



SOUTHWEST LRT

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Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Thursday, September 19, 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. **Southwest LRT Community Works Guiding Principles***

- IV. **New Starts: Land Use & Economic Development***

- V. **Corridor-Wide Housing Strategy Update***

- V. **Presentation: Met Council's TOD Program**
Allison Bell, Metropolitan Council

- VI. **Adjournment**

**enclosed*

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



Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Representing	Name	Member Status	Email Address
Hennepin County	Gail Dorfman	Member & Chair	gail.dorfman@co.hennepin.mn.us
	Jan Callison	Member	jan.callison@co.hennepin.mn.us
Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority	Peter McLaughlin	Member	peter.mclaughlin@co.hennepin.mn.us
Metropolitan Council	Jennifer Munt	Member	jennifer.munt@metc.state.mn.us
City of Minneapolis	Don Samuels	Member	don.samuels@minneapolismn.gov
	Betsy Hodges	Alternate	betsy.hodges@minneapolismn.gov
City of St. Louis Park	Anne Mavity	Member	annemavityslp@comcast.net
	Sue Sanger	Alternate	suesanger@comcast.net
City of Edina	James Hovland	Member & Vice Chair	jhovland@ci.edina.mn.us
	Mary Brindle	Alternate	mbrindle@comcast.net
City of Hopkins	Jason Gadd	Member	jason@nexgenassociates.com
	Molly Cummings	Alternate	MollyECummings@aol.com
City of Minnetonka	Tony Wagner	Member	twagner@eminnetonka.com
	Terry Schneider	Alternate	tschneider@eminnetonka.com
City of Eden Prairie	Kathy Nelson	Member	knelson@edenprairie.org
	Brad Aho	Alternate	baho@edenprairie.org
Minnehaha Creek Watershed District	Dick Miller	Member	dickrmiller@gmail.com
	Jeff Casale	Alternate	jcasale@minnesotahomes.com
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Anita Tabb	Member	atabb@minneapolisparcs.org ,
	Bob Fine	Alternate	bfine@minneapolisparcs.org
SouthWest Transit	Nancy Tyra-Lukens	Member	ntyra-lukens@edenprairie.org



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Urban Land Institute- Minnesota	Caren Dewar	Ex-officio Member	carendewar@uli.org
Southwest LRT Community Advisory Committee	To Be Determined	Ex-officio Member	
Southwest LRT Business Advisory Council	To Be Determined	Ex-officio Member	

July, 2012





Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 15, 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

Jason Gadd, City of Hopkins Member

Terry Schneider, Minnetonka Member

Mary Brindle, Edina Alternate

Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate

Bob Fine, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Alternate

Jim Hovland, Edina Member

Caren Dewar, Urban Land Institute–Mn Member

Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Kerri Pearce Ruch (Hennepin County), Chuck Darnell (Hennepin County), Cristina Diaz (Hennepin County), Tara Beard (Hennepin County), Nelrae Succio (Hennepin County), Jim Wisker (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Kevin Locke (St. Louis Park), Julie Wischnack (Minnetonka), Janet Jeremiah (Eden Prairie), Meg McMonigal (St. Louis Park), Ryan Kelley (St. Louis Park), Kathryn Hansen (SW Project Office), Craig Lamothe (SW Project Office), Meg Beekman (Hopkins), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), Cathy Bennett (ULI), Barry Schade (BMNA), Vida Ditter (BMNA/ROC), Joan Vanhala (AMS), Michael Larson (Met Council), Paul Mogush (Minneapolis), Jeff Peltola (Public Works for Public Good), Karen Lyons (Met Council), Laeh Robertson (MMLA), Mark Koegler (HKGi), Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting)

Guest Speaker

GB Arrington, GB Placemaking

I. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements

Chair Dorfman convened the meeting, noting that this is a time of dynamic tension for the LRT project and also a good time to discuss ways to maximize opportunities for this corridor.

Chair Dorfman announced that the 2013 Railvolution conference is October 20 – 23 in Seattle, and Meg McMonigal will be on a panel presenting on the Southwest project. Railvolution will be held in Minnesota in 2014, so it is not too early to be thinking about how the Steering Committee can work together to highlight the Southwest corridor. She also announced that a Request for Proposals is about to be issued for the housing gaps analysis to identify needs with regard to housing along the corridor.

II. July 18, 2013 meeting minutes

Chair Dorfman asked for approval of the meeting minutes from the July 18, 2013 meeting. Bob Fine moved the minutes and Jason Gadd seconded the motion. Meeting minutes were approved on a voice vote.

III. Presentation of New Starts Application Recommendations

Chair Dorfman re-introduced GB Arrington, GB Placemaking to discuss how to bolster the SW LRT project's New Starts application in light of MAP-21 and new guidelines. She referenced a letter from member Dick Miller about the need to tell our story about legislation that gives Hennepin County and its partners special authority to initiate community works projects. The letter and a copy of the legislation will be sent to members.

Chair Dorfman asked members and attendees to introduce themselves before Mr. Arrington offers his comments.

Chair Dorfman asked Vida Ditter to give an update on the opening of the Van White bridge on August 21.

Mr. Arrington presented on the latest information about New Starts criteria and ways to raise the Southwest project's land use and economic development rating. He encouraged the Committee to adopt guiding principles for land use in the corridor. There will be a submittal in the spring of 2014, so that is the next chance to increase the rating for Southwest project. Chair Dorfman and Anne Mavity asked about what the new guidelines say about affordable housing. Kathryn Hanson responded with information about the definition of affordable housing, and how comparisons will be made to show how a project rates on affordable housing criteria. She also noted that she is still reviewing the latest information to determine impacts.

Katie Walker provided an overview of how the Community Works initiative is coordinating with the SW Project Office to optimize the project ratings for land use and economic development. A subcommittee of the Technical Implementation Committee will be working with Kathryn Hanson and Karen Lyons to compile information and develop strategic direction. Another staff group will be working with Mr. Arrington on recommendations to strengthen the New Starts application.

Chair Dorfman stated that it is her understanding that the next submittal to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will occur after the 2014 legislative session. Craig Lamothe verified this, and also noted that will be the first time the SW project is rated on the new criteria. He also noted that most of the New Starts criteria have changed, not just those relating to land use and economic development. While the submittal next spring will be very important, there will be another submittal about a year later to enter into a full funding grant agreement with the Federal Transit Administration. Chair Dorfman asked about the 'refresh' on the ridership projection that was discussed at the Corridor Management Committee. Mr. Lamothe indicated that the ridership projection is trending upward for several reasons, so the estimate of approximately 30,000 riders per day will likely go higher.

IV. Action on Guiding Principles

Chair Dorfman indicated that city staff sitting on the Technical Implementation Committee had worked on the draft Guiding Principles, and laid the groundwork for specific station strategies. We're moving from talking about, to specific planning for, to implementation of transit oriented development projects. Mr. Arrington reviewed a handout that outlined six principles with strategies. Chair Dorfman asked members to consider the draft guiding principles and come to the September meeting ready to take action to approve them. Mary Brindle noted that it would be advisable to ensure that these guiding principles align with new FTA criteria. Jason Gadd stated that these principles will have two purposes: to help local partners work together, and to improve the project rating on land use and economic

development criteria. Mr. Arrington informed the Committee that the land use criteria have not changed, but the economic development and affordable housing guidance has changed. Committee members discussed the draft guiding principles and offered suggestions. Jim Hovland stated that we should show support for enhancing existing businesses, not just new development. Ann Mavity talked about equitable development, and recommended that connections to bike, pedestrian and bus lines be included. Terry Schneider asked about our goals matching with principles, for example around park and rides lots.

Mr. Arrington offered that the FTA will put the greatest weight on demonstrated performance and less on policies where results have not been demonstrated. To that point, Dick Miller reminded the Committee of his point about the great success of community works initiatives to date, including with public/private partnerships. Ann Mavity suggested that the jobs and housing estimates should be updated, and Karen Lyons provided new figures based on 2010 census data and 2030 comprehensive plans.

Jan Callison suggested document improvements and Chair Dorfman offered that this as a first draft and refinements would be made to address confusing structure. Mr. Arrington said that he would be working with staff to prioritize strategies and create a shorter and more focused list. Committee members continued their discussion and made other suggestions for improvements to the draft document.

V. Engineering and Economic Development Integration

Chair Dorfman asked Katie Walker and Mark Koegler to provide an update on the Transitional Station Area Action Planning (TSAAP) work. Ms. Walker provided background about the integration of land use and engineering work. The level of coordination being undertaken is relatively unusual compared to other rail transit projects around the nation. Because of this newness, the region is experimenting with various strategies to enhance coordination, but good results are already being realized. She referenced the Corridors of Opportunity vision: to have transit corridors guide development and revitalization within the region and to use transitways as anchors for equitable development, access to jobs and housing options. The SWLRT project was designated as a model for the early integration of LRT engineering and land use planning to optimize community benefits. The TSAAP process is to ensure that planning occurs for areas beyond the rails, and to be ready for the changes that the LRT project will catalyze. Ms. Walker outlined ways that the SW LRT project approach differs from the Hiawatha and Central Corridor projects: there is an integrated organizational structure was put in place to support greater and earlier integration; one community advisory committee and one business advisory committee advise both the SW Project Office and the Community Works program; engineers and planners work side-by-side to identify ways to meet both engineering and land use/economic development goals; cross-disciplinary workshops have been convened; and the TSAAP process has integrated closely with the preliminary engineering work happening in the SW Project Office.

Mark Koegler outlined what the TSAAP document will include. The report will include an overall corridor component as well as sections specific to each station. Specific projects will be recommended and prioritized. Over the past few months, the level of integration and collaboration has grown significantly, such that only a few issues remain to work out before the full plan is offered for adoption. Mr. Koegler provided examples where engineering and planning efforts are being or have been resolved.

Chair Dorfman asked about the list of 'betterments' that will come before the Corridor Management Committee on September 4. Jim Hovland suggested that the Steering Committee should weigh in on that list of betterments as they could relate to TSAAP recommendations. Committee members discussed the process to identify betterments and agreed that the Steering Committee should comment on those, particularly if there is overlap. Committee members asked staff to analyze the betterments list and report back, but also were uncertain about timing if the Corridor Management Committee is taking

action on September 4. Jan Callison recommended that the group not spend too much time reviewing betterments, but rather create a sense of the Steering Committee's priorities. Ann Mavity raised a concern about the location of the Louisiana station, but said that this is not a betterment issue. Mary Brindle talked about how city zoning policies and practices can affect the health and vitality of a community.

VI. Adjournment

Chair Dorfman adjourned the meeting. The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, September 19**, at 1:30 pm at the St. Louis Park City Hall.



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Agenda Item 3: Southwest Corridor Principles

Steering Committee Action Requested:

Discussion and Approval

Background/Justification:

Previous Action on Request:

Recommendation: Approval

Financial Implications? None.

Are These Funds Budgeted?

Attachments:

- Memorandum: Proposed Southwest LRT Community Works Guiding Principles
- Hennepin County Community Works Principles
- Letter from Dick Miller, MCWD
- Hennepin County Resolution
- Hennepin County Community Works 1994 report – Executive Summary

Comments:





MEMORANDUM

Date: September 16, 2013

To: Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

From: Katie Walker, Southwest LRT Community Works Manager

RE: Southwest LRT Community Works Guiding Principles

Background

In June 2013, the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee requested that staff work with GB Arrington, GB Placemaking, to draft a set of guiding principles for investment along the Southwest Corridor. The Steering Committee reviewed and commented on a draft set of guiding principles requesting the guiding principles for the Southwest LRT Corridor be considered in the context of the FTA New Starts Land Use and Economic Development criteria as well as the Hennepin County Community Works principles.

Summary of FTA's New Starts Land Use and Economic Development Criteria

In recent years the FTA has changed its focus and has placed a high emphasis on land use and economic development when rating potential New Starts projects and progressing them through the project development pipeline. The recently released FTA guidance on land use and economic development focuses on the following factors:

- Growth Management
- Transit Supportive Policies
- Transit Supportive Zoning
- Implementation Tools
- Performance
- Impact on Regional Development
- Plans/Policies for Affordable Housing



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Hennepin County Community Works

In 1994 a report was prepared by the Park and Public Works Commission recommending that Hennepin County establish the Community Works program to “enhance how the communities of Hennepin County will work together to create good jobs, provide access to employment, build the long term value of communities by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks and the natural environment, and by improving the existing implementation system”.

A set of principles were also established and are listed below:

- Stimulate employment development
- Build bridges for effective planning and implementation
- Maintain and improve natural systems
- Strengthen communities through connections
- Enhance the tax base

Recommendation

After receiving additional feedback from Steering Committee members and comparing the draft Southwest LRT Guiding Principles with both the FTA New Starts Land Use and Economic Development Criteria and the Hennepin County Community Works Principles, it is recommended that minor modifications to the current draft language be made. These minor modification are intended to better communicate the focus for the Southwest LRT Community Works partnership as well as the strong alignment between the Southwest LRT Community Works Guiding Principles and both the FTA New Starts Land Use and Economic Development Criteria and the Hennepin County Community Works Principles. The proposed language revisions are included as an attachment to this memorandum.

FTA New Starts
Land Use & Econ Dev Criteria

Hennepin County
Community Works Principles

Southwest LRT
Community Works Principles

Growth Management

Transit Supportive Policies

Transit Supportive Zoning

Implementation Tools

Performance

Impact on Regional Development

Plans/Policies for Affordable Housing

Achieve more diverse, compact Transit Oriented Development surrounding transit facilities

Provide a Full Range of Housing Choices

Build Bridges for Effective Planning & Implementation

Maintain & Improve Natural Systems

Stimulate Employment Development

Enhance Tax Base

Strengthen Communities Through Connections

Build Bridges for Effective Planning & Implementation (*Partner to leverage resources & maximize investment*)

Maintain & Improve Natural Systems

Stimulate Employment Development (*Accelerate Economic Competitiveness & Job Growth*)

Enhance Tax Base

Strengthen Communities Through Connections (*Create Great Places Focused Around Transit Facilities & Key Destinations*) (*Shape Supportive Connections Between LRT and the Surrounding Areas*)



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Attachment A: Recommended Modifications to the Southwest LRT Community Works Guiding Principles

(Note the potential strategies have been removed from this document and are not recommended for approval by the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee)

Guiding Principles

1. Partner to Leverage Resources and Maximize Investment Build Bridges for Effective Planning & Implementation
2. Realize Achieve More Diverse, Compact Transit Oriented Development Surrounding Transit Facilities
3. Accelerate Economic Competitiveness and Job Growth Stimulate Employment Development
4. Provide a Full Range of Housing Choices
5. Create Great Quality Places Around Transit Facilities and Key Destinations Strengthen Communities Through Connections
6. Strengthen Connections Between LRT and the Surrounding Areas—Critical Connections
Maintain & Improve Natural Systems
Enhance Tax Base



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Southwest LRT Community Works Guiding Principles

Build Bridges for Effective Planning & Implementation

Achieve More Diverse, Compact Transit Oriented Development Surrounding Transit Facilities

Stimulate Employment Development

Provide a Full Range of Housing Choices

Strengthen Communities Through Connections

Maintain & Improve Natural Systems

Enhance Tax Base

Letter and related materials from Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District

- Letter to Chair Dorfman
- Hennepin County Resolution Establishing Southwest LRT Community Works
- 1994 Report from the Parks and Public Works Commission, Hennepin Community Works



July 18, 2013

RE: SW LRT Community Works Draft Guiding Principles

Dear Chair Dorfman,

With the information recently presented by MZ Strategies on how SW LRT is competing nationally through the FTA New Starts program, I support the Steering Committee's review of guiding principles that may further focus SW LRT Community Works efforts in a manner that enhances both the project's ranking and the effectiveness future Community Works investments will have within the County.

My understanding is that the final federal rule passed earlier in 2013 established a new regulatory framework for FTA's evaluation and rating of major transit capital investments under the discretionary New Starts and Small Starts programs. MZ Strategies outlined that, as the federal government's primary financial resource for supporting locally-planned, implemented, and operated transit capital investments, funding through the New Starts pipeline has become increasingly competitive. This underscores the vital significance of adopting guiding principles that maximize the impact planning and infrastructure investments will have on meeting livable community goals, while boosting the overall project rating.

As a long-time supporter of the Hennepin Community Works doctrine I would like to suggest that the SW LRT Steering Committee review and discuss the 1994 foundational report establishing the Hennepin Community Works program. This document provides a time-tested strategic framework for meeting our collective goals and includes fundamental principles, strategies, and mission statement that are readily adaptable for application within the SW LRT Community Works Initiative.

Reinforced by data supplied to the SW LRT Steering Committee on "place making" and transit-oriented-development the Parks and Public Works Commission confirmed in 1994, "*through careful analysis of geographic information and data about Hennepin County,*" that there was overwhelming historical evidence showing that "*well designed and carefully integrated parks and public works projects maintain and enhance the long-term tax base of neighborhoods while improving the quality of life.*"

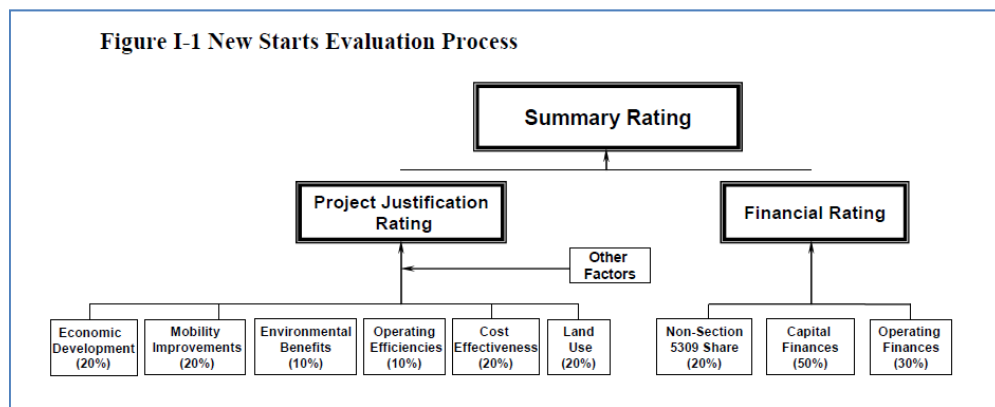
The original guiding principles: (1) stimulate employment development, (2) enhance the tax base, (3) strengthen communities through connections, (4) maintain and improve natural systems, and (5) build bridges for effective planning and implementation, all sought to "*enhance how the communities of Hennepin County work together to create good jobs, provide access to employment and build the long term value of communities by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks and the natural environment, and by improving the existing implementation systems*"

In rereading this cornerstone document it is interesting to observe that many of the strategies accompanying the five guiding principles would have direct application in guiding targeted

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District is committed to a leadership role in protecting, improving and managing the surface waters and affiliated groundwater resources within the District, including their relationships to the ecosystems of which they are an integral part. We achieve our mission through regulation, capital projects, education, cooperative endeavors, and other programs based on sound science, innovative thinking, an informed and engaged constituency, and the cost effective use of public funds.

investment and planning within SW LRT. In addition to adopting principles that provide the framework for future planning and investment, it seems that Hennepin Community Works is also well positioned as a lead agency with the Met Council and Steering Committee Members to aggregate information that increases the Project Justification Rating to the FTA.

According to the New Starts Capital Investment Program FY 2013 Annual Report Evaluation and Rating Process, projects are given a summary ranking based on Project Justification and Financial. It seems that, absent of an increase in the state or local contribution, the Financial Rating is relatively fixed. Therefore, I would request that the Steering Committee discuss what information is being collected and how it will be packaged for submittal to the FTA New Starts program.



For example, as part of the Project Justification Rating, the New Starts Program evaluates if, *“Transit agencies and/or regional agencies are working proactively with local jurisdictions, developers, and the public to promote transit-supportive land use planning and station area development. Local agencies are making recommendations for effective regulatory and financial incentives to promote transit-oriented development. Capital improvement programs are being developed that support station area land use plans and leverage the Federal investment in the proposed major transit corridor.”*

These regulatory incentives could include the financial benefit associated with deferring stormwater regulations on developing sites that may use regional stormwater solutions, such as those being planned at 325 Blake Road. Similarly, the New Starts Program considers development, density, pedestrian connections and employment opportunities in its rating. In partnership, the cities of Hopkins, St. Louis Park, MCWD and private sector have increased open space, strengthened communities through enhanced connections and stimulated development opportunities which are expected to enhance the tax base. It would be helpful for the Steering Committee to fully understand how these public and private investments throughout the corridor are being incorporated into the New Starts rating, and how the guiding principles can further guide investment to generate additional private-market reaction.

Therefore I would like to request that the Steering Committee review the Draft Guiding Principles against the founding Community Works document and discuss how the Steering Committee may use these principles to help enhance the project rating.

Respectfully,

Dick Miller
 MCWD Board Member and SW LRT Steering Committee Member

Hennepin County Board Action Request

09-0596



Item Description:

Establish the Southwest LRT Community Works project - introduced by Commissioners Dorfman, Callison and McLaughlin

Resolution:

WHEREAS, the proposed Southwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line will serve the Cities of Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, and St. Louis Park, as a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts project and is included in the Metropolitan Council's long-range Transportation Policy Plan; and

WHEREAS, enhancing economic development is one of five adopted goals of the Southwest LRT project, consistent with the FTA goals and measures of evaluation for funding New Starts projects; and

WHEREAS, the Southwest LRT Line presents numerous opportunities for transit-oriented economic development that maximizes public and private investments along the corridor, particularly in the areas surrounding transit stations; and

WHEREAS, Hennepin Community Works is a program with demonstrated effectiveness in bringing communities together to create jobs, provide access to employment, and enhance the long term value of communities by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks and the natural environment; and

WHEREAS, Hennepin Community Works is an appropriate program for integrating the Southwest LRT Line with targeted economic development activities, and is consistent with new federal programs through the Interagency Council on Sustainable Communities to promote the coordination of transportation, housing, community development, energy and environmental policies; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners establishes the Southwest LRT Community Works project and directs staff to report back to the County Board within 90 days of adoption of this resolution with a Southwest LRT Community Works plan that includes project goals, the geographic boundary of the project, identification of participating organizations and the organizational structure, and a work plan and budget; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Hennepin County Board directs staff to develop the Southwest LRT Community Works project and plan in consultation with the cities of Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, and St. Louis Park, the Metropolitan Council, and other Southwest LRT key stakeholders.

Hennepin County Board Action Request (continued)



Requesting Department	Commissioner Dorfman
Recommendation from County Administrator	
Committee Assignment	Public Works, Energy & Environment Committee

Background

Approvals

Department Head
Deputy/Assistant Administrator
County Administrator

Date
Date
Date

Hennepin Community Works

*An Employment, Public Works and
Tax Base Development Program*

**Final Report
of the
Parks and Public Works Commission**

June 1994

Cooperating Jurisdictions

Hennepin County Board

Mark Andrew, Chair
Mike Opat
Sandra M. Hillary
Peter McLaughlin
Randy Johnson
John Keefe
Emily Ann Staples
County Administrator - James M. Bourey

City of Minneapolis

Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton

City Council

Jackie Cherryhomes, City Council President
Walter Dziedzic
Joan Campbell
Joe Biernat
Alice Rainville
Jim Niland
Fat Scott
Brian Herron
Kathy Thurber
Lisa McDonald
S. Doré Mead
Dennis Schulstad
Steve Minn
City Coordinator - Kathy O'Brien

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Thomas Baker, Chair
Patricia Baker
Rochelle Berry Graves
Dale W. (Skip) Gilbert
Patricia B. Hillmeyer
Scott L. Neiman
George Puzak
M. Annie Young
Dean Zimmermann
Superintendent - David Fisher

Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District

David J. Dombrowski, Chair
Jim Carey
Marilynn Cocoran
Rosemary Franzese
Linda Marquardt
Brigitte Kay Reuther
Marcia Taubr
Superintendent - Douglas F. Bryant

Executive Summary

In the process of executing its charge, the Parks and Public Works Commission confirmed, through careful analysis of geographic information and data about Hennepin County, overwhelming historical evidence that: *well designed and carefully integrated parks and public works projects maintain and enhance the long-term tax base of neighborhoods while improving their quality of life.*

This basic finding led the Commission to the hypothesis that locating projects (coordinated parks, public works and infrastructure improvements) in urban neighborhoods and suburban communities which do not have such amenities, or which are experiencing a decline in property values, or both, is a way of shoring up the tax base as well as creating amenities which encourage long-term investment. An important corollary is that: *the implementation of these projects will provide immediate employment and job training while laying the groundwork for long-term employment opportunities.*

By exploring a variety of project types and employment opportunities in potential neighborhoods and communities, the Commission developed a set of interactive guiding principles to implement Hennepin Community Works' mission:

Mission Statement

Hennepin Community Works seeks to enhance how the communities of Hennepin County work together to create good jobs, provide access to employment and build the long term value of communities by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks and the natural environment, and by improving the existing implementation systems.

The principles, discussed in greater detail in the body of the report, are summarized as follows:

Principles

Stimulate Employment Development - The parks and public works projects create jobs by themselves but, more importantly, the physical improvements in neighborhoods create the groundwork and the reason for other long-term investments and for existing businesses to stay. Physical improvements have the potential for developing their own internal capital (currency) and thus new jobs for the neighborhood if coordinated with the appropriate jobs training programs.

Build Bridges for Effective Planning and Implementation - For the projects and programs to be effective, the financial and human resources must be coordinated at all levels of government into a comprehensive program with multiple goals.

Maintain and Improve Natural Systems - Developing the natural systems as the underlying structure of a place can provide significant amenities which add value to a community while also reducing the long-term cost of infrastructure.

Strengthen Communities through Connections - The Commission discovered that those parks and public works projects which strengthen linkages to other communities; to urban resources, networks and systems; and to the natural environment create the highest long-term value and sustain the highest property values.

Enhance the Tax Base - Compelling historical data indicate that parks and public works projects which are integrated with the natural and man-made infrastructure of the community and are coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries should enhance the common tax base of the county.

These guiding principles were developed by the work of a Project Subcommittee which explored the feasibility of the physical project types, a Program Subcommittee which developed eleven principles for job programs related to the project types and an Organization Subcommittee which examined alternative models for implementation.

Recommendation

As a result of its work, the Commission encourages the participant agencies to commit the resources needed to develop the implementation structure for Hennepin Community Works, based on the lead agency model, and to select at least three possible projects for implementation evaluation based on the endorsed mission statement, program goals and project principles.

Findings

The Parks and Public Works Commission has studied the feasibility of implementing joint-jurisdictional parks and public works activities to stimulate new job opportunities, to revitalize communities, to restore sensitive ecological areas and to maintain infrastructure investments as charged by the joint session.

The Commission further finds that Hennepin Community Works as a joint-jurisdictional program provides the framework to ensure that the immediate work opportunities resulting from public infrastructure investments benefit the construction industry and provide work and job skill training opportunities for the economically disadvantaged.

The Commission further finds that the implementation of Hennepin Community Works will stimulate new, long-term employment growth within the communities of Hennepin County through the attraction of private investment into residential, commercial and industrial areas served by the new and/or improved public facilities.

The Commission finds that the implementation of Hennepin Community Works will provide a framework for collaboration by diverse groups on the investment of public resources to address public needs, for new employment opportunities, to connect neighborhoods and communities to the larger Hennepin County community and to maintain the viability of all Hennepin County communities.

The Commission further finds that the success of Hennepin Community Works is dependent upon the willingness of affected governmental units to use the framework of Hennepin Community Works to jointly plan for the investment of public resources to accomplish activities which connect and enhance communities and protect sensitive areas.

The Commission further finds that effective planning for Hennepin Community Works relies upon the collection, synthesis and use of diverse types of information about natural resources, infrastructure and the built environment, and social and economic conditions.

In summary, the Parks and Public Works Commission finds that implementation of Hennepin Community Works provides an opportunity for diverse groups in Hennepin County to achieve, by cooperation, greater success in meeting the goals of stimulation of employment growth, enhancement of communities and growth of the common tax base than can be accomplished by independent actions.

Recommendations

The Parks and Public Works Commission recommends that Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board implement Hennepin Community Works as an employment, public works and tax-base development program through approval of the following recommendations:

That Hennepin County be the lead coordination agency for the development of the Hennepin Community Works planning process.

That a public information document explaining the goal and purpose of Hennepin Community Works be prepared to introduce the program to the public and local governments.

That Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board continue to provide financial and staff resources to complete the implementation plan and process for Hennepin Community Works.

That, based upon project recommendations from the principal agencies, the advisory committee evaluate the implementation opportunity for at least three selected projects by March 31, 1995. The evaluation process should include a research methodology and short-term and long-term goals for job generation and tax-base impact.

That a Hennepin Community Works advisory committee be established with members appointed by Hennepin County, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District, the City of Minneapolis, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, by October 1, 1994.

Next Steps

The Parks and Public Works Commission has identified the following as steps to be followed by the supporting agencies to continue the planning and development of process for the Hennepin Community Works Program:

Assemble a joint agency planning group to sustain the Hennepin Community Works planning and development process by coordinating access and analysis of information that supports the Hennepin Community Works Advisory Committee and detailed feasibility studies.

Secure funding to develop an information collection and analysis system that integrates capital budgeting, comprehensive planning and natural systems data in cooperation with the University of Minnesota Design Center for American Urban Landscape.

Develop a detailed employment training and job stimulation program based on the principles and goals presented in this study and on findings from project-specific feasibility studies.

Develop a project evaluation matrix based on the principles and goals presented in this study to assist in project selection and measurement of effectiveness.

Research and recommend public and private financial grant opportunities to participant jurisdictions to support the planning and implementation of Hennepin Community Works projects.

Identify and evaluate existing state legislation that facilitates or impedes implementation of Hennepin Community Works and develop a demonstration project proposal that provides incentives for community participation.



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Agenda Item 4: Southwest New Starts Rating – Land Use & Economic Development

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.

Previous Action on Request:

Recommendation: Information

Financial Implications? None.

Are These Funds Budgeted?

Attachments:

- Memorandum
- New Starts Presentation, GB Arrington
- New Starts Affordable Housing Memo, MZ Strategies

Comments:





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MEMORANDUM

Date: September 16, 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.

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

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 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, especially in the areas of land use and economic development, and to move closer to securing federal funding. The Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee expressed an interest in



understanding how their work and the work of the individual partners could help to improve the rating and position of the Southwest LRT project. In response, the services of GB Arrington and Mariia Zimmerman, MZ Strategies, have been retained to receive guidance on how the Southwest LRT project can improve its rating in the areas of Land Use and Economic Development of which affordable housing has become more important at the federal level. Mr Arrington and Ms. Zimmerman have provided some initial recommendations for consideration. Both Mr. Arrington and Ms. Zimmerman will continue to provide recommendations, review drafts of documents, and provide policy advice to the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee and the Southwest Project Office (SPO) between now and the submission of the Met Council's 2014 New Starts Application, which is anticipated to be completed by May/June of 2014.

Initial Consultant Recommendations

Summary of GB Arrington's Initial Recommendations

1) Broaden your view

- Create a 'Story board' both regionally & for SW LRT
- Capture region wide "transit supportive" actions / successes achieved / benefits realized (TOD / Economic Development supportive actions, documentation of built TODs, adopted plans & implementation tools , Binding affordable housing policies and actions, & Private sector involvement in TOD)

2) Strengthen Codes & Policies for TOD and affordable housing, considering the greatest chance for implementation and the most beneficial impact on the New Starts rating

3) Adopt TOD Plans & Policies

- Steering Committee – Guiding Principles
- Cities adopt – Guiding Principles, TSAAP plans/strategies, Targeted zoning & policy changes, plans/policies to strengthen affordable housing

4) Southwest LRT

- Continue to enhance project design to enable TOD & capture joint development opportunities
- Include joint development projects supportive of TSAAP as part of project

5) TOD Implementation Tools

6) Partner with Private Sector

- Proactively involve the private sector (ULI, Business Investment Partnership, land owners) in TOD planning and implementation



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Summary of Mariia Zimmerman's Initial Recommendations

1) Mobility Measure

What travel model will be used (local or STOPS) and what is the preferred horizon year?

2) Economic Development

Region should highlight the following:

- Hennepin County Affordable Housing Incentive Fund and TOD Fund, particularly if the latter were modified to include extra points for low-income or mixed-income projects.
- MHFA's consideration of TOD and employment centers within its revised Qualified Allocation Plan. Hennepin County may want to consider alignment of its QAP, or federal entitlement funds.
- Minneapolis Affordable Housing Resolution (2004R- 260) which commits the city and its funding programs to explicit consideration of affordable housing, including "4.18 Minneapolis will encourage both a density and a mix of land uses in TSAs that both support ridership for transit as well as benefit from its users."
- Local mortgage assistance programs including for first time home buyers, and the Homes within Reach Land Trust established in Eden Prairie
- Requirements for affordability included within TIF (Minneapolis, Hennepin County) and policy objectives pursued through Pooled TIFs by Minnetonka, Eden Prairie and other suburban communities (to the extent that these policies could become formalized it would ensure a higher rating).
- Active engagement by local non-profit housing partners such as LISC and Family Housing Fund, including land banking. To the extent that a specific acquisition fund, or corridor wide financing tool could be established this would also support a higher rating. There appears to be a need, based on preliminary housing analysis by the Corridor Working Group to develop a financing tool to preserve some of the naturally affordable market rate multi-family units along the corridor.
- Southwest Community Station Area Planning activities, especially if those result in TOD overlay districts or zoning changes that include such strategies as density bonuses for developments that include a percentage of affordable housing.



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- Metropolitan Councils' Livable Communities TOD Demonstration Program which includes affordability requirements, and also forthcoming regional housing plan (depending on timing) and the Thrive MSP 2040 policy statements. There is also an opportunity in the Met Council's forthcoming TOD Policy and Joint Development Policy to emphasize affordable housing and transit dependent riders.

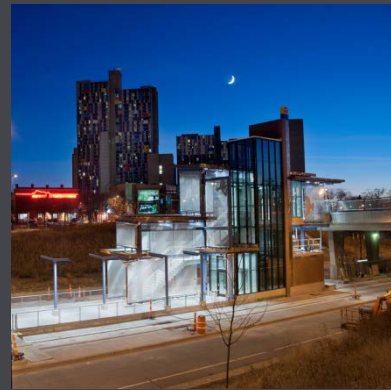
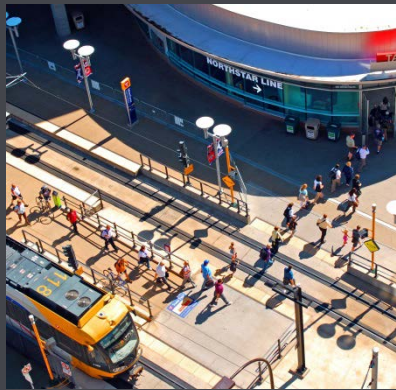
The region should also strongly consider undertaking the additional quantitative analysis allowed by FTA.

3) Land Use

- FTA will also consider (on a case by case basis) additional information provided by project sponsors that captures the benefits of the proposed project to low-income families, which may be an opportunity for Southwest LRT to report on the legally binding affordability restricted units along the Green Line (Central Corridor).
- It may also benefit the project to include analysis from the recently completed Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) which underscores the number of low-income households that will be served by the project. The FHEA, required under the HUD Sustainable Communities Grant, is not limited to legally binding affordability restricted units but does demonstrate the importance of the corridor to connecting other low-income areas and job/education opportunity sites in the region, which is a factor in the overall measures that includes an analysis of employment served by the system.

**New Starts Guidance Presentation to Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee
August 2013, GB Arrington, GB Placemaking**

A Strategy for Success New Starts & Land Use



August 2013

Two Part Strategy

1. Help assure highest possible New Starts rating for land use & economic development
 - Isolate most effective points
 - Identify gaps for attention
2. Maximize return on investment from SW LRT by enabling broad implementation of TOD
 - Station areas as special places
 - Do a very good job in a few places
v mediocre everywhere



1) Broaden your view

- ‘Story board’ story regionally & for SW LRT
- Capture region wide “transit supportive” actions / successes achieved / benefits realized
 - TOD / Economic Development supportive actions
 - Comprehensive documentation of built TODs
 - Adopted plans & implementation tools
 - Binding affordable housing policies and actions,
 - Private sector involvement in TOD



2) Strengthen Codes & Policies

- Through the lens of FTA's New Starts criteria identify & recommend changes to:
 - 1) local codes & policies
 - 2) affordable housing policies & outcomes
- Considering the greatest chance for implementation and the most beneficial impact on the New Starts rating

3) Adopt TOD Plans & Policies

- Steering Committee adopt:
 - SW LRT Principals & Supporting Strategies
- Cities adopt:
 - SW LRT Principals & Supporting Strategies
 - TSAAP plans, policies & strategies
 - Targeted changes to zoning & policies
 - Modifications to plans & policies to strengthen affordable housing elements

4) SW Corridor LRT

- Continue to enhance project design to enable TOD & capture joint development opportunities
- Include joint development projects supportive of TSAAP as part of project

5) TOD Implementation Tools

- Hennepin County:
 - Adopt SW Corridor TOD Investment Criteria
 - Solicitation of initial SW Corridor TOD grants

6) Partner with Private Sector

- Proactively involve the private sector (ULI, Business Investment Partnership, land owners) in TOD planning and implementation



MZ Strategies, LLC | www.mzstrategies.com | 703-582-7355

September 6, 2013

To: Caren Dewar, ULI-MN and Alene Tchourumoff, Hennepin County

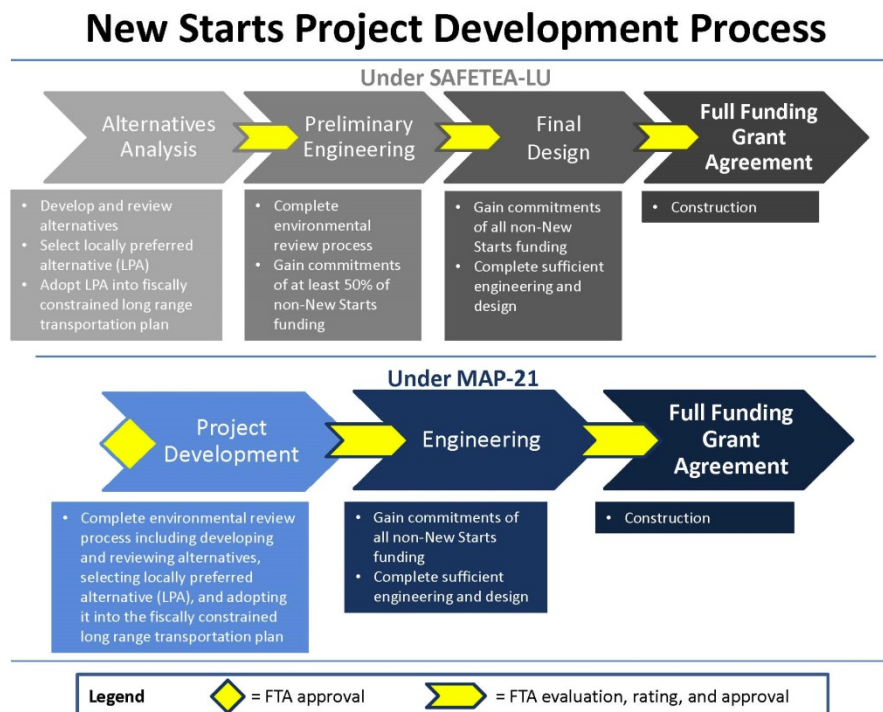
From: Mariia Zimmerman, Principal

RE: Federal New Starts Guidance on Affordable Housing

On August 13, 2013 the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued its final guidance for its Capital Investment Grant Program which includes New Starts and Small Smarts. This guidance replaces all previous guidance. There are several important provisions made in MAP-21 not included in this guidance such as the program of inter-related projects, the pilot program for expedited project delivery, and the details of the congestion relief criterion. These, and other outstanding issues which are of interest to the region, will be addressed in future policy guidance and rulemaking.¹

ULI-MN requested MZ Strategies to provide a memo highlighting those changes specific to affordable

Figure 1. Revised Federal New Starts Process



housing. As part of this overview, attached is an excellent policy brief of the proposed changes prepared by Enterprise Community Partners. MZ Strategies, LLC and Reconnecting America have been working with Enterprise and other affordable housing advocates over the past several years to emphasize the intersection between federal new starts and local affordable housing goals.

Figure 1 summarizes the

¹ The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) is working through its Policy and Planning Committee to develop recommendations to FTA on these issues and is seeking input from members through working groups that have been established on specific topic areas.

changes from MAP-21 to the New Starts process. Among the nine individual criteria ratings, three include specific consideration of low-income populations: Mobility improvements (of which transit dependent populations are double counted in the rating), Land Use (of which number of legally binding affordable housing units within corridor is calculated and rated as percentage of such housing in the county), and Economic Development (of which plans and policies to support preservation and expansion of available affordable housing units is rated). These nine criteria are then summarized in the Project Justification Summary Rating (50% of overall rating) and the Local Financial Commitment Rating (50% of Overall Rating).

Additionally, the new FTA Guidance includes three provisions that also have implications for considering low-income populations in the New Starts evaluation process which emphasizes the use of readily available information for decision-making, and a greater reliance on standardized metrics.

- First, FTA is making available to local project sponsors (and encouraging but not requiring) the use of a national travel model called Simplified Trips-on-Projects (STOPS).
- Second, FTA is requiring all project sponsors to calculate the measures for the evaluation criteria based on current year inputs.² FTA is allowing project sponsors to determine their own project horizon year estimates for comparison and evaluation – either 10 or 20 years in the future – with a weighted average between current year data and horizon year data. The longer the time horizon, however, the more additional analysis may be necessary to account for projects in the TIP (for 10 year horizon) or the long-range transportation plan (for 20 year horizon).
- Third, FTA has developed a set of new templates and worksheets which they believe will streamline the process for project sponsors and evaluation purposes. These documents are on FTA’s website at <http://www.fta.dot.gov/12304.html>.

Consideration of Low-Income Populations in Final New Starts Guidance (Issued August 2013)

A. Mobility Improvements Measure

FTA assigned a weight of two to trips by transit dependent persons – defined in the STOPS model as those households without a car. Project sponsors may instead use local travel model data which could

Rating	Mobility Improvements: Estimated Annual Trips (Trips by Non-Transit Dependent Persons plus Trips by Transit Dependent Persons multiplied by 2)
High	≥ 30 Million
Medium-High	15 Million – 29.9 Million
Medium	5 Million – 14.9 Million
Medium-Low	2.5 Million – 4.9 Million
Low	< 2.5 Million

Figure 2. FTA Breakpoints for Transit Dependent Riders

alternately define this as persons living in the lowest income bracket households. A weight of two is given to trips made on the project by transit dependent persons, including linked trips. As such, transit dependent riders alighting from elsewhere on the system, i.e. Central Corridor, Hiawatha or direct bus connections to Southwest may be counted. Mobility Improvement Break-

² FTA is defining “current year” as closet to toady as the data will permit.

points are shown on the table in Figure 2.

Local Implications:

1. What travel model will be used for project evaluation – a local travel model or STOPS, and is there a preferred horizon year?

B. Economic Development Effects Measure

FTA defines this measure as an evaluation of the extent to which a proposed project is likely to induce additional, transit-supportive development in the future. The evaluation is based upon a qualitative examination of *existing* local plans and policies, with an optional quantitative analysis that project sponsors may choose to undertake.³ In regards to affordable housing, FTA requests information from project sponsors on tools in place to maintain or increase the share of affordable housing in the corridor. This includes

- 1) Evaluation of Corridor-specific affordable housing needs and supply
- 2) Plans and policies to preserve and increase affordable housing be those regulatory such as inclusionary or multi-family zoning or density bonuses; voluntary or mandatory inclusionary housing policies, affordability covenants, adopted financing tools such as affordability requirements associated with TIF or extra points for proximity to transit in qualified allocation plans for tax credits or local and state mortgage assistance programs for low-income or senior households; or, land acquisition, land banking or transfer tax programs and affordable housing trust funds. FTA also allows for consideration of developer activity to preserve and increase affordable housing.

FTA maintains its use of different levels of effort in rating projects based on whether the project is in Engineering or FFGA status. This means that as a project gets closer to the full funding grant agreement and construction, the bar is raised for the types of plans and policies that need to be in place. FTA is not specifying a methodology for the optional quantitative analysis of economic development, and has therefore not established breakpoints. Information on how ratings will be given for the qualitative evaluation of this measure is included in Appendix A.

Local Implications:

1. While none of the local jurisdictions along the SW corridor have inclusionary zoning in place, there are a number of existing policies and programs which should be highlighted by the region to increase its rating. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Hennepin County Affordable Housing Incentive Fund and TOD Fund, particularly if the latter were modified to include extra points for low-income or mixed-income projects.

³ This memo highlights only those elements specific to affordable housing, with the anticipation that additional information is being provided to discuss implications for broader set of TOD-supportive land use policies and plans that also factor into the evaluation rating, of which the region, county and local jurisdictions are also actively involved in addressing through Southwest Community Works, Corridors of Opportunity and other initiatives.

- MHFA’s consideration of TOD and employment centers within its revised Qualified Allocation Plan. Hennepin County may want to consider alignment of its QAP, or federal entitlement funds.
- Minneapolis Affordable Housing Resolution (2004R- 260) which commits the city and its funding programs to explicit consideration of affordable housing, including “4.18 Minneapolis will encourage both a density and a mix of land uses in TSAs that both support ridership for transit as well as benefit from its users.”
- Local mortgage assistance programs including for first time home buyers, and the Homes within Reach Land Trust established in Eden Prairie
- Requirements for affordability included within TIF (Minneapolis, Hennepin County) and policy objectives pursued through Pooled TIFs by Minnetonka, Eden Prairie and other suburban communities (to the extent that these policies could become formalized it would ensure a higher rating).
- Active engagement by local non-profit housing partners such as LISC and Family Housing Fund, including land banking. To the extent that a specific acquisition fund, or corridor wide financing tool could be established this would also support a higher rating. There appears to be a need, based on preliminary housing analysis by the Corridor Working Group to develop a financing tool to preserve some of the naturally affordable market rate multi-family units along the corridor.
- Southwest Community Station Area Planning activities, especially if those result in TOD overlay districts or zoning changes that include such strategies as density bonuses for developments that include a percentage of affordable housing.
- Metropolitan Councils’ Livable Communities TOD Demonstration Program which includes affordability requirements, and also forthcoming regional housing plan (depending on timing) and the Thrive MSP 2040 policy statements. There is also an opportunity in the Met Council’s forthcoming TOD Policy and Joint Development Policy to emphasize affordable housing and transit dependent riders.

2. Given that a number of plans and potential policy revisions are underway, and the significant potential in the corridor for redevelopment and more intense development along station areas, the region **should strongly consider undertaking the additional quantitative analysis** allowed by FTA. This would require additional coordination with FTA’s regional office by the project office but could provide additional consideration for future development potential and VMT reduction. Some of this early assessment has already been done or is underway to look at land availability in station areas, project population and employment increases resulting from more intense land development, and a pro forma assessment of the feasibility of specific development scenarios. Hennepin County and ULI-MN have led a number of these efforts.

C. Land Use Measure

The land use measure is an examination of existing corridor and station area development, character, parking supply, pedestrian facilities and the **proportion of existing “legally binding affordability restricted” housing within ½ mile of the station areas to the proportion of “legally binding affordability restricted” housing in the counties through which the project travels.** This is a change from the proposed January guidance which evaluated the corridor supply against the regional supply.

FTA defines legally binding affordability restricted housing as a lien, deed of trust or other legal instrument attached to a property and/or housing structure that restricts the cost of housing units to be

Rating	Proportion of legally binding affordability restricted housing in the project corridor compared to the proportion in the counties through which the project travels
High	≥ 2.50
Medium-High	2.25 – 2.49
Medium	1.50 - 2.24
Medium-Low	1.10 - 1.49
Low	< 1.10

Figure 3. FTA Breakpoints for Legally Binding Affordability Restricted Housing

affordable to renters at 60% of the area median income (AMI), and owners with incomes below the AMI. Project sponsors should include both federally assisted rental housing, and local or state assisted properties.

Naturally occurring market rate affordable units do not count within this measure. The breakpoints established by FTA for this factor are shown in Figure 3.

Local Implications

- In an important caveat, FTA will also consider (on a case by case basis) additional information provided by project sponsors that captures the benefits of the proposed project to low-income families. This is designed to allow for projects that pass through a county with ample affordable housing to note that this may influence the rating, which may be the case for Hennepin County. This may provision provides opportunity to also report on the legally binding affordability restricted units along University Avenue (phase 1 of the Green Line).
- It may also benefit the project to include analysis from the recently completed Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA) which underscores the number of low-income households that will be served by the project. The FHEA, required under the HUD Sustainable Communities Grant, is not limited to legally binding affordability restricted units but does demonstrate the importance of the corridor to connecting other low-income areas and job/education opportunity sites in the region, which is a factor in the overall measures that includes an analysis of employment served by the system.

Appendix A. FTA Breakpoints for Economic Development: Affordable Housing Plans and Policies

<i>Plans and Policies to Maintain or Increase Affordable Housing in Corridor</i>		
FFGA/SSGA	HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive affordable housing plans have been developed and are being implemented that identify and address the current and prospective housing affordability needs along the corridor. The plans include efforts to preserve existing affordable housing (both legally binding affordability restricted housing and market-rate affordable housing.) The plans also explicitly address the housing affordability and quality needs of very- and extremely-low income households. • Financing commitments and/or sources of funding and robust financial incentives are secured and available at the local and/or regional level and along the proposed corridor to support affordable housing acquisition (including acquisition of land and/or properties intended to be converted to affordable housing), development and/or preservation consistent with adopted plans and policies. These commitments may include early phase or acquisition financing as well as permanent financing. • Local policies and zoning codes support and encourage significant affordable housing development in transit corridors. • Developers are actively working in the corridor to secure priority development sites and/or maintain affordability levels in existing housing units.
	MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing plans have been developed and are being implemented that identify and address the current and prospective housing affordability needs along the corridor. The plans include efforts to preserve existing subsidized housing. The plans also explicitly address the needs of very- and extremely-low income households. • Some financial incentives are available along the proposed corridor to support affordable housing acquisition (including acquisition of land and/or properties intended to be converted to affordable housing), development and/or preservation consistent with adopted plans and policies. These commitments may include early phase or acquisition financing as well as permanent financing. • Local policies and zoning codes support affordable housing development in and near transit corridors to a moderate extent. • Developers are starting to work in the corridor to secure priority development sites and/or maintain affordability levels in existing housing units.
	LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable housing plans and policies are in development or non-existent, or fail to address key elements such as length of affordability, preservation of existing affordable housing, and the needs of very- and extremely-low income households. • Little or no financial incentives are available to support affordable housing development and preservation. • Local policies and zoning codes support only limited affordable housing development in and near transit corridors. • There is little or no affordable housing development/preservation activity in the corridor.

<i>Plans and Policies to Maintain or Increase Affordable Housing in Corridor (continued)</i>		
Engineering	HIGH	<p>Plans and policies are in place in most of the jurisdictions covered by the project corridor that identify and address the current and prospective housing affordability needs along the corridor. The plans outline a strategy to preserve existing affordable housing (both legally binding affordability restricted housing and market-rate affordable housing.) The plans also explicitly address the housing affordability and quality needs of very- and extremely-low income households.</p> <p>Financing commitments and/or sources of funding and robust financial incentives are identified and secured to support affordable housing acquisition (including acquisition of land and/or properties intended to be converted to affordable housing), development and/or preservation consistent with adopted plans and policies. These commitments may include early phase or acquisition financing as well as permanent financing.</p> <p>A strategy is in place to encourage jurisdictions to adopt local policies and zoning codes that support and encourage affordable housing development in transit corridors.</p> <p>Developers are actively working in the corridor to secure priority development sites and/or maintain affordability levels in existing housing units.</p>
	MEDIUM	<p>Affordable housing plans are being prepared in most of the jurisdictions covered by the project corridor that identify and address the current and prospective housing affordability needs along the corridor. The plans outline a strategy to preserve existing affordable housing (both legally binding affordability restricted housing and market-rate affordable housing). The plans also explicitly address the housing affordability and quality needs of very- and extremely-low income households.</p> <p>Some financing commitments and/or sources of funding and have been identified and secured to support affordable housing acquisition (including acquisition of land and/or properties intended to be converted to affordable housing), development and/or preservation. These commitments may include early phase or acquisition financing as well as permanent financing.</p> <p>A strategy is in place to encourage jurisdictions to adopt local policies and zoning codes that support and encourage affordable housing development in transit corridors.</p> <p>Developers are starting to work in the corridor to secure priority development sites and/or maintain affordability levels in existing housing units.</p>
	LOW	<p>Plans and policies are not in place or being prepared that identify and address the specific housing affordability needs along the corridor.</p> <p>Financing commitments and/or sources of funding have not been identified and secured to preserve and/or build new affordable housing consistent with adopted plans.</p> <p>There is no strategy to encourage jurisdictions to adopt local policies and zoning codes that support and encourage affordable housing development in transit corridors.</p> <p>There is little or no affordable housing development/preservation activity in the corridor</p>
<p>Ratings based on assessment of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of corridor-specific affordable housing needs and supply; • Plans and policies to preserve and increase affordable housing in region and/or corridor; • Adopted financing tools and strategies targeted to preserving and increasing affordable housing in the region and/or corridor; • Evidence of developer activity to preserve and increase affordable housing in the corridor; and • The extent to which the plans and polices account for long-term affordability and the needs of very- and extremely-low income households in the corridor. 		



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Agenda Item 5: Corridor Wide Housing Strategy

Steering Committee Action Requested:

Information

Background/Justification:

Staff will present an update on the Corridor Wide Housing Strategy including the scope for the upcoming Gap Analysis.

Previous Action on Request:

Recommendation:

Financial Implications? None.

Are These Funds Budgeted?

Attachments:

- Memorandum
- Corridor Wide Housing Strategy

Comments:





MEMORANDUM

Date: September 16, 2013

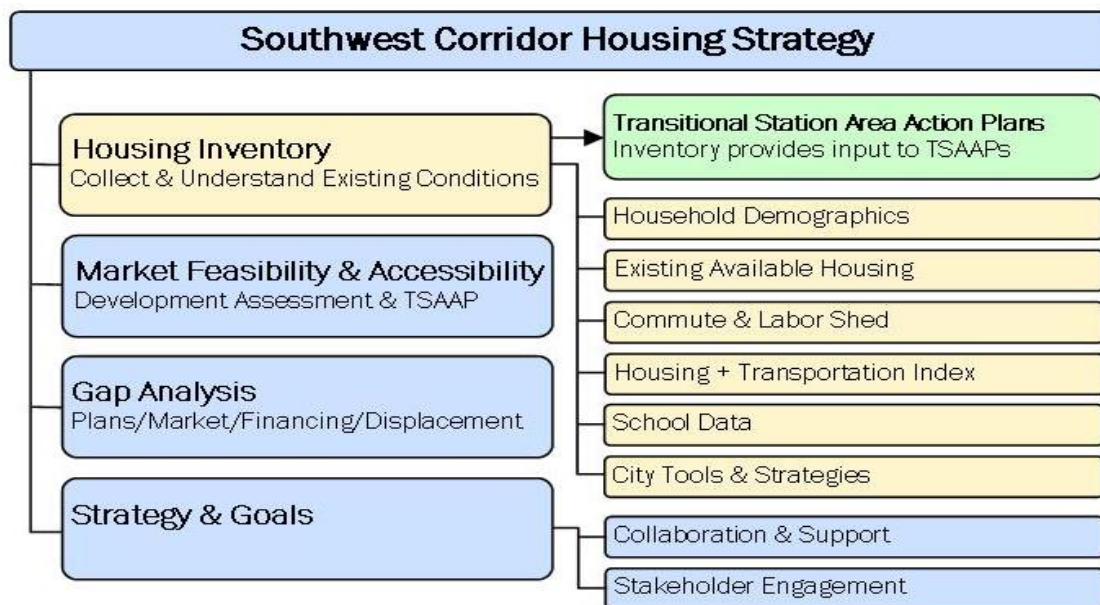
To: Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

From: Katie Walker, Southwest LRT Community Works Manager

RE: Corridor Wide Housing Strategy Update

Background

In May, 2012 the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee endorsed the development of a Corridor Wide Housing Strategy for the Southwest Corridor. The purpose is to form a collaborative partnership between Southwest Community Works members and regional partners to recommend joint policies, tools and financing strategies to achieve a full range of housing choices along the Southwest Corridor in conjunction with future transit investments.





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The first step of the Corridor Wide Housing Strategy, the Housing Inventory, was completed by Maxfield Research in early 2013 and was presented to the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee in March of 2013. The Housing Inventory provides a baseline for housing, demographics and economics for the corridor which will be built upon in future phases. The results of the Housing Inventory was used in development of the future development scenarios for the Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP).

The next step in the Corridor Wide Housing Strategy is the Gap Analysis which will document the differences between the current housing stock (supply) and project housing demand based upon demographic profiles and trends. The Gap Analysis will be jointly funded by the Family Housing Fund (FHF) and Hennepin County. The work is expected to begin in 4th quarter of 2013 and be completed in 1st quarter of 2014.

The final step in the Corridor Wide Housing Strategy is development of the Goals and Strategies. This work is anticipated to begin in 1st quarter of 2014 and be completed by 2nd quarter of 2014.

The Southwest Corridor Wide Housing Strategy will be shared with the Federal Transit Administration as part of the Metropolitan Council's 2014 New Starts Application for entry into Engineering.



SWLRT Corridor –Wide Housing Strategy



Corridor Wide Housing Strategy

Completed in March

June-December

October – November

October - December

Jan-March 2014

Draft – Aug 2013

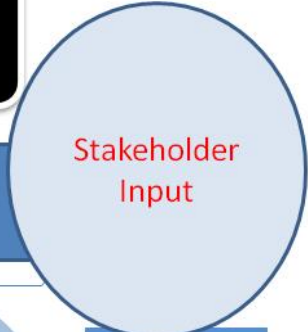
Corridor Wide Principles & City Housing & Development Goals



Housing & Development Opportunities

Informed by TSAAP

Corridor Wide Collaborative Strategies



Influence New Starts



Implement Policies & Programs





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Agenda Item 6: Met Council TOD Policy	
	Steering Committee Action Requested: Information
Background/Justification: The Metropolitan Council plans to adopt a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Policy in October 2013. Met Council staff, Allison Bell, is sharing the draft TOD Policy with key stakeholder groups, including the Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee, prior to formal action. The Met Council is expected to take action on the TOD Policy on October 23, 2013.	
Previous Action on Request: Information	
Recommendation:	Financial Implications? None. Are These Funds Budgeted?
Attachments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met Council TOD Strategic Action Plan, Executive Summary 	
Comments:	



Metropolitan Council

TOD Strategic Action Plan

June 2013



Acknowledgements

This TOD Strategic Action Plan was developed through extensive collaboration with Metropolitan Council staff, local government partners and other stakeholders.

Project Manager

Allison Bell, Manager, Corridors of Opportunity
allison.bell@metc.state.mn.us
390 North Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55101

Consultant Team

Parsons Brinckerhoff PlaceMaking
GB place making
Center for Transit Oriented Development

Date: June 17, 2013

I. Executive Summary

The regional transitway network that connects Minneapolis, St. Paul and the suburban jurisdictions is an investment in the future. This investment must be protected and enhanced if we are to remain economically competitive, attracting both residents and jobs, with other communities throughout the United States.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) provides the opportunity to enhance the transit investment by shaping regional development around transit. The working definition of TOD, as defined by the Metropolitan Council and partners at regional think tanks in September 2012 and February 2013, is: A moderate to higher density district/corridor located within easy walking distance of a major transit stop that typically contains a mix of uses such as housing, jobs, restaurants, shops, services and entertainment. These districts/corridors enable people of all ages, backgrounds, and incomes abundant transportation choices and the opportunity to live convenient, affordable and active lives.

For the Twin Cities to remain competitive with other regions pursuing the same federal funding sources and to adapt to the updated New Starts requirements, the region must seize the TOD opportunity, including addressing economic development, new employment opportunities, housing choice and social equity. The opportunity to leverage the multi-billion dollar transit investment is noteworthy with new transit investments in the Green Line (Central

Corridor LRT), Green Line Extension (Southwest LRT), and various



bus rapid transit (BRT) lines.

TOD in the Twin Cities Today

In the Twin Cities, the foundation for creating a more robust TOD program is solid: the Metropolitan Council, local governments, the philanthropic community and the private sector understand how TOD can be part of the region's economic competitiveness strategy and have made strong commitments to advance TOD. Development associated with the Hiawatha Line has been robust: over 1,600 dwelling units have been completed or are under construction. An additional 1,100 dwelling units are pending or approved for future development.

Thrive MSP 2040¹ includes three goals that are consistent with TOD:

- Land use, development patterns and infrastructure align to make the best use of public and private investment.
- Housing options give people in all life stages and of all economic means viable choices for safe, stable and affordable homes.
- A multi-modal transportation system safely and reliably connects people and freight with destinations in the region and beyond.

Transit Oriented Development Defined

“A moderate to higher density district/corridor located within easy walking distance of a major transit stop that typically contains a mix of uses such as housing, jobs, restaurants, shops, services and entertainment. These districts/corridors enable people of all ages, backgrounds, and incomes abundant transportation choices and the opportunity to live convenient, affordable and active lives.”

*~ working definition from Metropolitan Council Think Tank,
September 2012*

¹ Thrive MSP 2040 is the 10-year update of the 2030 Regional Development Framework. The update is ongoing, and although the goals are unlikely to be changed, they have not been formally adopted to date. Thrive MSP 2040 will provide a 30-year regional vision for the 7-county metropolitan area.

TOD Strategic Action Plan

To prepare for the expansion of the existing transitway system with the Red Line (Cedar Avenue BRT) and Green Line extension, the Metropolitan Council has initiated a TOD Strategic Action Plan to build off the existing foundation and set the stage for the next phase in the region’s evolution to create a more robust TOD program.

This next stage advances the Metropolitan Council’s leadership by providing clarity on the needs and ways that the Metropolitan Council can fill those needs, focusing on the following goals:

- Collaborate between the Metropolitan Council and its regional partners to accelerate the implementation of high-quality TOD.
- Prioritize limited resources by targeting investments in TOD to programs and locations where they can have the greatest success.
- Focus on implementation of, as well as planning for, TOD as part of a larger regional equitable economic competitiveness strategy.
- Improve internal coordination on TOD related programs and projects in order to align investments and priorities and support TOD implementation.

The TOD Strategic Action Plan has many parts, all emanating from the Metropolitan Council mission, goals and policies. Each component builds off the other and all lead back to the Council’s mission to “foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region.” The TOD Strategic Action Plan calls for the

creation of a TOD policy that identifies the vision, priorities and goals of the Council's TOD program. It also identifies strategies and tools to implement the policy. The strategies and tools are grouped into five main categories: collaboration; technical resources, communication and education; TOD planning; TOD development; and TOD funding.

Strategic Action Plan Recommendations

The report recommends two categories of action for a regional TOD program:

1. A TOD policy that will guide the implementation of the action plan.
2. Tools and strategies that address: collaboration; technical resources, communication and education; TOD planning; TOD development; and TOD funding.

Each strategy is ranked as high, medium or low priorities based on the impact and ease of implementation. The highest priority recommendations are collaboration strategies or relate to the creation of a TOD policy:

- Establish TOD staff capability within the Council to work with partners to deliver high-quality TOD outcomes.
- Create an internal Council TOD working group and dedicated TOD program staff to improve internal coordination and collaboration across the organizational divisions.
- Continue talking with regional partners and begin the process of creating a regional TOD Advisory Group to work with the Council on implementing the Action Plan recommendations.

- Establish and adopt a Council TOD policy, including joint development and land acquisition policies.
- Incorporate the goals in the TOD policy into the criteria for allocating Council funding related to TOD.



The other recommendations described in the action plan include:

- Technical Resources, Communication and Education Strategies
 - Assess partner needs.
 - Measure and share local TOD success stories.
 - Produce an annual report to track where TOD is happening.
 - Create TOD peer networks to share information.

- Create a centralized home for TOD resources and best practices.
- Engage in public outreach and engagement.
- Conduct original research.
- TOD Planning Strategy
 - Integrate TOD goals into Metropolitan Council regional planning documents.
 - Establish performance targets.
 - Engage in/initiate corridor planning.
 - Provide technical resources for planning services.
 - Participate in station area planning.
- TOD Development Strategy
 - Encourage private developers to build TOD.
 - Understand development industry needs.
 - Connect partners with site-specific TOD resources and opportunities.
 - Identify opportunity sites.
 - Conduct a portfolio analysis.
 - Offer key sites for development.
 - Actively pursue land acquisition and development partnerships.
 - Partner with a land bank.
- TOD Funding Strategy
 - Incorporate TOD Policy into funding criteria.
 - Provide operating funding for TOD program.
 - Support TOD Prioritization Tool and incorporate into Council programs.
 - Continue to fund Livable Communities TOD Grants while leveraging more in terms of outcomes and private investment.
 - Explore creation of station area grant program.
 - Direct transportation dollars to TOD-supportive infrastructure.
 - Use New Starts funding to support TOD.





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Updates

- Railvolution Conference, Seattle, October 20-23
(www.railvolution.org)
- Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board letter/resolution
- Corridors of Opportunity
- Southwest LRT Project Office



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September 6, 2013

Susan Haigh, Chair
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert St. N
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) position on Southwest Light Rail Transitway options through the Kenilworth corridor.

Dear Susan Haigh:

On August 21, 2013 the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) adopted Resolution 2013-282, articulating its position on Light Rail Transit through the Kenilworth corridor. While the MPRB is not part of the Corridor Management Committee nor will it be party to the Municipal Consent process, it plays a critical role in protecting parkland from the impacts of transportation projects. Considering that the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) for the current design options is expected to be issued after the Municipal Consent process, the MPRB feels it is critical to express its position prior to actions by the Metropolitan Council and issuance of a Municipal Consent package. Below are key points of the attached resolution.

- 1) The MPRB restates its opposition to co-location of freight and LRT.
- 2) The MPRB states support for relocating freight out of the Kenilworth corridor.
- 3) The MPRB indicates its support for the deep tunnel option if freight relocation is not feasible.
- 4) The MPRB indicates its opposition to the shallow tunnel option.
- 5) The MPRB states its belief that the shallow tunnel option will permanently damage the recreational, cultural, and aesthetic experience of MPRB parklands and assets at a particularly fragile and critical location (Kenilworth Channel) that would be overwhelmed by the proposed co-location of LRT and freight rail infrastructure.
- 6) The MPRB will use its options under 4(f) provisions of the Federal Transportation Act to pursue its objections to the shallow tunnel option.

The MPRB anticipates reviewing and commenting on the SDEIS. Thank you for serious consideration of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board's position on this matter.

Sincerely,

John Erwin, President
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board of Commissioners

Offered by: *Scott Vreeland*

Seconded by: *Anita Tabb*

Resolution 2013-282

Resolution Stating the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board's Position on Project Design Alternatives Recently Developed in the Preliminary Engineering Phase of Southwest Light Rail Transitway Planning

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) was created by the Minnesota Legislature in April 1883 and has the authority to manage and operate park lands;

Whereas, A prominent asset of the region owned, operated and maintained by the MPRB is the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park, which experienced over 5.8 million park visits in 2012;

Whereas, The Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park includes Cedar Lake, Lake of the Isles, and the Kenilworth Channel, which are adjacent to and/or intersect with the Kenilworth Corridor proposed as the alignment for the Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SWLRT);

Whereas, The Minneapolis Chain of Lakes is designated under federal law a National Scenic Byway and is a portion of the Minneapolis Grand Rounds deemed eligible by the U.S. Department of the Interior under the Historic Preservation Act for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places;

Whereas, The MPRB has collaborated for over two decades with Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, City of Minneapolis and the general public in the design, construction, and maintenance of the Kenilworth Regional Trail, which coexists in a naturalized and peaceful setting with freight rail in the Kenilworth Corridor;

Whereas, The Kenilworth Regional Trail generated over 550,000 user visits in 2012 made up of commuter and recreational bikers, skaters, runners, and walkers;

Whereas, The MPRB has also collaborated for over two decades with Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, City of Minneapolis and the general public in the design, construction, and maintenance of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, which connects to the Kenilworth Regional Trail;

Whereas, The Cedar Lake Regional Trail generated over 850,000 user visits in 2012;

Whereas, These two trail corridors provide a park experience and trail connectivity of immense value to the region;

Whereas, Through 2012, the MPRB convened a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) to study issues associated with adding light rail to the Kenilworth Corridor and develop responses to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the project;

Whereas, Recommendations of the CAC were approved by the Board of Commissioners on December 5, 2012 and submitted to the Hennepin County;

Whereas, Comments submitted by the MPRB include opposition to co-locating freight rail and light rail within the Kenilworth Corridor and as such, support for relocating freight rail out of the corridor as part of the SWLRT project;

Whereas, In the past several months, the Metropolitan Council has proposed new design alternatives for SWLRT that would keep freight rail in the corridor and place light rail in either a shallow or deep tunnel under the trail system;

Whereas, The shallow tunnel option proposes that light rail would return to grade in order to cross the Kenilworth Channel, a bucolic waterway connecting Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles that is immensely popular for recreational canoeing, kayaking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing;

Whereas, The at-grade crossing of the Kenilworth Channel creates a co-location scenario of the SWLRT with freight rail within the Kenilworth Corridor;

Whereas, The shallow tunnel option would be constructed by open trenching, essentially removing all existing vegetation within the current trail corridor;

Whereas, MPRB, SWLRT project office and City of Minneapolis staff have recently had significant conversations about the shallow tunnel option and specifically about the crossing of the Kenilworth Channel and vegetation removal;

Whereas, The shallow tunnel option would construct a significant amount of infrastructure directly adjacent to and over the Kenilworth Channel including concrete portals, safety fencing or walls and widened bridge decks as necessary to bring the light rail back to grade and over the Channel;

Whereas, After deliberating on the SWLRT options, the MPRB believes the shallow tunnel option as currently proposed will permanently damage the recreational, cultural, and aesthetic experience of MPRB parklands and assets at a particularly fragile and critical location that would be overwhelmed by the proposed co-location of light rail and freight rail infrastructure;

Whereas, The Board believes that short of dropping the light rail into a tunnel under the Kenilworth Channel, the mitigation measures that have been discussed by staff to bring the light rail to grade and over the channel will, themselves, have damaging impacts to MPRB parklands, assets and the surrounding landscape;

Whereas, Section 4(f)(1) of the Federal Transportation Act requires a finding of no feasible or prudent alternatives to the use of parks and historic sites before the Secretary of Transportation (Secretary) can approve the use of such property for transportation purposes and the attendant expenditure of federal transportation funds;

Whereas, Section 4(f)(2) of the Federal Transportation Act imposes a duty on the Secretary to utilize all possible planning at the earliest stages to minimize harms to parks and historic sites before the Secretary can approve a route;

Whereas, The Metropolitan Council is in the process of determining final locations;

Whereas, The current Kenilworth Corridor SWLRT alternatives are a recent occurrence and the impacts of which have not been fully evaluated in an Environmental Impact Statement;

Whereas, 23 CFR 771.35 of the Code of Federal Regulations require that any use of the lands from Section 4(f) property shall be evaluated early in the development of action when alternatives to the proposed action are under study;

Whereas, In 1997, the Minnesota Legislature enacted Minnesota Statutes §383B.81, the Hennepin County Environmental Response Fund, to help in part alleviate the problem created by the construction of Hiawatha Avenue/Highway 55 which severed existing east-west rail traffic for Twin City Western Railroad and necessitated the use of existing Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority tracks in the Kenilworth Corridor;

Whereas, Minn. Stat. §383B.81, subdivision 6, provided for the cleanup of the Golden Site property in St. Louis Park, then an EPA Superfund site;

Whereas, At the time of legislative funding, Hennepin County and local affected units of government understood that the cleanup of the Golden Site would be used to facilitate an alternative route for the Twin City Western Railroad northerly through St. Louis Park to accommodate future light rail through the Kenilworth Corridor; and

Whereas, Hennepin County kept its commitment to St. Louis Park to clean up the Golden Site and for nearly two decades, it has been contemplated that freight traffic would be relocated out of the Kenilworth Corridor in conjunction with SWLRT construction;

RESOLVED, That the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board of Commissioners approve this resolution stating its position on project design alternatives recently developed in the preliminary engineering phase of Southwest Light Rail Transitway planning;

RESOLVED, That the Board states its position against co-location of LRT and Freight and for a preferred alternative, along with mitigation measures stated in MPRB's DEIS comments, as the relocation of freight traffic out of the Kenilworth Corridor to a corridor in St. Louis Park as originally contemplated when the Legislature and Hennepin County created the Hennepin County Environmental Response Fund;

RESOLVED, The Board would also support the current option described as the "deep tunnel" option that would keep SWLRT deep underground from the West Lake Station to roughly the Penn Station;

RESOLVED, That the Board opposes the option described as the "shallow tunnel" option.

RESOLVED, That the Board direct its attorneys and staff to use all options under the 4(f) provisions in the Federal Transportation Act to raise its objections and oppose SWLRT options except as described in this Resolution and exercise all rights the MPRB has under Federal laws to prevent a project of that nature from proceeding;

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Board transmit a copy of this resolution to the Metropolitan Council, Governor Mark Dayton, Minneapolis Legislators, Hennepin County Commissioners, the Minneapolis Mayor and City Council and other officials with interests in the SWLRT; and

RESOLVED, That the President of the Board and Secretary to the Board are authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

Vote:

Commissioner	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Bourn			X	
Erwin	X			
Fine		X		
Kummer	X			
Olson				X
Tabb	X			
Vreeland	X			
Wielinski	X			
Young	X			

Adopted by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
In formal meeting assembled on August 21, 2013

Approved:



R.T. Rybak, Mayor


John Erwin, President

Julia M. Wiseman, Secretary



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Corridors of Opportunity Update **Provided by: Lisa Middag** **September 2013**

Corridors of Opportunity 2.0

During the summer hiatus an informal workgroup of Policy Board members (including Southwest Steering Committee Member Commissioner McLaughlin) met to discuss the next generation of Corridors of Opportunity. So far, we're hearing:

- CoO 2.0 may get a new name to reflect the revised focus and structure.
- The Policy Board will continue meeting throughout 2014, but at a reduced frequency and with potentially some different membership.
- The staff work of CoO 2.0 will be conducted not by a Senior Staff committee but by four workgroups focused on:
 - Metropolitan Opportunity
 - Corridor Implementation & Development
 - Community Engagement & Regional Equity
 - Transportation Funding
- These staff work groups likely will be established and co-chairs selected voluntarily from the participating organizations before the end of 2013.
- The workgroups will self-identify/determine their scopes of work, although draft goals/tactics were presented to the Policy Board at the July meeting (more information is available on the Corridors of Opportunity website at http://www.corridorsofopportunity.org/sites/default/files/CoOBoard-Presentation-CoONextPhase_072413.pdf).

East Side Project update

September 12 Senior Staff featured updated on the Gateway Corridor project (now called Fostering an Eastside Transit Conversation), as well as Community Engagement Grantee Engage East Side. Among the more powerful takeaways was that because transit service is so slim (an hour to go from east St. Paul to Wooddale, a drive that only takes a few minutes by car), you can't engage the public about a single transit mode (e.g., the Gateway project) in isolation of its connection to the existing network.



Date: September 10, 2013

To: Southwest Community Works Steering Committee

From: Chris Weyer, Southwest LRT Project Director

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

Project Development

- Work on resolving Project Development technical issues continued in September.
- SPO held Issue Resolution Team (IRT) meetings with project stakeholders.

Environmental Program

- SPO developing Supplemental DEIS in coordination with FTA and cooperating agencies.
- Noise and vibration consultant completed monitoring of existing conditions and beginning analysis.
- Wetlands consultant continued wetlands delineation fieldwork. This will be followed by field validation with permitting agencies.
- 4(f) evaluation consultant continued review of potential 4(f) properties in the corridor and began evaluation of Section 106 properties.
- Phase II Archaeological Survey consultant completed a work plan and began fieldwork on seven sites.
- Initiated work on Supplemental Architecture/History Survey consultant.
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment consultant continued work on the assessment.

Advisory Committees

- SWLRT Corridor Management Committee held meetings August 7, 14 and 28 to discuss project scope and costs, freight rail location, locally requested betterments, and design options. Meeting materials are available at <http://metro council.org/Transportation/Projects/Current-Projects/Southwest-LRT/SWLRT-Committees/Corridor-Management-Committee.aspx>

Other Outreach and Communication Activities

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

- Supported Metro Transit's booth at the Minnesota State Fair.
- Held a business open house meeting for Eden Prairie businesses located near potential alignment adjustments.
- Shared project information at the opening of the new Van White Bridge in Minneapolis.
- 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.
- Updated the swlrt.org website to include Corridor Management Committee agendas, minutes and presentations as well as information on upcoming meetings.