



# SOUTHWEST LRT community works

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## Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Thursday, May 16, 2013

1:30-3:00 pm

Council Chambers, St. Louis Park City Hall

### Agenda

- I. **Welcome & Introductions**
  
- II. **Approve April 2013 Meeting Minutes**  
Chair Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County
  
- III. **TSAAP Open House/Workshop Update**
  
- IV. **Southwest Parking Audit Tool Presentation**  
David Fields, Nelson Nygaard
  
- V. **Achieving System-Level, Transit Oriented Jobs-Housing Balance Presentation**  
Dr. Yingling Fan, University of Minnesota
  
- VI. **Southwest LRT Community Works Principles & Investment Strategy**
  
- VII. **Adjournment**

#### Attachments:

*Meeting Minutes*

*Legislative Update*

*Corridors of Opportunity Update*

*Southwest LRT Project Update*

The Steering Committee will meet next on **Thursday, June 20**, from 1:30-3:00 at the St. Louis Park City Hall.

EDEN PRAIRIE ■ MINNETONKA ■ EDINA ■ HOPKINS ■ ST. LOUIS PARK ■ MINNEAPOLIS

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL





**Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee**

Meeting Minutes  
Thursday April 18, 2013  
1:30 - 3:00 pm  
St. Louis Park City Hall

**Meeting Attendees**

Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Chair Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County Member  
Jan Callison, Hennepin County Member  
Peter McLaughlin, Regional Railroad Authority Member  
Anne Mavity, City of St. Louis Park Member  
Jason Gadd, City of Hopkins Member  
Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

**Other Attendees**

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Kerri Pearce Ruch (Hennepin County), Ryan Kelley (St. Louis Park), Kevin Locke (St. Louis Park), Jason Zimmerman (St. Louis Park), Daren Nyquist (SW Project Office), Elise Durbin (Minnetonka), Kathryn Hansen (SW Project Office), Barry Schade (Bryn Mawr), Diane Dube (Wm Mitchell), Mark Fuhrmann (Metro Transit), Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting), Mark Koegler (Hoisington Koegler), Cathy Bennett (ULI-MN), Jerome Johnson, Larry Blackstad (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Gary Johnson (St. Paul), Julie Wischnack (Minnetonka), Kersten Elverum (Hopkins), Will Roach (SW BAC)

**I. Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Gail Dorfman convened the meeting and asked members and attendees to introduce themselves. She asked Commissioner McLaughlin to provide an update on the legislative session. Commissioner McLaughlin shared that information about the status of a proposed half cent sales tax increase for transit projects including the Governor's position and discussions for a governance structure to manage additional revenue that would be generated for transit from an additional sales tax. He stated that the sales tax proposal is still in play, and several entities are making their support known to legislators. Chair Dorfman asked about possible bonding, and Commissioner McLaughlin offered that the House is considering setting aside \$50 million for transit corridors. He also provided information about a possible action to increase the gas tax including imposing the tax at the wholesale level. Kerri Pearce Ruch also provided a handout from the Minnesota Transportation Alliance.

**II. March 21, 2013 meeting minutes**

Chair Dorfman asked for a motion on the draft minutes from the March 21 meeting. The minutes were moved and seconded, then approved on a voice vote.

**III. Central Corridor Funders Collaborative**

Chair Dorfman welcomed Jonathon Sage-Martinson and invited him to offer information about the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative (CCFC) to the Committee. He provided an overview of the CCFC, including that it is a collaboration of 13 local and national foundations that came together in 2008 to support the neighborhoods around the Green Line (Central Corridor LRT line). Their goal is to create places of opportunity along the line and support investments beyond the rails. They started with building a clear community vision. The community and the CCFC agreed upon four basic goal areas: strong local economy, affordable housing, coordination and collaboration, and transit-oriented places. The CCFC does not focus on planning, but rather building shared solutions that lead to implementation. They created a catalyst fund that generated \$12 million in funding. Mr. Sage-Martinson shared lessons learned from the experience to date of the CCFC. Commissioner McLaughlin elaborated on other benefits that have accrued from the work of the CCFC, including their support for creating a local match for the three stations that were added to the line. In addition, modest planning grants have enabled the Prospect Park neighborhood to explore the potential for development around their station. Mr. Sage-Martinson also talked about funding provided to help with mitigation of business impacts during construction of the Central Corridor LRT line.

The Committee asked questions and discussed with Mr. Sage-Martinson how the SW LRT Community Works Steering Committee could support the SW LRT line as the CCFC has done for the Central Corridor LRT line.

Chair Dorfman recalled the action of the Steering Committee from the March meeting when member Ann Mavity had introduced a resolution directing staff to develop an outline of how partner cities and the county can work together on tools that would incentivize development. Ms. Mavity explained her objectives around taking the work of the Steering Committee beyond plans and ideas and into creating tools that support action. Jan Callison spoke about the need to create a comprehensive set of standards that would make it easier for the partners to work with interested developers. Chair Dorfman reported that staff are working on this and will report back to the Steering Committee at the May meeting. Ms. Mavity and Jason Gadd both indicated that it's important to move forward on this since developers are already approaching cities with proposals. Mr. Sage-Martinson agreed with the need to be ready, relating that there are \$1.2 billion in development proposals lined up for areas along the Central Corridor LRT line a year before the line is expected to begin operations.

#### **IV. Southwest Business Investment Partnership**

Chair Dorfman introduced Louis Smith who is working on the Southwest Business Investment Partnership. Mr. Smith explained that the Partnership focuses on larger employers along the corridor and exploring how they can work together to catalyze business investments near planned SW LRT stations. He reported that the Partnership has been formed and has held two meetings to date. Jim Campbell, former chairman and CEO Wells Fargo Bank, chairs the Partnership, and members include Park-Nicollet Health Services, Target, Xcel Energy, Comcast, Japs-Olson, SuperValu, and Cargill. They are taking a long-term perspective, looking at how they might align investments among themselves as well as encouraging other businesses. They have a different focus than both the business chambers and the SW Business Advisory Committee.

Member Dick Miller shared that \$5 million had been raised by a similar business coalition to support civic investment along the Midtown Greenway; while very little of these funds were spent, they provided assurance to potential developers that projects could move forward under a less onerous timeframe.

Chair Dorfman thanked Mr. Smith and asked staff to set up a joint meeting with the Partnership in the near future.

#### **V. Southwest Business Advisory Committee (BAC)**

Chair Dorfman introduced Will Roach, representing the Minneapolis Chamber on the Southwest BAC and chair of the BAC. She stated that the BAC was created to provide advice to both the SW Project Office as well as the SW LRT Community Works initiative. Mr. Roach offered that the BAC kicked off their work this past summer, and is composed of small, medium and larger businesses as well as chamber representatives. They started with learning about the proposed LRT line, and have moved into discussions about how to measure success. The group likes to move fast and is focused on offering relevant input. Mr. Roach offered that they want to inform and arm their members with information that will support action, determine what they can do to strengthen ridership on the line, and develop a 'legacy viewpoint' which would look at longer term impacts.

#### **VI. Transitional Station Area Action Plan (TSAAP) Update**

Chair Dorfman asked Katie Walker, SW LRT Community Works manager, to provide an update. Ms. Walker reported that the first of four public open houses would take place that night at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center. She distributed copies of the news release that lists locations, dates and times for the four open houses. The public will see concept maps and be asked about what is important for their communities in the context of the LRT line and how the areas around the proposed stations will evolve. There will be a report on what is heard at the open houses at the May Steering Committee meeting. Chair Dorfman asked about how the freight train options would be shown, and Ms. Walker indicated that both the co-location and relocation options would be represented. Chair Dorfman asked Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit New Starts Program Director, when the SW Project Office project would be holding a public open house on the freight rail location issue. Mr. Fuhrmann indicated that the date had not been set yet but that it would likely be in the late spring to early summer time frame.

#### **VII. Adjournment**

Chair Dorfman adjourned the meeting. The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 16, at 1:30 pm at the St. Louis Park City Hall.



**Agenda Item 3: Transitional Station Area Action Plan (TSAAP)**

**Reviewed By:**

- Chair
- TIC Principals
- TIC
- Hennepin County staff
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Steering Committee Action Requested:**

Information

**Background/Justification:**

Staff will provide an update on TSAAP process including the recently completed open house/workshops held in April and May.

**Previous Action on Request:**

**Recommendation:** Information

**Financial Implications?** No

**Are These Funds Budgeted?**

**Attachments:**

- Summary Memorandum from HKGI
- Open House/Workshop Comment Summary
- Informal LRT Usage Survey Results

**Comments:**



# MEMORANDUM

Hoisington Koegler Group Inc.



**To:** Katie Walker  
**From:** Mark Koegler  
**Subject:** TSAAP Open Houses – Preliminary Summary  
**Date:** May 13, 2013

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We have just completed the first round of open houses as part of the preparation of the Transitional Station Area Action Plans. Open houses were held as follows:

**St. Louis Park**

Date: April 18, 2013 (heavy snowfall)  
Location: St. Louis Park Rec Center  
Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
Attendance: 40 signed in (estimated total – 45)

**Hopkins – Minnetonka**

Date: April 23, 2013  
Location: Hopkins Center for the Arts  
Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
Attendance: 137 signed in (estimated total – 150+)

**Minneapolis**

Date: May 2, 2013  
Location: Bryn Mawr School  
Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Attendance: 100 signed in (estimated total – 125)

**Eden Prairie**

Date: May 13, 2013  
Location: Eden Prairie City Hall  
Time: 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
Attendance:

The attached sheets include preliminary summaries of information collected at the TSAAP open houses. We will be assembling a full technical memorandum which will provide more detail for each station site as well as general opinions and ideas that were offered.

## Where will you ride SW LRT?

Location/Attraction	Minneapolis Residents	St. Louis Park Residents	Hopkins-Minnetonka Residents	Eden Prairie Residents
Airport (MSP)	X	X	X	
Blake School				
Bryn Mawr Meadows	X			
City Lakes	X		X	
Downtown Hopkins	X		X	
Downtown Minneapolis	X	X	X	
Downtown St. Paul	X	X	X	
Eden Prairie Center	X	X	X	
HCMC	X			
Home of family or friend	X	X		
Interchange			X	
Knollwood Mall	X			
Loring Park	X			
Mall of America	X	X	X	
Methodist Hospital		X		
Minneapolis Farmers Market	X			
Minneapolis – North Loop			X	
Minnetonka	X			
Park Nicollet Clinic		X		
St. Louis Park	X			
State Capitol	X	X	X	
State Fairgrounds			X	
Target Field	X	X		
Union Depot			X	
University of Minnesota	X	X	X	
Uptown		X	X	
VA Hospital			X	
Vikings Stadium		X	X	





**Agenda Item 4: Southwest Parking Audit Tool Presentation**

**Reviewed By:**

- Chair
- TIC Principals
- TIC
- Hennepin County staff
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Steering Committee Action Requested:**

Information

**Background/Justification:**

Hennepin County was awarded a technical assistance grant from the Environmental Protection Agency under their Sustainable Communities Building Blocks program. The grant funds were used to contract with the Nelson Nygaard consulting firm to develop a parking audit tool for use by Southwest LRT Community Works partners in evaluating the interaction between development and parking. David Fields from Nelson Nygaard will present the parking audit tool and the results of his analysis.

**Previous Action on Request:**

**Recommendation:** Information

**Financial Implications?** None.

**Are These Funds Budgeted?** Yes.

**Attachments:**

- Memorandum from Nelson Nygaard

**Comments:**



# EPA Technical Assistance for Sustainable Communities

## Building Blocks

### Technical Assistance Tool: Sustainable Design + Development

Hennepin County, Minnesota May 21-22, 2012

To: Carol L. Anderson and Katie Walker, Hennepin County

From: David Fields and Tom Brown, Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, Inc.

Date: May 30, 2012

Re: Suggested Next Steps as Outcome of Technical Assistance

#### **1. Key Issues Addressed during Technical Assistance Workshop**

The key issue addressed during this workshop was identifying the inherent tradeoffs involved in providing park-and-ride capacity versus developing active land uses in the areas surrounding the stations proposed for Metro Transit's Southwest Transitway. The workshop focused in particular on select stations outside the Minneapolis core. The tradeoffs were assessed through use of a model designed to project the impacts of different combinations of park-and-ride and land use development on a core set of transit and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) performance metrics:

- Ridership
- Costs/ revenues related to the provision of park-and-ride facilities (capital, operations, maintenance, and real estate value)
- Costs/ revenues related to land use development on land controlled by Metro Transit
- Capacity for parking and land use development at each station (with non-quantified implications for local economic development)

#### **2. Targeted Policies/Ideas/Strategies Discussed during the Workshop**

Particularly in suburban locations, transit agencies have historically relied upon park-and-ride provision as their primary rider attraction/ retention strategy, as every utilized park-and-ride space equals at least one transit rider. This has led to significant challenges for developing active land uses in the areas immediately surrounding commuter-oriented stations, despite planners' efforts over the last few decades to promote the numerous benefits of TOD, including:

- Revenue - Rather than paying to provide free or subsidized parking to lure riders, the development of active land uses within station areas can bring new sources of transit agency revenue via land purchase or lease payments;
- Ridership - Placing active land uses at the station greatly expands opportunities to attract riders who walk to the station from nearby homes, and from the station to nearby jobs.
- Balanced loads - By increasing the share of local land uses oriented toward transit, and creating homes, shops, services, and places of employment that are particularly attractive to transit

# EPA Technical Assistance for Sustainable Communities

## Building Blocks

users, TOD can broaden local ridership patterns beyond the narrow, peak-hour/ peak-direction patterns typical of suburban stations. This presents an opportunity to create more balanced loads, including increased evening and weekend ridership, which can greatly improve the cost-effectiveness of transit service.

Despite these many, significant upsides, shifting away from the entrenched strategy of maximizing park-and-ride capacity has required a sort of "leap of faith" that many transit agencies have been unwilling to make. Further, traditional park-and-ride may be the right strategy at some stations after all. The Audit tool at the center of the Hennepin workshop was designed to quantify key costs and benefit as a means to identify the optimal park-and-ride/ TOD balance at each station.

### 3. Findings Overview

The consultant team, working with Hennepin County Department of Housing, Community Works and Transit staff developed a rough estimate of likely residential and office/ commercial development potential at each station, based on station area plans and other development scenarios completed during alignment planning. These development quantities, parking quantities, and parking management policies were entered into the model, and adjusted based on different options for development and parking supply. Five model runs were completed, each with two to four scenarios:

- Golden Triangle Station Model Run #1: Four scenarios based on proposed station area plans
- Golden Triangle Station Model Run #2: Two scenarios based on intense buildout
- Shady Oak Station: Four scenarios based on proposed station area plans
- Beltline Station: Two scenarios based on conceptual development for the County-owned parcel
- Beltline and Westlake Station (modeled together): Four scenarios based on proposed station area plans

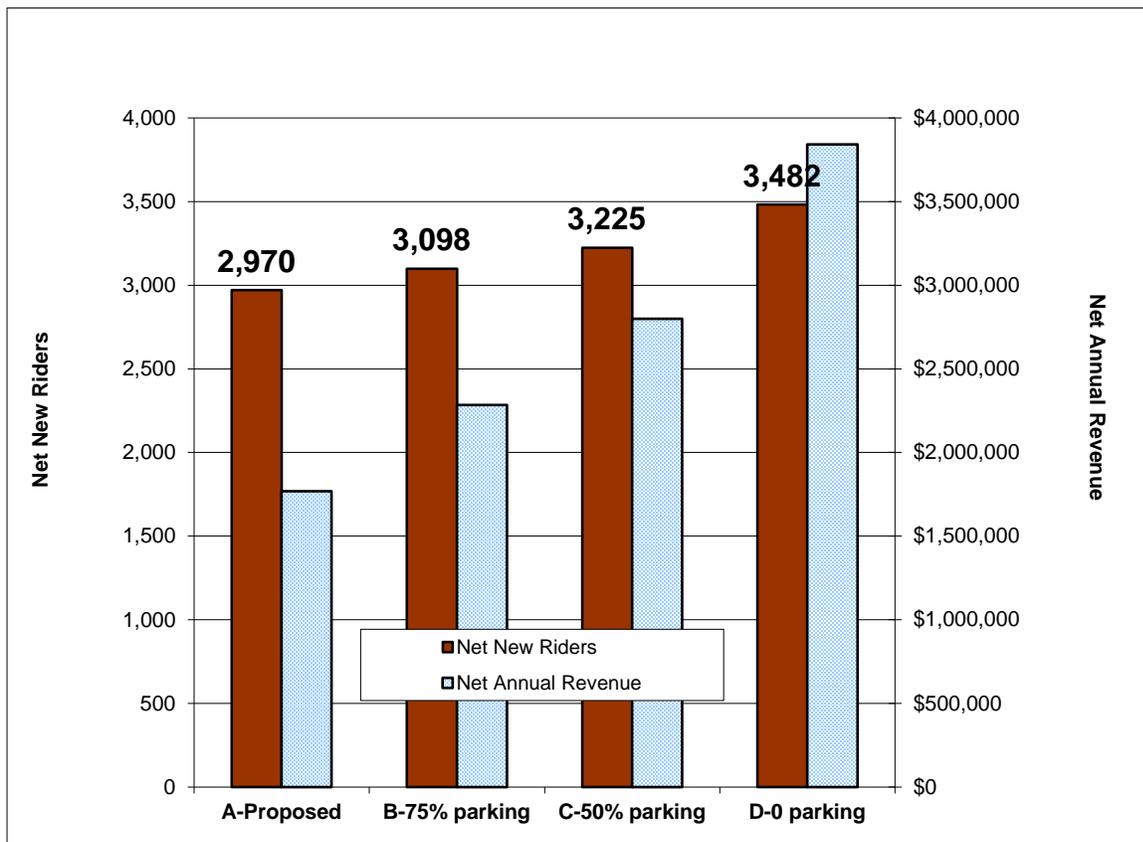
Following is a summary of model inputs and resulting ridership- and revenue-impact projections. While the findings are specific to each of the station sites, the overall approach is what is critical for the communities to understand: that transit is one component of community building, so deciding the priorities for your community are necessary before you can maximize the value of a transit investment. For some communities, it may be a local financial benefit; in others it may be regional access; additional benefits and tradeoffs are also possible and the same model with additional facets (for example, greenhouse gas emissions or social equity) could be developed for each community to analyze their priorities.

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## Building Blocks

### Golden Triangle: Model Run #1

	Scenario			
	A-Proposed	B-75% parking	C-50% parking	D-0 parking
<b>Development and Access Assumptions</b>				
Residential (units)	948	948	948	948
Commercial (Retail/Office/Institutional/Civic)(sf)	1,556,700	1,644,900	1,733,100	1,911,075
Planned Spaces (Surface)	100	75	50	0

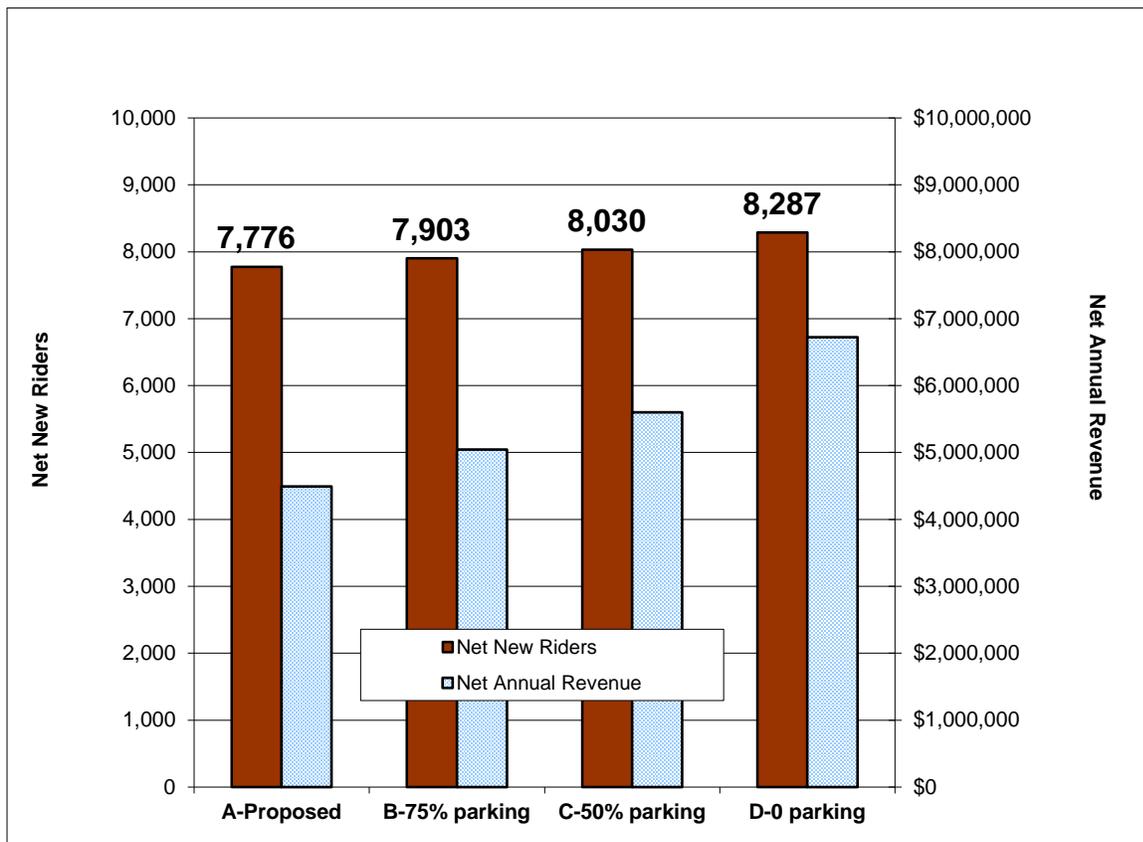


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## Building Blocks

### Golden Triangle: Model Run #2

	Scenario			
	A-Proposed	B-75% parking	C-50% parking	D-0 parking
<b>Development and Access Assumptions</b>				
Residential (units)	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Commercial (Retail/Office/Institutional/Civic)(sf)	4,000,000	4,088,200	4,176,400	4,354,375
Planned Spaces (Structured)	100	75	50	0

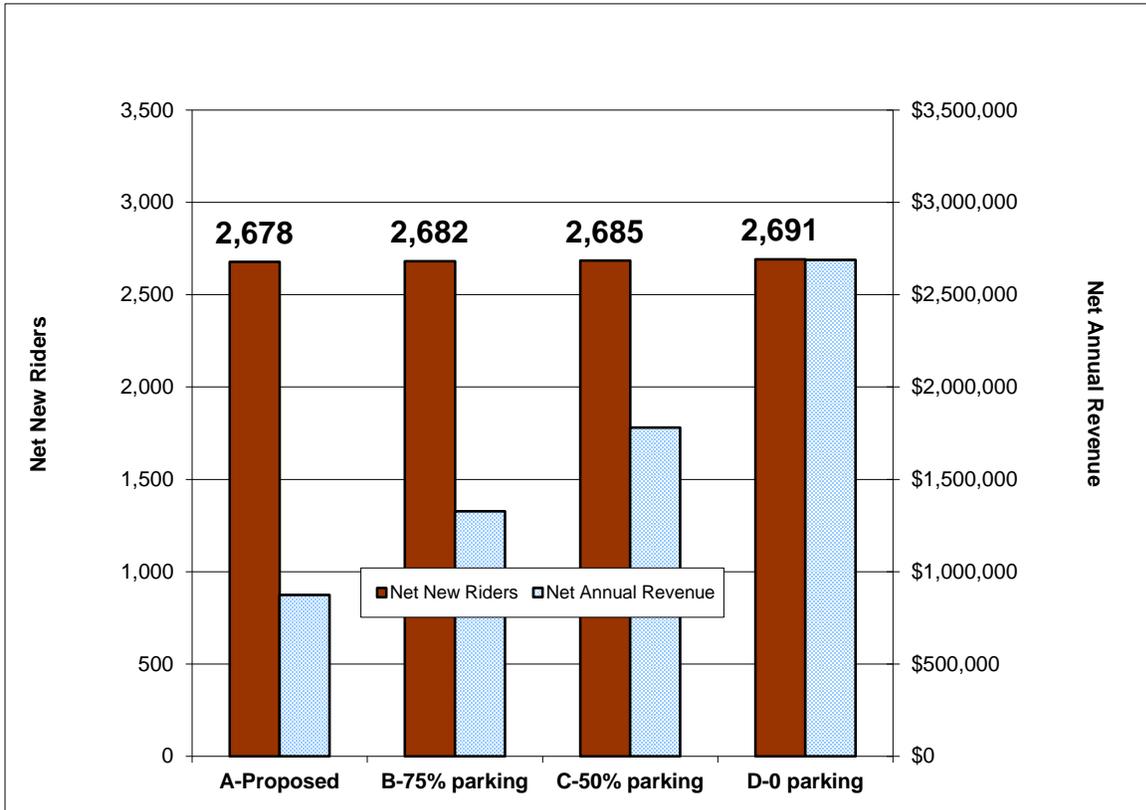


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## Building Blocks

### Shady Oak

	Scenario			
	A-Proposed	B-75% parking	C-50% parking	D-0 parking
<b>Development and Access Assumptions</b>				
Residential (units)	1,277	1,277	1,277	1,277
Commercial (Retail/Office/Institutional/Civic)(sf)	1,342,461	1,417,461	1,492,461	1,642,461
Planned Spaces (Structured)	350	263	175	0

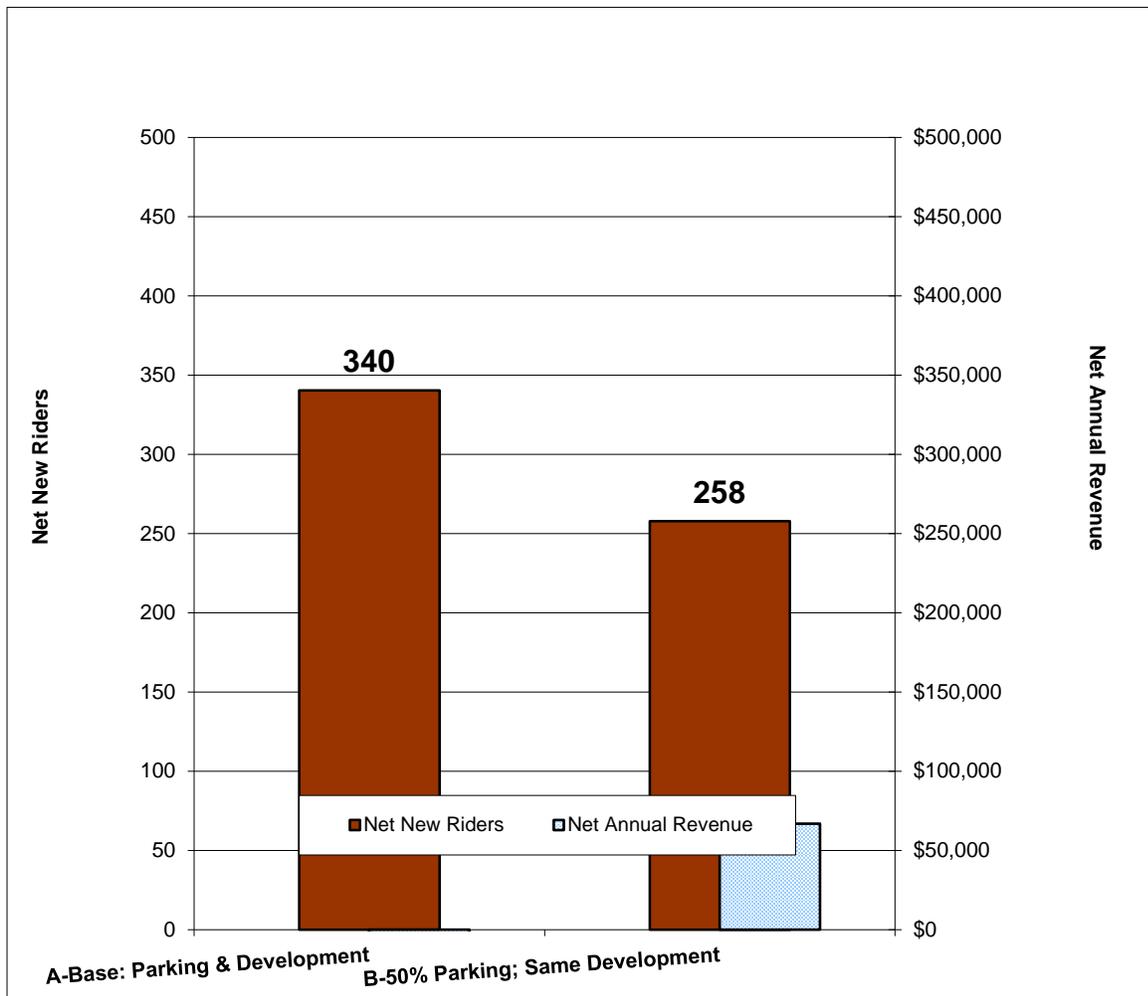


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## Building Blocks

Beltline (County Parcel Only)

1. Scenario Inputs		
	Scenario	
	A-Base: Parking & Development	B-50% Parking; Same Development
<b>Development and Access Assumptions</b>		
Residential (units)	0	0
Commercial (Retail/Office/Institutional/Civic)(sf)	100,000	100,000
Planned Spaces (Structured)	150	75

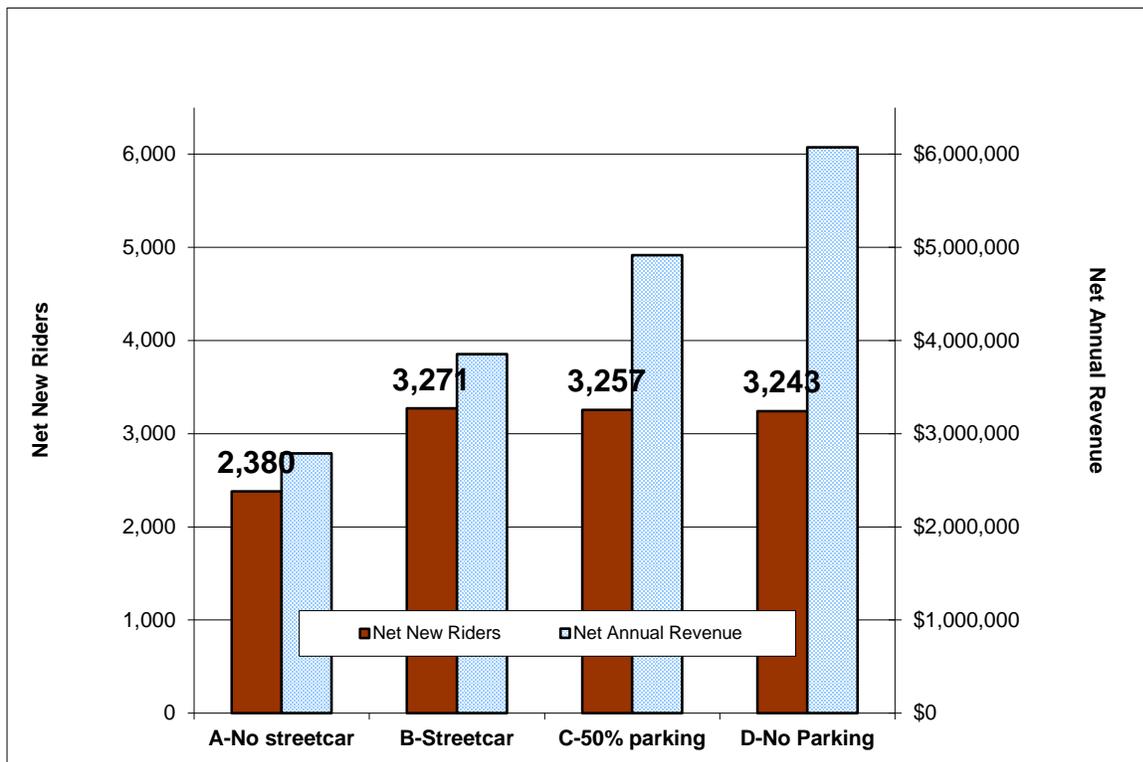


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## Building Blocks

West Lake and Beltline (modeled together)

1. Scenario Inputs				
	Scenario			
	A-No streetcar	B-Streetcar	C-50% parking	D-No Parking
<b>Development and Access Assumptions</b>				
Residential (units)	2,193	2,193	2,255	2,318
Commercial (Retail/Office/Institutional/Civic)(sf)	1,039,600	1,039,600	1,086,475	1,133,350
Industrial (sf)	253,000	253,000	253,000	253,000
Planned Spaces (Surface)	255	255	128	0



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### 4. Strategies and Actions

Following is a summary of potential strategies and actions to explore as a means of continuing to investigate the issues, opportunities, and challenges identified during the workshop. These are presented merely as options that the community can consider; these are not requirements and are should be considered as starting points for the community to determine the viability of each idea.

Strategy 1- Continue to use the Tool to further explore the park-and-ride/ TOD tradeoffs addressed during the workshop as planning for the rail service and market potential for station-area development along the line evolve.

- Action - The Audit Tool will be provided to Hennepin County staff. Its use during the workshop was primarily intended to present the concept and implication of different parking and land use options. Its efficacy as a means of projecting detailed implications of various levels of station-area parking can be improved through repeated use and refinement over time as follows:
  - Customizing various inputs based on local conditions;
  - Adjusting assumptions based on continuing input from local planners, stakeholders, developers, etc;
  - Adjusting development potential based on evolving market conditions;
  - Adjusting assumptions and inputs based on changes to park-and-ride capacity assumptions at adjacent stations Recognize that the access provided by the Transitway is a regional benefit, so the quantity and types of access provided should be modeled on the system level, not only individual stations. Recalibrating the Tool for system-wide scenarios will help communicate trade-offs between the many stakeholders at each specific station; and
  - Adjusting parking management strategies, including different parking fee rates, surface versus structured parking, and shared use of parking supply.

Strategy 2 - Work with local communities to continue to refine assumptions and develop strategies for supporting desired forms of station-area programming/ development.

- Action - Continue the dialogue regarding each community's vision for their station area, including what each community's and the County's overall goals are for the project, as well as the preferred quantities of park-and-ride and types and intensities of station area land uses.
- Action - Explore/ develop parking management best practices presented at the workshop that can help support each community's station-area vision. For example, if a community would prefer to minimize park-and-ride in favor of more station-area TOD, but is at risk of spillover, and particularly so during regular sporting events, a pilot Residential Parking Benefit District might be work exploring. Such a pilot would provide a direct incentive for residential support, as heavy event demand can be converted from a negative to a positive by charging transit riders for day permits to park on under-utilized residential blocks. Further, such a pilot could introduce

# EPA Technical Assistance for Sustainable Communities

## Building Blocks

a new strategy for expanding park-and-ride access at more stations, in a way that does not take away prime station-area space from potential TOD.

- Action - Use Center for Transit Oriented Development's National TOD Database to refine assumptions. This database provides easy access to data that can be used to adjust assumptions regarding each station area's land use, demographic, and transportation characteristics, including past and present commute mode share (inbound and outbound), density, and rates of household car ownership.
- Action - Engage resources such as the Minnesota chapters of the Urban Land Institute and the American Planning Association to continue to explore the potential for TOD at each station.

Strategy 3 - Explore options for improving neighborhood connections to each station. Even without any station-area land use development, there are ridership benefits to ensuring that nearby residents can comfortably, safely, and relatively-directly access the station on foot, on bike, or on a bus.

- Action - Work with each community to develop an Access Hierarchy for their local station, and discuss the trade-off involved in prioritizing access by some modes over that by others. For example, siting bus connections directly adjacent to the station will improve neighborhood bus connections, but at the cost of greater walking distance for park-and-ride customers.
- Action - Work with each community to identify means for improving non-driving access and mobility at and surrounding their station. Options include providing bike accommodations at the station, adopting zoning code changes that promote bike accommodations at new development, spending parking revenue on streetscape and sidewalk expansions/enhancements, and promoting reverse-commute jobs located at the station (including providing transit benefits to station-area employees).
- Action - Identify which stations have particularly strong potential for attracting bike commuters, and accommodate this form of park-and-ride or bike-on-transit demand accordingly.

### 5. Timeframe for Accomplishing Actions

The Southwest Transitway is still in the planning and design stages. Therefore most of the above noted strategies will be medium- to long-term endeavors. Each, however, should be started as soon as possible to take advantage of being at the early stages of the line's planning, as well as the focus and attention brought to these issues through the workshop.

Some actions will require much more time and effort to accomplish than others. For these, it will be imperative to begin planning as soon as possible. Some examples include developing a pilot Residential Parking Benefit District, as part of Strategy 1, and most of the actions identified for Strategy 3. The former will require significant political buy-in and adjustments to a long-established program. An early start for the actions under Strategy 3 is recommended as they are likely to directly affect specific aspects of station-area planning and design, such as where connecting bus bays are located and the level and forms of bicycle accommodations to be provided on-site, that are likely to be addressed early on in the planning process.

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### **6. Implementation Coordination**

We suggest that the parties involved in the workshop — County/City/Town planners, transit agency representatives, traffic engineers, economic development — as well as similar representatives from other station-area communities, should continue to meet and discuss these issues, whether as a Technical Advisory Committee to Metro Transit, or as an independent exploratory committee for developing optimal station-area visions for each community along the Southwest Transitway. Transportation Management Associations and private transit providers (employers and residential developments) should also be invited, as they can significantly facilitate multimodal travel and maximize the value of the proposed Transitway.



# SOUTHWEST LRT

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## Agenda Item 5: Achieving System-Level, Transit Oriented Jobs-Housing Balance Presentation

**Reviewed By:**

- Chair
- TIC Principals
- TIC
- Hennepin County staff
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Steering Committee Action Requested:**

Information

**Background/Justification:**

Dr. Yingling Fan of the University of Minnesota will present recent research related to achieving system-level transit oriented jobs-housing balance along transitway corridors.

**Previous Action on Request:**

**Recommendation:** Information

**Financial Implications?** None.

**Are These Funds Budgeted?**

**Attachments:**

- Research Overview

**Comments:**



## University of MN research interviews Twin Cities developers and business leaders on TOD

Andrew Guthrie, Project Manager, *Research on How to Achieve System-Level, Transit-Oriented Jobs-Housing Balance*, Humphrey School of Public Affairs and Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota Twin Cities

The success of transitways in creating sustainable regional development hinges on location decisions made by the private sector. Realizing transitways' full potential to improve both sustainability and social equity requires encouraging private development of affordable housing and entry-level, living-wage jobs in station areas.

To address these issues, researchers at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs are studying strategies the Metropolitan Council and local governments could employ to:

- I. Fully realize the potential of transitways in improving regional-level jobs-housing balance;
- II. Promote entry-level job creation and affordable housing development near Twin Cities transitways;
- III. Engage in bridge building between the public and private sectors in the transitway planning and development process;
- IV. Develop incentive, regulatory and public/private partnership programs that will effectively orient new development and re-development projects towards areas near transitways.

The project, *Research on How to Achieve System-Level, Transit-Oriented Jobs-Housing Balance* is funded by Corridors of Opportunity and centers around a series of interviews with developers and business leaders in the Twin Cities region. Interviews with Twin Cities business executives are ongoing. The sample of developers included firms working in the central cities, inner suburbs, and outer/developing suburbs. Both residential and commercial developers are represented, including firms that develop both types of projects.

The graphic below shows the words most commonly mentioned by developers during interviews. More frequent words are shown in larger type and darker colors. The most prominent transportation term in the cloud—"parking"—is quite illustrative. Developers repeatedly cited parking as a major cost driver for multi-family and mixed-use developments, particularly on urban sites. Multiple interview participants also mentioned excessive minimum parking requirements as significant hindrances to transit-oriented development. On a more positive note, "rail" is the next most common transportation-related word after "parking", followed closely by "transit."

Multiple participants identified efforts to make transit-accessible housing affordable *by design* rather than by subsidy as crucial to the promotion of mixed-income neighborhoods in station areas. Several also identified

transit access itself as making all housing inherently more affordable, by dramatically reducing household transportation costs.

The developer interviews point to an important conclusion: **transit-oriented development is possible and in demand in the Twin Cities metro area; tract homes on cul-de-sacs, strip malls and office parks are easier.** Most of the developers interviewed find the land entitlement and permitting processes to be time consuming, increase costs and add significant uncertainty to development projects. Interview participants find these issues to be problematic in general, but especially so for any projects that depart from traditional Euclidean zoning and auto-oriented design, or those that seek to build at sufficiently high densities to turn a profit on high-value transit station area land. Developers articulate a strong wish for local governments to act less as regulators of all developments and more as advocates for desirable development. Possible strategies for encouraging beneficial developments could include:

- **Zoning reforms** allowing projects with high enough densities and low enough parking ratios to be both truly transit-oriented and profitable to be built *by right* in areas meeting a clearly identified standard of high transit access.
- Implementation (at least on a trial basis) of a **true form-based code in transit station areas**, regulating only appearance and externalities, rather than uses, to ease implementation of mixed-use development.
- **Building code reforms** intended to allow for **more flexibility in mixed-use projects**, as well as adaptive reuse of existing properties where a change in use may be desirable, but hindered by differing commercial, residential and industrial codes.

The researchers are wrapping up their interviews with metro employers. A full project report will be available in the coming months. The research team for the *Research on How to Achieve System-Level, Transit-Oriented Jobs-Housing Balance* project includes: Yingling Fan (Principal Investigator), Andrew Guthrie (Project Manager), Chris Berrens (Research Assistant), Brent Oltz (Research Assistant), and Jill Smith. For more information on this research, contact Andrew Guthrie at [guth0064@umn.edu](mailto:guth0064@umn.edu)



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## Updates

- Legislative Update
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### May 2013 Legislative Update

Provided by: Bill Schreiber, Messerli and Kramer

As of May 13, 2013

Legislature must adjourn by May 20. Transportation funding is just one piece of a much larger picture to be played out. No clear crystal balls right now. Only thing clear is that the end is in sight. I would encourage residents interested in transit and highway funding to contact the Governor, their own legislators, and House and Senate leadership to make the argument for the adoption of a balanced and comprehensive transportation funding package. Only one week left in this legislative session. Time for action is NOW!!!

I'll provide a brief summary for each body.

#### **Governor:**

Supports SWLRT, and proposes metro area ½ cent sales tax increase (3/4 cent in Scott and Carver Counties) to pay the normal state 10% share of the capital costs for rail transit as well as funding for at least twelve Bus Rapid Transit corridors throughout the region. Governor did not recommend any state bonding dollars for SW.

#### **House:**

Bonding bill has completed all committee action and is waiting a vote by the full House. 60% vote required for passage, meaning at least 8 Republicans would have to join all the Democrats to attain the needed 81 votes. The bill includes \$50 million for metro area transit projects, of which we would expect \$37 million to be directed to SW for the completion of all engineering and design activities. The House Transportation Finance bill does not include any new money for either highways or transit. It's referred to as a "lights on" bill. The Governor's proposal for a metro sales tax increase has not been voted upon by any House committee.

#### **Senate:**

Senate Transportation Finance Committee adopted a bill which included a gas tax increase for highways and a ½ cent metro area sales tax increase dedicated to transit. The bill passed the Senate Finance Committee and was referred to the Tax Committee for its' final stop prior to floor action. On May 8th, the Senate Tax Committee removed both the gas tax increase and the metro area sales tax increase. The bill, as sent to the floor, was also a "lights on" bill. The Senate has not taken any action on a bonding bill. Various committees have heard individual requests for bonding, but nothing has come together in bill form.



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As of Friday morning, it appeared the Senate was going to follow the path of the House and provide NO additional revenue for highways and transit this year. But, that scenario changed dramatically when the Senate Transportation Finance bill (HF 1444) came up for consideration and passage late Friday afternoon.

The Senate DFL discussed transportation funding at two caucuses on Friday. As reported by some members in attendance, a number of first term DFL Senators explained to their colleagues that additional funding for highway and transit projects in their districts was an important component in their election effort. They simply could not support a transportation “lights on” bill providing zero hope for funding their projects. The freshman Senators, led by Sen. Melisa Franzen, Edina, offered an amendment to provide additional funding for both highways and transit on a phased basis. The amendment was adopted by the Senate.

The Franzen amendment includes a 2 ½ cent gas tax increase on Oct. 1, 2013, and another 2 ½ cent increase on Oct. 1, 2015. Currently, Minnesota’s gas tax is below the national average. These phased in increases would make Minnesota about average compared to the rest of the country.

For metro area transit, the amendment includes a ¼ of 1% sales tax increase applicable to all seven counties on Oct. 1, 2013 and an additional ¼ of 1% increase on July 1, 2015. The total sales tax in the metro area dedicated to transit would be ¾ of 1%, which would be a fairly modest level compared to other regions’ sales taxes dedicated to transit.

#### **Speculation for week of May 13th:**

- The Governor wants the metro sales tax for transit. He does not want a gas tax increase this year.
- Many legislators say they need a balanced funding package for highways and transit. Governor believes legislature should support transit funding this year and highway funding later.
- We now have major differences between the House passed “lights on” bill and the Senate passed comprehensive funding package. A conference committee consisting of 5 members from each body will likely be appointed May 13<sup>th</sup> and is not likely to be completed for a least a week.
- Governor wants a bonding bill, as does House leadership. Some speculation that the House will attempt to pass a bonding bill early the week of May 13<sup>th</sup> and the Senate could adopt the House language rather than sending to conference committee.



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### Corridors of Opportunity May 2013 Update

**Provided by:** Nora Riemenschneider  
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The Metropolitan Council has hired Lea Schuster as a Community Engagement Liaison. Lea will work within the Corridors of Opportunity team to connect the Community Engagement Team, Community Engagement Steering Committee and Community Engagement Grantees with the activities of the Metropolitan Council and other Corridors of Opportunity partners.

Lea has a deep background in grassroots organizing as well as transportation planning, policy and advocacy. From 2009 to 2011 she served as Deputy Director of Transportation for America. Before that, she was the Executive Director for Transit for Livable Communities from 2001-2009.

Lea will be working part-time and starting on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Her position coincides with the timeline of the HUD Sustainable Communities grant, therefore it continues through the end of December, 2013.

Lea was selected for this position through a collaborative evaluation process that included a representative from the Community Engagement Team, a representative from the Community Engagement Steering Committee, and a Metropolitan Council staff member.



**Date:** May 8, 2013

**To:** Southwest Community Works Steering Committee

**From:** Chris Weyer, Southwest LRT Project Director

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

### **Preliminary Engineering**

- Work on resolving PE technical issues continued in April 2013.
- The SPO held Issue Resolution Team (IRT) meetings with project stakeholders. The PEC West and PEC East teams developed design materials for the IRT discussions.
- Two proposals in response to the Council's RFP for a Peer Review Consultant contract were received March 14. Evaluation is currently in process; contract award expected in July.

### **Environmental Program**

- The Council selected CH2MHill as the most qualified proposer for the Final Environmental Impact Statement contract and anticipates executing a contract in early May.
- Two proposals in response to the Council's RFP for a Phase II Archaeological Survey were received on March 5. Negotiations are currently in process with the most qualified proposer; contract award expected in May.
- The Council issued an RFP for an architecture/history structures survey covering four properties and one potential historic district May 1.
- Contractor SEH continued work on the Environmental Site Assessment, identifying and classifying sites for detailed review and developing GIS data during April.

### **Staffing**

- One new staff member started work at SPO during April.

### **Advisory Committees**

- Meetings of the Business and Community Advisory Committees were held April 24 and 25, respectively. The committees provided feedback on potential Operation & Maintenance Facility locations and layouts for Opus Hill, Opus Station, Shady Oak Station, Downtown Hopkins Station and Wooddale Station.
- The Communications Steering Committee met April 17 to discuss outreach and communications activities along the corridor.

### **Other Outreach and Communication Activities**

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

- Attended a Royalston Business meeting April 1 and shared project information.
- Attended the Downtown Minneapolis Transportation Summit and provided project information April 2.
- Participated in a West Calhoun/Cedar-Isles-Dean Neighborhood (CIDNA) Walking Tour April 6 and shared project information; attended the CIDNA Association Board meeting April 10.
- Presented project information to the St. Louis Park City Council April 8.
- Met with North Loop residents and Shop NBC representatives April 17.
- Attended and presented information at Transitional Station Area Action Plan Open Houses for St. Louis Park (April 18) and Minnetonka/Hopkins (April 23).
- Responded to approximately 30 calls and emails from the public, and updated the Project website ([www.swlrt.org](http://www.swlrt.org)).
- Attended a Park Nicollet Hospital Leaders Group meeting April 25 and shared project information.
- Attended a Kenilworth Alliance meeting and shared project information April 27.