



# SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

connecting people to jobs, housing, shopping, and fun

## Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Thursday, January 17, 2012

1:30-3:00 pm

Council Chambers, St. Louis Park City Hall

### Agenda

- |      |  |                                   |
|------|--|-----------------------------------|
| I.   | <b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>   | <b>1:30 – 1:35</b>                |
| II.  | <b>September 20 &amp; December 20, 2012 Meeting Minutes</b><br>Chair Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County     | <b>1:35 – 1:40</b><br>Action      |
| III. | <b>2013 Legislative Session</b><br>Will Schroeer, Minneapolis Regional & St. Paul Chambers of Commerce | <b>1:40 – 2:00</b><br>Information |
| IV.  | <b>SWLRT Community Works Annual Report</b><br>Katie Walker, Hennepin County                            | <b>2:00 – 2:10</b><br>Information |
| V.   | <b>Transitional Station Area Action Planning</b><br>Mark Koegler, Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc.       | <b>2:10 – 2:30</b><br>Information |
| VI.  | <b>2013 Workplan</b><br>Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County  | <b>2:30 – 3:00</b><br>Discussion  |

The Steering Committee will meet next on Thursday, February 21, from 1:30-3:00 at the St. Louis Park City Hall.



**Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 20, 2012

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  
Anne Mavity, City of St. Louis Park Member  
Tony Wagner, City of Minnetonka Member  
Jason Gadd, City of Hopkins Member  
Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member  
Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate  
Kathy Nelson, City of Eden Prairie Member  
Jennifer Munt, Metropolitan Council Member  
Nancy Tyra-Lukens, SouthWest Transit Member  
Caren Dewar, Urban Land Institute (ULI) – Minnesota Member  
Anita Tabb, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Member  
Bob Fine, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Alternate

Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Adele Hall (Hennepin County), Kerri Pearce Ruch (Hennepin County), Patrick Conroy (Hennepin County), Julie Wischnack (City of Minnetonka), Kersten Elverum (City of Hopkins), Barry Schade (Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association), Mark Fuhrmann (Metro Transit), Kathryn Hansen (Metro Transit), Janet Jeremiah (City of Eden Prairie), Farveh Makhssous (City of Eden Prairie), Jack Sullivan (City of St. Louis Park), Meg McMonigal (City of St. Louis Park), Kevin Locke (City of St. Louis Park), Vida Ditter (Bassett Creek Redevelopment Oversight Committee), Kathie Doty (KLD Consulting), Beth Elliott (City of Minneapolis), Charles Decker (Hennepin County), Cara Lee (Hennepin County), Phil Eckhert (Hennepin County), Karen Lyons (Metropolitan Council), Diane Dube (William Mitchell Community Development Clinic), Sean Walther (City of St. Louis Park)

**I. Welcome & Introductions**

Chair Gail Dorfman (Hennepin County Member) called the meeting to order and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

The freight railroad tracks in the Kenilworth Corridor are currently being replaced. Please visit the website at <http://www.hennepin.us/railreplacement>. The site has contact information for Phil Eckhert, Director of Housing Community Works and Transit at Hennepin County and Tim Jeske from Twin Cities and Western Railroad. This project is not affiliated with the Southwest LRT project.

## **II. August 16, 2012, Meeting Minutes**

Chair Gail Dorfman (Hennepin County Member) presented the August 16, 2012, Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee minutes for review and approval.

Dick Miller (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member) moved to approve the minutes; Anita Tabb (Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Member) seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved on a voice vote.

## **III. Development Workshop**

At the August meeting, the Steering Committee directed ULI to work with the Technical Implementation Committee (TIC) principals to define the scope and participants for the November development workshop. Caren Dewar (ULL-MN member) reported that the workshop is scheduled for Nov 14 and 15 at the Southwest project office. A formal notice will be sent to Steering Committee members. Will Fleissig and Marilee Utter will attend to present a national perspective, Colleen Carey (Cornerstone Group), Jon Breitenger (Cushman & Wakefield Northmarq), Pat Mascia (Duke Realty), and Mark Ruff (Ehlers) will represent the local developer perspective. Funding is from ULI, LISC, and Minnesota Housing. The first day will consist of a tour of the line and a deep look at the station areas: Penn, Beltline, Blake, Golden Triangle, and Mitchell. The panelists will assess critical issues and options to existing land use and infrastructure plans. On the second day the local and national panelists will have a work session, and then policy makers and panelists will have a discussion with Mr. Fleissig regarding the policy implications of the panelists recommendations. Staff will be participating both days. Mr. Fleissig plans to return in December to report back on the panelists' findings. Chair Dorfman (Hennepin County Member) suggested that the November Steering Committee meeting could be canceled so that Steering Committee members can focus on the workshop. The October meeting will likely be canceled, as well, because of the Rail-Volution Conference. Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) commented that as part of the ULI Program "Navigating the New Normal" the St. Louis Park City Council had a similar panel present at their last meeting with great results.

## **IV. Appointment: Engineering Services Contract Selection Committee**

The requests for proposals for Southwest LRT Engineering Services were issued in August and call for 30% design and engineering for two parts of the corridor: the west segment from Mitchell Station to just east of the Shady Oak station and the east segment from just east of the Shady Oak Station to Minneapolis, including a freight rail colocation or relocation evaluation. Preliminary Engineering (PE) procurement follows the Brooks Act where technical evaluation is done without financial considerations to identify the most qualified proposer. After a preferred vendor is chosen, their bid is opened and the contract is negotiated. The evaluation committee has a cross section of representation, including Community Works. The action before the Steering Committee today is to appoint a Community Works representative to the west and east consultant evaluation panels. Proposals are due October 2<sup>nd</sup>, interviews will be held in November, negotiations will be in December and the consultant will start work early in 2013.

Kathy Nelson (Eden Prairie Member) nominated Dave Lindahl to the west evaluation panel. Mr. Lindahl is the economic development lead for the City of Eden Prairie, who works closely with community and business interests. Chair Dorfman (Hennepin County Member) nominated Jack Byers to the east evaluation panel. Mr. Byers leads the planning division of the City of Minneapolis' Community Planning and Economic Development department and worked on Hiawatha LRT design and construction.

Dick Miller (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member) moved the appointments, Nancy Tyra-Lukens (SouthWest Transit Member) seconded the motion, and the appointments were approved on a voice vote.

Chair Dorfman asked if the firms selected for PE will be limited in their future work on the project. Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit, responded that due to conflict of interest issues the PE engineering

firm cannot be the oversight engineer, nor will the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) let that consultant do the Final Environmental Impact Statement; the firms will be eligible for Final Design work. Jeff Casale (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate) asked how much of this work is as a result of the Metropolitan Council action this summer regarding URS. Mr. Fuhrmann responded that to ensure public safety the engineering services contract was split in two parts—east and west—and a third oversight technical engineering firm will be hired to review the work of the east and west engineers to ensure they're up to code. URS is not precluded from proposing in the second round.

Chair Dorfman encouraged Steering Committee members to thank Governor Dayton for the \$2 million in DEED funds awarded to SWLRT. The Southwest Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be published in the federal register on Oct 12. There will be a 60 day comment period and at the HCRRA meeting on September 25, the board will take action to set three public hearing dates: Tuesday, November 14 at the Hennepin County Government Center 4:30 pm open house on the public service level, hearing beginning at 5:00 pm; Wednesday, November 14 at St. Louis Park City Hall open house at 5:00 pm, hearing beginning at 6:00 pm; Thursday, November 29 at the Eden Prairie City Hall at 5:00 pm, hearing beginning at 6:00 pm. People are encouraged to email or mail comments, or fill out a comment card or testify at a hearing. The document will be posted on southwesttransitway.org and is searchable. Hard copies will be available for review in city halls and libraries. HCRRA is the responsible governmental unit and will hold the hearings.

Jennifer Munt (Metropolitan Council Member) noted that the Community Advisory Committee requested some training on how to review the document and comment. The FTA cautions against Hennepin County and Met Council providing training, so fellow CAC members with experience with EISs on other projects will lead the session. If you have questions about the DEIS please call Katie Walker at Hennepin County.

#### **V. Station Area Profiles**

Cara Lee and Charles Decker, Hennepin County Public Affairs, distributed a draft of station area profiles for the Opus and Hopkins Stations. In response to feedback from the cities, the profiles have evolved from a fact sheet to a sleek informational and promotional piece intended to tell the story and generate excitement about the Southwest corridor. The individual profiles that will be part of a booklet that will provide the full spectrum of what is available along the corridor. The front of the profile is an iconic image of what you can see and experience at the station. The map on the back provides context for its location within the corridor as well as specific location of the station if you want to visit.

The primary audience is wide: developers, community members, marketing opportunities, tours, people that aren't familiar with the project. Steering Committee members noted that connections to other rail lines at the Interchange should be obvious, and that the branding and character of the individual stations, as well as the Community Works branding and tagline, should be included. Staff noted that the goal is to prepare the profile packet for the Rail-Volution Conference in October, and to bring the final product to the Steering Committee and Corridor Management Committee.

#### **VI. Royalston Station Presentation**

Beth Elliott, City of Minneapolis, presented on the Royalston station area, which is a fairly industrial area very close to the office core, the Farmers Market and Target Field. The City approved 1,600 housing units in Downtown Minneapolis last year; 1,100 are currently under construction. Property ownership is scattered and there are several city properties with major public works investments. A large industrial property immediately adjacent to the proposed station is mostly vacant, but has not redeveloped. It's an eclectic development area: the station is closer to Target headquarters than the LRT station at 5<sup>th</sup> and Nicollet, but because there are many pedestrian barriers so it's difficult to walk there; supportive housing has a presence in the station area. There is very little

character, as this was one of the first urban renewal areas, and employees at the functioning industries aren't visible in the neighborhood. There could be an opportunity for student housing at nearby trade and technical schools. International market square has generated a lot of interest and development, and Southwest LRT will, too.

Because the market study was inconclusive, the City guided the area "transitional industrial". The City didn't want to push out the industry, but also wanted to be ready for what the market would bear. It's a placeholder guidance. Development guidelines are more relevant and the station area falls into the 2-10 story intensity category (lower than the core, higher than the area by the river). There has been a lot of speculation around the ballpark, especially for entertainment, but that is not really the vision of the city. An industrial incubator like CoCo would be an appropriate use in the area. CoCo is a company that allows small businesses to rent their facilities—a business incubator. The City wants to make infrastructure investments that improve connectivity and attract development. There are issues with connecting the station to the farmers market and the City would like to investigate the option of moving LRT to Border Avenue. The City also would like to call it the market station within a Market District and improve the farmers' market to a year-round facility.

#### **VII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm. The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, October 18, at 1:30 pm at the St. Louis Park City Hall.

DRAFT



## Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, December 20, 2012

1:30 - 3:00 pm

St. Louis Park City Hall

### Meeting Attendees

#### Steering Committee Members & Alternates

Vice-Chair Jim Hovland, City of Edina Member

Anne Mavity, City of St. Louis Park Member

Tony Wagner, City of Minnetonka Member

Dick Miller, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Member

Jeff Casale, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate

Caren Dewar, Urban Land Institute (ULI) – Minnesota Member

#### Other Attendees

Katie Walker (Hennepin County), Adele Hall (Hennepin County), Julie Wischnack (City of Minnetonka), Elise Durbin (City of Minnetonka), Kersten Elverum (City of Hopkins), Barry Schade (Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association), Mark Fuhrmann (Metro Transit), Kathryn Hansen (Metro Transit), Sam O'Connell (Metro Transit), Janet Jeremiah (City of Eden Prairie), Tom Harmening (City of St. Louis Park), Jack Sullivan (City of St. Louis Park), Meg McMonigal (City of St. Louis Park), Kevin Locke (City of St. Louis Park), Sean Walther (City of St. Louis Park), Dave Nuckols (Hennepin County), Karen Lyons (Metropolitan Council), Larry Blackstad (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District), Cathy Bennett (ULI-MN), Joan Vanhalla (Alliance for Metropolitan Stability), Mark Ruff (Ehlers, Inc.), Ashley James (Metropolitan Council), Jeff Peltola (West Calhoun Neighborhood)

### I. Welcome & Introductions

Vice-Chair Jim Hovland (Edina Member) called the meeting to order and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

### II. September 20, 2012, Meeting Minutes

Approval of the September 20, 2012, Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee minutes will be held over until the January meeting because of the lack of quorum.

### III. Development Scenarios Report

Hennepin County hired Ehlers, Inc., a public finance firm that represents public and non-profit clients, to analyze the Shady Oak station and do an evaluation of existing tools that spur development and infrastructure investments around stations. Mark Ruff, Ehlers, described the location of the Shady Oak station, which will draw commuters from the north and west; 350 LRT parking spaces are currently planned for the station. The site is 95% developed with 1950s-60s warehouse and some newer retail development. The street grid is interrupted off of Excelsior Boulevard and Shady Oak Road, and the station is far from interstates.

Mr. Ruff conducted interviews with developers from several states and across a variety of development types. Their evaluation was that the site is a "b minus" grade because while the site is near many other jobs, two important factors are not present: access to transit and other transportation, and proximity to retail. Most of the site is composed of small parcels which would make the acquisition process difficult. The site's proximity to the future transit station could command an increase of approximately 10% in rent; in other markets this increase is as high as 30%. Given today's financial markets, the 10% increase is probably corridor-wide, especially in the suburban market; parts of Minneapolis and along Central Corridor it may be higher. Without other amenities nearby, the rent increase is not as significant.

Parking ramp design, signage, and materials will be very important, especially for shared parking. Public development tools are needed in this case for two reasons: first, the many parcels will make acquiring land difficult; second, the financial markets are still very tight. For a lower density development with surface parking, even including an increase in rent from transit, grant funds, and Tax Increment Financing (TIF), there is still a gap between sources and uses. A higher density scenario with structured parking has a larger gap. There are several ways to close this gap: create a land bank with less than 3% interest; make the case at the legislature for the need and timeliness of eminent domain with some restrictions; create an organized and structured way to provide other funding sources; don't emphasize the transit component; and finally, parking ramps need to be thought of as something paid for over time by development in ways such as special assessments.

TIF has been an important transit oriented development (TOD) tool in MN and restricting it works against TOD. A value capture zone could be created between the cities in a corridor. Some stations will generate surplus that could be used for other stations with land that is more difficult to acquire. If cities, counties, and other agencies work together they can get cheaper financing and substitute local dollars for federal where possible. There is an effort to bring some new financing options to the legislature this year so that project can proceed next spring.

Caren Dewar (ULI-MN Member) noted that at the Corridors of Opportunity policy board meeting, members talked about the importance of creating a mechanism for paying for infrastructure. The Family Housing Fund is taking the lead on consolidating TIF for TOD advocacy. Mr. Ruff commented that the purpose of a bill would be to give cities financing options and to build on the existing cooperative effort to share risk among the communities and the county. Julie Wischnack, City of Minnetonka, asked what the difference is between TIF for TOD and the TIF the cities currently have. Mr. Ruff responded that cities can do TIF on affordable housing developments, or non-affordable housing or commercial developments that are in a blighted area where 50% of the buildings must be substandard. Many communities don't have either of these so TIF isn't a useful tool to them. Transit Improvement Areas are in state law and, with authorization, are places where TIF could be used without restriction and excess property tax revenue could be used to buy land. Jeff Casale (Minnehaha Creek Watershed District Alternate) asked if Mr. Ruff had any recommendations for joint powers for the Community Works group to move this agenda forward. Mr. Ruff responded that there are a lot of good models, but it will be up to this group to decide. Joint powers laws are broad, so any kind of city can be involved.

#### **IV. Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP)**

Mark Kogler, Hoisington Kogler Group, Inc. (HKGI), introduced himself and described the Transitional Station Area Action Planning consulting team. The firms involved have very broad experience in station area planning and rail systems, community engagement, and a great working knowledge within the corridor cities. Several of the firms are currently working with the cities on other projects, as well.

The TSAAP are focused on station area preparations for opening day of the LRT, while not precluding long-term opportunities. The consulting team is currently reviewing past studies and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, and has met with all five cities to get an understanding

of each city's issues and their ideas for public involvement. The consulting team is finalizing a written community engagement strategy now. At a planning charette in February the focus will be on each of the station platforms and other LRT infrastructure. After that charette the team will explore in detail the development potential and seen and unseen infrastructure in the station areas, including a stormwater analysis at Royalston, Blake, Shady Oak, and Mitchell stations, which are representative of the various environments along the corridor. The Preliminary Engineering (PE) consulting teams will be involved and are anxious to create a mutual schedule. Tony Wagner (Minnetonka Member) asked what the critical path items are. Mr. Koegler responded that the team is very anxious to collaborate with the PE consultants to agree on milestone points so that TSAAP can help with the detailed conversations about LRT engineering. The consulting team will do some rendering and modeling for visualization of the LRT stations.

#### **V. 2012 Accomplishments & 2013 Look-Ahead**

Katie Walker, Hennepin County, reviewed the handout with 2012 accomplishments and the look-ahead for 2013. These items will appear in the annual report in January, as well, which will help to communicate to people outside of Community Works the great things this group is doing. Ms. Walker also distributed the station area profiles, which are in final draft form. Comments are requested to Adele Hall by January 11, 2013. Ideas for where the profiles should be distributed are also welcome; the document will also be updated periodically.

#### **VI. Updates**

Caren Dewar (ULI-MN Member) reported that the Business Investment Partnership is interested in strengthening the dialogue with the public sector. Six corridor businesses were represented at their meeting this month; they are looking for several more members.

Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit, reported that the Metropolitan Council authorized the award of two PE contracts. The east segment was awarded to Kimley-Horn, the west segment to AECOM. After the award the contracts were signed and notices to proceed were executed. The consulting teams are currently getting settled in the project office. Municipal consent plan sets will come to cities in late summer-early fall to begin the dialogue; action on the plans is expected in fourth quarter 2013. It will be a fast process. Anne Mavity (St. Louis Park Member) noted that mitigation will be a big component for St. Louis Park and asked if that will be part of the municipal consent package. Mr. Fuhrmann responded that staff and consultants will have been working on those questions since January and been considering colocation and relocation throughout. By mid-year hopefully one of the two options will emerge as preferred, then mitigation options will follow. Alignment and engineering are the focus of municipal consent and mitigation concepts will be included, but it won't be designed mitigation because detailed designs will come through final design.

A ULI program on value capture and funding infrastructure will be held on January 17. Ms. Dewar will check if the event can be moved to St. Louis Park City Hall so that Steering Committee members can easily attend.

#### **VII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm. The next Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, January 17, at 1:30 pm at the St. Louis Park City Hall.





Agenda Item 3: 2013 Legislative Session	
<b>Reviewed By:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair <input type="checkbox"/> TIC Principals <input type="checkbox"/> TIC <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin County staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<b>Steering Committee Action Requested:</b>  Information
<b>Background/Justification:</b>  Will Schroerer of the Minneapolis and St. Paul Chambers will present on the recommendations of Governor Dayton's Transportation Finance Advisory Committee, briefly cover the results from the Itasca Group's Return on Investment study, and discuss with Steering Committee members the approach for the 2013 legislative session.	
<b>Previous Action on Request:</b>	
<b>Recommendation:</b> Information	<b>Financial Implications?</b> No  <b>Are These Funds Budgeted?</b>
<b>Attachments:</b> None	
<b>Comments:</b>	





# SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.



## Agenda Item 4: Southwest LRT Community Works Annual Report

**Reviewed By:**

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

**Steering Committee Action Requested:**

Information

**Background/Justification:**

Community Works staff have prepared the Community Works Annual Report for review by the Steering Committee.

**Previous Action on Request:** Approved at the beginning of each year.

**Recommendation:**

**Financial Implications?** No

**Are These Funds Budgeted:**

**Attachments:** Report will be distributed at the meeting

**Comments:**





**Agenda Item 5: Transitional Station Area Action Plans**

**Reviewed By:**

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

**Steering Committee Action Requested:**

Information: Update on the Transitional Station Area Action Plans

**Background/Justification:**

Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc is now under contract to carry out the Transitional Station Area Action Plans. Staff and consultants will provide an update on the work, including coordination with the Preliminary Engineering consultants who are now under contract.

**Previous Action on Request:** Discussed at the December 20, 2012 meeting.

**Recommendation:**

**Attachments:** None

**Comments:**

**Financial Implications?** No

**Are These Funds Budgeted:**





# SOUTHWEST LRT

community works

green means go.

## Agenda Item 6: 2013 Workplan

**Reviewed By:**

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

**Steering Committee Action Requested:**

Discussion

**Background/Justification:**

Discussion of the workplan items for 2013, including independent Community Works efforts and joint efforts with the LRT project.

**Previous Action on Request:** None.

**Recommendation:**

**Financial Implications?** No

**Are These Funds Budgeted:**

**Attachments:** None-to be brought to meeting.

**Comments:**





# SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

connecting people to jobs, housing, shopping, and fun

## Southwest LRT Community Works Steering Committee Updates Preceding the January 17, 2013 meeting

### Business Advisory Committee

Contact: Katie Walker, Hennepin County [katie.walker@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:katie.walker@co.hennepin.mn.us)

- BAC members completed surveys polling the topics the BAC is interested in discussing more in-depth at future meetings

### Community Advisory Committee

Contact: Katie Walker, Hennepin County [katie.walker@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:katie.walker@co.hennepin.mn.us)

- CAC members heard a presentation on the Louisiana Station from City of St. Louis Park staff

### Corridors of Opportunity (CoO)

#### Sustainable Communities

Contact: Lisa Middag, Hennepin County [lisa.middag@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:lisa.middag@co.hennepin.mn.us).

- Value Capture & Other Finance Tools  
The January 23 Policy Board meeting (12:30p/McKnight Foundation) includes a presentation and discussion on potential legislative actions that would enhance finance tools that promote corridor transit-oriented development. Mark Ruff from Ehlers will discuss their work on the Southwest Corridor.
- 2013 Focus Areas for Corridors of Opportunity  
The January 10 Senior Staff meeting included a discussion of desired 2013 outcomes for the initiative, including the integration of transit and land use planning along the Southwest corridor, legislative strategies for value capture for corridor infrastructure and development investments, the incorporation of economic development and workforce efforts at the regional and corridor planning level, the implications of Thrive MSP 2040 and the Fair Housing Equity Assessment on corridor planning, the deployment of the Corridors of Opportunity TOD/Affordable Housing Loan Fund, the sustaining of the Corridors of Opportunity Community Engagement model, and the alignment of transit funding efforts.

#### Community Engagement

Contact: Susan Hoyt, Metropolitan Council [susan.hoyt@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:susan.hoyt@metc.state.mn.us)

- No updates this month.

#### Living Cities

Contact: Cathy Bennett, ULI-MN [cathycbennett@frontiernet.net](mailto:cathycbennett@frontiernet.net)

- Southwest Corridor Developer Scenario Workshop Final Report and briefing books will be handed out at the Steering Committee meeting and available on the Southwest LRT Community Works website.



# SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

- The findings in the report are the recommendations of the developer panel and are not policies or actions adopted by individual cities, Hennepin County or the Metropolitan Council.
- Based upon the expertise of the local and national panelists, consideration should be given to incorporating the comments/recommendations from the developer scenario workshop report as part of the corridor-wide Environmental Impact Statement and evaluated early in the Transitional Station Area Action Planning (TSAAP) process.
- The evaluations will enable local jurisdictions to make informed recommendations regarding station locations and alignments as part of the Preliminary Engineering analysis by Metro Transit. This work serves to inform future Southwest Corridor Community Works discussion and implementation strategies.

## **ULI MN Draft Work Plan 2013** (as discussed with SW Corridor City and Hennepin County staff):

1. Southwest Corridor Developer Scenario Workshop Recommendations.
  - Work with Southwest Corridor Community Works to consider and implement report recommendations.
2. Technical Assistance; private sector engagement; harvest best practices.
  - Support the integration of land use and LRT engineering/design to position the corridor for private sector investment and to maximize economic development opportunities and community benefits.
3. Complete corridor-wide housing strategy.
  - Partner to complete the Southwest Corridor Housing Strategy to ensure alignment with the TSAAP and local and regional housing goals.
4. Prioritize and align corridor-wide investments.
  - Connect the last mile – access to employment, housing, amenities.
  - Consider the station area influence to achieve equity and community benefits goals.
  - Collectively prioritize and phase incremental infrastructure improvements.
  - Collectively identify, prioritize and phase catalytic development.
  - Develop shared parking strategies to maximize development opportunities.
5. Partner to identify corridor-wide financial mechanisms.
  - Consider options regarding coordinated development through joint powers agreements.
  - Consider development of a corridor-wide infrastructure/development fund.
  - Consider establishing a private/public partnership development entity.
  - Identify strategies to capture development opportunities on publically owned land.
  - Align with Metropolitan Council TOD Strategic Plan and Corridors of Opportunity initiatives.

## **Housing Inventory**

Contact: Lisa Middag, Hennepin County [lisa.middag@co.hennepin.mn.us](mailto:lisa.middag@co.hennepin.mn.us)

- Maxfield Research is nearing completion of the Southwest Corridor-wide Housing Inventory. The Southwest

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

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL





# SOUTHWEST LRT community works

green means go.

Housing Work Group, which includes housing staff from Southwest LRT Community Works partners, will review the draft report on Friday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. The Inventory will be reviewed by the Technical Implementation Committee in February. The Inventory was funded through a Corridors of Opportunity Local Implementation Capacity Grant (\$25,000) with additional resources from Hennepin County's Corridor Development fund (\$17,601) and includes a range of demographic information (including school and employment data), an inventory of existing and planned housing for a full-range of incomes in the Southwest corridor, and a review of existing and recommended housing policies.

## Southwest LRT Project

Contact: Robin Caufman, Metro Transit [robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:robin.caufman@metc.state.mn.us)

- Signed two contracts for Preliminary Engineering Consultant (PEC) services on December 19, 2012.
  - AECOM is under contract for PEC West.
  - Kimley-Horn and Associates is under contract for PEC East.
  - PEC staff starting to arrive at the project office late December 2012.
- Posted an RFP for a Peer Review Consultant on December 14, 2012. Proposals are currently due on March 14, 2013.
- Awarded contract for Phase I/Limited Phase II Environmental Site Assessment on November 15, 2012
  - Completed Phase I Archaeological Survey and final report in December 2012.
- Posted Request for Proposals for the Final Environmental Impact Statement Consultant on January 4, 2013. Proposals are currently due on February 7, 2013.
- Provided a tour of the corridor to CTIB financial staff on January 9, 2013.
- Council Member Munt presented at the City of Hopkins' ARTery workshop on January 12, 2013; SPO outreach staff was in attendance.

## Legislature

Contact: Bill Schreiber, Messerli & Kramer [bschreiber@MesserliKramer.com](mailto:bschreiber@MesserliKramer.com)

- The 2013 legislative session began on January 8. Over 25% of the legislature is new and 40% have two or fewer years of experience. We can expect the first few weeks will be primarily spent on briefing legislators on the roles of various state agencies, how money is generated for state appropriations and how it is spent.
- The Governor will present his FY 2014-15 budget recommendations to the legislature on January 22. Expect heightened legislative activity after the 1<sup>st</sup> of February.
- Since this is an odd numbered year the focus will be on a two year budget; in even numbered years the focus is on the capital budget (state bonding). So, 2013 is not a normal bonding year, but historically, the legislature has adopted a smaller size bonding bill in the odd numbered year to accommodate a narrow



# SOUTHWEST LRT

## community works

green means go.

list of specific needs. We fully expect Governor Dayton to recommend state bonding dollars this year (about \$35 million) in order to keep SW light rail on schedule.

- Below is a list of corridor legislators and their committee assignments that could be helpful for SW. All three transportation committee chairs are corridor legislators.

District	Senator	Phone	Email	Capital Investment Committee	Transportation Committee
44	Terri Bonoff	651-296-4314	<a href="mailto:sen.terri.bonoff@senate.mn">sen.terri.bonoff@senate.mn</a>		
46	Ron Latz	651-297-8065	<a href="mailto:sen.ron.latz@senate.mn">sen.ron.latz@senate.mn</a>		
48	David Hann	651-296-1749	<a href="mailto:sen.david.hann@senate.mn">sen.david.hann@senate.mn</a>		
49	Melisa Franzen	651-296-6238	<a href="mailto:sen.melisa.franzen@senate.mn">sen.melisa.franzen@senate.mn</a>		x
59	Bobby Joe Champion	651-296-9246	<a href="mailto:sen.bobby.champion@senate.mn">sen.bobby.champion@senate.mn</a>	x	x
61	Scott Dibble	651-296-4191	<a href="mailto:sen.scott.dibble@senate.mn">sen.scott.dibble@senate.mn</a>		x - chair
District	Representative	Phone	Email	Capital Investment Committee	Transportation Finance Committee
44B	John Benson	651-296-9934	<a href="mailto:rep.john.benson@house.mn">rep.john.benson@house.mn</a>		
46A	Ryan Winkler	651-296-7026	<a href="mailto:rep.ryan.winkler@house.mn">rep.ryan.winkler@house.mn</a>		
46B	Steve Simon	651-296-9889	<a href="mailto:rep.steve.simon@house.mn">rep.steve.simon@house.mn</a>		
48A	Yvonne Selcer	651-296-3964	<a href="mailto:rep.yvonne.selcer@house.mn">rep.yvonne.selcer@house.mn</a>		
48B	Jenifer Loon	651-296-7449	<a href="mailto:rep.jenifer.loon@house.mn">rep.jenifer.loon@house.mn</a>		
49A	Ron Erhardt	651-296-4363	<a href="mailto:rep.ron.erhardt@house.mn">rep.ron.erhardt@house.mn</a>	x	x
49B	Paul Rosenthal	651-296-7803	<a href="mailto:rep.paul.rosenthal@house.mn">rep.paul.rosenthal@house.mn</a>		
59B	Raymond Dehn	651-296-8659	<a href="mailto:rep.raymond.dehn@house.mn">rep.raymond.dehn@house.mn</a>	x	x
61A	Frank Hornstein	651-296-9281	<a href="mailto:rep.frank.hornstein@house.mn">rep.frank.hornstein@house.mn</a>		x - chair







[Home](#) [About Us](#) [News+Events](#) [Transportation](#) [Wastewater+Water](#) [Parks](#)

> [News+Events](#) > [Newsletter](#) > [Planning - December 2012](#)

Set text size:

## Asad Aliweyd steering Somali community toward bright future along Southwest Corridor

### Corridors of Opportunity grant makes entrepreneurial training possible

Every evening between 5 and 9 p.m. the New American Academy on the border of Edina and Eden Prairie comes to life with more energy, dreams and goals than can be easily contained within this industrial office space.

Somali students, aged kindergarten through high school, and their parents, attend classes on the English language and citizenship. A new addition this year is training to be an entrepreneur. These East Africans have made starting new businesses to support their families and community a focus as they establish themselves in their new society.

Asad Aliweyd, founder and executive director of the New American Academy, was awarded a \$30,000 community engagement grant by the Corridors of Opportunity initiative to help him engage the Somali community in planning for new businesses, jobs, and housing along the Southwest light rail corridor.

"The Golden Triangle light rail stop in Eden Prairie will be key to many opportunities for our Somali community, linking us to the southwest, downtown Minneapolis, and the University where many of our children attend school," said Aliweyd.

"In order to succeed, we need to have good education for our children," he said. "We need affordable housing. We would like to build equity and assets through home ownership. We want to grow our job opportunities and we need reliable transportation."

### Engaging underrepresented communities along transit corridors

Corridors of Opportunity is a partnership of government, foundations and nonprofits promoting transit-oriented development, affordable housing, small business support and investment, and engagement of underrepresented communities along seven transit corridors in the region.

Repa Mekha, Corridors of Opportunity Community Engagement Team (CET) member and president of Nexus Community Partners, encouraged Aliweyd to apply for a community engagement grant when his work with New American Academy clearly showed the kind of success sought by CET.

"We are looking for three levels of success – people engaged around transit corridors, people who want to be part of the decision making, and people who clearly see the benefit of how the expanding transit corridor can improve their quality of life," said Mekha. "Asad has these three levels covered, with the excitement and vision he has built up for the rail line in his community."

### Somali community seeks seat at the table when decisions are made

"We are learning the democratic process and practicing our rights as

[Corridors of Opportunity overview \(pdf\)](#)  
[Community outreach and engagement on the corridors](#)

The Corridors of Opportunity Community Engagement Team identifies and promotes existing community assets along transitway corridors and ensures that the communities along those corridors are involved in the planning process.

“ In order to succeed, we need to have good education for our children. We need affordable housing. We would like to build equity and assets through home ownership. We want to grow our job opportunities and we need reliable transportation.

– Asad Aliweyd, founder,  
New American Academy

“ We are looking for three levels of success – people engaged around transit corridors, people who want to be part of the decision making, and people who clearly see the benefit of how the expanding transit corridor can improve their quality of life.

– Repa Mekha, President,  
Nexus Community  
Partners



Asad Aliweyd talks about the opportunities for economic development for the Somali community near the site of the future Golden Triangle stop on the Southwest LRT line.

citizens," Aliweyd said. "We all came out to vote. I haven't talked to one person who said they did not vote. In 10 years you may see Somali neighbors on the ticket."



Aliweyd tutors students at the New American Academy in Edina. Adults also take language and citizenship classes, and thanks to a Corridors of Opportunity grant, get entrepreneurial training.

The 35-year-old married father of 7 children had been a high school math teacher in the Eden Prairie Schools. He opened the New American Academy in 2008 while completing his MBA at Hamline University. His goal: to help Somali students bridge their achievement gap through extra tutoring after school.

The school's unassuming location behind a trucking warehouse situated next to Highway 169 belies the academy's significance in helping the community of 3,000 new East African immigrant families living in Eden Prairie,

Edina, Hopkins, and St. Louis Park.

"We learned from Asad that the Somali community relies on 'word of mouth' to spread information," said Susan Hoyt, coordinator of Corridors of Opportunity community engagement efforts. "We believe they would greatly benefit from the Southwest light rail line. This community is underrepresented, low-income and ready to embrace this as an opportunity to improve their quality of life."

### **What light-rail stops could mean to an immigrant community**

The key to this community engagement work is to connect community members with transportation and land-use planners, and transitway engineers, so prime locations for businesses and for affordable housing are identified early. On a late afternoon, Aliweyd led a short field trip to look at the sites where Somali community members might realize their dreams.

"In the Golden Triangle where we will have a light rail stop, we would like to see an opportunity for housing, economic development, and jobs for our community," said Aliweyd, as he gestured at the open fields and industrial office park. "The light rail will reduce the financial stress for many of our families. We can send our children on the light rail to classes at the university without worry about the weather, and fewer cars per family means less insurance cost."

At a second stop on Prairie Center Drive, a vacant Hennepin County leasing office appears to be another prime location for several businesses within a short walk from apartment complexes housing Somali residents

As a result of the New American Academy's connection to the CET, 16 Somali adults interested in developing businesses along the corridor graduated from a 20-week entrepreneurial training class taught by the Neighborhood Development Center, which is experienced in training new immigrant communities. "We want the entrepreneurs to be visible, in highly trafficked areas," said Mike Temali, CEO and founder of the NDC. "This radiates a message to those who drive by or near a light rail stop."



Students strengthens their reading skills at the Academy.

Following the 10-week classroom training, the Somali business students received one-on-one assistance to develop business plans. A bus trip with potential lenders followed to see possible locations for these developments. "Their success in the end really depends on their business ideas, their assets and abilities," said Temali.

### **Planning new businesses in the Southwest corridor**

Ibrahim Ali and Amina Ali (who are not related) completed the entrepreneur business classes in anticipation of the SWLRT economic opportunities. Amina Ali, a married mother of five, would like to open a restaurant that serves Somali and American food. More business ideas include a few coffee shops, a day care, computer store, bookstore, salons and a clothing store.

Ibrahim Ali, 52, a married father of six and a community elder, plans to open an auto body shop in Eden Prairie, similar to what he worked at in Africa.

"I am prepared to work very hard and struggle for the first two years to establish my business," said Ali, through Aliweyd as his interpreter. When he opens, Ali expects to provide jobs for 12 to 14 skilled workers. He remains hopeful, but not blind to the challenges.

"Our aim is to always have better relationships with the current business community," Ali said. "It's the first time. We will see what the people are like and their reaction to it."

[Home](#) | [A-Z Index](#) | [About Us](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Policies](#) | Wednesday December 19 2012

© 2012 Metropolitan Council. All Rights Reserved. · 390 Robert St. N., St. Paul, MN 55101 · Phone: 651-602-1000 · TTY: 651-291-0904