

SW CORRIDOR INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

COLLABORATION

The Southwest Corridor Investment Framework is the result of a robust collaboration among communities and partners planning for the METRO Green Line Extension. Hennepin County, which led the effort through its Community Works program, recognized the importance of planning that is coordinated and focused on implementation. The Investment Framework was supported by a Corridors of Opportunity / Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant of \$800,000 from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Investment Framework was developed in parallel with the Metropolitan Council's design and preliminary engineering phase for the Southwest light rail transit (LRT) / METRO Green Line Extension. The Investment Framework identified capital improvements that could be made prior to opening day, investments that would immediately improve each station's accessibility and development potential. The Investment Framework also identified longer term capital improvements and helped identify opportunities for coordination between LRT construction and projects that would support transit-oriented development in station areas.

ACTION-ORIENTED PLANS

A central part of the Investment Framework is the Transitional Station Action Area Plan (TSAAP). Each station area's TSAAP identifies both short- and long-term investments that help implement each station area's broad vision for transit oriented development (TOD). The collaborative and coordinated approach fostered relationship building. The result was a more strategic approach to corridor investments than if each community had to undertake these efforts alone.

Supporting Redevelopment

The Investment Framework identifies each station area's character and development conditions. It identifies how ridership, station area access, and development in station areas could be strengthened through public investments. These include new or improved streets, sidewalks, trails, streetscapes and plazas, as well as investments in sanitary sewer, stormwater, and water utilities.

Although it focuses on infrastructure, the Investment Framework also identified where there is a need for changes in development regulations or more detailed master planning. The Investment Framework's implementation chapter includes detailed approaches to redevelopment in each station area and potential sources of funding to support it. One example of this work is coordination of the [Shady Oak Area LRT Station Development Strategy](#) between the Cities of Hopkins and Minnetonka.

Connectivity

The Investment Framework recognizes that the success of the transit corridor is dependent on each station's accessibility for riders, especially pedestrians and bicyclists. It analyzed each station area's "connectivity," or how easy it would be to access the station on foot, by bike, or via connecting bus. The Investment Framework used the walkshed maps developed for each station area to show where infrastructure investments could expand the 10-minute walkshed.

Capital Improvement Planning

Each city is using the Investment Framework to guide planning for its investment priorities. Given the level of complexity and the level of need, participants agree that the Investment Framework helped "frame" what was needed within each station area and helped determine when it was needed. In many cases, the TSAAP identifies specific projects that the public sector can initiate on its own.

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FAST FACTS

Transit:

METRO Green Line Extension

Outcomes:

Plan for capital improvements to improve conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and new transit-oriented development.

Cost:

\$800,000 HUD grant

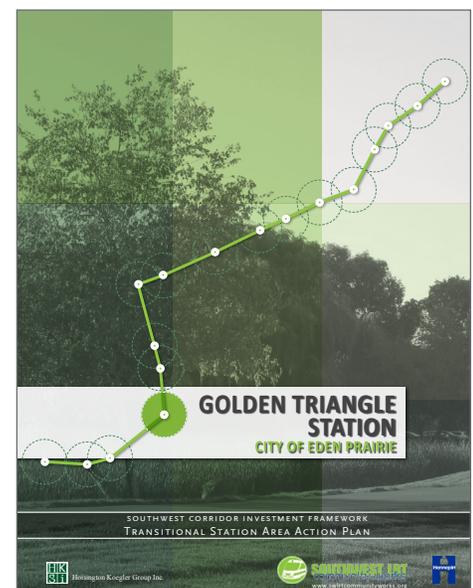
Timeline:

2011 Grant obtained

2013 Completed

Partners:

- Hennepin County
- Eden Prairie
- Edina
- Hopkins
- Minneapolis
- Minnetonka
- St. Louis Park
- Metropolitan Council
- Metro Transit
- SouthWest Transit
- Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
- Three Rivers Park District
- Urban Land Institute



In other cases, improvements can be implemented when redevelopment occurs or coordinated with LRT construction.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE TSAAP

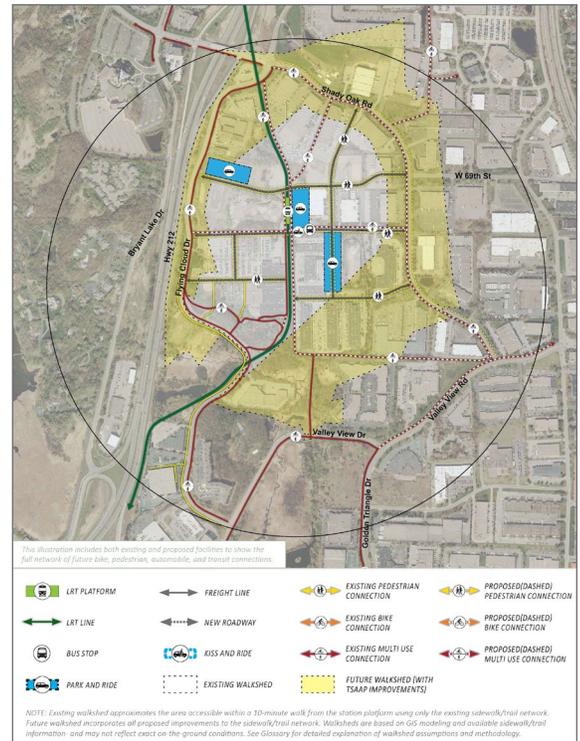
The Golden Triangle Station TSAAP is one example along the METRO Green Line. This station area in Eden Prairie is primarily a low-density concentration of employment, however there are opportunities to improve the density and mix of uses in the area.

Of the priority projects that the TSAAP identified was the extension of West 70th Street from the planned station to Shady Oak Road. This new roadway provides a much more direct connection from the station to development sites on Flying Cloud Drive. The TSAAP identified this project as a priority, and the City of Eden Prairie completed the extension in 2015. A second phase of the project will reconstruct the existing portion of the roadway from Shady Oak Roadway to the station. This will be coordinated with LRT construction. When finished, the roadway will be an important east/west “complete street” through the station area, including trails, bike lanes, and tree-lined boulevards.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Implementation challenges along the METRO Green Line Extension are numerous and varied. The Investment Framework allowed communities to explore them, identify the costs of addressing them, determine when they might occur, and assess the potential benefits that would result. Succinctly stated by Katie Walker, “The Southwest Investment Framework improves the efficiency of public infrastructure investments, unlocks private capital, and creates healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods served by public transit”.

Perhaps most importantly, the Investment Framework allowed staff to work across boundaries and disciplines, learn from one another, and develop stronger working relationships. This allowed communities to consider ways to coordinate around limited public resources rather than compete for them. The relationships and coordination efforts have continued beyond the Investment Framework into other planning efforts, such as boundary adjustments, development reviews in adjoining areas, and idea sharing.



Eden Prairie Golden Triangle Station Area: Current and future walksheds determined based on future improvements.



Eden Prairie Golden Triangle Station Area: Looking west along the recently constructed extension of 70th Street, which provides access to the station from development opportunity sites.

HOW DOES THIS PLANNING WORK SUPPORT TOD?

Connect: The Investment Framework identifies investments that will improve the directness of walking and bicycling routes to stations.

Intensify: The Investment Framework identifies public improvements that prepare station areas for infill and transit-oriented development with greater density around station areas.

Demonstrate: The Investment Framework demonstrates the value of working across city boundaries and professional disciplines to improve coordination along a corridor and, therefore, the effectiveness of planning.

LEARN MORE

Southwest Corridor Investment Framework Documents

- <https://www.swlrtcommunityworks.org/beyond-rails/planning-information/investment-framework>
- <https://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Transportation-Committee/2014/December-8,-2014/Info-1-SW-Corridor-Investment-Framework.aspx>

Southwest LRT Community Works

- <https://www.swlrtcommunityworks.org/>

METRO Green Line Extension

- <https://metro council.org/Transportation/Projects/Current-Projects/Southwest-LRT.aspx>

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FEEDBACK

Did you find this information useful? Do you have questions or suggestions for improvement? Contact us at TODGuide@metc.state.mn.us

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