

LAKE STREET STATION

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

PROJECT SUMMARY

Lake Street Station is a mixed-use Transit Oriented Development (TOD) project located on a small remnant parcel next to the Lake Street Midtown Station. The project offers affordable senior housing, retail space, a public plaza, and a covered pathway between the project and the station entrance. The Metropolitan Council's Livable Communities Grants supported the City of Minneapolis and Wellington Management in the development of Lake Street Station.

The project was completed in spring 2015 after years of dedication and commitment from the project developer, the City of Minneapolis, and community stakeholders. The underutilized parcel presented both opportunities and challenges. Originally, a vision for the area included a much larger redevelopment of the adjacent Hi-Lake Shopping Center. However, circumstances made this vision infeasible. Nevertheless, the developer and community worked together to create a high-quality development that has proven to be financially feasible in an unknown market.



Minneapolis. View from Lake Street/Midtown Station platform looking northwest toward project.

HOW DOES THIS PROJECT SUPPORT TOD AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES?

Connect: A canopy and plaza direct connect the project to the station platform. The project features a trail connection to the Midtown Greenway. The ground floor includes service-oriented retail.

Intensify: The project transformed a 0.85 acre infill site into a mixed-use development that includes 64 units of senior housing (100% affordable) and 5,700 sq. ft. of retail with three businesses.

Demonstrate: The project makes use of a challenging infill site adjacent to the Lake Street Midtown Station platform. Stormwater is managed onsite through the use of pervious pavers and a rain garden that doubles as a placemaking feature for the adjacent transit plaza.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons Learned from Project Developer

The project's high-quality design was instrumental in securing tenants. Amenities include a covered walkway to the LRT station entrance, a roof top patio, and large indoor and outdoor common areas. The project includes only surface parking, which was adequate for a well-designed project targeted at seniors who valued immediate access to LRT. While the upper floors leased up well, the strongest demand was on floors 2 and 3 because of shorter elevator rides and easy access to the ground floor. Contrary to initial expectations, units overlooking the station have also been popular. Nearby neighborhood amenities were very important to the project and include Aldi Grocery, Wells Fargo Bank, the YWCA, Savers, and restaurants – all within a one-block walk.

FAST FACTS

PROJECT FACTS

Developer:

Wellington Management

Total Development Cost:

\$11,500,000

Total Public Investment:

\$1,484,000

Dwelling Units: 64

Percent of Affordable Units:

100% at 60% of area median income (AMI)

Commercial Square Feet: 5,700

TOD METRICS

Stories: 6

FAR: 2

Dwelling Units/ Acre: 75

Commercial Parking Ratio:

1 space per 470 sq. ft.

Residential Parking Ratio:

0.5 Stalls per Unit

STATION AREA

Transit: METRO Blue Line

Station: Lake Street / Midtown

Station Area: Urban street grid, mix of TOD and auto-oriented uses, retail destination, access to trails, high % of area residents and workers use transit, and enhanced streetscape

Metropolitan Council

Livable Communities Grants

Applicant: City of Minneapolis

Year: 2010

TOD grant amount: \$1,034,000

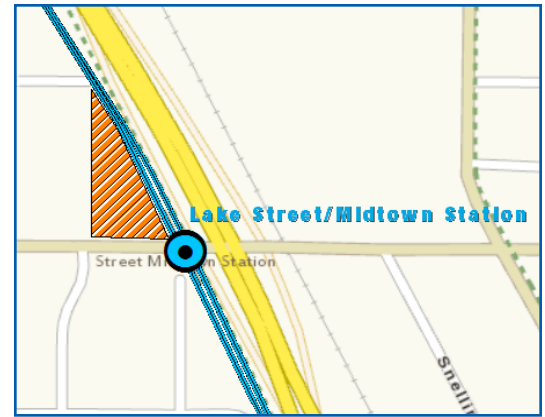
Funded elements: :

site preparation, utility relocation, stormwater management, and covered walkway

Lessons Learned from City Staff

Even a relatively small site can work for redevelopment, including infill sites adjacent to automobile-oriented areas. Wellington Management owns the Hi-Lake Shopping Center directly west of the project site. Given their existing investment in the neighborhood, they were dedicated to ensuring that this development had a positive impact on the neighboring properties.

Convenience is key. Tenants can take care of most of day-to-day needs within two blocks of this site. That level of convenience seems to resonate with apartment seekers. The building filled quickly despite rents at the high end of the local market. Project highlights include the proximity to the LRT station area and desirable views of the City of Minneapolis. Improving neighborhood walkability and connections, particularly under the Hiawatha Avenue bridge, will likely further catalyze TOD.



Click on image for an aerial view of the project.



Looking northwest across Lake Street west of METRO Blue Line.

Challenges from Project Developer

The project's design needed to fit a triangular-shaped parcel that was wedged between a busy shopping center and the LRT Station. Significant site design challenges included access, parking and circulation. Further complicating the design was a desire by the City of Minneapolis to preserve a right-of-way for a potential streetcar connection to the Midtown Corridor.

Financing a 100% affordable senior housing project was difficult. Construction of new senior affordable housing is far more common in suburban areas. The market study did not have any direct comparisons for such a project and location. While the affordable rents helped broaden the market, the rental rates – between \$825 and \$1,175 per month – were at or above the market for established apartments in the area. Fortunately, the

project was very well received by the market and filled quickly. The project also included 5,700 square feet of street-level retail space, which leased quickly at rents above nearby properties. The location adjacent to the Hi-Lake Shopping Center helped attract prospective tenants.

Challenges from City Staff

Since the site is a small triangle infill parcel, a lot of creative thinking and perseverance was required of the development team. Having several committed funding partners was also essential to making the project feasible while still providing a high-quality and integrated design. Partners included the Metropolitan Council, which awarded a TOD grant that enabled site amenities that benefit building residents as well as neighborhood residents and transit riders.

LEARN MORE

Project-Related Website: www.lakestreetstation.com

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View from rooftop patio looking south along Hiawatha Avenue.

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