3.0 SOCIAL AND LAND USE IMPACT ANALYSIS

This chapter addresses the potential impacts of the alternatives on a number of social and land use factors. These include changes to land use and land development regulations, neighborhood cohesion, visual character of the affected environments, historic and archeological resources, schools, community facilities, parklands, and safety. For each of these factors, the existing conditions are inventoried, potential impacts are identified and mitigation for adverse impacts is outlined.

Graphics for Chapter 3.0 are included together at the end of the chapter.

3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

This section provides a demographic overview, as listed below, for the Central Corridor as well as providing demographic data for the seven county Metropolitan area, the counties of Hennepin and Ramsey, the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. Demographic data related to populations were obtained from the 2000 Census and income data were obtained using the 1990 Census.

- Total population and number of persons by racial group by neighborhood in the corridor (2000 Census)
- Median household income by neighborhood in the corridor (1990 Census)
- Number of persons below poverty level by neighborhood in the corridor (1990 Census)
- Households with no vehicle available (1990 Census)
- Transit dependent persons to include the young, elderly and persons with mobility limitations (1999 Census)
- Forecast population, households and employment for Year 2020

Conclusion: the Central Corridor has all of the significant demographic characteristics to suggest extremely strong transit ridership in the future:

- Current population of the ridership area (123,099), about 5 percent of the region's population
- Current number of jobs (334,500)
- Current level of likely transit dependent persons (12,503 households with no vehicle, 25 percent of population lives below the poverty level, and over 31,000 people are young, or elderly or have mobility limitations)
- Substantial projected metropolitan growth: jobs – 21.9 percent, population – 18.5 percent, and households – 22.5 percent; suggesting the Central Corridor would experience growth in these three areas as well.

3.1.1 Population

The Central Corridor traverses portions of two counties, two cities and fifteen neighborhoods. Table 3.1-1: Year 2000 Race and Ethnicity by Neighborhood, presents population totals and profiles racial groups for each neighborhood adjacent to the proposed Central Corridor

alternatives. The total population within the Central Corridor neighborhoods is 123,099. Figure 3.1-1: Designated Neighborhoods, illustrates the neighborhood boundaries.

Using demographic data from the 2000 U.S. Census, the population for the state of Minnesota was 4,919,479, and the seven-county metropolitan area had a population of 2,642,056. Hennepin County's Year 2000 population was 1,116,200 and population in Ramsey County was 511,035. In year 2000, Minneapolis had a population of 382,618 and St. Paul's population was 287,151, for a total population of 669,769 for the two cities served by the corridor.

Table 3.1-1: Year 2000 Race and Ethnicity by Neighborhood

NEIGHBORHOOD	RACE						TOTAL POPULATION	ETHNICITY
	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian and Alaska Native alone	Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	Some other race alone	Population of two or more races		Hispanic or Latino[1/]
Downtown West	3,072	1,047	80	221	38	123	4,581	139
Downtown East	81	32	1	3	8	3	128	12
Elliot Park	3,361	2,037	182	215	213	468	6,476	500
Cedar-Riverside	3,174	2,428	67	1,190	286	400	7,545	426
University of MN	3,540	130	10	216	32	98	4,026	98
Prospect Park/East River Road	4,839	481	70	639	53	244	6,326	155
Saint Anthony Park	4,982	300	30	562	65	137	6,076	172
Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Lexington-Hamline	15,294	1,850	138	646	268	607	18,803	594
Hamline-Midway	8,967	1,541	129	538	203	444	11,822	524
Thomas-Dale	4,697	3,884	238	6,650	690	1,089	17,248	1,507
Summit-University	8,117	6,532	181	1,958	396	855	18,039	850
Downtown	4,374	934	64	276	137	111	5,896	353
West Side	9,441	1,087	325	1,305	2,959	1,016	16,133	5,266
TOTAL	**73,939**	**22,283**	**1,515**	**14,419**	**5,348**	**5,595**	**123,099**	**10,596**

[1/] Of any race.

Source: City of Minneapolis and City of St. Paul, 2000 Census, (Note: The City of Minneapolis states that 2000 Census data [for Minneapolis neighborhoods] has not yet been reviewed for accuracy or completeness by the City of Minneapolis)

3.1.2 Income, Households and Transit Dependency

In the Central Corridor neighborhoods, nearly one quarter of the population lives below the poverty level. (Using the 1990 U.S. Census, at the time of this analysis income data from the decennial 2000 Census was not available). Of the fifteen neighborhoods in the corridor, eleven neighborhoods have poverty levels at a higher rate than their respective city's poverty rate, as shown in Table 3.1-2: Income and Transit Dependency by County and City and Table 3.1-3: Income and Transit Dependency by Neighborhood. The neighborhood with the highest percentage of persons below the poverty level is the Downtown East neighborhood in Minneapolis with 68.8 percent, followed by Cedar-Riverside with 46.1 percent. Correspondingly those two neighborhoods also had the lowest median household income. In St. Paul, the Thomas-Dale and Summit-University neighborhoods had the highest poverty rates of 35.5 percent and 32.5 percent, respectively. In 1990, there were a total of 25,505 persons living below the poverty level in the Central Corridor neighborhoods.

The 1990 (1989 income data) median household income in Hennepin County was $35,659, and the median household income in Ramsey County was $32,043. All Central Corridor neighborhoods have median household incomes below the percentages of the two counties.

Compared to the percentages of the two cities, over half of the neighborhoods have median household incomes below the cities' rates.

Of the two cities, Minneapolis has a higher percentage of no vehicle households at 22.9 percent with St. Paul slightly below at 18.2 percent. Over two-thirds of the Central Corridor neighborhoods have higher percentages of no vehicle households than their respective city's percentage. In 1990, there were 12,503 households in the Central Corridor neighborhoods with no vehicle available.

Table 3.1-2: Income and Transit Dependency by County and City

	Persons for whom poverty status is determined[1/]	Persons Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Median Household Income	Households	No Vehicle Households	% No Vehicle
Hennepin County	1,009,606	93,388	9.2	$35,659	419,060	49,696	11.9
Ramsey County	472,620	53,897	11.4	32,043	190,500	23,510	12.3
Minneapolis	353,874	65,556	18.5	25,324	160,682	36,733	22.9
St. Paul	263,822	44,115	16.7	26,498	110,249	20,114	18.2

Source: 1990 Census (1989 Income)

[1/] The number of persons for whom poverty status is determined differs from the total population. The total population uses data from the short and long form to include every person. The poverty question is only asked of those who received the long form. Therefore, the numbers are adjusted to approximate the entire population.

Table 3.1-3: Income and Transit Dependency by Neighborhood

Neighborhoods (from Minneapolis to St. Paul)	Persons for whom poverty status is determined[1/]	Persons Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Median Household Income	Households	No Vehicle Households	% No Vehicle
Downtown West	3,900	941	24.1	25,551	2,370	861	36.3
Downtown East	32	22	68.8	4,999	14	13	92.9
Elliot Park	4,320	1,525	35.3	11,646	2,602	1,567	60.2
Cedar-Riverside	4,768	2,197	46.1	11,231	2,754	1,336	48.5
University of MN	89	30	33.7	12,188	55	14	25.5
Prospect Park/East River Road	4,705	1,323	28.1	25,772	2,073	312	15.1
Saint Anthony Park	6,263	928	14.8	25,610	2,691	284	10.6
Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Lexington-Hamline	16,466	2,514	15.3	27,885	7,047	930	13.2
Hamline-Midway	10,966	1,174	10.7	26,351	4,803	827	17.2
Thomas-Dale	14,302	5,075	35.5	16,645	5,118	1,611	31.5
Summit-University	17,717	5,755	32.5	20,934	7,331	2,029	27.7
Downtown St. Paul	4,326	893	20.6	19,928	2,893	1,456	50.3
West Side	14,810	2,971	20.1	24,543	5,579	1,263	22.6
TOTAL	**102,664**	**25,348**	**24.7**	**-**	**45,330**	**12,503**	**27.6**

Source: City of Minneapolis and City of St. Paul, 1990 Census (1989 Income)

[1/] The number of persons for whom poverty status is determined differs from the total population. The total population uses data from the short and long form to include every person. The poverty question is only asked of those who received the long form. Therefore, the numbers are adjusted to approximate the entire population.

Note: Shading indicates higher than respective city's rate of poverty level or no vehicle households.

The Central Corridor is home to a substantial number of people who depend on transit. The young, the elderly and persons with mobility limitations are populations that have traditionally been considered transit dependent, in addition to low-income populations and no vehicle households as outlined above. Table 3.1-4: Transit Dependency by Age and Mobility Limitations, presents the total number of transit dependent persons, due to age or mobility limitations, located within a quarter mile radius from the center of the proposed alignments. The table also provides the number of transit dependent persons as percentage of the total population for the same area.

Table 3.1-4: Transit Dependency by Age and Mobility Limitations

Category	LRT Alternative		BRT Alternative	
	Persons within ¼ mile of alignment	% from total population within ¼ mile zone	Persons within ¼ mile of alignment	% from total population within ¼ mile zone
Total Persons	**31,598**	-	**31,483**	-
Youth (16 and under)	5,519	17.5%	5,566	17.7%
Elderly (65 and over)	3,805	12.0%	4,077	13.0%
Mobility Limitations	1,274	4.0%	1,307	4.2%

Source: 1990 Census

3.1.3 Forecast Population, Employment and Households

Within the seven county metropolitan area population, households, and employment are projected to increase by the year 2020. As presented in Table 3.1-5: Forecast Population, Employment and Households for Year 2020, total population and the number of households are estimated to increase 18.5 percent and 25.5 percent respectively and employment is estimated to increase by 18.4. Likewise, population, households, and employment in the Central Corridor are also projected to increase. Using Metropolitan Council traffic analysis zone (TAZ) estimates, it was estimated that the Central Corridor will have an increase in population and households of 21.7 percent and 22.5 percent respectively and employment will increase by 21.9 percent.

Table 3.1-5: Forecast Population, Employment and Households for Year 2020

	Base Year 2000	Forecast Year 2020	Growth (%)
Metropolitan Area[1/]			
Total Population	2,642,056 (forecast estimate)	3,091,390	18.5
Total Households	1,011,050	1,269,320	25.5
Total Employment	1,527,070 (forecast estimate)	1,808,670	18.4
Corridor[2/]			
Total Population	119,779	145,782	21.7
Total Households	50,763	62,169	22.5
Total Employment	314,706	383,635	21.9

Sources:
[1/] Metropolitan Council web site visited 1/15/02.
[2/] SRF Consulting Group using data from Metropolitan Council and City of St. Paul
Note: Recent data projections from the release of the 2000 U.S. Census data have forecasted an even higher percentage of growth in population, household and employment.

3.2 CONSISTENCY WITH LAND USE, LOCAL PLANS, AND ZONING

This section describes the existing land use patterns, evaluates comprehensive and small area plans for concurrence with the proposed transit alternatives, describes the zoning codes in relation to potential impacts to land use, and describes major activity centers in the in the Central Corridor Study Area.

3.2.1 Land Use

At all scales, regional, corridor, neighborhood, and site, the location and utility of proposed transit facilities are dependent on land use patterns. Figures 3.2-1a and 3.2-1b: Land Use, show the general land use pattern in the Central Corridor. There are four major activity areas within the Study Area:

- Downtown Minneapolis
- University of Minnesota - Minneapolis campus
- University Avenue, including a diverse mix of land uses known as "the Midway Industrial District"
- State Capitol and downtown St. Paul

The relationship of land use patterns within the Central Corridor at the neighborhood scale was a key criteria during Central Corridor Transit Study alternatives analysis, leading to recommendations to further consider alignments on University Avenue. A focused analysis of development patterns at intersections along University Avenue was performed for the station site selection process.

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS

The downtown Minneapolis office core is the major employment center in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, with a large number of high-rise office towers and related retail and hospitality establishments. High and medium density residential land uses are located along Hennepin Avenue and the riverfront in the downtown, and in the neighborhoods that surround the downtown core. The land use pattern is segregated into functional zones, including the Warehouse District entertainment area to the west, the central business district (CBD) which includes Nicollet Mall retail businesses and parking areas, and the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome stadium in the eastern part of downtown. The Hiawatha Light Rail Transit (LRT) line, now under construction, will operate through downtown Minneapolis on Fifth Street.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The University of Minnesota - Minneapolis campus is located on both sides of the Mississippi River east of downtown. The Washington Avenue Bridge connects the West Bank of the campus, and its concentration of classrooms and libraries, with the East Bank and its very dense area of classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories, and the University Hospital and Clinics. On the eastern edge of campus, the Stadium Village area is comprised of older storefronts with small businesses serving the student population.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE

Land use patterns along University Avenue were first shaped by streetcars that ran along University Avenue and intersecting streets. Nodes of commercial development grew where streetcar lines intersected, with a looser and less dense pattern between nodes. Growth in automobile ownership in the mid-twentieth century brought car dealerships, automobile service stations, shopping centers with large parking lots, and drive-in restaurants to University Avenue. Current land use patterns include a varied mix of urban forms, including: older storefronts on small parcels immediately adjacent to sidewalks; large regional shopping centers, specifically in the Midway Industrial District at Snelling Avenue; and small and large office and medical buildings, commercial warehouses, and automobile sales and service businesses.
Traveling from west to east, the proposed University Avenue LRT and Busway/Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) alignments would pass through the University of Minnesota campus and south of the Southeast Minneapolis Industrial (SEMI) area. In the vicinity of 27th Avenue S.E., new student housing has been recently constructed. Land uses at the Westgate area near Highway 280 include a light industrial area, showrooms, and office-oriented uses, with a node of mixed-use redevelopment taking shape around Raymond Avenue. The roadway descends below-grade and under a railroad bridge at the Midway Industrial District and then climbs back up to grade at Prior Avenue, where motels occupy opposites sides of the intersections. East of Prior Avenue is the beginning of the pattern of storefront nodes at intersections and automobile-oriented urban forms, frequently occurring at mid-block and repeated in various arrangements all the way to "Frogtown" and the State Capitol area. Some nodes, such as those at Snelling and Western Avenues are more intensely utilized than others such as those located at Fairview Avenue and Lexington Parkway, which have a greater amount of vacant land and buildings.

When considering land use in relation to potential transit ridership, it is important to consider the land use on the blocks to the north and south of University Avenue, as well as land use located directly on University Avenue. In the western portion of the University Avenue corridor, industrial facilities and office buildings occupy large areas of adjacent land. Larger office buildings and labor intensive operations may be considered good transit trip generators, but less intense land uses such as warehouses typically generate fewer riders. In the Midway area, University Avenue is four blocks north of Interstate 94 (I-94). To the south of University Avenue, between Snelling Avenue and Lexington Parkway, large surface parking lots serve regional shopping centers, a hotel, and a high-rise apartment building. While the layout of this area is more amenable to access by automobile than by transit and pedestrians, the concentration of shopping and employment makes it a major destination.

Along the middle and eastern portions of the corridor, the dominant land use pattern is a half block of commercial uses immediately adjacent to University Avenue, backed by residential areas as one proceeds further away from University Avenue. On the south side, between Snelling Avenue and Lexington Parkway, there is a big box retail, hotel, high rise apartments, and two major opportunity sites for redevelopment. This pattern is especially consistent to the north of University Avenue. While a few nodes of higher population density can be found, the majority of the housing units were originally constructed as single-family dwellings, some of which were subsequently divided into flats. Although there are only a few large apartment buildings, the shear number of housing units provides a large ridership base for the current transit service on University Avenue.

In general, the University Avenue portion of the Central Corridor has a land use pattern that is highly consistent with transit service, including a mix of retail, office, light industrial, and residential land uses that support transit service.

STATE CAPITOL AND DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL

The State Capitol area is located at the eastern end of University Avenue. At that location, office, hotel, and retail land uses are found on the Rice Street side of the State Capitol, while additional state offices and the Regions Hospital complex lie to the east of Jackson Street. The State Capitol and its landscaped mall are located between University Avenue on the north and I-94 to the south. The Capitol area has approximately 3,400[1/] jobs in the immediate area.

Downtown St. Paul is a compact concentration of offices, residential units, and entertainment venues situated on a bluff above the Mississippi River. Cedar Street is lined by the largest office towers in downtown St. Paul and bisects the office core to the east and west. Jackson Street defines the eastern extent of the office core and is the western boundary of the Lowertown Historic District. The new Xcel Energy Center Arena and the new Science Museum on the southwest edge of downtown anchor a growing entertainment district, which also includes Rice Park, the Ordway Theater, and the RiverCentre convention venue. Downtown St. Paul has approximately 63,700[1/] jobs.

3.2.2 Comprehensive and Small Area Plans

As a major commercial thoroughfare serving a large number of neighborhoods, industrial areas, and the historic route to Minneapolis, University Avenue has been the subject of continual planning efforts by the City of St. Paul, including the *St. Paul Comprehensive Plan.* Neighborhood organizations designated by the City of St. Paul complete Small Area Plans that the City adopts as amendments to the *St. Paul Comprehensive Plan.*

Transit improvements in the Central Corridor Study Area have been proposed for many years and potential alignments have been reviewed by designated neighborhood organizations. Since University Avenue serves as a boundary to four neighborhoods in the Midway area, the future of transit and redevelopment is a topic included in the Small Area Plans completed by a number of these designated neighborhood organizations. Other portions of the proposed Central Corridor transit project, such as in downtown St. Paul, have also been addressed in neighborhood plans.

Strong support for transit in major corridors is given in planning documents adopted by the Metropolitan Council and by the City of Minneapolis. The Metropolitan Council *Transportation Policy Plan*, dated January 2001, addresses LRT in the Central Corridor. The University of Minnesota has also addressed the provision of improved transit facilities in its *University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus Master Plan.* A brief review of relevant planning documents and statements regarding transit improvements are given below.

REGIONAL BLUEPRINT, TWIN CITIES METROPOLITAN AREA

The Regional Blueprint, Twin Cities Metropolitan Area was adopted by the Metropolitan Council in December 1996. The Plan calls for a focus on development in urban area, specifically transportation corridors. The plan states, in part: "The Council will promote major transit capital investments in the form of transitways or high-occupancy vehicle lanes in a number of transportation corridors (p. 56)."

[1/] Source: SRF Consulting Group using data from Twin Cities Metropolitan Council and City of St. Paul

[1/] [1/] Source: SRF Consulting Group using data from Twin Cities Metropolitan Council and City of St. Paul

THE MINNEAPOLIS PLAN

This comprehensive plan for the City of Minneapolis, *The Minneapolis Plan* was adopted by the City Council in 2000. The plan supports transit improvements in main growth centers identified as downtown and University of Minnesota.

THE ST. PAUL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, LAND USE PLAN

The *St. Paul Comprehensive Plan* is a comprehensive plan for the City of St. Paul that was adopted by the City Council in March 1999. The plan specifically addresses the Central Corridor project by stating under Strategy 3: Corridors for Growth, "The City supports the Central Corridor between downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis as the top priority for development of transitways - busways and/or LRT." Also under Objective 6.3: University Avenue Corridor, the plan states: "New urban housing, offices, retail, and industrial development should all contribute through density and site design to the ridership base for public transportation on the University Avenue and I-94 bus routes." A related plan graphic identifies specific redevelopment opportunities along the University Avenue corridor. The corridor development concept is detailed more fully in the Land Use and Transportation portions of the Comprehensive Plan.

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT (LRT) ON UNIVERSITY AVENUE: A REVIEW OF THE POTENTIAL

The St. Paul Planning Commission on November 5, 1999 adopted this report. The report to the planning commission investigated a feasible roadway cross section that would allow for LRT on University Avenue. The report concludes that: "A two-track light rail system connecting downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis can be accommodated well within the existing University Avenue right-of-way." In regard to economic development issues the report concludes that: "a light rail line would likely make a very positive contribution to improvement and development goals for University Avenue and its adjacent communities."

1999 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ST. PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION

The *1999 Annual Report of the Saint Paul Planning Commission* was adopted by the Commission in May 2000. In the report, Item 12 describes an effort by the Planning Commission to study the feasibility and viability of LRT on University Avenue. The Planning Commission specifically states: "Recommendations of the Planning Commission and Midway Chamber of Commerce resulted in the City Council not only endorsing the Central Corridor for LRT, but concluding that University Avenue was the only reasonable alignment within the Corridor."

A LIVABLE CAMPUS: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA TWIN CITIES CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

In 1996, the University of Minnesota Board of Regents adopted this campus master plan. The plan addresses transit improvements and states that: long term development of the LRT should be considered for Washington Avenue (p. 94)." The plan also recommends that: "Regional LRT service should be the centerpiece of the next generation of campus access and the University should take the lead in developing an appealing conceptual plan for the LRT route and station within the University (p. 107)." In regard to specific design issues that plans states: "The two outside lanes of the street [Washington Avenue] should be dedicated to a busway route, with the potential to accommodate LRT in the future (p. 174)."

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE MINNESOTA STATE CAPITOL AREA

The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB) adopted this plan for the State Capitol area in February 1998. LRT and BRT alternatives are both supported by the plan. The plan states under the heading of "LRT/Busway:" "Objective: Provide for availability in the long term of high-capacity transit serving the capitol area." The plan also states: "Explore options for University Avenue transitway," and "High-capacity transit may also aid area redevelopment by increasing demand for goods and services in the corridors it serves (p. 82)."

HISTORIC LOWERTOWN SMALL AREA PLAN

The St. Paul City Council adopted this Small Area Plan on October 5, 1994. The plan specifically supports: "development of Light Rail Transit with a stop a the Depot." The plan also calls for: "LRT alignment along the east side of Cedar Street and the south side of 4th Street," "a diagonal alignment across the St. Paul Athletic Club Block," and "three stations including, Museum Station at 11th and Cedar Streets, St. Paul Central on the diagonal block and Union Depot on 4th Street between Sibley and Wacouta (p. 18)." These recommendations were in agreement with the *Central Corridor Draft EIS* published in 1993.

THOMAS-DALE SMALL AREA PLAN AND FORTY ACRE STUDY

The St. Paul City Council adopted this Small Area Plan on April 2, 1997. Either a University Avenue LRT or BRT alternative would have potential to support the goals of the plan, specifically improvements and infill development on University Avenue. The plan advocates "supportive regional transportation and land use policies," and calls for "design oversight of the LRT station at Dale and I-94."

HAMLINE-MIDWAY COMMUNITY PLAN

The St. Paul City Council adopted this small area plan in 2001. A review of the plan for this document showed that LRT or BRT on University Avenue have potential to support the goals of the plan including improved transit service. Limited parking on University Avenue is mentioned as a concern that could be impacted by the transit alternatives.

SOUTH ST. ANTHONY PARK SMALL AREA PLAN AND 40-ACRE STUDY

The St. Paul City Council adopted this Small Area Plan on July 28, 1992. A review of the plan for this document showed that LRT or BRT on University Avenue have potential to support the goals of the plan, specifically in regard to the Raymond Avenue area. The plan specifically mentions left-turn lanes, parking, and streetscape issues as concerns that could be impacted by the transit alternatives.

ST. PAUL ON THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework* was adopted by the City Council in 1997 as the official urban design framework for downtown St. Paul and the central riverfront. The vision of the *Framework* is of a series of mixed-use urban villages connected to the Mississippi River that support a more balanced transportation system. Ten city-building principles from the core of the vision; those most relevant to the Central Corridor improvements

and related redevelopment/reinvestment include: 1) invest in the public realm; 2) broaden the mix of uses; 3) improve connectivity; and 4) provide a balanced network for movement. The framework encourages the redevelopment of underutilized sites in downtown and along the central riverfront in a way that provides a mix of live, work and recreational uses within walking distance of one another and connected to transit. Specifically, the vision supports less reliance on the car as the primary mode of movement and increased reliance on transit (bus, LRT, high-speed rail and commuter rail). Higher densities and broader land use mixes that support significant investments in an improved transit system are encouraged.

3.2.3 Zoning Codes

The previous section described planned land use based on Comprehensive Plans or Small Area Plans. This section describes the current pattern of zoning, which gives an indication of desired land use and provides the legal basis for shaping future development in the Study Area. It must be noted that zoning can indicate an existing condition, a condition that existed in the past, or a desired future condition, depending on when the zoning regulations were enacted or changed. The City of Minneapolis conducted a complete revision of its zoning code, resulting in a new code published in September 2000. The City of St. Paul is currently working to upgrade its zoning code.

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS ZONING CODES

Within the Study Area, downtown Minneapolis has specific zoning codes in the "B-4" classification that create business, service, and commercial districts allowing a wide variety of uses and high intensity of development. The University of Minnesota is zoned "OR-3 Institutional Office Residence District." This classification "is established to provide a mixed-use environment of very high density dwellings, large office uses, and major institutions . . .[and] may serve freestanding institutions and employment centers" (City of Minneapolis Zoning Code, Sec. 547.320). Zoning at Stadium Village is a mix of "C-3A, C-1, and C-2" classifications which allow a varying scale of commercial development. Parcels fronting on University Avenue are zoned for a mix of Office Residential and Commercial uses, backed by large areas of Industrial zoning to the north and Residential zoning to the south.

The existing zoning code in downtown, at the University of Minnesota campus, and along University Avenue allows high-intensity uses, which are already amenable and dependent on quality transit service. Minor adjustments to the zoning code may be considered in response to proposed transit station implementation. The Downtown East area where Hiawatha LRT enters the downtown is currently under study that will result in a new master plan with corresponding zoning for transit-oriented development.

CITY OF ST. PAUL ZONING CODE

Existing zoning along University Avenue in St. Paul is predominately "B-3 General Business District." This commercial zoning "is intended to provide sites for more diversified types of businesses than those in the B-1 and B-2 Business Districts, and is intended for location along major traffic arteries" (City of St. Paul Zoning Code, Sec. 60.540).

This zoning code allows a wide variety of commercial uses including small and large retail establishments, automobile dealerships and service stations, printing and small-scale manufacturing, and hospitals and motels. Indeed, all these uses are found along University Avenue, giving the corridor a broad mix of businesses in a wide variety of structures. The "OS-1 Office Service" classification is more restrictive than the "B-3 General Business" classification, as is the "B-2"

zoning code. The "OS-1" and "B-2" classifications are applied to some parcels in the corridor with a large area of "B-2" in the shopping center area at Snelling Avenue and University Avenue; and a small number of "Office Service" parcels defined along University Avenue.

A handful of parcels along University Avenue are zoned "I-1 Industrial District," which is the City's lightest industrial classification, allowing warehouse, wholesale, and assembly usage. The heavier industrial classification of "I-2" is found in the Midway Industrial District to the north and south of University Avenue between Highway 280 and Prior Avenue.

Many blocks along University Avenue have commercial zoning on parcels fronting the avenue, while the half block behind is zoned for residential use. This residential zoning is applied to large areas under the classification of "R-4 One-Family Residential District," but also includes "RT-1 Two-Family Residential District" and "RM-1" and "RM-2" which allow low and medium density multiple family dwellings. A number of parcels are zoned "P-1 Vehicular Parking District" which is used for parking lots ancillary to businesses, institutions, or multiple family residences.

The State Capitol area is outside the authority of the City of St. Paul zoning code. The CAAPB controls the land use in the State Capitol area. All of downtown St. Paul is zoned "B-4 Central Business District" allowing high-intensity commercial, residential, and institutional uses.

The City of St. Paul is currently reviewing its zoning code and may make changes to the zoning classifications to encourage a more intense mix of business and residential uses. Support of transit-oriented nodes is a specific point that the new code will address. The current configuration of land uses and related zoning codes along University Avenue is very conducive to transit-oriented development. The City may consider new zoning classifications within selected transit station planning areas to allow intensification of residential and commercial uses.

3.2.4 Major Activity Centers

The proposed transit project would link major trip generating land uses located in four major activity centers in the Central Corridor Study Area: downtown Minneapolis, University of Minnesota, Midway, and State Capitol and downtown St. Paul.

Downtown Minneapolis is the largest and highest density employment center in the Upper Midwest, with more than 160,000 employees. Downtown Minneapolis is also a cultural and entertainment center and has a growing residential population with over 26,000 residents. Major trip generators in downtown Minneapolis include:

- CBD with over 22 million square-feet of office space and 160,000 employees.
- City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County offices
- Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome stadium
- Target Center Arena
- Warehouse/Hennepin Avenue Entertainment District
- Nicollet Mall shopping district
- Hennepin County Medical Center
- Minneapolis Convention Center
- Minneapolis Public Library

- St. Thomas University
- Metropolitan State University
- High density residential neighborhoods along the Mississippi River, Hennepin Avenue, Loring Park, and Elliot Park

The University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus is the largest in the state system, sharing over 45,000 students with the smaller St. Paul campus. The university is also one of the largest employers in the region with over 27,000 faculty and staff positions. Major trip generators on campus include:

- Classrooms and laboratories on the West and East Banks
- Fairview-University Hospital
- Northrop Auditorium
- Walter Library
- Coffman Union
- Williams Arena
- Mariucci Arena

MIDWAY

The area between the University of Minnesota and the State Capitol is known as the Midway area, with a number of smaller districts such as Westgate, Raymond Avenue, and Frogtown located within the area. Employment in the Midway area is estimated to be over 84,000 jobs in a wide variety of industrial, institutional, service, and retail positions. Major nodes along University Avenue that have high volumes of cross traffic include Snelling (40,000 ADT), Hamline (15,300 ADT), Lexington (31,000 ADT), Dale (20,500 ADT) and Rice (14,000 ADT) generating even more activity. The largest numbers of jobs in the Midway area are concentrated in the following areas:

- Westgate
- Midway Industrial District
- Midway regional shopping area

STATE CAPITOL AND DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL

As the seat of state government and regional business center, over 63,500 persons are employed in downtown St. Paul. Hospitals are major employers as well as visitor destinations. The RiverCentre is a growing destination for entertainment and conventions on the west side of downtown. Major trip generators in downtown St. Paul include:

- State Capitol campus with over 2 million square-feet of office space in 11 buildings
- CBD with nearly 14 million square-feet of office space
- City of St. Paul and Ramsey County offices
- Regions Hospital
- HealthEast/St. Joseph's Hospital

- Gillette Children's Hospital
- Science Museum of Minnesota
- Minnesota Historical Society
- Xcel Energy Arena
- RiverCentre
- Lowertown Historic District

3.2.5 Consistency with Local Plans and Impacts Related to Land Use

BASELINE ALTERNATIVE

The Baseline Alternative is not consistent with the *City of St. Paul Comprehensive Plan*, which states that the Central Corridor is the City's top priority for LRT or busway transit improvements. The Baseline Alternative is inconsistent with the *University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus Master Plan*, which calls for improved bus transit and eventually LRT. In both downtowns, the Baseline Alternative would provide no relief in land use impact as it relates to the demand for parking, where the current parking demand frequently exceeds supply. It may be expected that continued development would further reduce land currently being used for parking lots and structures. The land use effect on the University of Minnesota campus is particularly problematic, in that a compact, walkable campus is precluded by the construction of large parking structures.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE LRT ALTERNATIVE

The *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* calls out I-94 as the primary transit route in the corridor. The *Plan*, written and adopted in 1997, reflected the policy of the day – that the RCRRA was to build LRT in the freeway median. However, in 1999 the City Council stated that if LRT were to be considered in the Central Corridor, the City would support only consideration of University Avenue.

LRT on Washington Avenue is consistent with the *University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus Master Plan,* which calls for improved bus transit and eventually LRT. However the master plan calls for an at-grade alignment on Washington Avenue and at-grade stations, not the below-grade facility proposed by the University Avenue LRT Alternative. In 2001 the University of Minnesota Board of Regents took a position favoring the proposed tunnel alignment. The proposed median alignment on University Avenue would place track and stations within existing Ramsey County and Hennepin County right-of-way, therefore the direct impacts to existing land use are limited to only a small number of takings. LRT would be an incentive to intensification of commercial nodes consistent with adopted plans and zoning. A transit-oriented development overlay district may be useful to allow higher intensity development near station sites.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE BUSWAY/BRT ALTERNATIVE

The University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative is fully consistent with *The Minneapolis Plan.* The Busway/BRT facility is only consistent with the *City of St. Paul Comprehensive Plan* insofar as a projected ridership can be accommodated. Since the Plan places such a high premium on redevelopment within this corridor any new infrastructure that cannot meet demand in the design year, would be inconsistent with the intent of the plan.

3.2.6 Mitigation Measures Related to Land Use

The City of Minneapolis and City of St. Paul may find it necessary to revise their comprehensive plans in response to the proposed implementation of either Central Corridor build alternative. Current commercial zoning along University Avenue allows transit-supporting land uses, however it may be useful to create a transit-oriented development overlay district to allow higher intensity development, especially in regard to multi-family residential uses.

3.3 NEIGHBORHOODS, COMMUNITY SERVICES, AND COMMUNITY COHESION

Neighborhoods, community facilities and community cohesion contribute to the social fabric of each community. These facilities are visited both by necessity and choice and provide essential public services within the communities. The community "sense" of neighborhoods and community facilities contributes to community cohesion. The way in which these neighborhood and community facilities are used and accessed can directly impact the well being and health of the communities.

3.3.1 Neighborhood Characteristics

The proposed University Avenue alignment for both the LRT and BRT Alternatives passes through 14 recognized neighborhoods as shown in Figure 3.1-1. The neighborhoods are:

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

- Downtown West
- Downtown East
- Elliot Park
- Cedar-Riverside
- University of Minnesota campus
- Prospect Park

CITY OF ST. PAUL

- Saint Anthony Park
- Hamline-Midway
- Thomas-Dale
- Merriam Park
- Snelling-Hamline
- Lexington-Hamline
- Summit-University
- Downtown St. Paul
- West Side (BRT alternative only)

Neighborhood boundaries and neighborhood associations have been established and designated by the city councils of Minneapolis and St. Paul. This section provides a description of each neighborhood, including major land use patterns, major thoroughfares, physical features and landmarks, community facilities, and functional aspects of the community. Major roadways and physical features, such as water bodies or parks, frequently define neighborhoods, yet also set boundaries and create barriers to access. Landmarks are those structures, business locations, and destinations that distinguish an area and contribute to wayfinding. Community facilities include schools, parks, libraries, fire stations, police stations, hospitals, and churches. These facilities are the basis of community formation and daily life of the local area, generating repeated trips by residents.

Downtown Minneapolis (West, East, and Elliot Park) (Figure 3.3-1: Downtown Minneapolis [West, East] Elliot Park) is a major activity center in the Central Corridor. The area designated as Downtown West is the office core consisting of a high concentration of leaseable, private, and public office space. Downtown East is an area between the Mississippi River and Elliot Park neighborhood with Fifth Street as the boundary between the two. Major routes with bridges crossing the Mississippi are Washington Avenue, Third Avenue, Hennepin Avenue, and Interstate 35W (I-35W). Nicollet Mall is a bus transitway/pedestrian mall providing access to the retailing and office core. The Hiawatha Corridor LRT serves downtown via Fifth Street.

Downtown Minneapolis is organized into functional districts, including the office core, Warehouse/Hennepin entertainment district, Nicollet Mall retail district, government services core, and a ring of parking structures and lots. Residential uses are concentrated on the riverfront and along Hennepin Avenue. Downtown East is dominated by the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome stadium and surface parking lots, but also includes the historic milling district along the riverfront. Large-scale physical features of the downtown include the Mississippi River to the north, the grid of one-way paired streets, and I-394 spur west of the Warehouse District which is paralleled by a Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) mainline.

Downtown Minneapolis has a number of signature office towers including the Foshay Tower, IDS Tower, and Norwest Tower. The historic City Hall with clock tower is located between the Hennepin County Government Center and the Federal Courthouse. The white dome of the Metrodome is the most recognizable landmark in Downtown East, and is located where the Central Corridor merges with the Hiawatha Corridor.

The **Cedar-Riverside** neighborhood (Figure 3.3-2: Downtown East, Elliot Park, Cedar-Riverside) is located between Downtown East and the University of Minnesota campus. The neighborhood is named for Cedar Avenue and Riverside Avenue, which intersect to form a commercial and entertainment district known as the West Bank. South of Riverside and west of Cedar Avenue is a "new town within town" high-rise development that has housed successions of immigrants, currently home to a large East African population. Seven Corners is the name of the area where Washington Avenue meets Cedar Avenue and 10th Street Southeast with taverns, restaurants, theaters, a hotel, and new residential development all serving hotel guests, local residents and the University of Minnesota campus. The neighborhood's population is a diverse mix of students, Native Americans, East Africans, and seniors.

I-35W is the western boundary of Cedar-Riverside and I-94 its southern limit. The University of Minnesota campus and the Mississippi River border the area on the east. The Hiawatha Corridor LRT enters the neighborhood in a former freight railroad right-of-way just west of Cedar Avenue, where the new LRT yard and shops are located across the street from a group of roadhouse clubs. The proposed Central Corridor LRT alternative would also utilize this new LRT maintenance

facility. The Riverside Towers are the most recognizable landmarks in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood. The Holiday Inn Metrodome Hotel rises above Seven Corners.

The **University of Minnesota** campus (Figure 3.3-3: Cedar-Riverside, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis Campus) is an entity with home rule powers independent of the City of Minneapolis and State of Minnesota. The University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus is divided by the Mississippi River into the historic East Bank and the newer West Bank area. The Washington Avenue Bridge connects the two banks, providing a top deck for pedestrians and bicycles and a lower deck for vehicular traffic. The West Bank has been developed with a plaza that meets the pedestrian deck level, while the campus on the East Bank is further divided by at-grade traffic on Washington Avenue.

The West Bank is home to the Law School, School of Management, Art Building, Wilson Library, and other halls with classrooms and offices for the social science departments. The configuration is in the Modernist style organized around pedestrian plazas. The historic heart of the campus is on the East Bank of the Mississippi between the river and University Avenue. Major features include Northrup Mall, a traditional campus mall with Northrup Memorial Auditorium at the north end and flanked by Walter Library and other halls with classrooms and laboratories. The Coffman Memorial Union is cut off from the mall by traffic and a chain link fence on Washington Avenue, which is spanned by two pedestrian bridges. The University Hospital and associated clinics and laboratories occupy much of the land south of Washington Avenue to the river.

The Stadium Village area between Washington Avenue and University Avenue at Oak Street was the former site of Memorial Stadium, but has been redeveloped with a new Visitor Center and Aquatic Center. The Stadium Village area includes private retail and hospitality businesses fronting on Washington Avenue and Oak Street. Minneapolis Fire Station No. 19 is located one block east of Oak Street on Ontario Street Southeast. Dinkytown lies north of University Avenue, the retail focus of the campus and a complex of sports facilities, including Mariucci Hockey Arena and Williams Arena. The University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus houses nearly 5,000 student residents in dormitory rooms, however the majority of students live off campus, making the University of Minnesota one of the largest commuter campuses in the nation. The demand for parking has led to construction of a large number of parking structures on campus.

The **Prospect Park** and **East River Road** neighborhood (Figure 3.3-4: Prospect Park, Westgate, St. Anthony Park) is located between of the University of Minnesota campus and the eastern city and county limit. The neighborhood is predominantly residential to the south of University Avenue, but includes the industrial area north of University Avenue to the BNSF railroad line. The residential area is one of the oldest in the city and has many large and well-kept homes.

Physical features in Prospect Park include the southern boundary formed by the Mississippi River and the BNSF mainline as the northern boundary. I-94 cuts through the southern portion of Prospect Park, separating the area along East River Road from the rest of the neighborhood. A large interchange at Huron Boulevard and I-94 separates the Stadium Village area from the River Road area. The major east-west routes are University Avenue and Franklin Avenue, while 27th Avenue SE is the major north-south route.

The most prominent landmark in Prospect Park is the "witches hat" tower in Tower Park just south of University Avenue. The nine-story University Park Plaza office building and KSTP television tower are also recognizable landmarks along University Avenue. Community facilities serving Prospect Park include Pratt Community School, Luxton Park, Tower Hill Park, and Prospect Park United Methodist Church.

The Westgate area lies between Prospect Park and Highway 280 in the city of St. Paul. This area consists of a growing business park, north of University Avenue and an area of mixed land uses to the south, including a single block of houses surrounded by industrial plants and warehouses along Curfew Street.

East of Highway 280 and north of I-94 is the **Saint Anthony Park** neighborhood (Figures 3.3-4 and 3.3-5: St. Anthony Park, Midway Industrial District, Hamline-Midway, Merriam Park), which is divided by the BNSF mainline into north and south neighborhood units, and the area to the east includes the Midway Industrial District.

Due to the railroad tracks, Highway 280, I-94, and the industrial district, the residential areas of Saint Anthony Park are somewhat isolated. However, the quality of the original plat by Horace Cleveland, which follows the rolling terrain and the construction of many fine homes in the early decades of the twentieth century, provides a stable base for the community. Neighborhood businesses at the intersection of Raymond Avenue and University Avenue also add to community function and identity.

Community facilities and landmarks within the St. Anthony Park neighborhood include: Westgate Business Park, Court International and Court West, Hampden Park, South Saint Anthony Park and Recreation Center, Seal High-Rise, Midtown Commons, and the Raymond Avenue commercial node.

In the Midway area University Avenue becomes the boundary of six neighborhoods. The **Hamline-Midway** neighborhood (Figures 3.3-5, 3.3-6: Hamline-Midway, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, and 3.3-7: Hamline-Midway, Thomas-Dale (Frogtown), Lexington-Hamline, Summit-University) is located north of University Avenue from Transfer Road to Lexington Parkway. This large neighborhood has Snelling Avenue as its main north to south route. Commercial land uses and multi-family dwellings front on Snelling Avenue from University Avenue north to Hamline University. The BNSF mainline is Hamline-Midway's northern boundary. Industrial uses are found on the western edge of the neighborhood, but residential is the predominate land use in the vicinity of Snelling and University Avenues.

The intersection at Snelling and University Avenues is both a neighborhood commercial node and a regional destination, due to the importance of the two avenues as thoroughfares, and because of the Midway regional shopping area. The node was an important intersection of streetcar lines and remains a nexus of bus routes today.

The Hamline-Midway neighborhood has a number of private and public schools including Wilson Middle School, Galtier School, and Saint Columba School. Hamline University is a major feature of the neighborhood and is located a little over one-half mile north of University Avenue. The YMCA and Community Learning Center are also important community facilities.

South of University Avenue to Summit Avenue, the **Merriam Park** neighborhood (Figure 3.3-5) stretches from the Mississippi River to Snelling Avenue. Between Snelling Avenue and Hamline is the **Snelling-Hamline** neighborhood (Figure 3.3-6). The **Lexington-Hamline** neighborhood (Figure 3.3-7) is located between Hamline Avenue and Lexington Parkway. In addition to this segmentation along major north to south routes (Snelling, Hamline, and Lexington) the area is also divided in an east-west direction by I-94.

A small residential neighborhood unit is located between I-94 and University Avenue and centered around Iris Park. Residential is also the main land use between Fairview Avenue and Snelling Avenue, although interrupted by the HealthEast Midway campus. The area bounded by University, Snelling, and Hamline Avenues, and I-94 is a regional shopping destination known as Midway Shopping Center, with "big box" retailers and fast food restaurants. This shopping area serves many of the surrounding neighborhoods and is a major regional destination. Development between Hamline Avenue and Lexington Parkway is more varied in quality and has been designated as a focus of current city planning efforts. South of I-94, residential uses are common, but mixed with some industrial and institutional uses adjacent to the freeway.

A wide variety and large number of community facilities and landmarks are found in the Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, and Lexington-Hamline communities. These include parks such as Merriam Park, Iris Park, Dunning Field and Jimmy Lee Recreation Center. Medical facilities include the Lynhurst Health Care Center, HealthEast Midway campus, and Central Medical. Shopping destinations, which are also major employers, include Rainbow Foods, Cub Foods, Walgreens, Herbergers, Kmart, and Target. The Spruce Tree Center is a mixed-use office complex. The Four Points Hotel offers conference and meeting rooms. Large housing developments include the Iris Park Common Retirement complex and the very large Skyline Tower high-rise apartment building adjacent to the freeway, between Hamline Avenue and Lexington Parkway. Other notable landmarks include Porky's Drive-In, the Metro Transit Bus Barn (slated for redevelopment), and south of the freeway, Concordia University and St. Paul Central High School.

Lexington Parkway, the BNSF mainline, Interstate 35E (I-35E) and University Avenue bound the **Thomas-Dale** neighborhood (Figures 3.3-7 and 3.3-8: Thomas-Dale (Frogtown), Aurora-St. Anthony, Summit-University). This large area is predominately single-family and duplex residential dwellings. The area between University Avenue and I-94 is known locally as Aurora-St. Anthony, named for the northern and southern local streets. A few commercial uses are found along Dale Street, but University Avenue provides the majority of business sites serving the area. Nodes of community activity and commerce are located at the Dale and Western Avenue intersections with University Avenue in the area known locally as "Frogtown."

The Thomas-Dale neighborhood has a long history of welcoming immigrants. Recent renovations and reuse of commercial property along University Avenue have been spurred by the establishment of restaurants and shops owned by Southeast Asian and Mexican immigrants.

Community facilities and landmarks are mainly schools and churches, including St. Steven's Lutheran Church, Church of St. Agnes and School, Jackson Elementary, and St. Vincent DePaul School. Fire Station No.18 and a Police District Office are located on University Avenue near the intersection with Dale Street. The large neighborhood has only three small parks: Ryan Park, Horseshoe Park and Scheffer Recreation Center.

The final of the four neighborhoods in the University Avenue and Lexington Parkway quadrant is **Summit-University** (Figures 3.3-7 and 3.3-8). This neighborhood extends from Lexington Parkway to Marion Street. It has University Avenue as its northern boundary and extends south to Summit Avenue. Bridges cross the I-94 freeway at Lexington Parkway, Dale Street, Victoria Avenue, Western Avenue and Marion Avenue. Two pedestrian bridges also connect across the freeway.

Between University Avenue and I-94, housing is the main land use. Commercial land uses are concentrated along University Avenue and at the intersections with Lexington, Dale and Western Avenues. The Unidale Mall, at University Avenue and Dale Street, is the largest shopping mall

in the area known as "Frogtown", however, plans have been approved to redevelop the site as an Asian center with office, retail, and senior housing units. Recent immigrants from Southeast Asia and Mexico have started to revitalize the area by starting a number of businesses in storefronts along University Avenue. Frogtown is also home to businesses owned by African Americans that service the diverse population.

Community facilities and landmarks include the Unidale Mall, an urban farmer's market at Dale and University Avenues, Mount Olivet Baptist Church, and school and Church of Saint Peter Claver. Parks and schools include Maxfield Elementary School, Jimmy Lee Recreation Center, Carty Park, and Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center.

In addition to functioning as the CBD, **downtown St. Paul** (Figures 3.3-9: Summit-University, State Capitol Area and 3.3-10: Capitol Area, Downtown St. Paul, Lowertown) is also a designated neighborhood. University Avenue is the northern boundary and the Mississippi River the southern limit. The western boundary follows a path from Marion Street to Kellogg Boulevard, while to the east, this downtown neighborhood is bounded by I-94 and Highway 52. This definition of the downtown St. Paul neighborhood includes the Minnesota State Capitol area. I-94 cuts between the capitol and the CBD.

The St. Paul CBD is a compact eight blocks in depth from I-94 to the Mississippi River bluff. The heart of the office core is south of 7th Street and centered on Cedar Street. With the completion of the new Xcel Center Arena, Minnesota Science Museum, and RiverCenter convention hall, the west end of downtown St. Paul is becoming a major regional entertainment destination. The northeast corner of downtown is also being redeveloped as a new medium-density residential area. East of Jackson Street is the historic Lowertown District consisting of a number of large warehouse buildings converted to office and residential uses. The Union Depot is a landmark train depot in Lowertown that may be restored as a multimodal hub of commuter and regional rail service.

Downtown St. Paul has many landmarks and community facilities. Large office towers include the World Trade Center, North Central Life Tower, Piper Jaffray Plaza, Firstar Center, and 401 Robert. Other large buildings and employers include the St. Paul Companies, Lawson Commons, and Minnesota Mutual. Galtier Plaza is the largest residential tower. Community facilities and landmarks include the Ordway Theater, Landmark Center, and City Hall. Downtown also has two large medical complexes, Regions Hospital and Saint Joseph's Hospital. The most recognizable landmark is the State Capitol that sits on the crest of the hill, which descends through downtown St. Paul to the Mississippi River bluff.

Across the Mississippi River from downtown St. Paul is the **West Side** neighborhood (Figure 3.3-10), referring to its position on the west bank of the river. Currently the River Flats area is underdeveloped with low-rise office and light industrial buildings and large parking lots dominating the land use. However, this area is the subject of published plans to create a substantial new mixed-use residential development. A stable residential neighborhood is located on the bluffs above the River Flats area.

The recently rebuilt Wabasha Street Bridge and the Robert Street Bridge provide river-crossing connections to downtown St. Paul. Harriet Island Regional Park is a main community facility and the Wabasha Street Caves is an interesting landmark. Major employers and buildings include Health Partners and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

3.3.2 Impacts Related to Neighborhoods

This section evaluates the effect of the Baseline, the proposed University Avenue LRT and University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternatives on the quality and cohesion of neighborhoods and community services in the Central Corridor Study Area.

METHODOLOGY

Neighborhood impacts associated with the proposed alternatives are assessed in terms of the effects on neighborhood integrity and potential changes to quality of life. Factors considered include the effect of the alternative on the following:

- Level of transit service in the Central Corridor Study Area;
- Connectivity and circulation patterns for pedestrian and bicycle access;
- Displacements through acquisition of land and demolition of existing structures;
- Traffic levels, traffic patterns, and parking;
- Visual obtrusions in the urban environment.

BASELINE ALTERNATIVE

The projected increase in traffic over the next 20 years will have an effect on the existing quality of life in Central Corridor neighborhoods. Higher employment levels in major activity centers will cause an increase in the number of vehicles operating in the Central Corridor, resulting in more congestion and reduced pedestrian accessibility. The Baseline Alternative does not include implementation of any projects in the Central Corridor that would provide new options for travel, while an increase in congestion on I-94 and University Avenue would result in an increase in the use of local neighborhood streets for trips within the Study Area. The positive impacts offered by the two build alternatives, such as improved mobility, new transportation options, and the increased accessibility that would act as a catalyst for redevelopment projects, would not be provided with the Baseline Alternative. Although both build alternatives provide increased transit usage, LRT can meet the travel demand while BRT will not.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE LRT ALTERNATIVE

The evaluation of potential University Avenue LRT Alternative impacts to neighborhoods and major activity centers in the Central Corridor is given for the broad districts of downtown Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus, University Avenue, State Capitol area, and downtown St. Paul. Although both build alternatives provide for increased transit usage, the LRT Alternative can meet the travel demand while the BRT Alternative cannot.

Downtown Minneapolis

This section identifies the potential impacts to the Downtown West and Downtown East neighborhoods.

The proposed University Avenue LRT vehicles would operate on tracks and use stations constructed for the Hiawatha LRT line in downtown Minneapolis. Transit service to downtown Minneapolis would be improved by the high-capacity service from this proposed Central Corridor project that would provide better connections from downtown Minneapolis to the University of Minnesota campus, Midway, and downtown St. Paul.

The proposed University Avenue LRT vehicles would double the number of LRT vehicles operating on Fifth Street. The increased stacking and movement of LRT vehicles on Fifth Street may create additional barriers to pedestrian and bicycle movement. There would be no displacements or acquisitions of private property.

Any cumulative impacts caused by operation of the proposed University Avenue LRT vehicles on Hiawatha track would be most evident in the area of traffic congestion, as discussed in Chapter 6.0 Transportation Impact Analysis. There would not be any additional stations or overhead contact system (OCS) for the proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative therefore there would not be any additional visual impact.

University of Minnesota Minneapolis Campus

This section identifies the potential University Avenue LRT Alternative impacts to the Cedar-Riverside neighborhoods and the University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus.

The proposed University Avenue LRT would pass through Cedar-Riverside, but would be on the below-grade section of Washington Avenue and would not have any impact on neighborhood cohesion. Service to Cedar-Riverside would be from the West Bank Station. Three stations are proposed to serve the University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus. LRT service between the West Bank and East Bank stations would substantially improve the connection across the Mississippi River for students, faculty, and visitors to the campus. The high-capacity transit may also reduce a major dependence on access to the campus via private automobiles and reduce the need for surface parking and parking garages.

The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would have some impact on the pedestrian environment on campus. The existing barrier between Northrup Mall and the Coffman Union caused by traffic on Washington Avenue would remain, with the addition of retaining walls, fencing, and below-grade LRT tracks and station. Pedestrian bridges over Washington Avenue to allow passage from Northrup Mall to Coffman Union are anticipated regardless of the alternative selected. A tunnel portal would be located at Church Street. An existing pedestrian tunnel under Washington Avenue would be displaced by the construction of the tunnel for the LRT facilities. This tunnel, which connects from a parking garage to the hospital campus, is part of an extensive system of underground passageways that connect buildings on the University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus.

The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would displace some buildings in the campus area. The proposed Stadium Village Station and track alignment would displace two commercial structures and City of Minneapolis Fire Station No. 19 in the area between Oak Street and Ontario Street. The station and an associated bus drop-off would displace both public on-street parking and parking spaces owned by the University of Minnesota. A short street connecting Oak Street and Ontario Street would be vacated for the station, thereby limiting access for vehicles and pedestrians. The new below-grade crossings between University Avenue and Huron Boulevard would displace a two-story structure housing the University of Minnesota Press. The below-grade open cut north of University Avenue would introduce a barrier to pedestrian access in an area providing access to surface parking lots. Consequently, relocated pedestrian walkways would have to be added to preserve access to parking areas.

Existing traffic levels on Washington Avenue cause frequent congestion during the day. The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would improve this condition, as it would permit a reduction of through buses over this segment of roadway.

University Avenue

In the University Avenue corridor the proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would provide improved transit service to Prospect Park neighborhood in Minneapolis. In St. Paul service would be provided to the Westgate area, Saint Anthony Park, Hamline-Midway, Thomas-Dale, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Lexington-Hamline, and Summit-University. The increased access brought by transit improvements and the siting of LRT stations may act as a catalyst to new investment in the University Avenue corridor. Proposed stations would also be new community facilities that would add to the stature of the adjacent neighborhoods and serve as focal points of daily activity.

The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would have both negative and positive impacts on the pedestrian environment. At present University Avenue is a busy four-lane arterial roadway with parking on both sides of the road in most areas and sidewalks providing access to businesses and community facilities. Pedestrian crossings of University Avenue are officially limited to marked crosswalks at signalized and unsignalized intersections. A concrete median found at some intersections provides a space to stand if crossing the intersection takes more than one cycle of the traffic signal and this median would be displaced for LRT track and stations. Parked cars provide a buffer between moving traffic lanes and the sidewalk.

Pedestrian crossing of University Avenue would remain much the same at signalized intersections, with the additional issue of crossing the LRT tracks. The movement of LRT vehicles through intersections will present an additional vehicular barrier to pedestrians and bicyclists, although the number of buses would be reduced. Pedestrian activity would increase at intersection station sites, which would give pedestrians a higher profile on the street and improve the pedestrian environment. Concentrations of pedestrians at stations would also create new opportunities for certain types of businesses. Illegal mid-block crossing of University Avenue would become more difficult due to the presence of LRT vehicles and track.

On-Street parking in St. Paul would not be permitted along University Avenue near proposed station sites and where medians are reconstructed for realigned left-turn lanes. The actual loss of parking is minimal because many of these intersections currently ban parking to allow for right turn lanes. In the locations where parking is lost, the impact is borne by businesses fronting University Avenue. Evaluation of parking use indicates that more on-street parking spaces will remain with LRT than are projected to be demanded along most of University Avenue.

A partial displacement of three small one-story commercial structures may occur north of the proposed Fairview Avenue Station site. Preliminary engineering (PE) would reexamine the design and location of the proposed station to reduce or eliminate the impact to any property. This would be the only displacement of structures along University Avenue, from 29th Avenue SE to just west of Rice Street. One additional building would be displaced at Rice Street described below. Alternative station locations near this node that avoid displacement will be identified during PE.

Turning movements along University Avenue will be restricted more than the current environment. This will cause more right-in and right-out movements. In addition, there will be many more U-turns at signals which will have left-turn prioritization signals to protect such movements. The reduction of left-turn lanes will impact businesses whose customers may need to drive one or two additional blocks to make a U-turn. Some drivers may decide to find new routes on blocks to the north or south of University Avenue, thereby increasing traffic levels on those streets.

If current curb lines are maintained, all on-street parking would be displaced along University Avenue between 29th Avenue SE and Westgate Drive in the Prospect Park neighborhood. This loss of on-street parking would impact adjacent properties, especially businesses. In addition, the drive lanes on both sides of University Avenue would be moved immediately next to the curb, which would impact the perceived safety and comfort of pedestrians on sidewalks. Just west of Bedford Street the drive lane would be moved a few feet south, and the sidewalk on the south side of University Avenue would be brought up to the facade of a commercial building.

The introduction of the LRT tracks and OCS may improve the visual quality of the University Avenue corridor by creating a new, unifying element in the middle of the wide roadway. However, as with BRT, station canopies and other platform facilities need to be designed to avoid creating a barrier to visual access across the street at intersections, thereby blocking the view to some business signs from the far side of the street. The LRT Alternative would revise the entire right-of-way providing an opportunity to improve the appearance of the corridor.

State Capitol

This section identifies the potential University Avenue LRT Alternative impacts to the State Capitol area.

The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would provide improved transit service to the State Capitol and related state offices in downtown St. Paul. The proposed Rice Street Station would also provide service to the Summit-University and Thomas-Dale neighborhoods.

The proposed Rice Street Station would provide good access to the capitol area pedestrian tunnel system connecting the capitol and surrounding state office buildings. A small one-story building at the southwest corner of Rice Street and University Avenue, dominated by a check cashing business, would be displaced; however this building is within an area already identified for development of a new state office building. Three small commercial structures, one containing a daycare center and the two others used by the State of Minnesota Plant Management Division, would be displaced along the west side of Robert Street between Constitution Avenue and Columbus Avenue. A National Guard armory would be displaced at the corner of Columbus Avenue and Cedar Street, however the displacement would have no appreciable effect on the neighborhood. The CAAPB has already planned their displacement. These buildings are in the State Capitol area and their displacement would not substantially impact adjacent neighborhoods.

The existing right-of-way for University Avenue is narrower between Rice Street and Robert Street than to the west of Rice Street, and the proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would reduce the four drive lanes to a single lane in each direction in this area. Robert Street leads to a bridge over the Mississippi River and is therefore a major route connecting to University Avenue. The southbound lanes on Robert Street would also be reduced from two to one lane from University Avenue to Columbus Avenue. The proposed reduction in lanes on Robert Street would cause an increase in traffic congestion and cause drivers to seek new routes around the capitol. The intersection of Minnesota Street and Columbus Avenue would be closed by the placement of the Capitol East Station.

A main concern in serving the State Capitol area is the impact on views to the capitol. The proposed alignment to the north of the capitol reduces this potential impact because the north side of the capitol is considered the back facade, while the south facade is considered the front of the building. The view to the south facade is more prominent because of its position facing the Mississippi River valley and the campus has been designed to direct views across the Capitol Mall to the south facade. The introduction of LRT tracks and OCS would have an impact on the views of the north facade.

Downtown St. Paul

This section identifies the potential University Avenue LRT Alternative impacts to the downtown St. Paul neighborhood.

The proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would improve transit service to downtown St. Paul. The pedestrian environment may be improved by the reduction of drive lanes and the closing of two blocks of Cedar Street and 4th Street to private vehicles. Yet the introduction of LRT vehicles into the narrow right-of-ways in downtown St. Paul may create new conflicts between pedestrians and LRT patrons as they await the next transit vehicle.

The proposed alternative would impact sidewalks at the 6th Street and 4th Street Stations. These side platform stations would utilize existing sidewalk space for the station platforms. Pedestrians walking through these areas would be allowed onto the station platform. The pedestrian environment on Cedar Street may improve with the introduction of the 6th Street Station located between 7th Place and 6th Street. Currently the area lacks vitality due to the blank street level walls of surrounding structures.

No structures would be displaced in downtown St. Paul. The circular drive in front of the Union Depot would be displaced and a new driveway would be constructed.

Traffic patterns in downtown St. Paul would be altered. Cedar Street between 7th and 5th Streets would be reduced to a single drive lane. 4th Street would be reduced from its current two-way traffic to a single lane with traffic moving west, and closed between Minnesota and Robert Streets at the station site. On-street parking along 4th Street would be removed. LRT vehicles would operate next to the sidewalk on the south side of the street and automobiles and trucks would operate next to the sidewalk on the north side of the street. LRT vehicles operating in both directions on 4th Street would fill much of the roadway operating envelope, creating a new presence on what is now a relatively quiet street. Pedestrians crossing 4th Street would need to consider the movement of LRT vehicles traveling in both directions. The overall impacts of the lane reductions and block closings in downtown St. Paul would reduce access to some blocks and require new signage to reduce confusion for wayfinding and traffic movement.

Visual impacts in downtown St. Paul would include the introduction of LRT stations, tracks and OCS. Visual impacts of LRT stations would be most apparent in front of the Union Depot; however, the symbolic relationship between rail transit modes presents an opportunity for station architecture to reduce this potential impact.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE BUSWAY/BRT ALTERNATIVE

The evaluation of potential University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative impacts to neighborhoods and major activity centers in the Central Corridor Study Area is given for the broad districts of downtown Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus, University Avenue, State Capitol area, and downtown St. Paul. The evaluation for the proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative also includes the West Side neighborhood across the Mississippi River from downtown St. Paul.

Downtown Minneapolis

This section identifies the potential impacts to the Downtown West and Downtown East neighborhoods.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would improve transit service to downtown Minneapolis. The BRT vehicles would operate in mixed traffic on Fourth Street, using an existing bus lane for westbound traffic and a shared lane traveling east. The additional buses on Fourth Street would impede the pedestrian and bicycle crossings. There would not be any displacements or acquisition of property. The addition of fare vending equipment would reduce the sidewalk area for pedestrians at locations where a BRT stop occurs.

There would not be any loss of parking spaces in downtown Minneapolis.

University of Minnesota Minneapolis Campus

This section identifies the potential impacts to the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood and the University of Minneapolis campus. Service would be provided to Cedar-Riverside from stations on the Cedar Avenue ramps to Washington Avenue.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT service between the West Bank Station and East Bank Station would improve the connection across the Mississippi River for students, faculty, and visitors to the campus. If BRT capacity were high enough, it may also reduce a major dependence on access to the campus via private automobiles and reduce the need for surface parking and parking garages. Bus congestion is already a problem along Washington Avenue, and the ability to add new bus service is limited.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would add an impediment to the pedestrian and bicycle environment on the University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus. Sidewalks would be widened at proposed BRT station sites to accommodate fare vending machines. There would not be any displacements or acquisition of property.

There would not be any loss of parking spaces on Washington Avenue. The addition of BRT vehicles on Washington Avenue would not have a major impact on overall traffic levels. There would not be any direct visual impact, however, bus congestion would worsen and the additional congestion would add visual impact.

University Avenue

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT vehicles would operate in mixed traffic in the City of Minneapolis section of University Avenue, from the intersection of Washington Avenue to Bedford Street.

The right-of-way on University Avenue is wider in St. Paul, allowing the BRT vehicles to move to diamond lanes in the center of the road from Bedford to Constitution Avenue. This exclusive lane alignment would improve the BRT service, and the BRT line would improve transit service to all the neighborhoods along University Avenue, including the Westgate area, Saint Anthony Park, Hamline-Midway, Thomas-Dale, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Lexington-Hamline, and Summit-University. The increased mobility provided by transit improvements and the siting of proposed BRT stations may act as a catalyst to new investment in the University Avenue area. Proposed BRT stations would also be new community facilities that would add to the stature of the adjacent neighborhoods and serve as focal points of daily activity.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would not cause any displacement of structures. On-street parking spaces would be displaced along University Avenue near proposed station sites and where medians are reconstructed to channelize drive lanes closer to the curbs to create space for realigned left-turn lanes. The number of spaces displaced would vary given that

some of the intersections have limited on-street parking. This loss of on-street parking spaces would impact businesses fronting on University Avenue in all the impacted neighborhoods.

An impact at the neighborhood level would be the restriction of turning movements for vehicles from University Avenue into roadside parcels to right-in and right-out movement, which would impact accessibility to several businesses. In addition, more U-turns are likely at signalized intersections in order for drivers to double-back to access a business or to head in their desired direction. Some drivers may decide to find new routes on blocks to the north or south of University Avenue, thereby increasing traffic levels on those streets. Truck routes must be planned to provide access to businesses.

State Capitol

This section identifies the potential impacts to the State Capitol area.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would provide improved transit service to the State Capitol and related state offices in downtown St. Paul. The proposed Rice Street Station would provide service to the Summit-University and Thomas-Dale neighborhoods. From Rice Street into downtown St. Paul the BRT would resume operation in mixed traffic without any exclusive lanes.

The proposed Rice Street Station would provide good access to the State Capitol area pedestrian tunnel system connecting the capitol and surrounding state office buildings. There would not be any displacement of structures or parking in the capitol area. There would be increases in bus and automobile traffic and emissions when compared to the LRT Alternative.

The proposed BRT would operate in front of the State Capitol on Constitution Avenue, then on Cedar Street, following existing bus routes. The visual impact to the State Capitol would be negligible.

Downtown St. Paul

This section identifies potential University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative impacts to the downtown St. Paul neighborhood.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would improve transit service to downtown St. Paul. The BRT would operate in diamond lanes. New BRT stations or shelters including fare vending machines would be installed on sidewalks. The introduction of Busway/BRT stations onto the narrow downtown sidewalks in St. Paul may create new conflicts between pedestrians and Busway/BRT patrons as they await the next buses.

There would not be any loss of parking spaces in downtown St. Paul. Since there are already a high number of buses operating in downtown St. Paul, the addition of proposed BRT vehicles would not impact the downtown neighborhoods, and would not impact overall traffic levels. The BRT Alternative would potentially result in more automobile traffic using downtown streets and parking.

West Side

This section identifies potential University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative impacts to the West Side neighborhood.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would cross the Mississippi River on the Robert Street Bridge to the West Side neighborhood on the bank opposite downtown St. Paul.

The improved transit service to the West Side neighborhood could act as a catalyst for redevelopment in the area. There would not be any impacts to the pedestrian or bicycle environment.

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would operate in existing traffic on the Robert Street Bridge and surface streets in the West Side neighborhood. The BRT would utilize an existing bus layover at Rive Park Plaza. The proposed BRT would not cause major impacts to traffic levels, there would not be any displacement of parking and there would not be any visual impacts.

3.3.3 Impacts Related to Construction

Construction impacts associated with the proposed build alternatives may result in temporary air quality, noise, vibration, water quality, visual, and access impacts in any of the neighborhoods located in the Central Corridor Study Area.

Any air quality impacts associated with construction activities would be temporary and would be in the form of emissions from diesel-powered construction equipment and wind-blown dust. Air pollution associated with the creation of airborne particles would be effectively controlled through the use of watering or the application of calcium chloride in accordance with Best Management Practices.

Noise and vibration impacts could result from heavy equipment movement and construction activities such as compaction. Potential noise and vibration impacts would be controlled through the use of Best Management Practices. Potential water quality impacts from soil erosion would be controlled through the use of Best Management Practices.

Some construction equipment and materials stored for the project may be visually displeasing to local residents. This would be a temporary situation and would result in no long-lasting effects. Maintenance of traffic and sequence of construction would be planned and scheduled so as to minimize traffic delays and inconvenience. Access to all neighborhoods would be maintained throughout the construction period.

3.3.4 Potential Mitigation Measures

For both the University Avenue LRT Alternative and University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative the negative impacts to neighborhoods are limited to displacement of structures, loss of on-street parking spaces, and potential effects on traffic patterns. Mitigation for these impacts is discussed in subsequent chapters and include:

- Displacements and Relocation
- Parking
- Roadway Operations

The displacement of structures for the proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative would be limited to the Stadium Village Station, the Fairview Avenue Station, Rice Street Station, Robert Street and Columbus Avenue. The CAAPB already has plans to relocate the activities at Rice Street, Robert Street and Columbus Avenue. The limited number of displacements is not likely to have any major impact on neighborhoods. A new location for City of Minneapolis Fire Station No. 19 would need to be found in the Stadium Village area. The potential displacements on

Fairview Avenue and Rice Street are older structures containing small businesses that could be relocated. PE would reexamine the design and location of the proposed Fairview Avenue Station to reduce or eliminate the impact to any property. The daycare center on Robert Street that would be displaced would need to be relocated within the capitol area it serves; State of Minnesota services within the two other small buildings on Robert Street should be relocated. Displacement of the armory by the proposed Capitol East Station could be mitigated by consolidating its function to another location. In fact, these displacements would enable assembly of sites for new redevelopment projects that should relate directly to the proposed new transit station, or in the case of properties in the State Capitol area, may coincide with planned redevelopment efforts. There would not be any displacement of structures for the proposed University Avenue BRT Alternative, nor would there be any closing of streets.

Changes in traffic patterns along University Avenue for both build alternatives would impact neighborhoods because of the limiting of turn movements to right-in and right-out only and the increase in U-turns at signalized intersections. These impacts may cause drivers to increase the use of local streets, especially to the north of University Avenue. Preliminary design of the LRT system just west of Vandalia Street should consider the impact of reduced turning movements at St. Paul Fire Station No. 20. Mitigation of these impacts is discussed in the chapters referenced above.

The potential impacts in downtown St. Paul from the construction of the proposed LRT transit stations offer an opportunity to improve the environment for pedestrians and the visual quality of the streetscape. The restricting of traffic lanes on streets in the downtown would need to be mitigated by an examination of the overall pattern of pedestrian and vehicular movement and a plan to assist drivers and pedestrians to find new routes around some closed blocks and through the downtown.

3.4 PARKLANDS

Consideration of potential impacts to public parks and recreation lands is an important analysis required under federal law. Parks located within one-half mile of the proposed Central Corridor alignments are shown on the landmarks and community facilities figures discussed in Section 3.3.

3.4.1 Legal And Regulatory Requirements

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act of 1966, Section 4(f) as amended (49 USC 303), prohibits the acquisition and conversion of public park or recreation land for any federally funded transportation project, unless a determination is made that:

- There is no feasible or prudent alternative to use of the land; and
- The proposed action includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the land resulting from its use for the transportation project

The meaning of "use" in this context is the taking or acquiring of land or property for construction of a permanent transportation facility, or if not taken or acquired, the substantial impairment of its use for the intended park or recreation use.

The second major federal regulation regarding parklands is Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (LAWCON). Section 6(f) stipulates that any land or facility planned, developed, or improved with LAWCON funds cannot be converted to uses other than

parks, recreation, or open space unless land of at least equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent usefulness is provided. Anytime a transportation project would cause such a conversion, regardless of funding sources, such replacement land must be provided.

3.4.2 Park and Recreation Resources Inventory

Parks, parkways, and recreation facilities in the City of Minneapolis are owned and maintained by the independent Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board. The University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus has landscaped open space features that may also be subject to federal regulations. In the City of St. Paul the Department of Parks and Recreation maintains a variety of facilities including major city parks and neighborhood recreation centers. Land in the vicinity of the Minnesota State Capitol is under the jurisdiction of the CAAPB. These lands include open space surrounding the capitol buildings which place the capitol in a setting of landscaped malls important to preserving views of the building and as gathering places for political rallies and civic events.

An inventory of facilities within one-half mile of the project alignments in each jurisdiction is summarized in this section. Parks or other facilities that are in close proximity to the proposed alignments are described from west to east as follows.

MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

The following Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board areas are shown on Figure 3.3-3, which is included at the end of the chapter.

West River Parkway

West River Parkway is a major regional parkway along the banks of the Mississippi River, extending from north Minneapolis through the central riverfront adjacent to downtown, past the University of Minnesota, into the lower gorge to Minnehaha Falls. The parkway is spanned by the Washington Avenue Bridge and Railroad Bridge No. 9, connecting the west and east banks of the University of Minnesota campus. Bridge No. 9 was converted to a pedestrian and bicycle facility in 1999 by City of Minneapolis Public Works using Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) funds.

East River Flats

East River Flats is a 26-acre riverfront park located south of the University of Minnesota campus. The park is primarily composed of naturalized riverbank and sand beach.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

The following University of Minnesota areas are shown on Figure 3.3-3, which is included at the end of the chapter.

Intramural Fields

Athletic fields located on the West Bank at 10th Avenue and 2nd Street are approximately 5-acres of turf used for informal and intramural recreation activities.

Northrup Mall

The main campus open space feature on the east bank, Northrup Mall is flanked by halls, laboratories, and Northrup Auditorium. The mall is interrupted by Washington Avenue resulting

in a poor connection to Coffman Memorial Union, somewhat mitigated by two pedestrian bridge overpasses. The Mall is approximately 2.75-acres of turf, mature trees and sidewalks.

The Knoll

A historic landscaped campus open space along University Avenue between 14th and 15th Avenues is approximately 4-acres. A wrought iron fence defines the Knoll along University Avenue, which is the campus open space with turf and mature trees, criss crossed by sidewalks.

MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

The following Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board areas are shown on Figure 3.3-4, which is included at the end of the chapter.

Luxton Park

A 4.5-acre neighborhood park located between Williams Avenue and I-94 in Prospect Park, Luxton offers softball diamonds, basketball courts, soccer field, wading pool, and gymnasium.

Tower Hill Park

Rising above University Avenue just east of Malcolm Avenue, Tower Hill Park's grass and tree covered slopes topped by a distinctive round tower is a main landmark in the Prospect Park neighborhood. The majority of the 4.5-acre park is programmed for passive recreation but does include tennis courts.

ST. PAUL PARKS AND RECREATION

The following St. Paul Parks and Recreation areas are shown on Figures 3.3-4, 3.3-5, 3.3-7, 3.3-8 and 3.3-9, which are included at the end of the chapter.

Hampden Park

This 2.9-acre neighborhood park with walking paths, picnic tables, and benches is located east of Highway 280 at Raymond Avenue and Hampden Avenue.

South St. Anthony Park and Recreation Center

Located just east of Highway 280, and approximately 500-feet north of University Avenue, this 12-acre neighborhood facility offers baseball fields, a basketball court, tennis courts, play equipment, and the South St. Anthony Community Building.

Merriam Park

With I-94 as its northern border, Merriam Park is a 17.6-acre park that includes a community center, gymnasium, recreational facilities, and adjoins Longfellow Elementary School. Recreation facilities include football and soccer fields, lighted baseball diamond, tennis courts, and a skating rink in winter.

Iris Park

Designed as a 19th century walking park, with paths, benches, and a recently restored fountain, Iris Park is a focal point of a small residential community located between University Avenue and I-94. The half-acre linear park has a narrow frontage along University Avenue and hosts the Iris Park Festival.

Dickerman Park
This linear open space located between Fairview Avenue and Aldine Street, approximately 1.75-acres in size, was deeded to the City but has subsequently been degraded by the placement of automobile parking spaces on the park. It also acts as the playground with some equipment for the YMCA and Community Learning Center charter schools.

Hamline Playground
Occupying a small 1.7-acre block on Snelling Avenue, five blocks north of University Avenue, Hamline Playground offers open space and playfields.

Dunning Field
Adjoining the St. Paul Central High School, Dunning Field is an active recreation area situated between I-94 and Marshall Avenue. The large 41.8-acre facility includes a lighted baseball diamond with bleachers, tennis and basketball courts, and a community building.

Jimmy Lee Recreation Center
East of Lexington Parkway and bordering the south side of I-94, the Jimmy Lee Recreation Center includes lighted baseball diamond, play equipment, and a gymnasium on 8.9-acres.

Oxford Pool
Adjoining the Jimmy Lee Recreation Center, at Lexington Parkway and Inglehart Street, Oxford Pool offers year-round community swimming.

Ryan Park
Located five blocks north of University Avenue and east of Victoria Street, Ryan Park is a small neighborhood park consisting of 1.2-acres, on the western third of a city block. The park provides play equipment, picnic tables, and benches.

Carty Park
Carty Park is located one block south of I-94 between Victoria and Dale Street and occupies a full city block of 3.6-acres. Carty Park has a variety of recreational facilities including tennis courts, basketball, horseshoes, and play equipment.

Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center
Adjoining Rondo Education Center, the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center offers a full range of community and recreation facilities at the 2.3-acre facility, including tennis courts, ice skating, and play equipment. The Penumbra Theater is also located in the center.

Central Village
The 4-acre neighborhood park is located between University Avenue and I-94 and Dale Street and Western Avenues and includes walking paths, tennis courts, and play equipment.

Western Park
Located west of Marion Street, between University Avenue and I-94, this 4.5-acre neighborhood park serves as a commons for the surrounding residential development. A main feature is the Western Park Sculpture Garden.

Horseshoe Park
A triangular 0.7-acre park along Como Avenue is focused on horseshoe pits.

Scheffer Recreation Center

South of Como Avenue at Marion Street, Scheffer Recreation Center includes baseball diamonds, ice skating rink, basketball court, and play equipment. The park is 2.6-acres in size.

CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD (CAAPB)

The following CAAPB areas are shown on Figure 3.3-9, which is included at the end of the chapter.

Leif Erikson Park

At the corner of University Avenue and Rice Street, Leif Erikson Park faces the west side of the capitol. The southwestern triangle of the park is a surface parking lot, while the northeastern triangle of the approximately 4-acre park is a landscaped space with trees, grass, and a statue of the park's namesake.

Capitol Mall

The Mall is approximately 15.5-acres of large open space in front of the capitol building frequently used for public assembly. The fan-shaped open space includes a number of monuments set in a large lawn with walking paths.

Cass Gilbert Park

This approximately 4.5-acre open space is located on a rise above University Avenue at Cedar Street. The park provides an overlook vista of the capitol area and downtown St. Paul

ST. PAUL PARKS AND RECREATION

The following St. Paul Parks and Recreation areas are shown on Figures 3.3-9 and 3.3-10, which is included at the end of the chapter.

Valley Recreation Center

At 11.4-acres, Valley Recreation Center is a large open space with recreation facilities located to the northeast of University Avenue and Jackson Street.

Museum Park

A landscaped urban open space south of the former museum building, along Exchange Street between Cedar and Wabasha Streets. There are no amenities present.

Hamm Memorial Park

A recently redesigned urban plaza on St. Peter Street in front of the St. Paul Company. The space is less than 0.2-acres.

Ecolab Plaza

An urban plaza at Wabasha Street, and 5th Street. The half-acre plaza features a large sculpture.

Rice Park

Rice Park is a historic landmark park located between 4th and 5th Streets, Market Street and Washington Street. The park fronts the St. Paul Library and the Ordway Theater. Its 1.6-acres was included in the original plat of the city. The design includes a large fountain and the park hosts the ice sculpture event during the Winter Carnival and numerous other events year round.

Mears Park

The centerpiece of the Lowertown neighborhood, the 2-acre park features a bandstand, gardens, and a naturalized stream fountain. Mears Park hosts many events throughout the year.

Kellogg Mall Park

This bluff-top park provides scenic overlooks of the Mississippi River complemented by interpretive sculptures. Kellogg Park is located between Kellogg Boulevard and the edge of the bluff and is 4.2-acres in size.

Downtown Children's Play Area

Located at 4th and Sibley Streets, this play area is less than 0.2-acres in size but offers play equipment, landscaped areas, and benches. A mural on the adjoining building creates a three dimensional effect.

Raspberry Island Park

Accessed from stairs on the new Wabasha Bridge, Raspberry Island Park is a public open space in the Mississippi River. The park is 2-acres in size.

3.4.3 Impacts Related To Parklands

Each of the parks, parkways, recreation centers, and open spaces located within one-half mile of the proposed transit facility and identified in the parkland inventory were evaluated for potential impacts associated with the Baseline Alternative, University Avenue LRT Alternative and University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative. This evaluation included consideration of direct as well as indirect impacts based on field observations and the current conceptual plans for those parks. Direct impacts are those which involve acquisition of land for the new transit facility. Indirect impacts are those caused by the proximity of the new transit facility to the parkland; which substantially impair or diminish the features, attributes, or activities which qualify the park for protection under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966.

A discussion of the potential impacts to parklands within one-half mile of the proposed transit facility is presented in the following section, and summarized in Table 3.4-1: Potential Parkland Impacts, at the end of the section. Particular attention is paid to those parkland resources that are in close proximity to the proposed build alternative alignments, within 300-feet, that would be most likely to incur impacts.

BASELINE ALTERNATIVE

The Baseline Alternative would have no adverse impacts on parks and recreation lands.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE LRT ALTERNATIVE

Ten parks, parkways, recreation areas, or urban landscaped open space are within 300-feet of the proposed LRT alignment. Those parks are: West River Parkway, East River Flats, Northrup Mall, Tower Hill Park, Iris Park, Dickerman Park, Leif Erickson Park, State Capitol Mall, Cass Gilbert Park, and Museum Park. As currently proposed, none of the parks would be directly impacted by right-of-way acquisition associated with the alternative.

Two of the parks within 300-feet are not located directly adjacent to the proposed LRT alignment, because the proposed alignment passes over West River Parkway and East River Flats on the

existing Washington Avenue Bridge. Given this vertical separation and the existing traffic on the bridge no proximity effects are anticipated.

The remaining eight parks within 300-feet are located adjacent to the proposed LRT alignment. The proposed alignment would pass to the south of Northrup Mall in the existing Washington Avenue right-of-way, separated from the mall by a sidewalk and a drive lane. The proposed alignment would pass to the north of Tower Hill Park, separated from the park by two drive lanes on University Avenue. The proposed alignment would pass to the north of Iris Park, separated from the park by two drive lanes and a parking lane on University Avenue. The proposed alignment would pass to the south of Dickerman Park, separated from the park by two drive lanes and a parking lane on University Avenue. The proposed alignment would pass to the north of Leif Erickson Park on the State Capitol ground, separated from the alignment by a drive lane. The alignment would pass by the southeastern corner of the State Capitol Mall at Cedar and Twelfth Streets, but would be separate from the mall by two drive lanes. The proposed alignment would pass south of Cass Gilbert Park near the intersection of University Avenue and Robert Street, and below the grade of the park which has a high retaining wall along the north side of University Avenue. The proposed alignment would pass to the east of Museum Park, a small open space along Exchange Street in downtown St. Paul.

In summary, the University Avenue LRT Alternative would not substantially impair or diminish the activities, features, or attributes at any of the ten parks, within 300-feet of the proposed alignment.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE BUSWAY/BRT ALTERNATIVE

Ten parks, parkways, recreation areas, or urban landscaped open space are within 300-feet of the proposed University Avenue BRT Alternative. Those parks are: West River Parkway, East River Flats, Northrup Mall, Tower Hill Park, Iris Park, Dickerman Park, Leif Erickson Park, State Capitol Mall, Museum Park, and Kellogg Park. As currently proposed, none of the parks would be directly impacted by right-of-way acquisition associated with the alternative.

The impact summary for the University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would be the same as for the University Avenue LRT Alternative, except in the State Capitol area. The BRT Alternative would operate on Constitution Avenue, which is an existing street that has the State Capitol Mall to the north and south. Existing bus routes operate on Constitution Avenue, and the BRT Alternative would not have significant additional impact. In downtown St. Paul the proposed BRT alignment would pass by Kellogg Park on Robert Street, but would not impact the park.

In summary, the University Avenue BRT Alternative would not substantially impair or diminish the activities, features, or attributes at any of the ten parks, within 300-feet of the proposed alignment.

3.4.4 Section 4(f) Properties

Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966 protects public parks and recreation lands from conversion to transportation use unless there is no prudent or feasible alternative to such use. Use of Section 4(f) land occurs when land from the property is acquired for a transportation project; there is a temporary occupancy of the property that is adverse; or the proximity effects of the

transportation project are so great that use of the property is substantially impaired resulting in constructive use of the site.

The evaluation of Section 4(f) use considers such factors as any possible physical impact of use of the property, visual impacts, noise, and other environmental impacts that might substantially impair or diminish the character of the property or its use. Examples are provided in 23 CFR 771.135 and are discussed as follows:

- The projected noise level increase attributable to the project substantially interferes with use and enjoyment of a resource protected by Section 4(f), such as: hearing a performance at an outdoor amphitheater; enjoyment of a historic site where a quiet setting is a generally recognized feature of the site; or enjoyment of an urban park where serenity and quiet are significant attributes.
- The proximity of the proposed project substantially impairs aesthetic features or attributes of a resource protected by Section 4(f), where such features or attributes are considered important contributing elements to the value of the resource. An example of substantial impairment to visual or aesthetic qualities would be the location of a proposed transportation facility in such proximity that it obstructs or eliminates the primary views of an architecturally significant historical building, or detracts from the setting of a park or historic site which derives its value in substantial part from its setting.
- The project results in a restriction of access to the Section 4(f) resource, which substantially diminishes the utility of the resource.
- The vibration impact from operation of the project substantially impairs the use of a Section 4(f) resource, such a projected vibration levels from a rail transit project that are great enough to affect the structural integrity if a historic building or substantially diminish the utility of the building.
- The ecological intrusion of the project substantially diminishes the value of wildlife habitat in a wildlife or waterfowl refuge adjacent to the project or substantially interferes with the access to a wildlife or waterfowl refuge when such access is necessary for established wildlife migration or critical life cycle processes.

An inventory of parks, parkways, recreation areas, and urban landscaped open spaces is discussed in Section 3.4.2. Potential vibration effects and ecological intrusion were evaluated in Chapter 4.0 Environmental Impact Analysis, and vibration effects and ecological intrusions are not anticipated.

Given the highly urbanized land use setting of all the parks, most do not provide substantial wildlife habitat or are associated with a wildlife or waterfowl refuge. The exceptions are the West River Parkway and East River Parkway along the Mississippi River, which provide some low quality habitat to waterfowl and wildlife; however, the proposed build alternatives would pass over these parkways on the existing Washington Avenue Bridge. The impact of the build alternatives on the Washington Avenue Bridge may be to lessen the amount of vehicular traffic and could therefore improve the environment regarding noise or vibration. Access to parks in the vicinity of the build alternatives would be improved for transit riders, and not substantially changed for those accessing the parks by vehicle, bicycle, or on foot. LRT tracks, OCS, vehicles, and some stations would be visible from parks immediately adjacent to the proposed facilities. The proposed facilities would be in public road right-of-way, so visual impact would be negligible.

As currently proposed none of the ten parks, parkways, recreation areas, or urban landscaped open spaces located within 300-feet of the proposed build alternatives would be directly impacted

by right-of-way acquisition. It is anticipated that none of the ten parks would be adversely impacted by proximity effects such as noise, air quality, visual, vibration, or access. The proposed build alternatives would not substantially impair or diminish the activities, features, or attributes at any of the ten parks. Consequently, a Section 4(f) Evaluation under Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 is not required for the build alternatives and would not be required for the Baseline Alternative.

3.4.5 Section 6(f) Properties

Section 6(f) of the LAWCON protects land planned, developed or improved with LAWCON funds from being converted to uses other than outdoor recreational use. No such conversions are allowed unless replacement land of at least equal fair market value and reasonably equivalent usefulness is provided. Easements allowing a transportation agency to enter the property to undertake maintenance, slope easements, etc., which do not involve converting land to a non-outdoor recreation use are not subject to Section 6(f) requirements. Section 6(f) involvement may be present even though no Section 4(f) use exists.

The evaluation determined that no Section 6(f) properties would be converted for the Baseline Alternative, University Avenue LRT Alternative, or University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative.

3.4.6 Impacts Related to Construction

Construction impacts associated with the University Avenue LRT Alternative and University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative may result in temporary air, noise, vibration, water quality, visual, and access impacts at any of the parks, parkways, recreation areas, and urban landscaped open spaces located within 300-feet of these proposed build alternatives. The Baseline Alternative would not have any construction-related impacts.

Table 3.4-1: Potential Parkland Impacts, summarizes the potential impacts to all parklands located within one-half mile of the proposed transit facility.

Any air quality impacts associated with construction activities would be temporary and would be in the form of emissions from diesel-powered construction equipment and wind-blown dust. Air pollution associated with the creation of airborne particles would be effectively controlled through the use of watering or the application of calcium chloride in accordance with Best Management Practices.

Noise and vibration impacts could result from heavy equipment movement and construction activities such as compaction. Potential noise and vibration impacts would be controlled through the use of Best Management Practices. Potential water quality impacts from erosion would be controlled through the use of Best Management Practices.

Some construction equipment and materials stored for the project may be visually displeasing to local residents. This would be a temporary situation and would result in no long-lasting effects. Maintenance of traffic and sequence of construction would be planned and scheduled so as to minimize traffic delays and inconvenience. Access to all parks would be maintained throughout the construction period.

Table 3.4-1: Potential Parkland Impacts

	Alternatives			
Parkland	**Baseline Alternative**	**Within 300-feet of a Build Alternative**	**University Avenue LRT Alternative**	**University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative**
	Direct / Indirect Impacts		Direct / Indirect Impacts	Direct / Indirect Impacts
West River Parkway.	None	*	None	None
East River Flats	None	*	None	None
Intramural Fields	None		None	None
Northrup Mall	None	*	None	None
The Knoll	None		None	None
Luxton Park	None		None	None
Tower Hill Park	None	*	None	None
Hampden Park	None		None	None
South St. Anthony Park & Recreation	None		None	None
Merriam Park	None		None	None
Iris Park	None	*	None	None
Dickerman Park	None	*	None	None
Hamline Playground	None		None	None
Dunning Field	None		None	None
Jimmy Lee Recreation Center	None		None	None
Oxford Pool	None		None	None
Ryan Park	None		None	None
Carty Park	None		None	None
Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Center	None		None	None
Central Village	None		None	None
Western Park	None		None	None
Horseshoe Park	None		None	None
Scheffer Recreation Center	None		None	None
Leif Erickson Park	None	*	None	None
Capitol Mall	None	*	None	None
Cass Gilbert Park	None	*	None	None
Valley Recreation Center	None		None	None
Museum Park	None	*	None	None
Hamm Memorial Park	None		None	None
Ecolab Plaza	None		None	None
Rice Park	None		None	None
Mears Park	None		None	None
Kellogg Mall Park	None	*	None	None
Downtown Children's Play Area	None		None	None
Raspberry Island Park	None		None	None

3.5 DISPLACEMENTS AND PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS

This section summarizes the residential and commercial displacements and land acquisition associated with the proposed alternative actions. It includes a brief section on the legal requirements for equitable treatment, a description of the methodology used to identify properties within the Study Area, identification of those properties, potential impacts as a result of an alternative and proposed mitigation measures.

3.5.1 Legal Requirements

Various federal statutes have been enacted to establish a uniform policy for the fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced, and from whom land is acquired as a result of programs designed and funded for the benefit of the public as a whole. Some of the applicable laws that guide government actions for acquisitions, displacements, and relocations are:

- 49 CFR Part 24, Department of Transportation implementing regulations for: The "Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970," as amended.
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

These laws provide for a process that is fair, and require practical and financial assistance in helping individuals and businesses transition into a comparable situation. Private property acquisition for any actions evaluated in this report will comply with the appropriate portions of the identified laws and statutes.
For housing units these requirements include that replacement housing units must be "decent safe and sanitary" and must be functionally equivalent to the number of rooms and living space, location, and general improvements. Replacement dwellings must also meet all of the minimum housing requirements established by federal regulations and conform to occupancy codes.

Relocation benefits may also be available for businesses, farms, and non-profit organizations. Payment may be made for:

- Moving costs
- Tangible personal property loss as a result of relocation or discontinuance of an operation
- Reestablishment expenses
- Costs incurred in identifying a replacement site

Businesses, farms or non-profit organizations may be eligible for fixed payments in lieu of moving and reestablishment costs.

3.5.2 Methodology and Assumptions

The right-of-way analysis examines the amount, location and type of property that could potentially be acquired to accommodate the proposed alternative actions, although these may be modified during the PE. Properties were identified based on preliminary site drawings of the LRT and BRT alternatives overlain on existing plat and parcel mapping from Hennepin and Ramsey Counties. For each build alternative component, transit station site plan and guideway right-of-way boundaries were assumed to be the potential acquisition area. However, these may change in the next phase of engineering work.

3.5.3 Property Acquisition and Displacement Impacts

BASELINE ALTERNATIVE

No relocations or partial acquisitions would occur under the Baseline Alternative.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE LRT ALTERNATIVE

The following categories are used to determine the potential right-of-way impacts of this alternative:

- Track
- Station Areas (by station)

This analysis assumes that the Central Corridor LRT would use the facility currently being constructed for the Hiawatha LRT.

Track Improvements

Construction of LRT tracks would have potential right-of-way impacts at the following track segments:

Stadium Village Station to 29th Avenue SE Station

LRT tracks on the south side of the University of Minnesota Transitway would impact three parking lots and 20 parcels.

Rice Street Station to Robert Street Station

Construction of LRT tracks would impact 5 parcels and displace 3 buildings.

STATION AREAS

The following paragraphs and Table 3.5-1: Right-of-Way Acquisitions and Displacements for the Proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative, describe the potential impacts on parcels and structures due to construction of the proposed LRT stations.

Downtown Minneapolis

Right-of-way impacts of LRT in downtown Minneapolis are included in the construction of the Hiawatha LRT line. This analysis assumes that the 200-foot platforms to be constructed for the Hiawatha LRT line would suffice for the proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative.

University of Minnesota/Prospect Park

Proposed stations would displace a total of five structures in this area. The Stadium Village Station would displace four buildings (three commercial buildings and one fire station). The 29th Avenue SE Station would displace a parking garage. Construction of station platforms would impact 13 parcels in total.

University Avenue

Stations along University Avenue would impact 83 parcels and displace 3 structures.

Capitol Area

The Capitol East Station on Columbus Street would displace two buildings and impact a parking lot.

Downtown St. Paul

The proposed Union Depot Station would impact two parcels: a plaza on the southwest corner of 4th Street/Sibley Street and the driveway of the Union Depot.

Table 3.5-1: Right-of-Way Acquisitions and Displacements for the Proposed University Avenue LRT Alternative

	Parcels Acquired[1/]		Building Acquisitions	
Segment (Station)	**Total**	**Partial**	**Residential**	**Non-Residential**
Metrodome - West Bank	0	0	0	0
West Bank - East Bank	0	0	0	0
East Bank Station - Stadium Village	0	0	0	0
Stadium Village - 29th Ave SE	4	27	0	4
29th Ave SE - Westgate	2	0	0	1
Westgate - Raymond Ave	0	20	0	0
Raymond Ave - Fairview Ave	0	0	0	0
Fairview Ave - Snelling Ave	2[3/]	6[3/]	0	2[3/]
Snelling Ave - Lexington Pkwy	0	14	0	0
Lexington Pkwy - Dale St	0	18	0	0
Dale St - Rice St	0	21	0	0
Rice St - Columbus St[2/]	3	4	0	4
Columbus St - 10th St[2/]	0	2	0	1
10th St - 6th St	0	0	0	0
7th St - 4th St	0	0	0	0
4th St - Union Depot	0	2	0	0
Total	**11**	**114**	**0**	**12**

Notes:
[1/] Parcels are defined based on Ramsey County parcel mapping. Assumes building takes entail total parcel acquisition.
[2/] Includes buildings donated by the CAAPB.
[3/] Subject to modification in next phase of work so that buildings are left intact.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE BUSWAY/BRT ALTERNATIVE

The following categories are used to determine the potential right-of-way impacts of the BRT alternative:

- Guideway
- Station Areas (by station)

This analysis assumes that the University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would use existing bus facilities (e.g. Fifth Street Garage and Snelling Avenue Garage).

Guideway Improvements

In summary, construction of the proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative is not anticipated to displace structures or impact parcels along the corridor.

Downtown Minneapolis

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would operate in mixed traffic (existing roadway right-of-way) in downtown Minneapolis. Therefore, there are no right-of-way impacts associated with this segment of the busway.

University of Minnesota/Prospect Park

From the University of Minnesota through University Avenue at Bedford Street, the proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would operate in mixed traffic (existing roadway right-of-way) in downtown Minneapolis. Therefore, there are no right-of-way impacts associated with this alternative in this area.

University Avenue

Between Bedford Street and Constitution Avenue, the proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would operate in an exclusive guideway in the median of University Avenue. There are no impacts to parcels and/or buildings along this segment of the BRT.

Capitol Area

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative would follow the existing Route 16 bus route through the State Capitol area in mixed traffic. There are no impacts to parcels and/or buildings along this segment of the BRT.

Downtown St. Paul

The proposed Busway/BRT Alternative would follow the existing Route 16 bus route through downtown St. Paul in mixed traffic. There are no impacts to parcels and/or buildings along this segment of the BRT.

STATION AREAS

In summary, University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative stations are not anticipated to have right-of-way impacts because the stations are minimal in design, not affording the space of LRT stations.

Downtown Minneapolis

Proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative stations in downtown Minneapolis would use existing sidewalks and entail installation of special BRT signage and shelters and fare vending equipment.

University of Minnesota/Prospect Park

Proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative stations through the University of Minnesota campus and Prospect Park would use existing sidewalks and entail installation of special BRT signage and shelters and fare vending equipment. However, the proposed East Bank Station would require extension of the existing bus pullouts in front of the Coffman Memorial Union building. This improvement would impact existing sidewalks.

University Avenue

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative station design on University Avenue between Bedford Street and Constitution Avenue would use existing public right-of-way. Therefore, BRT would not impact parcels or displace structures at station areas.

Capitol Area

The proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative stations in the area of the State Capitol would entail installation of special BRT signage, shelters and fare vending equipment. These improvements would not require additional right-of-way.

Downtown St. Paul

As with proposed University Avenue Busway/BRT Alternative stations in the State Capitol area, BRT stations in downtown St. Paul would entail installation of special BRT signage, shelters and fare vending equipment. These improvements would not require additional right-of-way.

3.5.4 Mitigation Measures

Loss of private property will be mitigated by payment of fair market compensation and relocation assistance as provided for in the laws and statutes identified in the section titled "Legal Requirements" of this section.

Signs would be posted before the initiation of construction activities at the entrance to the parking lots and garages potentially impacted in downtown St. Paul. These signs will announce the closure dates for the period of construction. Temporary construction easements would be purchased as required. At the completion of construction, the sections of the parking facilities not impacted by the proposed transit facilities will be restored to the condition prior to transit construction.

3.6 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC CONDITIONS

This section describes the visual characteristics and aesthetic resources of the project corridor, the potential for impacts at various locations along the proposed alignment, and proposed means to mitigate potential impacts. For purposes of discussion, the proposed Central Corridor has been divided into the following five segments:

- Downtown Minneapolis
- University of Minnesota
- University Avenue
- State Capitol
- Downtown St. Paul

Captioned photographs of the views within the proposed project location are included at the end of the chapter.

3.6.1 Visual Environment

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS

Central Corridor transit vehicles are proposed to run on the Hiawatha LRT line under construction on Fifth Street in downtown Minneapolis. Fifth Street runs through a number of important functional districts including: the Warehouse District, Hennepin Avenue (theater district), Nicollet Mall (retail district), the northern part of the downtown office core and government services district, and the Metrodome stadium. The proposed Central Corridor transit vehicles would use Hiawatha stations connecting these districts.

The visual environment in the Warehouse District is framed by a number of large brick facades built in the heyday of jobbing in Minneapolis, contrasting with the flashier neon and marquee lights of the Hennepin Avenue theater district. Nicollet Mall is a landscaped pedestrian and busway flanked by department stores. Large office buildings are located to the north and south of

Fifth Street, including the historic Soo Line Building and Telephone Company Building. Minneapolis City Hall and the Hennepin County Government Center face each other across Fifth Street, where a Hiawatha LRT Station is under construction. To the east, the area around the Metrodome in Downtown East is characterized by large surface parking lots adjacent to both nondescript and architecturally significant structures. The Metrodome itself is an unadorned stadium superstructure capped by a white, inflated fabric roof.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

East of the Metrodome the proposed Central Corridor alignments would pass below I-35W onto the western approach of the Washington Avenue Bridge. The view is of a large freeway interchange. This bridge approach is in a below-grade excavation, devoid of structures until it meets the West Bank of the University of Minnesota campus (see photograph 3.6-1). Stairs lead from the plaza and upper bridge deck area down to the lower level where transit stops are located. Vistas of the Mississippi River open from the bridge (see photograph 3.6-2) with sandstone bluffs visible on the east bank of the river. These bluffs are mimicked by the architecture of the Weisman Art Museum designed by Frank Gehry, which is located immediately south of the bridge (see photograph 3.6-3). Northrup Mall opens to the north of Washington Avenue. This landscaped urban green space is flanked by some of the oldest buildings on campus and serves as the crossroads of daily campus activity (see photograph 3.6-4). Looking down Washington Avenue, the biological science campus and University Medical Center present a dense mass of buildings on the south side of the street. The scale of buildings quickly changes to smaller commercial structures in the Stadium Village area at Oak Street and Washington Avenue (see photograph 3.6-5). A new student apartment building fills the view on the south side of Washington Avenue and west of Huron Boulevard. East of Huron Boulevard a view opens to the north across a triangle of land to the junction of Washington and University Avenues.

UNIVERSITY AVENUE

University Avenue defines a view corridor consisting of multiple drive lanes, parking lanes, sidewalks and building frontage. The University Village development occupies the view between 25th and 27th Avenue SE, with its three-story elevation divided by ground floor retail shops and apartments located above. A large industrial area (see photograph 3.6-6) including railroad tracks and large grain elevators is visible north of University Avenue. The University of Minnesota Transitway is visible as a ribbon of blacktop running along the edge of the industrial area. The south side of University Avenue between Huron Boulevard and 29th Avenue SE presents a mix of different building types, including older storefronts and new motels. The nine-story, hexagonal University Park Plaza office tower is a visual landmark at 29th Avenue SE and University Avenue (see photograph 3.6-7). Rising above treetops, the "witch's hat" tower in Tower Hill Park is the most prominent landmark in the residential area to the south of University Avenue.

East of Tower Hill Park, the view along University Avenue includes a handful of older frame houses on the north side of the street that are set between commercial buildings. The commercial buildings in this area lack distinguishing architectural features. Radio and television transmission towers on the north side of University Avenue provide a visual indicator of the city limit. At the city limit, University Avenue crests a hill and descends, opening a broad view to the Westgate area and beyond. The view of the Westgate business park on the north side is of two-story structures with long facades and picture windows as typically found in mixed-use business parks. Across the street on the south side, the view includes a pair of large structures, one an eight-story office building with a square massing and the other a four-story structure built with red brick and divided windows in a style common to mid-twentieth century industrial plants (see photograph

3.6-8). Looking to the east, the view opens in the area were University Avenue crosses over Highway 280. This expanse, without structures framing Washington Avenue, creates a visual separation between the Westgate and Raymond Avenue areas.

Crossing to the east of the Highway 280 interchange, structures at the intersection with Raymond Avenue come into view. The handsome brick buildings are set close to the sidewalk, with facades that round the corner from University Avenue onto Raymond Avenue (see photograph 3.6-9). South of the Raymond Avenue intersection, industrial buildings are visible. East of Raymond Avenue more industrial buildings come into view on both sides of University Avenue in the Midway Industrial District. Fronting on University Avenue is a mix of commercial buildings including a fast food restaurant on the north side and the one-story University Crossing a showroom building on the south side of Vandalia Street. University Avenue descends below the grade of surrounding land to cross under a railroad overpass between Cleveland and Prior Avenues. Views to the areas behind University Avenue are of brick, concrete, and sheet metal industrial structures, with associated railroad spurs and truck depots. University Avenue climbs back to grade at Prior Avenue where the view is of two motels on both sides of the street with more industrial buildings behind (see photograph 3.6-10). East of Prior Avenue, older storefronts set close to the sidewalk enclose the view for a half block. The 1919 University building is the tallest structure visible in the area (see photograph 3.6-11). On the south side, the narrow frontage of Iris Park limits the visibility of this green space from University Avenue. However, the derby-topped pig's head sign for Porky's Drive-In is a highly visible landmark and remnant of post-war automobile culture. Signage of all types is one of the prominent visual features along University Avenue.

Northwest of the intersection of Fairview and University Avenues the view includes vacant land and buildings in a state of disrepair. On the southwest corner a new senior housing complex, currently under construction, will create an attractive new facade, with existing single-family houses visible to the south. The view up Fairview Avenue to the north shows the transition from industrial buildings to residential neighborhoods. The Griggs Building on the northeast corner of Fairview Avenue shows an interesting conversion from an industrial plant to retail and office uses, while across University Avenue on the south side the large signs of fast food restaurants are designed to catch the eye of passing motorists. In front of the Griggs Building, the YMCA, and the Community Learning Center is a strip of landscaping, including mature trees, that is a parcel of land that was dedicated to the City as Dickerman Park. Mature trees are also visible on the south side of University Avenue in front of the HealthEast Midway campus, which mask the true size of this large medical facility.

Approaching the intersection of Snelling and University Avenues the view is of a major intersection with turn lanes and heavy traffic. To the south, the stepped massing of the Spruce Tree Centre culminates at a four-sided clock tower (see photograph 3.6-12). The green tinted glass and tiled facade provides an aesthetically interesting presence that wraps around the intersection. The Modernist-style Midway Bank building across Snelling Avenue complements the Spruce Tree Centre, especially its sign which reaches to the height of the clock tower spelling out "bank." The mid-twentieth century style of these two buildings is contrasted by the older, smaller storefronts on the northeast corner, which exhibit variety in height, materials, and architectural details (see photograph 3.6-13). While the older storefronts enclose the viewshed on the north side of University Avenue, an area of big box retail outlets on the southeast corner opens wide and long views across large surface parking lots (see photograph 3.6-14). This shopping center area extends for approximately one-half mile along the south side of University Avenue, with the open space of the freeway corridor apparent to the south. Glimpses of frame houses are caught to the north of University Avenue from Aldine Street to Rice Street.