

**Central Corridor  
Light Rail Transit**



**Summary of Public Comments  
Related to Project Scope  
(Rev. 1.0)**

**February 2008**

**Submitted by  
The Central Corridor Project Office**

**On behalf of  
The Metropolitan Council**

## Overview

In January 2008 the Central Corridor Project Office held seven update meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to engage the public by presenting current information about the project.

A total of over 400 people attended the following public update meetings:

- **Tuesday, Jan. 15** – 5:30-7 p.m., Hamline University, Drew Science Room 118, 811 Simpson St., St. Paul.
- **Thursday, Jan. 24** – 8-9:30 a.m., Lao Family Center, 320 University Ave., St. Paul.
- **Monday, Jan. 28** – 5:30-7 p.m., Buetow Music Auditorium, Concordia College, 300 Hamline Ave. N., St. Paul.
- **Monday, Jan. 28** – 7-9 p.m., Prospect Park United Methodist Church, Minneapolis.
- **Wednesday, Jan. 30** – 11 a.m. Downtown St. Paul Alliance Bank Center Food Court, 55 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St., St. Paul.
- **Thursday, Jan. 31** – 6-8 p.m., Central Corridor Project Office, 540 Fairview Ave. N, Ste. 200, St. Paul.
- **Tuesday, Feb. 5** – 8-9:30 a.m., Central Corridor Project Office, 540 Fairview Ave. N., Ste. 200, St. Paul.

The presentation was also videotaped and posted on the [Centralcorridor.org](http://Centralcorridor.org) and City of St. Paul websites.

In February 2008 the Metropolitan Council, held 4 listening sessions. The purpose of these meetings was to seek public comments on the project. Attendees had the opportunity to address members of the Metropolitan Council prior to the Metropolitan Council making key project scope decisions.

- **Wednesday, Feb. 6** - 1:00-3:00 p.m., Weisman Museum, UofM campus
- **Thursday, Feb. 7** – 5:30-7:30 p.m., Metro Transit Offices
- **Saturday, Feb. 9** – 1:00-3:00 p.m., Goodwill Easter Seals
- **Monday, Feb. 11** – 5:30-7:30 p.m., Met Council chambers

Over 300 people attended the listening sessions and 88 people provided oral testimony. In addition to verbal public comments, the Metropolitan Council received 154 emails, 26 letters, 17 comment cards and 3 petitions. The West Bank Community Development Corporation submitted a petition with 120 signatures stating that they support a direct connection between the West Bank Station and Cedar Avenue in order to serve neighborhood residents, support Cedar Avenue businesses, increase safety in the area and provide future development. A petition with 540 signatures was submitted by the Capitol River Council in support of the light rail alignment outlined in the Central Corridor Development Strategy including the diagonal across Cedar and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets and a stop in front of Union Depot. The District Councils Collaborative submitted a petition with 150 signatures supporting the additional stops on the University Avenue (Central Corridor) light rail line at Western Ave., Victoria Ave. and Hamline Ave.

Following is a summary of the comments:

- Support additional stations at Hamline, Victoria, Western (126)
- Support a tunnel under Washington Avenue (44)
- Support an at grade alignment on the East Bank (43)
- Support studying Northern Alignment around the UofM (17)
- Build 3 car station platforms (15)
- Maintain #16 bus frequency (14)
- Support Diagonal at 4<sup>th</sup> and Cedar (15)
- Oppose additional stations at Hamline, Victoria, Western (11)
- Concern about reconstruction of University Avenue/construction impacts (7)
- Add bus routes (7)

- Keep LRT in front of Depot (5)
- Improve University Ave. streetscape (5)
- Oppose LRT in General (4)
- Support retro-fitting infill station locations (4)
- Concern about impacts to parking (4)
- Support other alternatives to current alignment (1)
- Economic justice issues (3)
- Oppose LRT continuing past Depot to Maintenance Facility (3)
- Build elevated track (3)
- Route LRT should stop in back of Depot (2)
- Concern about hide and ride (2)
- Make stations solar powered (2)
- Concern about traffic on University Ave. (3)
- Reconstruct University Ave. building face to building face (2)
- Oppose 29<sup>th</sup> Ave. station (2)
- Support LRT at-grade through U of M with expanded pedestrian archways across university (1)
- Do not limit parking access to the Overflow café with 29<sup>th</sup> St station construction (1)
- Do not put the maintenance facility in Lowertown (1)
- Supports reduction in parking (1)
- Rename for the Central Corridor line (1)
- Oppose LRT running on University Ave. (1)
- Support 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Viaduct (1)
- Suggest constructing parking ramps (1)
- Suggest stations be enclosed (1)
- Suggest pedestrian bridges crossing University Ave. at busy intersection (1)
- Concern relating to business mitigation (1)
- Concern that the Central Corridor LRT will be “stripped-down” and not aesthetically pleasing (1)
- Concern about increasing property assessments (1)
- Concern about vibration (1)
- Concern about impacts on the community (1)
- Concern about safety (1)
- Concern about noise (1)
- Concern about impact on Hmong businesses and community (1)
- Concern about accessibility of LRT and safety of elderly and disabled (1)
- Suggest pedestrian subways at Lexington Ave. and Snelling Ave. stations (1)
- Explore additional station at Transfer St.(1)

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1: Public Comments made at the February 2008 listening sessions

Attachment 2: Community Advisory Committee comments

Attachment 3: Emails received

Attachment 4: Comment cards

Attachment 5: Resolutions, letters, handouts and petitions

## Attachment 1: Public Comments made at the February 2008 listening sessions

### Central Corridor LRT listening session, February 6, 2008 noon-2 PM

Metropolitan Council Members: Kris Sanda, Lynette Wittsack, Kirstin Beach, Craig Peterson, Dan Wolter, Russ Susag, Peggy Leppik, Georgianna Hilker, Brian McDaniel, Peter Bell, Sherri Broecker

Chair Bell reviewed the purpose and ground rules for the listening session as well as an overview of the project.

1. Maureen Reed, UMAA
  - a. Represent 64,000 alums that care the campus and come to the U for many reasons.
  - b. Concerned that the campus be workable, safe campus in the future.
  - c. Concerned about impact of LRT on safety and health of the students and visitors.
  - d. Suck the life blood out of the hospital and clinics due to difficulty getting to the facilities with an at grade alignment
  - e. Opposed to at grade on Washington Ave. and urge the Met Council to look at other alternatives
2. Steve Wilson, Summit University District 8 Planning Council, Chair
  - a. Support building of light rail line as a once in a lifetime investment to provide improved transit connections
  - b. Support restoring stations at Hamline, V W that were in original studies
  - c. Maintaining Route 16 service levels
  - d. Concerned about transit dependent households in east, no vehicles, too young to drive or disabled
  - e. 73% of HH ethnically diverse
  - f. 35% of households below poverty line
  - g. Transportation access second only to education...
  - h. Result of losing stations would be neighbors have to walk 15-20 walk compared to 20 seconds added to
  - i. Many people do not have access to other alternatives, reduced mobility,
  - j. Adding stations would have Neighborhood revitalization impacts.
  - k. Summary, look at adding these stations
  - l. Saying that you can't slow down to pick up
3. Marcy Frasier, resident, Marcy Homes neighborhood
  - a. Urge the Met Council build it quickly and right
  - b. Concerned about safety on Washington with at grade option
  - c. Closing Washington Ave would be disastrous to traffic and East River Road
  - d. Routing on 4<sup>th</sup> would have significant impact on neighborhoods.
  - e. Supports northern alignment crossing the river on freight line and bridge
4. Dr. Rosenstone, Scholarly & Cultural Affairs
  - a. Support for the project and potential for making UofM more accessible
  - b. Not every option will result in the same outcomes, need a solution that builds businesses and protects safety of students and visitors, part of total transportation plan, easier.
  - c. Suggests principles such as do no harm, make wise and informed decision
  - d. Don't make a decision until full information about the northern alignment
  - e. Suggests CM stand on Washington Ave to observe pedestrian crossings and observe
5. Bobby Daniels, Chief Medical Officer UofM Physicians
  - a. Consider alternative paths instead of the surface path
  - b. 2000 patience access the hospital every day.
  - c. Do not think that the patients will access using LRT, anticipate 10% decrease visitors due to difficulty in accessing the facility
  - d. Revenue from the clinics used to fund the medical student
  - e. Urge Met Council to consider other alternatives

6. Greg Hestness, UofM Police
  - a. Daily responded vehicular and pedestrian accidents, LRT would exacerbate
  - b. Already difficult for people to turn
  - c. Any turns off of Washington Ave would have to be restricted to maintain traffic flow
  - d. UofM Fairview will be upgrading facilities so increase medical and emergency traffic to the hospital
  - e. Mostly concerned about pedestrians, especially students occupied by technology, cell phones and Ipods,
  - f. Already write citations for pedestrians yielding to vehicles and vice versa,
  - g. Despite commendable safety record, HLRT has experienced fatalities,
  - h. Believes LRT will be an asset to the campus
7. Steve Housh, UofM Medical Center, VP Business Dev, Fairview
  - a. Largest medical center, regional draw of patients
  - b. 7000 employees, 1500 physicians
  - c. Facilities located 1-2 blocks off of Washington, access by emergency
  - d. 1500 runs to campus last year
    - i. Support of public transit and concept, 10% ride transit to work and support MetroPass
    - ii. Opposed to at grade option, believe it will create disruption and safety issues to pedestrians and traffic
    - iii. Support options including the tunnel, which is the best potential for vibrant businesses and better access. Northern alignment option should be studied.
8. Phil Este, Intercollegiate Athletics
  - a. Concern over access for athletic fans including the 50,000 fans to the new Gopher football stadium
  - b. Anticipate 20% of fans will use something other than a car
  - c. Opposed to at grade option on Washington Ave
9. Bob Baker, UofM Parking and Transportation
  - a. Chair the UofM planning team for CCLRT
  - b. Essential to UofM that CCLRT operates efficiently and effectively
  - c. 80,000 come to campus on the daily basis, 2<sup>nd</sup> largest trip generator in the state
  - d. Committed to public transportation, 20,000 UPass Program more use MetroPass
  - e. 1/3 of riders generated by UofM
  - f. Concerned about congestion
    - i. Safety
    - ii. Emergency access
    - iii. Functionality of the line
  - g. Congestion results in impacts to reliability of travel time,
  - h. Studying 3 options
    - i. Tunnel
    - ii. At grade – tested, studied and implemented traffic study, must maintain or improve
    - iii. Northern alignment
  - i. Feel traffic can not accommodate
10. Kristen Denzer, GPSA
  - a. 17,000 graduate and professional students
  - b. Passed resolution for a tunnel through campus
  - c. Attended the CAC where we've had many discussions, know that the main goal is to bring the costs down to meet the CEI
  - d. Can not add a tunnel later, unlike additional stations or extension to the back side of the depot
11. Emma Olson, MSA, Present
  - a. 20,000 students that are uniquely distracted by their I-pods
  - b. 2/3 of students get to campus via other than the car
  - c. Many of the riders will be UofM people, including students
  - d. Passed a resolution to support the tunnel, safety is key
  - e. Urge Council to take a step back when making a decision

12. Josh Tolkan, MURP student at HHH
  - a. Represent planning students
  - b. Many students think an at grade option is the best option for economic development
  - c. Help people navigate and know where they are going
  - d. Numerous examples around the country with at grade lines and through university campuses that have operated safely.
  - e. Cost of tunnel does not outweigh benefit of being able to add stations on University
13. Matt Clark, Minneapolis resident,
  - a. When first moved here, didn't have a car, lived on Comstock and Route 50 didn't exist
  - b. Transit user, saved money and built wealth
  - c. Was MSA president that helped get the UPass
  - d. Reiterated Kristen's statement to at what can be done now versus later.
  - e. Suggested putting traffic underground and LRT at grade.
14. Lois Brown, student that walks to buses to campus
  - a. As a bicyclist knows Washington is unsafe, so avoids
  - b. Acknowledges that LRT is safer than cars, especially if remove vehicles
  - c. UofM has already considered that option, presented at meeting a week ago. Proposed option had a solution that addressed emergency vehicle access
15. John DeWitt, raised points to consider for a transit mall
  - a. Metrodome
  - b. 25,000 vehicles turning vehicles not
  - c. Stop planning as 1950, and start 2000's. At the Capitol hear
  - d. University of Utah, eliminated 6000 parking spaces, If we could eliminate people driving to campus via LRT could reduce congestion
16. Marcus Young, Public Arts St. Paul, artists in residence
  - a. Raise a few questions because he was reviewing the design standards and did not see any place for public art. Hope not to have an over reaction to Hiawatha where art is limited to decoration.
  - b. Wondered who was in charge of public art. Hope to have artists, not engineers, in charge of art plan.
  - c. Opportunity of LRT to be a monument. Please consider art as an opportunity
17. Ross Jackson,
  - a. Bicycle access and facilities on campus and midway area as a way to improve mobility; include space on trains and stations.
18. Kathleen O'Brien, UofM, VP University Services
  - a. Thread of consistency – transit is important to the UofM, help to build and sustain our research university
  - b. Know it is difficult to put cars, buses, LRT, pedestrians and bikes in the same space
  - c. Thanked Chair Bell and staff for looking at options and traffic studies.
19. Margaret Carlson
  - a. Mother of daughter with MS, visits doctors at the UofM
  - b. Asks that LRT not make it more difficult for people to get to the UofM medical facilities.

## Central Corridor LRT listening session, February 7, 2008 5:30-7:30 PM

Called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM - Chair Bell reviewed the purpose and ground rules for the listening session.

Metropolitan Council Members: Rick Aguilar, Kris Sanda, Peggy Leppik, Dan Wolter, Russ Susag, Peter Bell

20. Wayne Detuncq – Has a family history with trains and transit systems,
  - a. No judgment against St. Paul, believes the modern transit ways should be on dedicated ROW to maximize travel, understands the City's interest in locating on University for redevelopment and economic development purposes
  - b. Quarrel is with routing line down Washington Ave,
    - i. Financial waste - suggests running down existing rail corridor using bridge #9
    - ii. Have to provide for cross traffic and pedestrians
    - iii. Depth of the corridor would require elevators for disabled accessibility if use the railroad corridor due to running in trench
  - c. What is Hennepin Co.'s? Have they prohibited the use of railroad?
21. Eric Hopp - Software energy, train, hand out showing alternative route
  - a. Washington Ave Bridge was not designed to take train vehicles; Bridge #9 was built for trains.
  - b. Provided a handout that proposes an alternative route, Benefits would include safest route
  - c. Avoids Dinkytown vehicle and pedestrian traffic
  - d. Referred to map that he emailed to Centralcorridor email that includes an electronic copy of the map.
  - e. Thanked staff for an acknowledgement of the email.
22. John Olson - Passed, same comments as Eric
23. Mary O'Connor – Think that this is waste of money. Should focus money on bridges and road improvements.
24. Kipling Thacker, UMAA, Member of National Board, graduate of University and now business person
  - a. Impact of viability of the University
  - b. Consider concerns of the University
  - c. Opposes LRT running at grade on Washington even though it supports LRT serving the campus for cultural, athletic and student events
  - d. Concern over traffic congestion, pedestrian crossing, and emergency access
  - e. Feels these would detract people from attending the U and resulting impact on the regional and state economy.
  - f. Please review and chose among other options.
25. Cam Gordon, Councilmember Minneapolis for Prospect Park, CR and UofM area
  - a. Commended met council for resolving the west bank station area. Framed issues and brought planners and engineers out into the community, delighted with results
  - b. Supporter of LRT and positive/benefit for the city
  - c. Raise several issues we need to look at and be aware of regarding Washington Ave alignment
    - i. Disappointment about the tunnel,
    - ii. Understand costs changed from the DEIS
    - iii. Restricting Washington Ave bridge to one lane will result in traffic impacts
    - iv. Requests a broad enough traffic impact study
    - v. At grade alignment concerns with both train and cars operating, Suggests having closed to traffic for safety reasons along with traffic mitigation strategies.
    - vi. City working on new infrastructure such as Granary Road to mitigate traffic concerns, encourages looking at other strategies.
    - vii. With at grade alignment would stop Huron, University and Washington as it goes through the triangle.
    - viii. Offers invitation to work with him on public involvement activities to build community support for the project
26. Andrew Paddock, St. Paul residents and transit user

- a. Supports use of tunnel on Washington Ave for safety and traffic concerns, wait out of the elements
- b. Suggests postponing renovations to University as separate project later as well as extension to the Union Depot and infill stations
- c. Regarding the northern alignment proposal, concerned about how it serve West Bank and the center of the University
- d. Supports consolidation of stations in St. Paul because many of the bus connections are running on 5<sup>th</sup> street.
- e. Summary, keep the tunnel on Washington.



## Central Corridor LRT listening session, February 9 2008 1-3

Called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM - Chair Bell reviewed the purpose and ground rules for the listening session.

Metropolitan Council Members: Kris Sanda, Russ Susag, Peter Bell, Kirstin Beach, Lynette Wittsack, Georgianna Hilker,  
Central Corridor Management Committee Member: Reggie Aligada

27. Eric Molho
  - a. Thanked MC for being in the neighborhood, especially weekend session
  - b. Member of District 13 Council, speaking as self
  - c. Will be impacted but welcomes the LRT.
  - d. Importance of Univ. reconstruction to make sure it looks better in 2014. Store front to store front
    - i. Make right long term decisions, if affordable, include streetscape and sidewalk improvements,
    - ii. Make it more accessible and beautiful
  - e. Importance of infill stations, eastern side of route has different needs than the western side of route
28. Carl Nelson, Summit University Planning Council,
  - a. ¾ mile south of Western and University Ave
  - b. Helped with local comp plan which includes Hamline, Western and Victoria stations
  - c. For the community is that these are not infill stations
  - d. Talked to a women with groceries while riding Route 16 en route to this meetings, which reminded him or need for stops
  - e. World Cultural Heritage District plan has been envisioned in City's Development Strategy. Need stops to make it work, can be a magnet for ridership.
29. Joseph Lampe, relinquished time, submitting in writing
30. Bernie Hesse, United Food and Commercial Workers Union
  - a. 1602
  - b. 2499 members in ward 1 and 4 that could be helped by this project
  - c. This are not infill stop, these are stops that would make the system whole
  - d. System connecting neighborhoods
  - e. Urge the MC to Frogtown, Midway, St. Paul
  - f. Don't trade economic justice and equity in efforts to cut costs
  - g. Think it will lift people up and provide economic opportunity
31. Les Everett,
  - a. UofM retiree, resident
  - b. Thinks that LRT should run at grade on Washington, traffic should be diverted elsewhere
  - c. Danger is not LRT but 4 lanes of vehicle traffic
  - d. Opportunity to reduce emissions on campus
  - e. Suggest the UofM, Met Council and project partners work to develop solution
32. Julia Althoff, Community Stabilization Project
  - a. Here on behalf of Metric Giles, who is unavailable
  - b. Discomfort with name of Central Corridor, CSP spending time to help people recognize that this project relates and impacts them
  - c. Spoke to the 3 banner line
    - i. Improving mobility – corridor has huge dependence on transit with low income population, disabled in corridor etc.... so important to have additional stops
    - ii. Easing congestion – understands that part of easing congestion is removing buses. However, if buses removed restricts mobility of some
    - iii. Strengthening communities – needs to strengthen middle as well as ends
33. Nancy Hendricks, works at Hennepin Co. government center,
  - a. Suggests looking at additional station at Transfer
  - b. Consider looking at hopscotch so every train doesn't necessarily stop at all stations

- c. Has looked into PRT as a way to avoid stopping at everything in between,
34. Claire Press, JAC
- a. thanks for opportunity to share thoughts, resident in neighborhood, JCA
  - b. Adamantly opposed to LRT,
  - c. Recognizing that it is inevitable, hopes that it is accessibly by adding 3 stops at Hamline, Western and Victoria
  - d. Believes it will have negative effect by dividing the community, especially during construction
  - e. Suggests it should go to Union Depot as part of initial project
35. Anita Alexander,
- a. Expressed frustration with process over past 2 years
  - b. Community has been expressed concern about adding 3 stops but feel that concerns have not been represented
  - c. Many people walk many blocks to just to get to University. Spacing of stations would require people to walk up to additional 5 blocks
  - d. Feels it is not fair to current customers to reduce Route 16 frequency
  - e. Favors LRT and adding 3 stations
  - f. Understands we have to cut costs
36. Paul Nelson, thanks for listening session, St. Paul resident, uses Route 16
- a. Thinks this is a good project, supports, right technology
  - b. Midway TMO board member
  - c. Respect concern and difficulty of CEI
  - d. Troubled by impacts of adding stadium, hopes that
  - e. Not in concert with neighborhoods re the additional stops. Thinks community needs to do more homework to study the impacts. Such as access, no bus route on those streets, density of development
  - f. Concerned about hide and riders in neighborhoods
  - g. Likes addition of Lexington Ave. service , improved bus transit connections/service
37. Rob Vanasek,
- a. Resident in neighborhood, welcome
  - b. Proposed Fairview Station is midway between St. Paul and Minneapolis.
  - c. Suggests renaming the station as Iris Park Station or Union Park Station
  - d. Former DC resident and transit user around the world, buses, LRT, street cars, subways etc...
  - e. Central Corridor is the shortest but most important of the TPP2030 transitway
  - f. Supports reconstruction of storefront to storefront, especially sidewalks
  - g. Supports adding 3 stations. Even though travel time is key to usage for work, recreation etc... willing to use even if it slow in order to benefit the community
  - h. Likes the transit/pedestrian idea at grade at the UofM, look at adding bike lane too.
38. Debbie Montgomery, thanked us for adding this to list of meeting
- a. Past councilmember and look term resident of Rondo neighborhood
  - b. Imperative we have 3 additional stops for World Heritage Center and immigrant and African American community
  - c. Imperative that we do storefront to storefront reconstruction
  - d. There is opportunity for redevelopment at all of the 3 station locations and seeing
  - e. Aging population in Ward 1 makes it difficult for that population to access stations 1 mile apart
  - f. Please be cognizant of the community as make decisions. Hearing impaired, aging, young population
  - g. Feels that she has been heard
39. John Broderick, thanked for the opportunity, appreciated efforts to get public input
- a. Lifelong resident of Frogtown and recalled streetcars, looking forward to LRT
  - b. Supports 3 additional stops at Western, Victoria and Hamline. Initial concern was that it would be a commuter train through the neighborhood.
  - c. Since he's been involved, he's received new information. Referenced the DCC report that suggests that there are no other routes with stations this far apart.

- d. The CEI appears to be the driving factor, questioned how it relates to the unique conditions of the line and community. Suggestions, new acronym, BTC benefit to Community
  - e. Suggests stations will provide economic development and address economic justice. Concerned about negative impacts to the community.
  - f. Appreciates community input into the project as important.
40. Jeanne Cooper
- a. Spoke to group at St. Paul Central H.S.
  - b. Appreciate our efforts to include all the community in the discussions
  - c. Referenced history of the I-94 freeway project. Suggested putting the LRT in the I-94 corridor.
  - d. Concerned about impacts of construction on neighborhoods and businesses
  - e. Supports other stops, along with bus service
41. Pat Lamb, Aurora St. Anthony, Senior Citizen building resident,
- a. Has held meetings with her building neighborhoods, people feel that they are not being considered
  - b. Questioned how disabled and elderly can access LRT
  - c. Sees LRT as an opportunity to improve her freedom and independence
42. Gloria Massey, resident at 466 Aurora Ave
- a. Important to have Western and Victoria stops for her accessibility.
  - b. Feels no one should have to ride Route 16 to get to an LRT station, questioned how it impacts their travel time
43. David Hennen, thanked for weekend listening session
- a. Resident near Dale street station, works in Western suburbs, wife works at the UofM
  - b. Welcomes the opportunity to take LRT to work
  - c. Spoke on behalf of neighbors and their accessibility needs, supports 3 stations
  - d. Thinks that resources should be focused on community, especially Rondo, instead of tunnel through the UofM
  - e. Applauds Ramsey Co. willingness to pull back on position.
44. Larry Englund, 162 College Ave, thanked for the opportunity to address MC
- a. Following LRT issues for many years, member of LOCATE Task Force and St. Paul's Downtown Task Force and CCLRT CAC member
  - b. Thinks that the line should start in lowertown to serve downtown residents
  - c. Speaking for option that lowers cost of project, the diagonal from 4<sup>th</sup> to Cedar Sts. Also saves \$0.39 off CEI and travel time.
  - d. Urge us to consider the diagonal
45. Eugene Barringer III, Thanks for opportunity, 40+ year resident, ASANDC member
- a. Supports additional 3 stops
  - b. Spoke with residents at 774 University Ave.
  - c. If main goal is to get ridership and have successful project.
  - d. As business person, understand cost effectiveness and bottom line.
  - e. Asks Met Council members to look at it from a ridership perspective.
46. Mike Madden
- a. Talked about situation from Thursday's ride home from listening session and an underdressed young man with a Wild jersey, backpack and hockey stick that he met. Got off the midway station and got into the elevator.
  - b. Tells the story because he loves the train and opportunity to get to know the city and community
  - c. Supports 4 station at Hamline, Victoria, Western and Cleveland
47. Luther Bexell, east St. Paul resident
- a. Disappointed that after talking to County Board, City Council, Met Council... that
  - b. This is not the Hiawatha Line where the area had lost its usefulness. HLRT is a people mover instead of a commuter line.
  - c. Concerned about stability of the neighborhood due to real estate turnover
48. Frank Schweigert, welcome to our neighborhood and thank you for listening to community,

- a. At time that the DEIS was approved, served on neighborhood planning organization and was asked whether they thought it would serve the community. Stations were included in original plans.
  - b. Goal was to see that the line served the population.
  - c. Watched the stations removed from plans to speed it up.
  - d. Most people on the Route 16 are going to destination in the midway, not downtown to downtown
49. Farun Osman, Skyline tower residents
- a. Speaking on behalf of elderly and others
  - b. Requests better access for minority community population
  - c. Request station at Victoria, Western and Hamline
50. Paul Slattery, thank you and acknowledged difficulty of position, balancing CEI and needs of community
- a. Community activist and residents
  - b. Lex-Hamline, District 13 member
  - c. Supports 3 additional stations
  - d. Knows we've heard and understand community's concern. Questions who we are going to serve, Midway community or commuters jumping on the train
  - e. Differentiates between HLRT and CCLRT, HLRT commuter train where people park and ride. This line will be more used y people in the neighborhood
51. Bonnie Welshons, UMAA
- a. Interesting for her to hear other perspectives on the CCLRT
  - b. UofM UMAA, western suburb resident,
  - c. Represents UMAA
  - d. Oppose LRT at grade on Washington
  - e. Trusts Council will make the decisions wisely, good stewards of the resources
  - f. Take time and do the project right, weighing pros and cons, listening sessions a good opportunity to do that and consider alternatives.
52. Xiongpaoo Lee, CHAT, CAC member, thanks for the listening session
- a. Supports 3 stops, knows the numbers and community interest so focused on Hmong community
  - b. 80,000 Hmong in St. Paul, many are <18 years of age, or elderly, largest Hmong population in the world.
  - c. Many live in Frogtown and east side
  - d. Concerned about change and impact on Hmong community and businesses
53. Stanley Gardner, welcome the opportunity to talk to the Met Council
- a. Does not disagree with previous presenters, but many things not said
  - b. Summit University planning council member, feels it his responsibility to talk to his community. Heard the following questions and concerns
    - i. How do we get from north to south side of road?
    - ii. Is anything being done to address park and hidlers?
    - iii. Consider impacts to businesses during construction.
    - iv. Give dual consideration to minority and women owned businesses
54. Clifford Dodd, thank you for everyone that came out to express their concerns, every person here there are 100 more that could not be here.
- a. Lifelong resident of Rondo, 1952
  - b. Wants to see LRT brought introduced in a positive way, especially for the future generations
  - c. Not an issue about color, issue of right and wrong.
  - d. Have a diverse population in this corridor, Somali, Hmong, etc... and sees opportunity for all of us to work together to deliver this important project
55. Debbie Pearl Peoples, thank you for hosting this extra day, evident by how many people came out on a brisk cold day how passionate they are about this project
- a. Debbie couldn't be her today due to work and family obligations
  - b. Resident of corridor
  - c. Metro transit is means of transportation because does not have car or license

- d. Thinks that the stops are too close in downtown and in Minneapolis and requests that the stops be placed in areas that can be served by families.

56. Adjourned at 2:55.

## Central Corridor LRT listening session, February 11 2008 5:30-7:30

Called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM - Chair Bell reviewed the purpose and ground rules for the listening session.

Metropolitan Council Members: Met Council, Kris Sanda, Russ Susag, Peter Bell, Kirstin Beach, Lynette Wittsack, Georgianna Hilker, Brian McDaniels, Mary Hill Smith, Annette Meeks, Peggy Leppik, Rick Aguilar, Tony Pistilli

Central Corridor Management Committee Member: Mayor Coleman

57. Delbert Case, Lowertown resident since 2004, thanks for efforts to put forth LRT between cite
  - a. Concern over termination in front of the union Depot
  - b. Extending line east on 4<sup>th</sup> street would disrupt the farmers market
  - c. Broadway alignment would interfere with truck access to docks
  - d. Additional stations would add travel time?
  - e. How will it get its power?
  - f. Will it run in the middle of the street
  - g. Impact to historical buildings and Central Presb, including services, weddings, events etc... and adjacent catholic church
58. John Schachterle, attended lots of meetings, participated in City of St. Paul's development strategy
  - a. Supports Cedar diagonal
  - b. Supports bringing line at least to the front of the Depot
59. Long Her, owns business at University and Dale, for over 20 years
  - a. Been there for awhile and concerned about construction process and how business will be affected by it, concerned that business will be slow
  - b. Supports additional stations on University
60. Brian McMahan, University United
  - a. Supports additional stations and streetscape improvements. UU includes small business owners on their board so understand the concerns of the small businesses
  - b. Facilitated planning exercises, referred to handout that shows redevelopment potential around the Hamline station, questioned why there is no station planned for Hamline.
  - c. Considering redevelopment potential on vacated Midway Chevrolet site and existing buildings such as Target and Skyline Towers, proximity to Concordia University.
  - d. Indicates that property owners at Hamline may make different land use decisions if a station is added.
  - e. Suggests that additional station would promote TOD, new affordable housing, more jobs, expand tax base and reinforce existing retail.
61. Kimberly Nightingale, St .Paul resident
  - a. As a HHH student, conducted a research project on adding 3 stations on University, interviewed 21 community members, researched FTA EJ issues, mapped
  - b. Reviewed the FTA Title 6 guidelines
  - c. Urge Met Council to weigh EJ issues along with the CEI
62. Jill Hirons Maraist, Capitol River Council
  - a. Thanked Met Council for holding listening sessions and demonstrates willingness to involve the public
  - b. Represent downtown businesses and property owners, BOMA, DBMA etc
  - c. Supports Cedar diagonal because it lowers cost and CEI
  - d. Supports taking train to the front of Union Depot because provides access to lowertown residents, many of who are transit dependent and live in affordable unit, and redevelopment opportunities
  - e. Downtown employees very supportive of LRT, and collected 500 signatures on a petition that supports downtown alignment that takes that line to at least the front of the Union Depot in the first phase on construction.
63. Barb Thoman, Transit for Livable Communities
  - a. Supports street level alignment through the UofM, with a transit/pedestrian mall

- b. Supports adding at least one more station on east end and maintain Route 16 frequency
  - c. Supports diagonal in downtown St. Paul due to tight corner and ability to consolidate stations.
  - d. Looks forward to the project moving forward!
64. Scott Holstad, Shoreview resident
- a. Does not support LRT, already has excellent bus service
  - b. Concerned about traffic impacts
  - c. Expensive project that he suggests will not do anything to reduce congestion
65. Joel Clemmer, thanks for time, attention and work on this project, Fairmont Ave resident in St. Paul, neighborhood council and DCC board
- a. Plan needs to benefit the neighborhoods that it goes through and access of those residents.
  - b. Concerned that stations spacing of 1 mile apart on eastern end of the line is too far apart, especially combined with cuts in bus service
  - c. Looked at spacing
  - d. Suggest we look at area along the corridor that could be subject to
66. Terry Olsen, St., Paul resident, architect
- a. Advocate for the environment and mass transit
  - b. Encourage us to look at future expansions including addition station stops and connection to Union Depot.
67. Dan Kravetz, Aurora St. Anthony NDC
- a. ASANDC serves transit dependent residents in eastern end of the corridor
  - b. Supports additional stations
  - c. Referenced City Council's resolution to incorporate as many of these stations as possible
  - d. Suggests that project costs reductions, finds it hard to believe that there isn't sufficient funds to build all three stations
  - e. Suggests that NEPA process requires us to add stations to address EJ issues
  - f. Urges the Met Council to consider these communities in the process
68. Justine Bigelow, resident of downtown St. Paul
- a. Thanked the Met Council for opportunity for public involvement
  - b. Looks forward to LRT, walks to work, rides the bus and chooses not to drive
  - c. 4 issues
    - i. 3 additional stations
    - ii. Implementation of 3-car stations because sees transit demand
    - iii. Supports station in lowertown due to residential density
    - iv. Supports diagonal to reduce cost and travel time
69. David Green, ISIAH, 90 congregations in MN,
- a. Suggests that LRT should benefit the community that it runs through
  - b. Should see a net improvement in transit service, however sees plans as net decrease
  - c. Questions why moving stations not under consideration
  - d. Concerned with process and time the community is given. Questions the deadline with FTA.
  - e. Asks the Met Council to slow down the decision make process.
70. Andrea Lubov, Jewish Community Action
- a. Thank you and expresses appreciation for working on the project
  - b. JCA worked on several issues
  - c. Supports adding stations at Hamline, Western and Victoria because population is heavily dependent on transit. Suggests that spacing would not be insufficient to serve community and would result in reduced transit service
  - d. Concerned about increase in property values and taxes
71. Thao Mee Xiong, Hmong Business Association
- a. Started organization to voice the Hmong communities concerns
  - b. Three issues

- i. Supports stations as Western, Victoria and Hamline because would provide greater access and more foot traffic for their businesses
  - ii. Requests mitigation support during construction
  - iii. Requests more involvement by Hmong community in the project
- 72. Anne White, District Councils Collaborative
  - a. Thank you for taking time to listening to the community about their concerns about the project
  - b. DCC supports LRT and that it is built right
  - c. Supports additional 3 stations and referenced the DCC report
  - d. Raised question about why not build now or later. Referenced the maps in the DCC's handout.
    - i. 1<sup>st</sup> map shows ratio of transit dependent because they are too young or old to drive
    - ii. 2<sup>nd</sup> map shows concentration of low income households that depend on transit
    - iii. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> map show ethnic breakdown and concentration at the eastern end of the route.
  - e. In conclusion, DCC wants to see this project move forward with additional stations to serve the communities on the
  - f. Urges the Met Council to reflect on maps and think of benefits and impacts of these 3 stations.
- 73. Joe Chouinard, resident of Maplewood
  - a. Thanks for opportunity to talk to the Met Council
  - b. Supporter of the project
  - c. Concerned about street design for bus stops where there is also a LRT station, under current proposal where the bus stops are on far side from station.
  - d. Concerned due to heavy traffic on University and ability to cross, potential for hazards
  - e. Created a potential layout for CCPO consideration.
- 74. Bill Hosko
  - a. Concerned about lost of on street parking on Cedar St and reduction to one-lane of traffic
  - b. Concerned about loss of skyway if Bremer Bank is removed for redevelopment and the station
  - c. Raised concern about noise and impacts on residential areas in lower town
  - d. Concerned about noise with trains running to the VMF in the lowertown area
  - e. Supports connection to Union Depot and suggested that 2<sup>nd</sup> St. Viaduct was the best route for minimal impacts
- 75. Cha Math Perera, Tilsner Artists Coop - DECLINED
- 76. Russ Adams, Alliance for Metro Stability
  - a. Supports LRT that supports transit dependent, low income and communities of color.
  - b. Suggests that LRT can promote economic development
  - c. Asks the Met Council to consider benefits and impacts on communities in making the decisions
  - d. Raised potential for adding stations later
  - e. Suggests that \$5.5 million is minimal costs considering benefits of adding stations and those 30 seconds is not significant impact on ridership due to longer travel time.
  - f. Mentioned that using the northern alignment around the UofM would divert service away from the Cedar Riverside community, another diverse community.
- 77. Lisa Amman, St. Paul resident within the corridor
  - a. Initially excited about LRT
  - b. Concerned about spacing of stations because she is resident in the area
  - c. Believes that it is a matter of racial and social justice
  - d. States that she thinks that we are imposing an artificial deadline because legislators say it is acceptable to submit in July 2009.
- 78. Phil Steger, St. Thomas Moore Church
  - a. Glad for opportunity to speak, lives in Midway "neighborhood"
  - b. Appreciates position Met Council....
  - c. Suggests that the outcome, not the intention, is racist
  - d. Referenced meditation for the day from Matthew, "What you do for the least of these, you do for me..."
  - e. Concerned about reduced bus service and impacts on the elderly and poor.



- f. Questioned response to the DCC report page 2
  - g. Urges the Met Council to consider who will benefit and impact.
79. Chang Thao, Foodsmart, in business for 15 years
- a. Seen changes on University and businesses
  - b. Concerned about increasing property taxes and construction impacts on small businesses.
  - c. Raised question about mitigation and suggests looking at marketing activities and low interest loans through local banks.
  - d. Sees as opportunity for economic development and building community
80. Katie Gumpertz, former Mac Groveland resident, current Longfellow neighborhood
- a. Does not support building this project at all costs without the 3 stations. Suggests that it does not support transit oriented development or improved transit service.
  - b. Infrequent stops does not result in supporting small businesses.
81. Jackie Cooper, St. Paul resident
- a. Remembered rondo, does not want LRT if it does not include 3 stations.
  - b. Urges Met Council to not let cost drive the decision
  - c. On behalf of son, she reminded us that we are not in S. Carolina where it is warm, but Minnesota.
82. Jessica Phillips, Minneapolis resident, UMAA member and transit user
- a. Concerned about access to the University for people not arriving to campus via LRT
  - b. Reiterated previous speakers comments regarding 10 rush hours, emergency access
  - c. Asked Met Council to consider alternatives to running at grade on Washington Ave.
83. Veronica Burt, Just Equity
- a. Referenced historical infrastructure decisions that resulted in inequity such as transportation plans and levee systems in New Orleans.
  - b. Suggests that transportation improvements can result in a win-win situation by involving the community
  - c. Referenced the DCC report and findings.
  - d. Urges the Met Council to consciously adhere to environmental justice guidelines.
  - e. Sees LRT as an opportunity to restore and aid the community, result in economic development, cultural and heal from the I-94 decisions.
  - f. Many stakeholders are not convinced that this is a benefit, but see the costs due to construction, loss of businesses, increase in property values, hide and rider impacts, reduced bus service.
  - g. To counter, she suggests that the community see the benefits.
84. Art Weddington, Shelby CDC
- a. Talked about the community that the CDC supports, supports stations at Hamline, Western and Victoria.
  - b. Supports and expects environmental justice and social justice by looking at them as a regional and community benefit.
  - c. Sees opportunity of World Heritage District and African American Corridor as culturally centered destinations and economic development opportunities
  - d. Supports bus connectors, including Selby Ave.
85. David Gutierrez, UofM grad student
- a. Asks that Metro transit continues to operate route 84
  - b. Believes that increasing station spacing on Route 16 could make it more efficient
86. Benita Warns
- a. Referred to previous groups that looked at Pierce Butler, I-94 and University Ave as alternative routes.
  - b. Suggests that LRT is supposed to be an express route most suitable along highway corridor instead of running on University.
  - c. Urges Met Council to maintain Route 16 service at existing frequency, and adding stations at Hamline, Western and Victoria.
87. Denis Presley, Got voice, got power
- a. Remembered history of neighborhood and asked the audience to “got voice, got power”
88. Dr. Bruce Corrie
- a. Thanked for opportunity to talk and taking time

- b. Shared his vision of University Ave as a World Cultural Heritage District for economic development, job opportunities,
- c. Sees as an opportunity to make returns on investment and make 3 additional stations more feasible.

## Attachment 2: Community Advisory Committee Comments

On February 21, 2008, the Central Corridor Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met to review the proposed project scope scenario. The CAC members provided the following feedback in response to the following questions related to proposed project scope Scenario B, which includes at-grade alignment through the University of Minnesota East Bank, infrastructure for the 3 infill stations, stop in front of the Union Depot, improved connection to Hiawatha LRT, maintenance facility in St. Paul east of the concourse, Washington Ave. Bridge improvements, 3-car platforms and diagonal station at 4<sup>th</sup> and Cedar streets.

### 1. What do you see as the strengths of Project Scope Scenario B?

- At grade on Washington
- Project meets CEI (3)
- Keeps project alive and moving ahead. An imperfect LRT alignment is better than no LRT, assuming that it is all reasonably efficient. Three car platforms are good. Increased capacity for maintenance and storage of LRT.
- East end Vehicle Maintenance Facility will be good base for future transport hub based at Union Depot
- It is a compromise among all parties to meet the CEI
- It meets budget. Some things must be done – University Avenue Bridge/University Avenue reconstruction. Decision for 3 car platforms. Hope the transit hub can be developed. I like the idea of using it.
- Works, however other 3 car platform combos could bring below \$23.99. For example eliminate the 29<sup>th</sup> avenue station for now and in front of the St Paul depot. Add Hamline station not just the foundation.
- Diagonal St Paul Thanks for listening. Additional stations with the infill meets CEI.
- I think its main strength is simply that it fills in the CEI. It is the most basic plan but does not meet the needs of the community.
- Meets CEI. Moves forward project, 3 car platforms are included, maintenance facility to be located in St Paul.
- At grade pedestrian mall at the University finally. Diagonal in downtown St Paul and stopping in front of the Union Depot for now. New bus routes and 3 car platforms.
- We'll get our LRT!
- Look toward future with 3 car platform, expansion of 3 stations and maintenance. Addition of several new bus routes and diagonal at Cedar, 4<sup>th</sup> Street and St Paul.
- Great access for people with disabilities with at grade Washington Avenue thru University of Minnesota. Need 3 car platforms, less money than tunnel.
- It meets the cost ceiling and 3 car platform
- Providing mitigation funding

### 2. What do you see as the weaknesses of Project Scope Scenario B?

- Number 16 being maintained at current frequency level. Build out stations at Hamline, University, Western consider infills. Eastern segment losing transit access with current section and not saving access with new service. Transit access deficit, not a transit gain.
- The three stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline are not to be built in B, only infrastructure.
- Not building 3 additional stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western. Project will still be perceived as not serving well the needs of the highest density transit dependent populations.
- Alignment by the Capitol. Slows the train and so undermines its potential effectiveness.
- None that stand out other than basing the Vehicle Maintenance Facility in SE Minneapolis. This does not seem to be a good location, regardless of where in the SEMI.
- The 3 stations that don't get built in areas of transit dependent communities.
- Eliminates vehicles on Washington Avenue and affects on adjacent neighborhoods transportation routes. Elimination of infill stations affect others more than me or PP neighborhood.
- Affects of right of way modification in Prospect Park and loss of trees.

- Works, however other 3 car platform combos could bring below \$23.99. For example eliminate the 29<sup>th</sup> avenue station for now and in front of the St Paul depot. Add Hamline station not just the foundation.
- Projection of amount needed for mitigation at the University. Location of the Union Depot in front.
- It does not serve the high density and transit dependent communities between Dale and the Capitol. It currently has exceeded the maximum distance between stops in similar cities. It lacks a creative edge to meet the needs of the communities currently living around the corridor.
- Loss of infill stations as part of project.
- Only infrastructure for infill stations instead of full stations. \$20 Million to the University for Traffic Mitigation. Make a transit/pedestrian mall by rerouting traffic and find another source to pay for the reroute. The transit mall will be a huge boom for the University and should be part of their long range planning expense and not a project cost. Reducing frequency of the #16.
- The tunnel would be far better for the long run of transit. We just don't have our priorities right.
- Loss of tunnel at the University of Minnesota. Uncertainty of Rice Street Station, design based on district 7/CAAPB concerns.
- What ever you do, by law it has to be accessible to all people.
- It doesn't include Hamline, Victoria and Western stations. Immediately let's be realistic, it will be many years before the monies are found to build those stations and in the meantime those neighborhoods and their residents will suffer. Doesn't include optimized Hiawatha optional connection.
- Dose not work in 3 new stations. Not enough information.
- Infill station infrastructure (3)

**3. Please share any other comments or concerns about project scope elements (e.g. University of Minnesota alignment; potential stations' Downtown St. Paul routes; University Avenue reconstruction)?**

- A critical outcome that does against a key environmental justice principle which is the delay in a transit benefit of a transit investment.
- To maintain train speed through the University of Minnesota area I favor removing vehicle traffic from Washington Avenue. The train, bus, bike and pedestrian mall is very appealing.
- What will happen to on street parking and its impact on businesses? Must create 1 hour parking to address the loss of parking and help the spaces from becoming park and ride spaces.
- Other cities place mass transit below ground to enable on grade vehicles movement in crowded areas. I think placing LRT on grade will greatly affect the use of Washington Avenue as it has been known. I recommend keeping LRT route on University to Washington Avenue and eliminating the turn to 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Place 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue in middle of University not on Avenue.
- Discussion with St Paul about mitigation/improvement along the avenue. Concerned about the reduction of bus #16 service.
- My main concern is that the constituent base served by GESM will actually have less access to transit than they currently have now. These are people who can become economically engaged in their communities through access to transit. Consider removing a stop from each downtown and re-distribute to the more underserved areas between the capitol and Dale. St Paul is an absolute ghost town after 5 PM, and is steadily losing business in DT. Is the rush for all of the stops for downtown St Paul truly a necessity?
- Bus transit must be at premium exemplar level for transit dependent populations East of Lexington Avenue. Also bus transit South of LRT is very important.
- You are making the right decision in eliminating the tunnel at the U. A slightly lower construction contingency could generate the funds for option D, the 3 additional St Paul stations and the optimized Hiawatha connection.
- Build 3 new stations and cut costs in other areas.
- I hope Met Council seriously considers the 3 additional stations on University because it would be a huge injustice to the communities who live and work in that area

In addition to the CAC members, the general public were given an opportunity to provide their feedback. Following is a summary of their written comments:

**1. What do you see as the strengths of project Scope scenario B?**

- Project Discussion moves forward
- Meets CEI (2)
- 3 Car Platforms (2)
- Front of Depot Station
- Tacks to Back of Depot
- Union Depot connection
- Meets the budget
- It makes the feds happy
- Not extending to concourse
- St. Paul diagonal routing – Great! (2)
- Public artwork (2)
- Maintenance facility added for St. Paul
- Double track to VMF for future
- Pedestrian/transit mall at U of M would be great
- Infill station infrastructure (2)
- New bus routes (60& 83)

**2. What do you see as the weaknesses of project Scope scenario B?**

- 3 stations are not built out
- The 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue is problematic, can it be delayed?
- No mitigation plan, doesn't fairly distribute economic development benefits including economic justice concerns
- Route 16 frequency reduction
- No North/South bus connection on Western
- Station density in downtown St. Paul seems dramatically high
- The 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue station is more expensive than other stations to accommodate design challenges. Alternative locations to these are available but not implemented.
- Washington Avenue bridge traffic (Eastbound) goes where? Westbound comes from where?
- Hospital traffic on campus? Patient and family access?
- It makes little sense to build the project with stations one mile apart
- It makes no sense to spend almost one billion dollars and cut transportation service to the neighborhoods which LRT passes because of station spacing and bus #16 cuts.
- Lack of tunnel with recognition to cost
- Double tracks to VMF may be too expensive
- Traffic/Pedestrian/LRT conflicts at the U (at grade)
- Rte 16 level of service would drop, further hurting transit dependent users in the lowest income areas (3)
- Minneapolis: wish train did not go to U of M stadium and stayed on University Avenue and turned directly on Washington
- St. Paul: wish train stayed on Cedar and turned in front of Capitol- not jogging over to Robert Street
- The 3 infill stations are only roughed in which is not acceptable
- Mitigation money distribution is unclear. U of M should not lay claim to all mitigation dollars.

**3. Please share any other comments or concerns about the project scope elements (e.g. university of Minnesota alignment; potential stations; Downtown St. Paul routes; University Avenue reconstruction)?**

- Moving too quickly
- Is the final product going to accurately facilitate the customers?
- There seems to be disconnect with this plan
- Without community support, rider ship will suffer
- An urban neighborhood in which 31% of residents live and work in the corridor needs stations closer than one mile apart. This is simply common sense and citizens are wondering how this could be happening
- I think that bus 16 should be more frequent but terminate at Fairview station. This would connect more people within the area that they use and would allow the same number of busses to run.
- North/South routes should be closer to quarter-hourly maintaining and increasing bus service should determine the need for the three extra stations. I think this would slow the train down too much but recognize it would be shorten the walk for others. More busses and fewer stations.
- Make University connection (Washington Avenue) at grade and pedestrian only/bus/LRT mall (like Nicollet Mall). Redesign vehicular traffic elsewhere
- Please design infrastructure to allow future additional stations when funding is available
- Concern about Port Authority desire to provide power and or steam to each of the stations, through a power plant in the midway area (near Rock Ten) by burning garbage (RDF, refuse derived fuel) “Just say no”
- Exciting opportunity to provide solar power to stations along LRT route (IPS Soler) provide power “Green & Clean” at the end use rather than line loss/steam heat loss through distance of distribution
- Opportunity to include pervious paving for pedestrians and scoping for storm water management along route. Reduce some impervious and help flood/storm water control
- Would like to see greatly improved streetscape elements along line; including pedestrian-scale lighting, street trees, benches, bicycle racks and other plantings
- Would support Met-Council allocating money off top of STP federal allocation as it did for Hiawatha operating costs to pay for these important costs
- Makes more sense to rough in 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue station, shorten distance between Westgate and Stadium stations rather than roughing in 3 infill stations
- Streetscape scope is a big question

### Attachment 3: Emails received

The following individuals sent the email below:

- Allison Burnett, St. Paul
- Bridgit Waterman, St. Paul
- Shannon Gibney, Minneapolis
- Phillip Romine, St. Paul
- Arif Mamdani, St. Paul
- Emily Seru, St. Paul
- Leslye Mistry, St. Paul
- Donna Evans, St. Paul
- Zaraawar Mistry, St. Paul
- Anika Carlstaed, Vadnais Heights
- Irna Landrum, St. Paul
- Stephen Wilson, St. Paul
- Paisley Nash-Dooley, St. Paul
- Noah Levy, St. Paul
- Naomi English, St. Paul
- Noah, Keller, Falcon Heights
- Kathrine Blavel, St. Paul
- Kimberly Nightingale, St. Paul
- Christine Frank, Minneapolis
- Shonagh Jones, St. Paul
- Nancy Hasse, St. Paul
- David Randolph, St. Paul
- Tsione Wolde-Michael, St. Paul
- Julia Nerbonne, Minneapolis
- Linda Clay, St. Paul
- Stephen Wensman, St. Paul
- Sheila Sahu, St. Paul
- Michelle Walseth, St. Paul
- Kristi Roberts, Saint Paul
- Jun-Li Wang, St. Paul
- Scott Wood, St. Paul
- Rena Moran, St. Paul,
- Stephen Wensman, St. Paul
- Pam Brabeck, St. Paul
- Lisa Lendway, St. Paul
- Laura Silver, Minneapolis
- Sandra Fjerkenstad-Budel, St. Paul
- Marg Rozycki, Minneapolis
- Timothy DenHerder-Thomas, St. Paul
- Marit Eriksmoen, St. Paul
- Beverley Oliver Hawkins, Ph. D., Model Cities
- Amara Rosenthal, Saint Paul
- Debbie Meistern St. Paul
- Margaret Ann Jarry, Minneapolis

Dear Peter Bell,

I urge you to support additional stops on the University Avenue (Central Corridor) light rail line at Western Ave., Victoria Ave. and Hamline Ave. These proposed stops has the potential to increase ridership at a fraction of the cost of other components to the project. Moreover, additional stops turn what would otherwise be a pass-through between the two economic hubs of the state into a viable transit option for some of the most transit-dependent communities in the region.

We all know that this project is an opportunity to truly improve people's lives. Transportation is second only to education in its ability to make social mobility possible. These additional stops will benefit neighborhoods that have some of the region's highest percentages of poverty, racial and ethnic diversity, and households without vehicles.

This transit line presents an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Twin Cities. We need to build it right!

Subject: Northern Alignment Alternative Auto forwarded by a Rule

>  
> Greetings,  
>  
> I am a University of Minnesota employee and longtime transit advocate.  
> I have been watching the talk of a northern alignment through the  
> University, in case there are problems with a Washington Avenue alignment.  
> The current suggested northern alignments basically bypass the  
> University's West and East Banks which are major traffic generators.  
> The possible loss of service to these areas is a great concern.  
>  
> In the past few weeks I have been pondering another possible alternate  
> route. Here's the idea:  
>  
> \* Have a West Bank station  
> \* Put tracks on the north side of the Washington Avenue Bridge  
> \* Have an East Bank station as close to the river as possible.  
> \* Right before or after the East Bank station, take the tracks northward  
> (may take some space, but the Science Classroom Building is getting  
> replaced anyways)  
> \* Use East River Road to get to the trail/trench through Dinkytown  
> \* Have a Dinkytown stop  
> \* Next stop, Stadium Village  
>  
> This route would not be perfect, but would at least connect the two  
> sides of the river and have a bonus of going to Dinkytown. This would  
> skip a lot of riders to the health sciences area, but that's true of  
> any of the other northern alignment alternatives.  
>  
> Perhaps this sort of route has already been suggested. If not, could  
> you forward this idea to project engineering staff?  
>  
> Thank you for your time...

Alex Anderson

---

As a regular Route 50 bus rider, I have many concerns about the existing LRT plan with stops only at Snelling, Lexington, etc. This seems to indicate the service will exist only to quickly transport people between downtown Mpls and St. Paul, ignoring the residents and businesses in between. If that is indeed the case, then it should not be constructed on University Avenue at all. The transportation needs of the residents along the route should be of primary concern and stops should be made at 1/2 mile intervals at the minimum. This is not just a class and/or racial issue either. This is a sustainability issue. If the city and the state are committed to energy conservation, then public transit must be at the forefront, and such transit must serve inner city residents as well as those in the suburbs who work in the downtown areas.

Thank you,  
Shelley Robshaw

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February 12, 2008

To: Metropolitan Council  
Re: Comments pertaining to Central Corridor LRT in Saint Paul

February 25, 2008



Cc: Governor Tim Pawlenty  
Ramsey County Board  
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority  
Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman  
Saint Paul City Council  
Capitol River Council

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a long-time supporter and user of mass transit, a long-time downtown Saint Paul business owner and a resident, I continue to follow with great interest the planning process for the Central Corridor.

In the 1990's plans were envisioned to turn the depot's platform area into a housing complex, later a soccer stadium was envisioned, and for the depot's magnificent concourse; a transportation museum. No plans envisioned passenger trains. In 1999 I contacted Mayor Norm Coleman encouraging him to consider looking into the possibility of helping to bring passenger trains back to the depot. The detailed illustrations I later submitted of the possibilities for the property helped him and others to envision a new future for the depot, with the postal facility left in place if necessary.

I have a number of concerns and suggestions to share with you about the Central Corridor planning, based upon recent information in the press and at public meetings.

1. Starting from west to east; LRT is supposed to ease traffic congestion, this line is but a third link in what will ultimately be a metro wide system. A tunnel thru the U of M campus will go the furthest in easing traffic congestion in that area.
2. Regarding the addition of stations along University, the Hamline Station is certainly the most worthy of consideration due to its being in the heart of that shopping district. Adding the two additional stations which I do not believe have intersecting bus routes is not in the best interest of the system as a whole.
3. With all due respect to those individuals and organizations supporting a LRT link to the *front* of the Union Depot, having LRT on Fourth Street is not the best option for downtown, nor is the nearby planned LRT maintenance facility.  
To install LRT down Cedar Street *then* Fourth Street will eliminate as many as 175 on-street parking spaces. I have personally counted these spaces from Cedar and Exchange to Fourth and Broadway. And up to fourteen of those blocks will go from two traffic lanes to one traffic lane. This scenario will increase congestion, not ease it. Union Depot's drive-up lane will be gone. With LRT's final stop in front of the Depot, a nearly 2 ½ block walk would be required between future connecting trains.
4. Apparently an alternate option to a direct Cedar to Fourth Street turn is for the Cedar Street line to run diagonally across a block from Fifth to Fourth. To do this the destruction of the vacant, yet perfectly tenable and attractive former Bremer Bank Building would need to occur. Within this building is the *only* skyway link from the heart of downtown to the Crown Plaza Hotel, Saint Paul Hotel, The Lowry, City Hall, public library, Excel Center, etc. Perhaps the vacant portion of this block will be redeveloped after a LRT line runs across it, perhaps not for a decade. Who, and how, will the missing ½ block skyway link be replaced? Its closure will be a major inconvenience to countless people. At street-level a public "Square" is envisioned as part of a transit station here. Adjacent to the most troublesome bus stops downtown this will not work out well.
5. My understanding is three scenarios have been proposed to access to the proposed Lowertown LRT Maintenance Facility:  
Scenario 1. Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot and turn south just after Wacouta. Mid-block an elevated platform would begin and take the lines over Kellogg Boulevard to the depot platform area. This plan it seems would limit the layout, design and access to a future platform train station, and would require use of a significant portion of the depot platform area which the postal facility currently uses. The Depot Bar would be displaced and two prime lots available for redevelopment would be lost. Noise impact in this area would be high.

Scenario 2. Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot to Broadway then turn right, travel down Broadway and cross over Kellogg at grade and rise up the existing postal facility ramp. This option would end on street parking in this area and reduce traffic lanes to one. Access to the Farmer's Market would be impacted. Noise impact in this area would be high. This plan also seems to limit the layout and access to a future platform train station and require use of a significant portion of the depot platform area which the postal facility currently uses.

Scenario 3. Apparently, this seems is the most favored scenario at this point. Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot and continue until east of the Northern Building then turn right and encompass a small park and surface parking lot before crossing Kellogg at grade. This option would end on street parking in this area and reduce traffic lanes to one. Access to the Farmer's Market would be impacted. Noise impact in this area would high.

6. The peak use for the maintenance facility I understand would be at night when over 20, perhaps 30 trains would return *home* to Lowertown after midnight and leave again before sunrise. Some 40 to 60 trains would move thru this compact area in the middle of the night. If the line is successful a third car may be added to some trains increasing their length to over 250 feet. Most residents here have no idea how their neighborhood would be disrupted.
7. A primary difference between downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul is that our downtown has existing housing immediately adjacent to the proposed LRT line, and with our narrower streets here, train sounds will be greatly amplified. At each station stop bells ring and at each turn, slight or great, wheels will grind and screech.
8. Colorful computer generated illustrations from the City of Saint Paul - Central Corridor Development Strategy which depict how a Fourth Street line will appear have numerous inaccuracies and exaggerations. Cedar and Fourth Streets are not Nicollet Mall nor are they downtown Saint Paul's most attractive thoroughfares. These illustrations should show nothing less than reality after the line is in place. By removing most vehicular traffic, Fourth Street *will* become more barren and *less* pedestrian friendly.
9. Much praise has been given to Saint Paul's historic Lowertown neighborhood, our Lower Landing riverfront and the new nature sanctuary east of both. The proposed Lowertown LRT maintenance site is in the absolute middle of these remarkable places. It deserves a higher use than a train maintenance facility. I urge you to strongly consider an alternate maintenance facility site off University Avenue in Minneapolis – I am told it is an industrial area with no housing. The Hiawatha maintenance facility is mid-line. The Central Corridor's can be as well.
10. The planned relocation of the downtown postal facility it seems is years away. Construction of the Central Corridor may be completed within seven. The best link to the Union Depot I have heard is still clearly a Cedar Street tunnel which would exit the bluff adjacent to the depot platform. This plan would not adversely impact Lowertown as the Fourth Street line will, and could be implemented whether the postal facility relocates or not. This is the most effective, thoughtful, environmentally, and residential friendly concept envisioned.

A LRT connection to the Union Depot should be the best connection, the first time. The Fourth Street proposal, particularly one with a Lowertown maintenance facility attached is bad for business, bad for Lowertown and bad for downtown. In the meantime, on an interim basis, it is entirely appropriate to end the Central Corridor line at Cedar and Fourth Streets.

The Central Corridor planning process is about putting in place a transportation network that should last centuries. Saint Paul deserves only the best it can be, the first time. Please help make this happen. In closing, the following is a January letter published in the Pioneer Press:

*“While I have long supported mass transit returning to Saint Paul's Union Depot, the time may be at hand to set this goal aside. Given that the proposed light rail line to Saint Paul continues to be seriously over budget (as is this nation), and apparently in danger of losing federal (and state?) funding if significant concessions are not made, the primary goal should be getting this line to the heart of downtown; Cedar Street at Fourth Street to be specific. The line concluding at this point would still be an historic accomplishment and great legacy for all who have taken part in the planning and design process.*

*The final link to the depot can wait and should not be rushed - it deserves proper funding and beautiful design. Saint Paul, and the Union Depot, deserve nothing less.*

*Bill Hosko, Saint Paul*

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of assistance in helping you reach your decisions.

Best Regards,  
Bill Hosko

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Good afternoon

My name is Bonnie Welshons, I am a Twin Cities native born in St. Paul and having lived in Roseville, St. Louis Park, New Hope, Plymouth and Maple Grove. I am a graduate of the U of Minnesota with a degree in Food Science (St. Paul Campus) and work at General Mills. I am here today representing the University of Minnesota Alumni Association.

As you know, **We strongly oppose the LRT running at-grade on Washington Ave.**

You have heard our concerns with pedestrian safety and line functionality.  
You have all the statistics on Washington avenue traffic and U of Mn ridership.  
You are evaluating the costs and benefits of building the central corridor line.  
You know the University is a critical link in the line between St. Paul and Mpls.  
You know the long-term importance of LRT to the vitality of our metro area.

**What we are asking today is that you take the time to consider the information you have in a thoughtful and thorough way before making your decision.**

I could share many examples from my 25 years with General Mills where rushed plans lead to poor and costly solutions. However, I have never made a \$900,000,000 one!

You have in front of you a \$900 million decision. This decision will have implications to the twin city area for the next 50+ years. Many of us will be long gone! We are trusting in you to make the right decision now for the twin cities' future.

Please take your time to do it right:

- ◆ Gather all the input you need
- ◆ Put it all on the table
- ◆ Weigh the pros and cons
- ◆ Evaluate the short term needs and the long term implications
- ◆ Consider the every alternative including rerouting off Washington

- ◆ And then, make the best decision for St. Paul, Minneapolis and of course the state's jewel in the ring the University of Minnesota. Go gophers!

Thank you.

[Bonnie Welshons](#)

Director, Quality and Regulatory Operations

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Subject: Transit through U of M

Good morning. I am writing to express my strong hope that a decision will be made to make the section of the new St. Paul-to-Minneapolis line that crosses the U of M campus will be an underground tunnel.

Thank you for your time.

Molly Matteson (current light rail rider, and future rider of the new line)

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To whom it may concern:

Besides the stations being built along the corridor, is there going to be any kind of other development in the area? If not, just where are the riders going to come from?

I happened to be in Jacksonville, Florida and was told about the mono-rail system that they have throughout various areas of Jacksonville. It is located in some areas where there were some businesses but were abandoned some years later. Therefore, reducing the ridership. What cars that are in operation are not filled to their capacity.

As I was told the whole project was political.

In closing, I hope that all will work out for the betterment of all who have been working so hard on this project and does not backfire in later years.

Sincerely,

Paul Smrekar

**Subject:** Central Corridor Project

Dear Peter Bell,

I wanted to write you a note to urge you to extend funding of the Central Corridor Project. As a small business owner and Landscape Architect (MLA '98 CALA - U of MN ) within the corridor where I own my own space and operate my business 1 ½ blocks north of University Avenue in South St. Anthony Park, St. Paul I wanted to share my feelings about this matter.

I understand the current budget situation, but this is a once every 100+ years type project and we need make sure that if we are going to do it we don't end up with a stripped down version that is not well built, not aesthetically pleasing, functions poorly or is not environmentally conscious. What a failure that would be to invest such a great amount of time, energy and funds to have it not be a successful asset to this state!

I support spending additional tax money to make sure that this is a successful asset to our community which will in turn greatly improve the economic condition of this state!  
The reworking of this corridor is long overdue! You need to ask yourself what would Horace Cleveland do?

Sincerely,

Stephen Mastey, ASLA  
**Landscape Architecture, Inc.**

> Subject: GET THE CENTRAL CORRIDOR LIGHT RAIL BUILT NOW !!!!!

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> I ride the Hiawatha line from Fort Snelling to the Nicollet Mall station every day. It is pathetic that the new line won't be open until 2014 -- TEN YEARS after the Hiawatha Line opened -- if it actually gets a green light to move forward !!

> Call the new line the University Line since it will go through the U of M campus and along University Avenue.

> Dave Burd  
> Eagan

Subject: Light Rail Underground please!

>

> ~~Dear Mrs. Sanda and Mr. Bell,~~

>

> I am writing you as a U of M Graduate Student and constituent of Lauderdale in reference to your upcoming decision on the light rail's future.

>

> I would urge you both to prioritize the light rail going underground for the section on Washington Avenue. As a student working in a building on this avenue and seeing the heavy pedestrian traffic everyday, I feel it would be a horrible decision to have this light rail go above ground and would negatively impact hundreds of thousands of students lives for 50 years. I know this sounds dramatic, but if you stop and think that including undergrad and graduate students, that is 70,000 students which change every 5

years. It will endanger people by day and drunk students by night and increase traffic congestion. Simply put, it will cause a "bottle neck" effect to hinder the general flow of car, pedestrian, and train traffic having ultimately an overall effect on the efficiency and value (\$\$) of the service.

>

> Thank you for your time and effort on this committee. I, along with my friends, love the public transport this city has to offer, and even though I won't be here when this is done, I hope this new system will benefit the Twin Cities coming together.

> Thank you for your time again, and please urge your committee to prioritize the Light Rail to go underground on Washington Ave.

> Regards,  
> Geoff Hart

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Subject: Central Corridor Planning

Greetings.

As I will not be able to make it to any of the upcoming public meetings, I wish to express my thoughts concerning the future of the Central Corridor. To begin, I urge Mr. Bell and the members of the council to think long term about the corridor, the surrounding areas and the metro as a whole. In short, the project needs to be done right from the start. This means:

- Connecting the rail line all the way to Union Depot
- Putting a tunnel under the University of Minnesota
- Focus on "place making" for the currently planned stations. Do not skimp on streetscaping, parks and pedestrian paths. The investment put up front to build this right will yield strong results in future development and tax revenue. Remember, the Twin Cities needs to compete and outshine other similarly size metro areas. Since our climate is often viewed as a drawback, we need to make up for this with best practice urbanism/city planning.
- I do not support adding extra stations at this point. Given the current housing situation and over all economic situation, it would be unwise to over build for "demand" that does not yet exist. Focus on making the planned stations destinations in and of themselves. Once these areas become developed and ridership exceeds expectations, then the council can look at adding a few additional stations. In the meantime, well planned bus routes can serve the transportation needs to the line.

Again, I stress the need to build this line right from the start. A piecemeal approach will only yield a mediocre result and cost more in the long run as construction costs and raw material costs rise.

Sincerely,  
Greg Curlo  
St. Paul

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Subject: Comment on Central Corridor  
Auto forwarded by a Rule

Folks,

I support adding additional LRT stations on University Avenue. I work and travel on University in summer and winter. It is a wind tunnel that funnels paper, snow, cold air, high winds, etc. The distance between stations in the existing plan is too great. Many

of our at-risk teens walk and bus from the Frogtown and Summit University areas. In the winter the distance between stations will often rule out use of the LRT.

Secondly, I oppose a tunnel on the U of M campus. The costs are too great and it would reduce or eliminate the impact of seeing the LRT pass by every few minutes as a travel option. The safety concerns on the campus are no different than anywhere else along the corridor, except that guiding students to take safe routes may be like herding cats.

Finally, I support the Union Depot connection downtown St. Paul, or at a minimum planning the corridor in such a way that that connection could be easily added in the future as lines coming in from the east are built.

Thanks

David Gagne

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**Subject:** Letter to Jan Morlock at U re Washington Ave.

I'm responding to your email of the 12<sup>th</sup> regarding the light rail tunnel under Washington Avenue.

Last winter, I heard Bob Baker explain the U's arguments for a tunnel at a meeting at the District Council Collaborative (DCC) in St. Paul. I was disappointed then and have been hoping to hear some better arguments articulated. I haven't. Demanding a tunnel is premature and inappropriate.

It's true that this is a decision that we'll have to live with for 100+ years. Both Mayor Rybak and Governor Pawlenty have noted that the world is changing rapidly. We must begin to acknowledge the longer term forces shaping our future. And one of the fastest growing challenges we face is, of course, global climate change. An article in the August/September issue of *Planning* discussed the results of an analysis conducted for the Central Puget Sound region. (Both Washington state and Minnesota have committed to an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.)

That analysis found that even with very aggressive assumptions (94.5 mpg and a 40% reduction in the carbon content of fuels) a 20% reduction in per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) would be necessary to meet the state's goals. More realistic assumptions would necessitate a 60% reduction in per capita VMT. Prioritizing the movement of cars on Washington at the expense of transit is very shortsighted. We need to be planning for 2050, not as if it were still 1950.

When Salt Lake City extended its *TRAX* light rail line through the University of Utah campus, the university was able to eliminate 6,000 parking spaces. Meanwhile, the University of Minnesota has seized upon the promise of light rail on campus as an opportunity for yet another parking ramp.

From a 100 or even 50-year perspective, the smartest thing we could do is convert Washington Avenue into a transit mall. But the U appears to be far more concerned with preserving what is than envisioning what might be.

I know that there is a lot of creative thinking going on about this concept. But none of it is seeing the light-of-day. The U is a tax supported entity and it's irresponsible to demand the costliest alternative of taxpayers without thoroughly and openly evaluating alternatives and tradeoffs.

I expect the U to be a font of innovation and creativity, just the opposite of the entrenched position it's taken. The U needs to establish a task force to explore multiple alternatives. That task force can be informed by, but not steered by, the traditional transportation planners at the U. They remain wedded to maximizing VMT. The task force should be headed by someone like Tom Fisher, Dean of the College of Design, someone who can think creatively and openly about transportation and land use issues. This task force has to think outside the box.

With a ULI advisory committee recommending the establishment of a new midtown area between the U and downtown Minneapolis, does it make sense to keep Washington Avenue a quarter-mile freeway through West Bank? Can Washington become a pedestrian, bike, and transit friendly urban boulevard connecting the East and West Banks and downtown Minneapolis? What are the tradeoffs? The U has the fastest growing transit modal share in our region. How much further can that be pushed with light rail? These are some of the questions the task force needs to ask.

The U is obligated to explore alternatives to a \$155 million tunnel in a creative, innovative and open-minded manner befitting a great university. We need to know the alternatives and the tradeoffs. If such a task force concludes that a tunnel is the only option that works, we can feel comfortable that that recommendation is an informed decision.

The opinions expressed in this letter are mine although they are informed by people who are far more knowledgeable than I. The opinions expressed do not represent those of Prospect Park or PPERIA.

John DeWitt  
Minneapolis

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Dear Advisory Community:

Just a quick note to thank you on your progress so far, and not to forget your "average" rider. As a resident of St. Anthony Park in St. Paul I am looking forward to taking the train! I am also looking forward to the greater transportation options my customers will have when they visit my pottery shop in Milton Square, St. Anthony Park, St. Paul.

Like the vast majority of riders I will be walking a few blocks at either end of my trip, and I expect that. It frustrates me to see advocates for very expensive parts of the line (the proposed University tunnel and the St. Paul Depot extension) holding up and jeopardizing the project. A terminus outside the upper level of the St. Paul depot and a route north of the U campus through Dinky Town would be perfectly acceptable. The advantages of these two parts of the project seem minimal compared to their cost.

Sincerely, Kenneth Chin-Purcell  
Resident and small business owner, St. Paul

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To whom it may concern,  
I would like to express my concern for the current Central Corridor LRT plan that affects Overflow's property. I am one of the many frequent customers of this shop that rely on their convenient parking, as this is so rare to have near campus. I understand the



importance of the light rail and urge you to employ a different plan of action for the sake of Overflow and its surrounding businesses.

Sincerely,  
Vipasha Kumar

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> Subject: "SHAVING THE COST"

> Auto forwarded by a Rule

>

> February 7, 2008

>

> Dear Met Council:

>

> I live in Richfield, MN. Frequently, I travel into St. Paul. From here, I ride public transit.

>

> Because I resided in St. Paul, in the 1950's, I have a concern about the needs of bus and light rail riders. My family struggled on public transit, from our small apartment at Sibley Manor, to the downtown area. Somewhere, perhaps in the Star Tribune, I have read about the need to shave the cost of the rail system, in order to qualify for Federal Funding.

Has your group considered the blessings that would flow from the creation of two PARKING GARAGES/PARKING RAMPS???

Strategic placement of a PARKING GARAGE/ PARKING RAMP at or near Lexington Ave. and another at or near Dale Ave. OFFERING PAID PARKING DURING THE BUSINESS DAY, WOULD OFFSET THE COST OF THE RAIL TRANSIT.

The construction costs for a building for PARKING, could be minimal. The cost for PAID PARKING, could be set at a similar rate to the system in Atlanta, GA for the MARTA rail and in the Montgomery County Maryland for the WMATA Washington Area Mass Transit.

The RAMP/ GARAGE could be called a " PARK & RIDE". Please refer to the following website information for cost/parking fee information.

<http://www.itsmarta.com/howto/parking.htm> Parking Availability by Station

<http://www.wmata.com/metro/daily-parking-detail.cfm> Metro Daily Parking.

> Thank you for advertising the email for Met Council.

>

> Sincerely,

> Patricia Slattery Beck, Richfield

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Subject: Please provide stops for all - Hamline, Victoria & Western Avenues

Dear Peter Bell,

Please support stops on the University Avenue (Central Corridor) light rail line at Western Ave., Victoria Ave. and Hamline Ave. These stops have the potential to increase ridership at a fraction of the cost of other components to the project (as the Met Council's studies showed). Moreover, these stops turn what would be a "pass-through" area between the two economic hubs of the state, into a viable transit option for some of the most transit-dependent communities in the region!

As we all know, this project is an opportunity to improve people's lives. Transportation is second only to education in its ability to make social mobility, economic viability possible. These additional stops will benefit neighborhoods that have some of the region's highest percentages of racial and ethnic diversity, households

without vehicles and poverty. This transit line presents an opportunity for the Twin Cities. We need to build it right - so let's do it right, for all!

Sincerely, Rachel Dykoski  
Minneapolis

Ms. Kathleen O'Brien  
Vice President of University Services  
University of Minnesota  
317 Morrill Hall  
100 Church Street SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

I strongly support the proposal to build Light Rail Transit on the Central Corridor for several reasons.

In addition to providing much better transit service to the current riders of the number 16 and 50 buses in the corridor, LRT has the potential to attract more new riders to transit than the bus does.

Greater reliance on transit has the potential to reduce the amount of auto traffic coming to and going from the campus. This in turn has the potential to reduce the demand for parking, which would help counter the current proliferation of looming parking structures and bleak surface lots. These seriously undermine the livability and appeal of the E Bank campus.

On Washington Av in the heart of the E bank campus, LRT has the potential to transform the environment from its current somewhat gritty and traffic-choked condition to a more pedestrian friendly place that would be attractive to both University people and visitors. To the extent that it reduces the need for buses, LRT has the potential to reduce diesel emissions and noise on campus.

I share the University's concern about the safety of pedestrians crossing Washington Av. Nevertheless, I think that trains passing every 7.5 minutes and driven by professional operators pose much less of a threat than does the constant stream of cars, some of which are operated by drivers with limited experience or impairments or both.

For these reasons, I support the at-grade alignment through the East Bank of the University. In order for the University of Minnesota and the region to realize the full potential of LRT, we will have to view it as an integral and valued part of our transportation system in the Central Corridor. This would mean that we give transit priority over cars in some cases.

On the other hand, if we view LRT as an 'add-on,' not something integral to the University of Minnesota, then we would continue to prioritize moving cars. This would slow the train and undermine the safety of pedestrians crossing the street going to and from stations. This would prevent LRT from realizing its potential to improve life in the Central Corridor.

As you know, the budget for the Central Corridor must be reduced for it to be financially viable under current conditions. The cost of a tunnel under University Avenue is very high. Without the estimated savings of \$148 million represented by the at-grade option, I do not see how the cost of the project can be reduced to a level even close to the \$840 million maximum budget. I live in Saint Paul and hope that the city and county will stop the train at Minnesota and Fourth for now.

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Nevertheless, that would only save an estimated \$72 million.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,  
Charles Welling, Saint Paul

Dear Central Corridor council,

Briefly, my opinion is that it is unwise to kill the light-rail link from Downtown Minneapolis to Downtown St. Paul just because the U of M "needs" a tunnel under Washington Ave. I think it is self-evident that routing the line over the existing pedestrian (formerly rail) bridge #9 and through DinkyTown along University Avenue is by far superior to losing the project altogether because the anticipated cost is too high.

Sincerely,  
Roger Goerke  
A frequent 94D bus rider.

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The Twin Cities needs the Central Corridor light rail project built as soon as possible; more than we need a tunnel under Washington Ave. through the University of Minnesota. I believe light rail trains will not cause as much traffic disruption as some people think; after all is it not the same as having more buses driving through campus on Washington Ave.? The trains will eliminate some of the many buses on Washington Ave. I presume. If we eliminate the tunnel, it will bring the overall cost of the entire project very close to the 840 million earmark it needs to get to to qualify for federal funding. We would then only need to eliminate the tunnel aspect of the project rather than multiple important aspects to reduce the cost, such as the Union Depot connection, streetscape improvements and additional stations. I believe these aspects are more essential to this project. Eliminate the tunnel!!!

Erick Schauer

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I was wondering if there was a reason we don't set up a monorail system, similar to the one in Las Vegas. It gets people around quickly but keeps the roads clear for traffic? Is there any reason this isn't being considered.

Thanks,  
Light Rail Rider

---

I've been hearing that Central Corridor LRT is over budget, and must slim down to meet FTA cost guidelines. (<http://www.metrocouncil.org/about/chair.htm>)  
(<http://www.metrocouncil.org/directions/transit/transit2008/CCLRTUpdateJan08.htm>)

So here's a proposal: Rather than rebuilding the Washington Ave. bridge to support light rail, and tunnelling under the UofM, why not put the adjacent former railroad bridge to good use?

Attached please find a .pdf showing my proposal.

Some benefits of this route include:

- Reuse of a river bridge built to carry two railroad tracks.
- No modification of Washington Ave. river bridge.
- No tunnel under UofM.
- No construction on Washington Ave. through UofM campus.
- UofM busway on NP A-line ROW remains usable.
- Grade-separated through Dinky Town.
- High-speed running possible in grade separation and over river.
- Can site a station next to the new UofM stadium.
- Can site a station in Dinky Town.
- Can site a station near Guthrie Theater, mill ruins, lock & dam, and new businesses in that area.
- Route avoids 35E/94 interchange - which I hear will soon be reconstructed.
- Connection of Central and Hiawatha is still at Metrodome.

I suspect the UofM may miss having stations on campus. To address this, I propose circulator busses. (I've heard that service already exists - might need some tweaking.)

Future possibilities worth considering:

- The route parallels the UofM busway for a stretch. This busway leads to the State Fairgrounds, Como Park, St Paul Saints area.
- From approximately the east end of the NP river bridge, there is an under-utilized right-of-way which leads to the St Anthony on Main area.

Eric Hopp

---

Folks,

I support adding additional LRT stations on University Avenue. I work and travel on University in summer and winter. It is a wind tunnel that funnels paper, snow, cold air, high winds, etc. The distance between stations in the existing plan is too great. Many of our at-risk teens walk and bus from the Frogtown and Summit University areas. In the winter the distance between stations will often rule out use of the LRT.

Secondly, I oppose a tunnel on the U of M campus. The costs are too great and it would reduce or eliminate the impact of seeing the LRT pass by every few minutes as a travel option. The safety concerns on the campus are no different than anywhere else along the corridor, except that guiding students to take safe routes may be like herding cats.

Finally, I support the Union Depot connection downtown St. Paul, or at a minimum planning the corridor in such a way that that connection could be easily added in the future as lines coming in from the east are built.

Thanks, David Gagne

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Whatever else happens, **\*KEEP\*** the tunnel at the University in the project. Stations, landscaping, and line extensions can happen in the future (as evidenced by the Hiawatha line), but we only have one chance to do things right at the "U".

R, Adam Froehlig

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Hello,

I am a resident in the Midway Neighborhood and I believe 3 more stops on the line would be very important to the neighborhoods. First of all, it would serve communities who may really need public transportation to get around. To ignore their need would not make any sense to me at all.

Also, my husband and I are a single car family. Light Rail would make that much easier and would hopefully promote that amongst my neighbors. If Light Rail is truly public transportation it must be accessible. I believe those 3 stops are crucial.

Please consider my concerns. Thank you very much,  
Julie Retka

I don't think we should spend the money to add the extra "infill" stations in the Central Corridor, at least not yet. I assume they could always be added at a later date if it seems necessary.

As a potential user of the service myself (I live just behind the Capitol at 794 Cedar St.) I don't like the idea of a lot of "local" stops on the route. To me, one of the great advantages of light rail would be a fast, smooth commute to Mpls, without the delays a bus route would have. If it costs more than a bus, and takes almost as long, then I'd just take the 94 B, C or D.

I also feel strongly that costs need to be kept down on this project. No tunnel for the U of M, and no connection to the rear of the Union Depot where the other trains are to come in (if that means substantial cost). People can walk through the depot to other trains, the way they do in train stations around the world. I've done it in London, New York, and Rome and it's not that big of a deal.

My \$.02.  
-John Zech

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I am unable to attend the listening sessions but would like my voice to be heard. Thank you.

How is it that at the end of the day, building the light rail down University Avenue is going to weaken my access to public transit rather than make it better? The current plan from the Metropolitan Council has the train speeding through my Frogtown neighborhood (the nearest stop for me would be a mile away) AND the #16 bus that my husband and I take every day to work is going to be reduced from every 7 minutes to every 1/2 an hour. Residents of Frogtown and Summit-University rely on transit more than any other residents in Saint Paul to access jobs, education, grocery stores, and health care. Let's support the residents, businesses, and neighborhoods that use transit now by considering additional stops at Western, Victoria, and Hamline. If we are going to be denied easy access to the light rail, at the very least let us keep the current frequency of the #16 bus!

Emily Seru

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Greetings,

I am a University of Minnesota employee and longtime transit advocate. I have been watching the talk of a northern alignment through the University, in case there are problems with a Washington Avenue alignment. The current suggested northern alignments basically bypass the University's West and East Banks which are major traffic generators. The possible loss of service to these areas is a great concern.

In the past few weeks I have been pondering another possible alternate route. Here's the idea:

- \* Have a West Bank station
- \* Put tracks on the north side of the Washington Avenue Bridge
- \* Have an East Bank station as close to the river as possible.
- \* Right before or after the East Bank station, take the tracks northward (may take some space, but the Science Classroom Building is getting replaced anyways)
- \* Use East River Road to get to the trail/trench through Dinkytown
- \* Have a Dinkytown stop
- \* Next stop, Stadium Village

This route would not be perfect, but would at least connect the two sides of the river and have a bonus of going to Dinkytown. This would skip a lot of riders to the health sciences area, but that's true of any of the other northern alignment alternatives.

Perhaps this sort of route has already been suggested. If not, could you forward this idea to project engineering staff?

Thank you for your time...

Alex Anderson

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Has an elevated line through the U campus area been ruled out? As a former Chicagoan, I'm used to the rail line being grade-separated above ground rather than below it, and I wonder if that might be a cheaper solution than a tunnel.

- Paul Epton

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In my opinion, it is essential to add the proposed "infill" stations. This should be of even higher priority than extending the line to Union Depot. The assumption that the extra 30 seconds of travel time between downtowns would hurt ridership is extremely hard to believe. For one thing, ridership projections are notorious for being low, not only with the Hiawatha line, but with LRT in other cities where it has gained a toehold. For another, what rational person would say, "30 more seconds? To heck with that! I'm not going!" And lastly, the locations proposed are important destinations to many riders. The Western Avenue station would serve the Cathedral Hill district (which otherwise would not be served at all), which is one of the most densely populated parts of Saint Paul, and the Hamline Avenue station would provide access to Target, Walmart, and Cub Foods, among other high-traffic retailers.

Obviously, with limited resources, priorities must be established. Even so, it would be a shame to rely on estimates that have repeatedly been shown to be inaccurate to make those decisions. Leaving these stops out of the plan sounds like another case of penny-wise, pound-foolish that we have come to expect from Minnesota's transportation leaders.

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Howdy

Here is my take and personal view on a few of the big issues that the Met Council is currently tackling regarding the Central Corridor LRT:

### **Three Additional Stations Along University Ave**

I oppose adding the additional stations for several reasons. I think that the added travel time and decreased ridership (as per the Met Council study), on top of the additional planning time and additional cost that this adds to an already above-budget project do not outweigh the benefits of convenience and a shorter walking distance. Having lived in London, perhaps one of the most transit-oriented areas I've ever been to, you get very used to walking a little bit more to get to rapid transit. There will always be buses that serve each block, but one of the main benefits of a train is that it is 'rapid' transit - fewer stops for greater travel distances. Buses are for short

trips, trains are for long trips. Adding more stops only further bloats this already out-of-scope budget, and blurs the line a little too much between the purpose of bus vs train.

### **Tunnel Underneath U of M**

If there is one portion of the LRT plans currently on the chopping block that I would strongly advocate for sparing, it's the tunnel under the U of M. I think the benefit of reduced congestion on an already over-burdened Washington Avenue is a huge asset to the strength of this entire project. So much so that I would rather see the LRT extension to Union Depot canned (and I live in downtown Saint Paul) if it meant that funding may be available for the tunnel on this end of the line. Washington Avenue is already packed with students walking, Metro Transit busses bussing, campus connection busses connecting, and all the other city traffic. A tunnel is an absolute necessity in my opinion to maintain the sanity (and preserve the rapidity) of the Central Corridor LRT.

### **Downtown Saint Paul Union Depot Connection**

While I understand the elegance and intuitiveness of an LRT terminus inside Union Depot, I find it hard to support it when the line is already over-budget and it's cost would cause it to be an additional \$30-\$50 million in excess of federal cost-effectiveness requirements. Having the LRT stop on the road in front of Union Depot isn't ideal, but I would rather have that be the reality than the line being completely canceled or delayed for another 3-5 years. This is something that the metro area needs now (and perhaps even 3-5 years ago). The elegance of a Union Depot terminus is not worth additional project delays, especially when the current plan already calls for the train to stop in front of the Station.

### **Downtown Saint Paul LRT Option Route**

I strongly support the LRT Option alignment (whereby the 4th St and 6th St stations are combined into one 5th St Station, and the track alignment takes a turn through the block on 4th and Minnesota). Again, the recent studies show that this will decrease the total cost of the project, decrease the total travel time between downtowns, and also provide for a more elegant curve when the LRT turns from Cedar onto 4th. I find no logical reason not to use this option for the final plan of the downtown Saint Paul LRT alignment, as it lowers the current projected cost and eliminates a wholly unnecessary two-block station distance between 4th and 6th Streets.

Thanks, and good luck with the final decision making process. I look forward to seeing a final plan approved on February 26th!

Ryan Dorshorst

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No more stops should be added to the Central Corridor LRT line. There are two main reasons for this:

- 1) The line needs to be fast between the two downtowns to make it an alternative to taking a car. At the current number of stops, I'm not sure if it will be as fast as the current 94 express buses. If you add more stops it will turn into a neighborhood trolley system, and people won't take to get between the two end points.
- 2) The project needs to stay under budget or risk losing federal funding. If anything, stops should be removed.

Competition for FTA funding is fierce, so the CC needs to be as cost-effective as possible:

- Make the initial (interim) terminus in the diagonal block at Cedar and 4th. The line can be extended later to Union Station when other transit elements are put in place.
- Defer any additional University Avenue stations and street improvements; they also can be added later as funds become available.
- Use the surface alignment on Washington at the U. A tunnel there is an unaffordable luxury.

YES, yes, yes to additional stops on the St. Paul stretch of the light rail in the central corridor.

Absolutely essential. Completely intuitive with respect to how the rhythm of life is lived in this area of St. Paul.

Yes to stops at Hamline, Victoria, and Western.

Susan Marie Swanson

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Yes to additional St. Paul stops! We need the stops at Hamline, Victoria, and Western! Please put these stops in. I am looking forward to the Central Corridor so much!

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Reiteration of information provided on Saturday related to the stops and bus service:

- It is frustrating to continue providing the same comments over the last 2 years. Matter of fact, a review of public comments gathered for the DEIS on your website will probably reflect what the taxpaying public (potential rail customers) stated on Saturday. Our concerns don't change just because the date and meeting location changes.
- Many, riders currently use buses. Ridership is up due in part to higher gas prices. Also, as the baby boomers retire and incomes become fixed I assume ridership will continue to increase. On any given day, they access and depart the bus at numerous street corners. The 16A bus serves a specific need. The need to transport citizens from point A to point B within the broader corridor. Those citizens who get on and off within a few miles will only need LRT if the stops are conveniently located. The current 16A schedule should not be changed/reduced with the assumption that this action will force more riders onto the LRT. This will not occur because of the limited stops on LRT. If I live close to Dale St. and want to go to the Midway area (Herberger's, Walmart), the LRT won't become my choice due to the lack of convenient stops.
- LRT is a great idea, but is it designed to become a commuter rail or a community rail? The answer to this question defines the number and location of stops. As a taxpayer and a resident, this should be a community rail. Unless the additional stops are added, the LRT does not serve the St. Paul community. One of your goals are to improve mobility. The only way to "improve mobility" for the residents is to increase the stops.
- What are the tax implications of the LRT? I don't see any discussion on the website. This should become part of the site. Again, taxpayers need to know the impact of the LRT on a yearly basis.

Mr. Bell, you've stated that compromises need to be made to meet the budget limit. Well I believe that our communities have compromised enough. Add additional stops and don't reduce or eliminate the 16A.

Thank you!  
Anita Alexander

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I attended the Listening Session on Saturday, February 9, and after hearing about Peter Bell at both the District Councils Collaborative and the Saint Paul Station Area Planning Committee on which I serve, as well as reading his article regarding a "realistic budget" in the Star Tribune, it was nice to finally put to put a face to a name.



Like many others, my involvement with the issues facing the light rail is deeply personal. I lived in Chicago for several years before moving back here to my home state of Minnesota. I used every form of public transportation available to me in Chicago for both work and leisure, and some of my friends to this day are those whom I have met in my public travels in Chicago due to similar daily commutes.

As a civil engineer, I understand the CEI and its implications, but I constantly have to question the information that the Met Council presents to the public. After a recent meeting of the Station Area Planning Committee where your engineer presented the light rail construction costs, I know that the “current” CEI presented of approximately \$26 does not include the Washington Avenue Bridge structural reinforcements costs, the cost of an elongated U of M tunnel, and the cost to change the downtown alignment. What this CEI does include, however, is a 30% contingency to allow for the room for change.

This room for change is what I would like to see embraced by the Met Council. In my years as an engineer, I know that there is always going to be some public outcry over what is built in one’s own backyard. In recent years, I have designed an underground storage facility with 10-foot pipes opposed to an original aboveground pond due to parental fears of drowning children and the unfounded thoughts of a creating a breeding ground for black flies and mosquitoes. Did this cost more? Of course, but in the end, it made everyone happy, and the entity for which I designed the system received an award for environmental stewardship for this underground system that infiltrates and cleans stormwater prior to discharge to public waters.

Isn’t it time that government cared about what the people want? In a year in which change means so much to so many people, I would hope that the Met Council would listen to what is most important to the people that they serve. While there will always be groups that scream louder and have more money, the communities are what will make the light rail a true success. I would like to see the following incorporated into the light rail design:

- Added stations at Western, Victoria, Hamline, and Cleveland to empower our communities and the business owners and to encourage everyone to get out of their cars
- A façade to façade reconstruction along University Avenue that embraces diversity, supports environmental goals, is aesthetically pleasing, and is safe for people of all ages

In many ways, I would like Minnesota to be the place I live in for the rest of my life, but having experienced so many places where public transportation is integrated and accepted into the fabric of living, I know that I will not be truly happy here without a public transportation system that caters to my community. My husband and I are seriously considering moving to another state due to the lack of a decent public transportation system here in Minnesota and because we would like our future children to understand that public transportation is the most environmental and easiest way to travel.

I will leave you, Chairman Peter Bell and the rest of the Met Council, with this challenge in deciding what should or should not be including in the construction of the light rail to meet the CEI:  
Give me a reason to stay.

Sheila Sahu

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Greetings,

February 25, 2008

Below are my public comments on the Central Corridor LRT project:

- 1 – The tunnel through the University of Minnesota is a huge priority in my opinion. It reduces the transportation impact on the University of Minnesota and decreases the risk of hitting inattentive bikers and pedestrians. It can not reasonably be added in the future.
- 2 – If Washington Avenue at-grade is selected, then I would prefer the University of Minnesota's proposal for a transit-mall / emergency vehicle access on Washington Avenue.
- 3 – Streetscape elements along University Avenue could be provided by other funding mechanisms, thus making the project more viable from a federal funding perspective.
- 4 – Extending the line to Union Station could be done at a later time, thus making the project more viable from a federal funding perspective.
- 5 – The City of Minneapolis should work with the University of Minnesota to determine if the Comp Plan realistically predicts the amount of growth expected near the station areas. In addition, the University of Minnesota should ensure that their growth plans concentrate growth near the stations. This should increase the projected ridership of the line and increase the maximum dollar amount that the federal government is willing to spend on the project. This really needs to be looked at because the draft Comp Plan under-predicts growth in the Midtown Greenway Corridor, which impacts the Southwest LRT study. It would not be a big surprise to see that the City of Minneapolis has dropped the ball on the University of Minnesota area as well.
- 6 – Additional stations for the line do not seem to make sense. Nothing is more annoying when riding transit than to make frequent stops. Perhaps there is a need or value in adding one of those stations, but it seems that it would undermine the ability of the LRT to serve the entire corridor by adding stations at this point.
- 7 – While I realize that this may not be possible, I would like us to consider replacing the LRT technology with a rapid streetcar. Streetcar technology would result in a cheaper line and perhaps would allow for all the elements that we're looking for – such as the tunnel at the University of Minnesota, a quality streetscape along University Avenue, and a terminus at Union Station. There are streetcars that can achieve 45 mph, which is a decent speed. My streetcar comments are based on the same route and exclusive right of way.

Thank you,

Thatcher Imboden

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I ride the Hiawatha line from Fort Snelling to the Nicollet Mall station every day. It is pathetic that the new line won't be open until 2014 -- TEN YEARS after the Hiawatha Line opened -- if it actually gets a green light to move forward !!

Call the new line the University Line since it will go through the U of M campus and along University Avenue.

Dave Burd

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Hello. I am writing to express my strong preference for the central corridor lightrail to be built within a tunnel through the University of Minnesota campus.

This plan will avoid exacerbating traffic congestion on Washington Ave. that could prevent those in critical condition from arriving at the University hospital in time.

Furthermore, an above-ground line on campus will endanger students, many of whom unfortunately cross the busy intersection without carefully looking both directions beforehand, by creating a dangerous new pedestrian safety hazard on campus.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

All the Best,  
Rachel H. Weiss

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Thank you Chair Bell and Members of the Council.

My name is Jessica Phillips. I am a resident of Minneapolis (9 West Franklin Avenue), a UMAA Board member, a former regent for the U of MN, and a user of Metro Transit. I ride the bus to work and back nearly every day and often take the Hiawatha line to the airport. I've been an active volunteer and supporter of the University of Minnesota for 13 years and for a few of those years, was driving to the Twin Cities' campus from Morris, MN, a small town 175 miles west of the Twin Cities'. Today, I'm on the U of MN campus nearly every week, whether for a meeting, concert or athletic event...and I typically drive due to the time constraints of taking the bus. Over the past 13 years, I have grown to really understand and value the University's impact on the region, state and nation; And I have also felt the stress of driving and parking on campus. The vision of a light rail transit line connecting downtown Mpls, the U of MN, Midway, the Capitol and downtown St. Paul is exciting, necessary and long overdue. And I look forward to the day when I can come to campus from my office in downtown Mpls via light rail. But having lived in Greater MN for the majority of my life, I also understand that not everyone comes to campus from Minneapolis or St. Paul. And that we need a light rail solution that makes the University of Minnesota's Mpls Campus accessible to those thousands of people who will continue to drive to campus for doctor appointments, meetings, athletic events, academic research, and (unfortunately) emergency room visits.

Over the course of the past week, several of my colleagues have spoken eloquently on the importance of your decision relative to the health and safety of our University students, faculty, staff and visitors. The TC Campus has 10 "rush hours" a day, including 10,000 pedestrians during the lunch hour. Washington Avenue sees 25000 vehicles and 1500 buses daily. And 500,000 people access the University Hospital and Clinics, just off Washington Avenue, annually. While campus accessibility and functionality of the line are extremely important, the health and safety of our community is critical.

**What I am asking you today is to take the time to consider the alternatives to running Light Rail at grade (with cars & buses) on Washington Avenue.** The UMAA understands the time and financial constraints you are under in order to secure dollars from the federal government and in no way wants to undermine that process; but we also understand that:

- Building the Central Corridor LRT line wrong would impact ridership
- Building the Central Corridor LRT line wrong would impact the functionality of the region's entire transportation system
- Building the Central Corridor LRT line wrong would impact the health & safety of our community
- Building the Central Corridor LRT line wrong would impact the accessibility to the U of MN hospital and clinics (thus reducing a significant portion of the U's revenue)

The State of MN and its taxpayers will pay a far higher price if we rush through the process and build this very significant line wrong.

The Crosstown interchange is a classic example of a transportation system we didn't have enough money for but built anyway. We are still remedying that situation today, some forty years later. We don't want the Central Corridor LRT line to be another Crosstown.

Thank you!

Jessica Phillips

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At yesterday's meeting of the Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee (2-11-08), the Central Corridor Project Office requested another \$25 million. In order to apply for the next cycle of Federal Transit funds, the Project Office is saying it needs to finalize the route and stops for the Central Corridor LRT line by February 27, 2008. Word from the offices of Reps. McCollum and Ellison is that the deadline for the FTA grant application is the end of June, not the end of February.

Is it possible that the February 27, 2008 deadline is not a condition of the Federal grant but rather a requirement for continued funding of the Central Corridor Project Office? Is February 27, 2008, a simply a deadline for the Project Office to get another \$25 million from the Metropolitan Council coffers?

Sheldon Gitis

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been living at Western and Selby Avenues since 1998, and I work in downtown Saint Paul. My husband and I very strongly feel that light rail stops should be located at Hamline, Victoria and Western Avenues. We feel that the benefits of these stops far outweigh the costs. If the total project must be scaled back to reduce costs, we would prefer scrapping the plan to extend the line to the Union Depot. We recognize that adding these stops may increase travel times between St. Paul and Minneapolis by up to 30 seconds, but we feel that the Met Council estimate of 400 people per weekday of lost ridership does not justify the decision not to build light rail stops at Hamline, Victoria and Western Avenue. Met Council projections for use of the Hiawatha Line were significantly less than actual use. If it is not possible to add all three stops, we our preference would be to add a stop at Western Avenue, followed by Hamline Avenue, then Victoria.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my opinion.

Lanya Ross

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I attended the listening session last night at the Met Council office. I wanted to express concern about the stations being in the middle of a very busy and wide road, and how pedestrians will be adequately shielded from the noise/pollution/danger of automobiles. Is it a possibility to provide pedestrian subways between train stations and bus stations to provide comfort and safety to pedestrians at major stations such as Snelling and University? This would also allow for better flow of traffic on University if pedestrians are not crossing at street grade.

I would also like to see infill stations at ½ mile intervals [to benefit the people between the downtowns], and signal priority [especially in the downtowns] along the entire route to provide a fast, consistent ride from downtown to downtown. One of the most annoying aspects of the Hiawatha line is having to stop at every station and at every intersection in downtown MPLS because there is not complete priority given to the rail line.

Thanks for your consideration. Michael Frederick,

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A copy for Chair Bell of my letter to Mayor Coleman

9 February 2008

Mayor Chris Coleman  
390 City Hall  
15 West Kellogg Blvd.  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Mayor Coleman,

I regularly ride the current bus service in Saint Paul. I also have ridden LRT in a number of other cities, including San Diego, Denver, and Portland. I am on the board of the D 13 Community Council and am the representative from the Council to the Central

Corridor Community Advisory Committee. The comments I offer in this letter are mine alone; I am not commenting on behalf of the D 13 Council.

I strongly support the proposal to build Light Rail Transit on the Central Corridor for several reasons.

- 1.) LRT will provide much better transit service to the current riders of the number 16 and 50 buses in the corridor.
- 2.) More new riders will be attracted to LRT than to the bus.
- 3.) Building LRT will promote and support development that is friendlier to pedestrians and requires much less parking than does current automobile-oriented development.

As you know, the budget for the Central Corridor must be reduced for it to be financially viable under current conditions. I was encouraged to hear the quote from Commissioner Ortega on MPR yesterday that he does not want to lose Central Corridor LRT and so is willing to wait on taking the LRT to the concourse at the Depot. I suspect we may need to wait on other features of the project if we are serious about earning the support of Governor Pawlenty and getting the LRT built. Below are comments on various aspects of the project.

A.) I support the at-grade option on Washington Ave. for the alignment through the East Bank of the University of Minnesota. The cost of a tunnel under University Avenue is very high. Without the estimated savings of \$148 million represented by the at-grade option, I do not see how the cost of the project can be reduced to a level even close to the \$840 million maximum budget.

As I understand it, one of the concerns of the University of Minnesota is that running Light Rail Transit (LRT) at grade on Washington Ave. through the East Bank campus will cause automobile traffic congestion. My concern is that consideration of this situation may depend too heavily on analysis by traffic engineers. These engineers use complex computer models to predict future traffic. If one wants to know how build to build a road to accommodate maximum levels of automobile traffic, then this is the way to go.

On the other hand, if one wants to know what might happen if routes are changed or road capacity is reduced, then traffic engineers and their computer models may not be helpful. The engineers tend to over-estimate future traffic volumes and congestion. They tend to underestimate and minimize the potential for automobile traffic to decrease or find other routes. I hope that the University will not rely too heavily on analyses by traffic engineers as you consider the possibility of LRT at grade on Washington Ave. through the East Bank campus.

Greater reliance on transit has the potential to reduce the amount of auto traffic coming to and going from the campus. This in turn has the potential to reduce the demand for parking, which would help counter the current proliferation of looming parking structures and bleak surface lots. These seriously undermine the livability and appeal of the E Bank campus.

On Washington Av in the heart of the E bank campus, LRT has the potential to transform the environment from its current somewhat gritty and traffic-choked condition to a more pedestrian friendly place that would be attractive to both University people and visitors. To the extent that it reduces the need for buses, LRT has the potential to reduce diesel emissions and noise on campus.

I share the University's concern about the safety of pedestrians crossing Washington Av. Nevertheless, I think that trains passing every 7.5 minutes and driven by professional operators pose much less of a threat than does the constant stream of cars, some of which are operated by drivers with limited experience or impairments or both.

For these reasons, I support the at-grade alignment through the East Bank of the University.

B.) Alignment in downtown Saint Paul

I ask that the city and county seriously consider stopping the train at Minnesota and Fourth for now. That could save an estimated \$72 million. If it comes down to it, would it not be better to have a train coming to Cedar and fourth than no train at all coming to Saint Paul?

I support the DEIS with a diagonal alignment across the block bounded by Cedar, Fourth, Minnesota, and Fifth in downtown Saint Paul.

I support consolidation of stations in downtown Saint Paul.

I am concerned about the alignment on University Avenue on the north side of the Capitol and on Robert St for several reasons. There is a significant grade between the height of land north of the Capitol and I-94. How much trouble will this cause for the train when it is coming up the hill and negotiating a sharp turn from Robert onto W-bound University Avenue, especially under snowy or icy conditions? In addition, elsewhere in this segment there are a number of additional sharp turns, which create noise and I believe accelerate wear on the wheels.

C.) I support design and construction of three-car platforms at all stations. I also support other necessary provisions to allow operation of three-car trains.

D.) To the extent that adding one or more stations between Snelling and Rice streets may jeopardize the viability of the LRT project, I do not support adding any of them.

E.) I support meeting all reasonable needs for facilities for storage and maintenance of LRVs and other equipment.

In order for Ramsey County and Saint Paul to realize the full potential of LRT, we will have to view it as an integral and valued part of our transportation system in the Central Corridor. This would mean that we give transit priority over cars in some cases. It would mean that the city would not require developers to provide as much parking with LRT as we require now in the corridor.

On the other hand, if we view LRT as an 'add-on,' not something integral to University Avenue, then we would continue to prioritize moving cars. This would slow the train and undermine the safety of pedestrians crossing the street going to and from stations. This would prevent LRT from realizing its potential to improve life in Saint Paul.

If Saint Paul and Ramsey County lose the Central Corridor LRT project, I hope for the sake of the region that Hennepin County and Minneapolis will move quickly to build a second LRT line, likely between Minneapolis and Eden Prairie. In that event, at least part of our region will be working toward a future with appealing and effective transit.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Chip Welling

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Subject: central corridor tunnel through U of M

I'm writing to ask you to support building a tunnel through the U of M as part of the central corridor project. I have been a graduate student at the U for the last seven years and think that a tunnel is the only long-term and safe solution for running a light rail line through the U. I really look forward to the project as I live in Como Park and can see using the light rail line frequently. I will likely not be a student any longer when the line is built, but as a St Paul resident I also support having a line that is as state-of-the-art, fast, and safe - which I think needs to include a tunnel.

Thank you for listening!

Lija Greenseid

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Subject: Light rail tunnel through U of M

Hello,

I live in District 14 and I work and study at the University of Minnesota Minneapolis campus. I feel strongly that the light rail line through the U of M campus should be in a tunnel. I know that there are cost issues, but it is important to have the tunnel for pedestrian safety as well as emergency access to the hospital. I think that in the long run it will be seen as a wise decision and worth every penny.

Best,  
Sara Mack  
Saint Paul

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**Subject:** Light rail through U of MN campus

I support a tunnel for the light rail through the University of Minnesota campus. It is vital that the light rail go through a tunnel on campus. The Central Corridor will be a 100+ year investment, so it is especially important that it is done right, the first time. Having a tunnel through campus is vital to student safety, preventing a bottleneck of traffic on Washington Avenue, and to ensure those going to the University Hospital can get there as fast as possible. The tunnel through campus is not something that can be added later, so it needs to be included in the design.

Sincerely,

Jessica Nguyen

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One test is worth one thousand opinions. Why not ask the MTC to make a test run using buses to make the same stops, as the light rail plan options? Rider ship could be monitored and checked against baselines. The number 50 buses make similar but not identical stops now but do not run all day and have a lower frequency. Granted the light rail is cuter. An interesting mathematical relationship is \$840 million would buy 22 miles of hybrid buses. Jerry Kettunen

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Please support stops on the University Avenue (Central Corridor) light rail line at Western Ave., Victoria Ave. and Hamline Ave. These stops have the potential to increase rider ship at a fraction of the cost of other components to the project (as the Met Council's studies showed). Moreover, these stops turn what would be a "pass-through" area between the two economic hubs of the state, into a viable transit option for some of the most transit-dependent communities in the region! As we all know, this project is an opportunity to improve people's lives. Transportation is second only to education in its ability to make social mobility, economic viability possible. These additional stops will benefit neighborhoods that have some of the region's highest percentages of racial and ethnic diversity, households without vehicles and poverty. This transit line presents an opportunity for the Twin Cities. We need to build it right - so let's do it right, for all! Rachel Dykoski, Minneapolis

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It's absolutely counterintuitive that a rail stop could occur across the street from a rail depot. There **MUST** be a way to have the Light Rail stop at the St. Paul Union Depot **Concourse!** The economic synergies of a terminal INSIDE Union Depot seem worth every penny of extra cost. I think the citizens of Minnesota would somehow pitch in to make this happen.



Rodger F. Ringham Jr., Minneapolis

I've pasted the text of a letter-to-the-editor submission to the Star-Tribune; it was not printed. I've been puzzled why the option I address below has never been part of the public dialogue about light-rail. The simplicity and ease of use, in addition to very low cost, seems like an obvious option. While I'm not an engineer, I can't underrated why there hasn't been discussion of this option in public while the extremely very costly and complicated--in terms of engineering--are the only options being discussed. John Schwarz

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**John Schwarz, Here's the food for thought of the letter I submitted:** I am puzzled about the discussion of whether or not to build a tunnel under the University's East Bank campus for the Central Corridor light-rail line. The extremely high cost of doing so seems to be shaping the debate in great part given the very high cots and the alternative uses of that money.

From having spent a number of years on the University campus, an obvious and very low cost alternative that satisfies Occam 's razor rule is available: Build it above ground and expand the arched walkways that are above Washington Ave. for pedestrians to use without needing to cross while having to contend with auto traffic. There are only several currently, but more could be added for the 4-6 blocks where a tunnel is being considered. Those walkways are extremely low cost and easy to build, compared to the perhaps year or more needed to build a tunnel.

Above street walkways of that sort actually have an advantage over Normal Street crossings because pedestrians don't need to stop at red lights--that produce higher travel time--and contend with auto traffic. Pedestrians will benefit from having these walkways.

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**Dear Central Corridor Management Committee:**

As residents of the Midway neighborhood we find the idea of light rail along the Central Corridor is exciting; however, the lack of stops throughout the eastern stretch of University from Snelling into Saint Paul is an injustice and disservice to the residents of the neighborhoods bordering the Central Corridor. Our family is in favor of adding stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western to serve the community. In some cases, residents have moved into the bordering neighborhoods because they want access to more transportation options. In other cases, residents rely solely on public transportation to run errands including laundry and grocery shopping. The LRT will be successful in service to the community. We eagerly anticipate the benefits of a well-planned and equitable LRT line. Susan Sochacki and David Rudolph, Rosa Lynn and Violet Rudolph, St. Paul

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Today I am writing to weigh in one more voice for a tunnel through the University of Minnesota. Of all the initiatives I am most proud to be Associated with across my 25-year career in and around public service, that first leg of light rail along the Hiawatha Corridor certainly is at the top of the list. The rider ship has amazed even those of us who believed it was a prudent investment. We can now better imagine the projected impact of a well-designed line between both downtowns.

My time at the U of M on campus is very fine time, indeed. In good weather and bad, I am enticed to move around outdoors with everybody else. We walk, we bike, and yes, I am even up on rollerblades getting around campus. Some of my classes are on east bank, including coursework through the Center for Spirituality and Health that takes me into the health care complex. I am also proudly associated with the renovation of the Masonic Cancer Center through the Masonic Eastern Star Grand Chapter's Partner for Life campaign, carrying on a bit of the work that was so important to my late mother. I see the many patients and families coming for treatment, or going to Stadium Village to enjoy time outdoors. They are enjoying the tremendous investments in the aesthetics of campus and the adjoining public

spaces and shopping areas that has dramatically improved the overall environment since

The years when I attended as an undergraduate. There is style everywhere, with manmade and natural beauty all through the design of capital projects and urban landscaping. The University of Minnesota is now a people-friendly place more than ever before.

The economics of the light rail connection between the two downtowns are daunting, but few projects will ever have a more dramatic impact than this one. There is one chance to do it "right," from one end to the other. There is one chance for the Metropolitan Council to work with each stakeholder to ensure that the light rail leverages investment along every foot of track. The needs of economic developers in the Midway District are vastly different than the needs of the University, or the needs of downtown St. Paul. The University needs the Metropolitan Council to preserve the equity in investments that are already made, and proven successful. An at-grade track will change the character of campus in ways that cannot be mitigated. Therefore, I urge you to vote in favor of the University tunnel when afforded an opportunity. Thank you for listening, most sincerely. And thanks for the work you are doing for the metropolitan area on the Council. Respectfully, Wendy W. Wustenberg, Masters of Public Affairs Program Hubert H. Humphrey Institute - University of Minnesota

I am writing you as a U of M Graduate Student and constituent of Lauderdale in reference to your upcoming decision on the light rail's future. I would urge you both to prioritize the light rail going underground for the section on Washington Avenue. As a student working in a building on this avenue and seeing the heavy pedestrian traffic everyday, I feel it would be a horrible decision to have this light rail go above ground and would negatively impact hundreds of thousands of student's lives for 50 years. I know this sounds dramatic, but if you stop and think that including undergrad and graduate students, that is 70,000 students which change every 5 years. It will endanger people by day and drunk students by night and increase traffic congestion. Simply put, it will cause a "bottle neck" effect to hinder the general flow of car, pedestrian, and train traffic having ultimately an overall effect on the efficiency and value (\$\$) of the service. Thank you for your time and effort on this committee. I, along with my friends, love the public transport this city has to offer, and even though I won't be here when this is done, I hope this new system will benefit the Twin Cities coming together. Thank you for your time again, and please urge your committee to prioritize the Light Rail to go underground on Washington Ave. Regards, Geoff Hart

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One test is worth one thousand opinions. Why not ask the MTC to make a test run using buses to make these same stops, as the light rail plan options? Rider ship could be monitored and checked against baselines. The number 50 buses make similar but not identical stops now but do not run all day and have a lower frequency. Granted the light rail is cuter. An interesting mathematical relationship is \$840 million would buy 22 miles of hybrid buses. Regards, Jerry Kettunen

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Please vote for the tunnel. IT will be well worth the additional investment to dig the tunnel for the light rail now. The tunnel will keep campus life better, allow me an easier commute to and from campus when driving, and allow my family and me to access the hospital without additional traffic complications. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Matthew Nylund

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It has come to my attention that the decision determining the design of the Central Corridor Light rail line will be made on the 27th of this month. I am writing as a current student of the University as well as current resident of the city of St. Paul to ask you push for a tunnel through the University. The decision that the Council comes to will have an enduring impact on the University community, which represents an important part of the Twin Cities community as a whole. If the decision is made to place the light rail at street/"grade" level, I fear that that impact will be a very damaging one.

As a representative of a District that likely contains many students, please bear our needs and these concerns in mind when you place your vote this month.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
~Amanda Kueper  
Graduate Research Assistant

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**Subject: Light Rail Comments**

Dear Members of the Metropolitan Council:

Many people from our building, Great Northern Lofts, in Lowertown attended the session last night on the Light Rail Transit. My wife and I would like to comment on some of the issues brought up at the meeting. We both support the Light Rail and plan to use it on a regular basis. I teach at the University of Minnesota and take the 16 or 50 bus almost every day.

**Link to the Depot in Lowertown**

We have heard a proposal about using a Cedar tunnel to connect to the rail line on the other side of Kellogg Park. This is an interesting proposal to reach the back of the Depot. It preserves 4th Street as is. As you are well aware the streets in St. Paul are narrow. The LRT coming down Cedar is going to reduce the number of lanes of traffic and take some parking. The same will happen if the LRT comes down 4th. Is this connection being studied or has it?

We are opposed to having the LRT continue past the Depot on 4th, as part of a plan for a Lowertown maintenance station near the Mississippi River. Within the past few years, a plan was presented to the city for the use of the property that the Diamond Building on Prince Street and 4th now occupies. The plan included business, residential and green space. This parcel of land is large and underdeveloped. It represents development opportunities for Lowertown. The area west of 280 and north of University in the industrial area makes more sense for locating a maintenance yard. Finally having the line extend down 4th to Broadway is going to complicate things for the Farmer's Market. Light rail running near the market would be beneficial, but right alongside would be problematic because of the vendor access, shopper's foot traffic and residential parking.

We do support the Cedar diagonal as a cost saving measure.

We support building stations that will accommodate 3 car trains. This makes sense for the future and the growth of ridership.

**Bus Comments**

We do not understand the plan to cut back on the 16 bus line service. If the LRT is going to replace the 50 bus it does not make sense to cut back on the 16. As a rider along this route I see the number of people who use the bus for transportation for destinations that start and end on University. The 16 bus line needs to be considered in the decisions for the LRT, amount of service, timing and location of stations. If members of the Council and the Transportation Advisory Committee have not ridden the 16 we strongly recommend you take a couple of rides on this line to experience its importance to the people who live in these neighborhoods. The LRT is going to be just as important, if not more, than the 50 that will be stopped.

Many speakers at the meeting talked about social justice. I have read that the LRT is intended to move people from one end of the line to the other. While doing this the LRT will pass through a neighborhood and not stop to pick up riders except at one mile intervals. This is too long a distance. The Hamline, Victoria and Western station should be added. Without these stations the line looks like it is to move the people from downtown St. Paul and the Capital to downtown Minneapolis where there are five stations in just over one mile. The University corridor is getting six stations over roughly five miles from the Capital.

If the LRT is to get people from St. Paul to Minneapolis as its primary objective then it should have been designed to run down I-94. To

pass Hamline and not stop is wrong. The new Target and the mall at this location are prime destinations, not to mention the development opportunities at this location. Ridership will grow if these three stations are added.

U of M Comments

We are concerned about the line running down Washington Avenue. There are safety issues. The tunnel sounds too expensive. Rerouting the line is not a good move. The 16 and 50 pick up a lot of students after 280 all along the route to the U. When I wait for the bus in front of Coffman Union I see the large number of students that get off from 16 and 50 buses from downtown Minneapolis. Moving the LRT to the north side of campus is wrong. While there has been talk of the route going to the new Gopher stadium and other athletic venues, students are going to class every weekday. Their use of the LRT is a greater ridership than sports fans. While we would see problems with closing all traffic to Washington Avenue except buses and the LRT this makes the most sense. Careful consideration for hospital traffic will need to be done.

Mark and Paula Neuman-Scott  
300 Wall Street #303  
St. Paul, MN 55101

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Subject: Paul Nelson additional comment

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

Dear Chairman Bell and fellow Met Council Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at the Goodwill Easter Seals on February 9th. I had the privilege to express my views that I thought the CC Corridor LRT was a good project and the right technology. I also expressed that I did not think it would be best for the communities to add additional stations right away first build at Western, Victoria and Hamline avenues.

Last Saturday following the meeting, I had brief opportunity and privilege to talk and listen to Ann White on this issue.

If I may, I would like to add that I respectfully expect all of you to do your best on this project and support it.

I think the CC line should be three or four car trains, at least three, not just two.

In addition, In 2006 I learned that the Met Council gave 50 million dollars to Mn-Dot when the Hiawatha needed more cars and all of the stations needed to be extended for three car trains. Hiawatha still needs to be three car trains.

In the February 2008 issue of the Monitor community newspaper is a story and interview about Chairman Peter Bell. In that article you were quoted as stating you would like to do more with Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). Whether you know this or not, BRT has not shown to be successful or cost effective. All over the country people are taking rail transit in increasing numbers greater than any kind of bus system.

I certainly hope you all do better with the Central Corridor, and transit throughout the region.

Thank you.

Paul Nelson  
1015 Charles Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55104-2615

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**Subject:** Light rail TUNNEL at U

I'm writing in support of the U of M's plan to have a tunnel through campus. The difference between cities with great public transit in the US (NYC, Boston, DC) and those with mediocre transit (St. Louis) has to do with the decisions of how it impacts other transit patterns...a tunnel is really the best option in the busy U area.

-John  
PhD Student  
Dept of Ecology, Evolution and Behavior  
University of Minnesota

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**Subject:** LRT Central Corridor Comments

Dear Ladies and Gentleman,

Enclosed, if you have not received them already are my thoughts about the proposed LRT line into downtown Saint Paul. I neither live nor work on Fourth Street downtown or in Lowertown, what local leadership is now standing "shoulder to shoulder" on (Pioneer Press 2,13,08) will not affect my life, but it will affect many other's lives. The Pioneer Press finished their editorial today with "We can almost hear that train a-comin'..". With respect to all of those just mentioned parties, and the good intentions they have for this city's core area, Time is going to tell whether I was the lone wolf in this matter, but I believe Saint Paul, is once again, about to make a major planning mistake in its downtown and riverfront area, particularly in regards to the LRT Central Corridor Maintenance Facility in Lowertown.

Sincerely,  
Bill Hosko

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I have not yet been able to turn the photos into PDFs. Until I can turn them into such a printer-friendly format, I'd like to invite the council members to browse my photos on the world wide web.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/83382949@N00/sets/72157603895182580/>

They can see where the photos are located at

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/83382949@N00/sets/72157603895182580/map/>

My photos are not comprehensive--I took them in low light after work, couldn't pull over easily for good shots of every business, and ran out of film halfway through Frogtown. But I hope the sampling of Frogtown businesses I've seen here will show you what kinds of places I'd hate to lose. And it really would be a loss, even for upper-middle-class, white, college-educated people like me. Particularly while I was in college, but even someone now (darned economy!) I couldn't afford Azia and Chino Latino. Restaurants like this were the ones I fell in love with and, to this day, take my family to when they visit and offer to buy dinner. And my boyfriend--another middle-class, white, highly educated person, depends on African-American barbers in small establishments such as these to have the back of his hair trimmed into a "fade," which happens to flatter him, at a price he can afford.

I believe that if there are never any trains on University Avenue and transit remains frequent-stop-oriented, there will always--and I mean for 200 years--be low-price, delicious restaurants and skilled "African" stylists making the neighborhood a destination and a safe place to visit.

I believe that if there are trains on University Avenue, in 40 years, not only will the first post-train businesses themselves be gone, but there will be nothing like them, either--nor will any of the types of business that University has right now replace them. I believe that in 40 years, after peak retail has come and gone for infrequent-stop-oriented businesses, there will be almost nothing left but abandoned, blighted buildings and truly unsafe sidewalks that the city will then have to figure out how to "renew."

Thank you for your attention, men and women of the council, and I hope you have a nice evening.

Sincerely,  
Katie Gumpertz

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Metropolitan Council Members;

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak at the Feb 7th Central Corridor public hearing.

I write you to follow up on a comment that was made, stating that the former Northern Pacific "Bridge 9" (the U of M "northern alignment") would need approximately 40 million in improvements to handle two tracks.

I've been puzzling over this, wondering why?

My first thought was that the engineers want the tracks a certain minimum distance apart. Perhaps far enough to place overhead catenary wire support columns between the tracks?

As the attached 1975 photograph shows, bridge 9 did sport two tracks at one time. The catenary supports are not a problem - they can be attached to each side of the bridge rather than run down the middle.

My second thought was that the bridge structure or supports need renovation. After 35W, I'll all for it!

To recap my Feb 7th statements, I believe the northern alignment, over "bridge 9", under 35W, and past the Guthrie Theater, would be:

- Cheaper (no need to strengthen the Washington Ave bridge.)
- Faster (grade separated right of way through Dinky Town.)
- Safer (no worry of hitting pedestrians or motorists at the U of M.)
- Just as good for U (One, even two U of M circulator bus stops are on the northern alignment.)
- Better (goes around future 35W - 94 interchange rebuilding.)
- Heavily used (adds the Guthrie, Mill Ruins Park, and associated development as a stop.)

Respectfully;

Eric Hopp

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Subject: Thank you for holding your public listening sessions

Dear Chairperson Bell:

I didn't get the chance to speak with you in person, so I wanted to e-mail and thank you for holding your public listening sessions about the Central Corridor light rail proposal, such as the one I attended on Monday evening.

I was happy that your only limit was, "Keep your speeches to light rail in the Central Corridor," not, "Keep your speeches to '4th vs. Cedar,' 'numbers of stops,' and 'street vs. tunnel.'" It gave me (and, I discovered that night, other citizens!) the chance to voice my objections to the existence of trains on University Avenue at all, and I was not sure that I would have that chance before I arrived.

I was extremely pleased that you listened to these kinds of opinions and suggestions from citizens. I believe that when a committee shows an interest in hearing proposals they've supposedly moved beyond, as long as those proposals are coming from citizens and residents, it really shows how interested the committee is in respecting democracy and citizens/residents' opinions.

So thank you--it was a wonderful meeting, and I look forward to becoming more involved in the future of mass transit (including light rail trains--I like train transit in general!) in the Twin Cities.

Sincerely,  
Katie Gumpertz

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Subject: Feb 7th Central Corridor hearing - followup

Metropolitan Council Members;

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak at the Feb 7th Central Corridor public hearing.

I write you to follow up on a comment that was made, stating that the former Northern Pacific "Bridge 9" (the U of M "northern alignment") would need approximately 40 million in improvements to handle two tracks.

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- Heavily used (adds the Guthrie, Mill Ruins Park, and associated development as a stop.)

Respectfully;  
Eric Hopp

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**Subject:** Light Rail

Metro Council members:

It seems unfair that you have been asked to decide Yeah or Nay on a light rail tunnel for U of M east bank before the engineering report is available. However, as someone who lived in SE Minneapolis until recently and has been associated with the U for many of the last 40 years (currently staff and grad student) I can testify that the University Avenue corridor could not reasonably support ground level light rail without unjustifiable changes. Thus I ask you to vote in support of a tunnel for the light rail system in this area. Light rail transit has proved to be a good investment and will continue to do so even with such additions.

Thanks for all you do!

-Jan Marie Lundgren, St Louis Park, MN

**Jan Marie Lundgren, BS, Associate Administrator**

Adult & Gerontological Health Co-operative  
University of Minnesota School of Nursing

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**Subject:** Consideration of "Pedestrian Mall" on Washington Avenue--> NO GOOD.

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a current University of Minnesota graduate student in Mechanical Engineering. I also did my undergrad here, so I am very familiar with the traffic/pedestrian/transit issues when it comes to the University. I had been sitting on the sidelines on this issue since I won't be here when construction begins. But then I heard the story on MPR this morning that there are alternatives to a tunnel under the University being considered. In consideration of those who will live here after me, I feel that I must become far more active now to protect their interests.

Making Washington Avenue into a pedestrian mall is simply unacceptable. It is dead on arrival. The website mentions that traffic would be rerouted. To where? To the south there is Delaware street, but it dead ends east of Coffman Union. Farther to the south is the East River Road. But trucks could never negotiate that. To the north is University Ave/4<sup>th</sup> street. But they're already at capacity, plus they're so far away. What about the people who go to the Dental School Clinics for care? Grace University Lutheran Church? What about the engineering part of campus—Mechanical, Electrical, Chemical, and Physics? These are not office buildings. They take in a lot of stuff in a day, and they get rid of a lot of stuff in a day—they need good access to major roads not for people-moving, but for stuff-moving. The campus buildings are too close together to put any sort of street anywhere, other than where University and Washington avenues are today.

And the collapse of the 35W bridge taught us something else: Redundancy. Say we lose the 10<sup>th</sup> ave bridge. Then what? All the traffic gets rerouted onto Washington avenue, but there would be no place for it to go on the East Bank.



I am not impressed at the planning taking place. In engineering speak, we talk a lot about which obstacles “drive” the design. The central corridor IS University Avenue. We need it to connect to the existing Metrodome LRT station. Where does that put us? Washington. The top priority above everything else should have been: “How do we get across the river and through the University?” The answer to that question drives the rest of the design.

The tunnel is the only option.

Thank you,  
David Grandall,  
Minneapolis

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**Subject:** Washington Avenue  
**From:** richard schumacher

Converting Washington into a transit mall is an excellent solution. Traffic will then cross the river where it ought to, on the I-94 and Cedar Avenue bridges, instead of slashing through the campus. This also opens the opportunity to rationalize the 122/I-94 interchange and surrounding streets on the west bank and reclaim some space for other uses.

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**Subject:** Stations at Snelling and Lexington

I’m all for expanding the train system in the Twin Cities and throughout the region. But let’s get it right!

Have we considered elevating or placing the Central Corridor line underground at University and Snelling and University and Lexington? These intersections are already too congested. Building a train line on street level at these intersections shows some major traffic flow and pedestrian safety flaws in an otherwise good plan. Remember, the Hiawatha Line runs parallel to Hwy 55 and does not have the density of businesses that University Avenue has. Certainly, we don’t think we can simply plop a train line down the middle of the State’s busiest thoroughfare do we? I hope we aren’t cutting corners in order to secure the federal dollars to get a bare-bones line built.

Scott Bradley

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**Subject:** Central corridor light rail

I know this may be too little to late, but I implore that the Met Council explore either a mono-rail for this link or even better yet - personal rapid transit. The advantages of either are numerous over on the ground LRT. For instance - I saw a discussion on Almanac about the Central corridor light rail & the talk was of a tunnel through the U. of M. campus - if an elevated monorail or an elevated PRT system was built the tunnel would not have to be built. Also, an elevated system down University Ave. would keep the street level intact - even during construction - and all that would be lost is a few parking spaces due to support structures. The existing LRT down Hiawatha in Minneapolis is great, but is very frustrating for drivers due to the traffic signals in conjunction with the trains. They should have gone over or under the cross streets.

Thanks for listening. Robert Boisjoli, Columbia Heights

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**Subject:** Light rail in the Twin Cities area

To Whom It May Concern,

February 25, 2008

I am originally from Lansdale, PA, a town about twenty miles due north of Philadelphia, PA, and came here thirty-six years ago. In my home town, yes the Reading Railroad went through the town at street level. But, as it reached the outskirts of Philadelphia, the line rose above street level to allow traffic to flow properly until it reached the Market Street Terminal, about three blocks from City Hall. If we wanted to ride the subway into Philadelphia, we would drive to a closer suburb and get on the line, which was above ground at that point. But this time, as it reached the outskirts of the city, it went underground until it arrived at the terminal in center city.

I tell you this because we are seeing the problems caused by having the street-level light rail between the Northeast corner of Wold Chamberlain field and downtown Minneapolis. To correct that would possibly cause a major financial catastrophe to the area. BUT, if you either place the newer rail lines *above* street-level or underground it will be much more welcome than the additional traffic problems that street-level line is now causing on Minnehaha Avenue into the downtown area. To support my point, just examine the rail and subway lines in Philadelphia, New York City, Newark, NJ, Trenton, NJ, or Washington D. C. and see how efficient their systems are at not impeding traffic in the city.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kenneth Lewis

~~Subject: The northern alignment and the SDIES Auto forwarded by a Rule~~

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In 2001, the University of Minnesota Board of Regents recommended a "northern alignment" for the Central Corridor light-rail line. Later, the University approved an expensive tunnel underneath Washington Avenue and an insane river crossing over the worn-out, corroded, substandard, fracture-critical, 50-year old Washington Avenue Bridge. Now that the tunnel has been deemed cost-prohibitive, the University is still proposing the ludicrous Washington Avenue Bridge crossing, along with a series of road construction projects on Washington Avenue and the surrounding streets.

In order to remove the train from the tunnel and place it on the street, a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) is required. Why is the recently scoped at-grade Washington Avenue alignment scheduled for approval in the SDEIS, when the northern alignment, recommended by the Board of Regents in 2001, is not scheduled for approval? Why is the road construction project on Washington Avenue and the surrounding streets, and the ridiculous river crossing over the old, worn out, obsolete Washington Avenue Bridge, so much further along in the Project development process than the far more sensible, less costly, faster, safer, less disruptive northern alignment?

Sheldon Gitis  
St. Paul

**Subject: LRT project**

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Has an elevated line through the U campus area been ruled out? As a former Chicagoan, I'm used to the rail line being grade-separated above ground rather than below it, and I wonder if that might be a cheaper solution than a tunnel.

Paul Epton

**Subject: Monorail?**

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I was wondering if there was a reason we don't set up a monorail system, similar to the one in Las Vegas. It gets people around quickly but keeps the roads clear for traffic? Is there any reason this isn't being considered.

Thanks,  
Light Rail Rider

**Subject:** FW: Central Corridor; Grade Separations  
**To Whom It May Concern:**

Please allow me to correct my previous request for information on possible grade separations for certain light rail crossings. Instead of Washington Ave SE/Huron Blvd, I should have stated Central Corridor Light Rail Line at Huron Blvd/University Ave SE. I am interested in whether grade separations are planned (or, at least, still under consideration) for that location and Snelling Ave/University Ave.

**To Whom It May Concern:**

Are grade separations planned for the intersections of Snelling Ave/University Ave and Washington Ave SE/Huron Blvd?

Thank you very much for your assistance.

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**Subject:** LRT Feedback from Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association

Dear Commissioner Bell,

The attached letter states the current position of the Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association (PPERRIA) regarding the important decisions that you and the council will be making before the end of this month. We feel it is most important that your decisions will result in a project we can all be proud of for decades to come.

Dick Poppele  
PPERRIA President

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**Subject:** U of MN Rail

I am writing per the rail to be built through the University of Minnesota campus. I recently came back from spending 6 months in Asia (specifically Hong Kong) and have realized how efficient, safe, convenient, and cost effective mass transit can be for both user and non-users.

Coming back to my great home of MN - I realize we need that same goal. Having a rail at street level decreases efficiency, increases safety concerns, which in turn decrease cost effectiveness and convenience.

I am writing to lobby strongly for producing a rail system above or below street level to help realize this stated goal, which will increase use.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments per my request.

Thank you very much for your time, Joey Martin  
Carlson School of Management

Subject: Light Rail plans near the University of MN

Hi, Ms. Wittsack and Council Members, I'm writing because almost every day I see Washington Ave. as it splits the University of Minnesota campus. It's a busy, lively place. If you'd spend 10 minutes there as a pedestrian, bicyclist, bus rider or driver you'd agree that it is vital that we have the light rail go through a tunnel or at an elevation above street level on campus. The Central Corridor will be a 100+ year investment, so it is especially important that it is done right, the first time. Having a tunnel or 'el' through campus is vital to student safety, to preventing a bottleneck of traffic on Washington Avenue, and to ensure those going to the University Hospital can get there as fast as possible. A tunnel through campus would be even more expensive and disruptive to add later, so it needs to be included in the design. I've heard that the Metropolitan Council has decided to make a decision about the tunnel before preliminary engineering is complete. This should not be decided without knowing all the details about the logistics, design, and cost. Thanks for considering my thoughts.

Sincerely, Marilyn Johnson, Minneapolis,

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The attached letter to the editor was published in the Minnesota Daily on February 18. I do not know the author personally, but he supports the option of LRT at-grade on Washington Ave, with a pedestrian/transit mall, which I also favor. The text of the letter is also pasted in here:

Praise for the pedestrian mall

I have watched the Central Corridor project with great interest with a number of years. Like many at the University, I became disappointed when I learned that one thing after another (first the possible tunnel through/over Snelling, then the Union Depot, then landscaping on University and then finally the tunnel through the University) got axed in an effort to meet the stringent federal funding requirements. It is a sad reflection on both our state and national priorities when funding for unnecessary wars and sports stadiums come so easily, but critical funds for the infrastructure needed to maintain pace with the rest of the world are so difficult to come by.

That all having been said, I think the transit mall option presented in the latest Central Corridor plan is a great opportunity to turn our proverbial lemons into lemonade by giving us the chance to re-envision Washington Avenue as a pedestrian-friendly place. For too many years now, Washington Avenue has been more of a burden than a boon for University students, as it is a pain to cross and an even bigger pain to bike on. Moving car traffic off Washington Avenue will not only get rid of the snarling traffic officials worried would bog down an at-grade LRT alignment, it would also provide a safer environment for the thousands of students who need to cross Washington Avenue every day. Sure, some students will complain about how much more time they have to spend driving to Franklin/10th Avenue and trying to park their cars for their West Bank/East Bank classes, but seriously, the whole point of LRT is to get people out of their cars and onto a transit system that is safer, more reliable and better for the environment.

This alignment might not be everything we had hoped for, but it is our best shot at getting what we need: a high capacity transit system that serves all of our major population centers well and meets federal requirements. So unless someone else wants to donate the billion dollars we need to get this done. I'd say that it's time for us to stop debating and hand-wringing over how to get it built our way and just get the thing built. Thus I truly hope our leaders will come out in favor of the transit-mall option. Thank you for your time.

Nathan Mittelstaedt  
University Alumnus

Thanks,

Les Everett  
Water Resources Center  
University of Minnesota

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Subject: Northern Alignment Central Corridor

Dear Ms Hill,

The Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association land use committee unanimously agreed to forward the following motion regarding the Central Corridor LRT to the Marcy-Holmes executive committee of the M-H Board of directors for action:

"If the Washington Avenue tunnel is not feasible, the Marcy-Holmes land use committee supports an alignment using the Dinkytown Trench and Bridge #9. We oppose any alternate route that uses Fourth Street SE and University Avenue SE through the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood."

On February 11, 2008 the MHNA Executive Committee adopted the motion. We would like our statement entered into the public record as the position of the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Melissa Bean  
MHNA Executive Director on behalf of Arvonne Fraser, president

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Subject: Central Corridor Lightrail

Dear Ms. Beach, As a resident of St. Paul and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Minnesota, I would like to express my support for having the Central Corridor Lightrail go through a tunnel on campus. Having a tunnel through campus is vital to student safety, preventing a bottleneck of traffic on Washington Avenue, and to ensure those going to the University Hospital can get there as fast as possible.

Sincerely,  
Emily Wroblewski  
University of Minnesota  
Dept. of Ecology, Evolution & Behavior

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**Subject:** Light rail on university

I am writing to express my support for increasing use of light rail transportation in the Twin Cities. Although I have mixed feelings about the proposed Washington/University Ave location because it will be replacing a well-established, efficient bus route rather than providing new transportation alternatives for riders (e.g. a new, faster route from Uptown to the University, for example), I am glad to see we are at least making progress on increasing public transportation.

As a medical student at the University, I am well aware of the significant car and pedestrian traffic that use the Washington/University corridor on a daily basis. I am therefore also asking for your support in ensuring that if the light rail project proceeds, a tunnel will be built under the University campus. I realize that this will significantly increase the

cost of the LTR project, but if we are going we are going to make a significant, lasting change to our cities' infrastructure, we need to think ahead and invest whatever money necessary to ensure the light rail system will meet our transportation needs for years to come.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Sincerely

Ann Isaksen, University of Minnesota, Medical School

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Subject: A pedestrian mall on Washington Avenue is the right option

I just received an e-mail from the U of M Graduate Assistant and Professional Student's Association, of which I am a member, asking me to write my MetroCouncil representative asking for a tunnel for the light rail through campus. I disagree with GAPSA, and feel that other students are following their instructions without taking the time to truly consider the alternatives.

The threat to pedestrian safety on Washington Avenue comes from cars. Trains are safe by comparison to cars. The solution to congestion on Washington Ave. is to put the train at grade, in a pedestrian/transit mall, and to move cars off campus. The objective of light rail is to give people alternatives to cars. If we do it right there will be a reduced need to drive to or through campus. If we make it less convenient to drive to campus than to take light rail, that is what people will do, and the whole system will be more cost effective, not to mention having greater environmental benefit.

Frankly, I feel that the University is being disingenuous. If it was truly a team player it would not have built a new stadium right in the middle of its own university transitway, requiring buses and bicyclists to take a long detour around it. This detour costs students moving between the Minneapolis and St. Paul campuses precious time, not to mention increased fuel consumption and wear and tear on buses. I understand that putting the stadium in this location will also make routing the light rail more complicated.

Metro Council has no choice now but to plan around the stadium, but you still have a choice about the tunnel. Just say no to the university and tell them that some day they will thank Metro Council for having the wisdom to build a pedestrian mall instead.

Thank you for considering my perspective, Lois Braun University Graduate Student

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**Subject:** FW: Central Corridor

Dear Metropolitan Council Members,

As president of the Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association I express the deep concerns of our whole neighborhood about the possibility of closing Washington Avenue through the University to through traffic and diverting traffic through our and other neighborhoods to make way for light rail through the University instead of tunneling under it.

I have spoken before the Metro Council public hearings about this and our MHNA board has unanimously approved the following resolution:

"If the Washington Avenue tunnel is not feasible, MHNA supports an alignment using the Dinkytown Trench and Bridge #9 for the Central Corridor Light Rail. We oppose any alternate route for traffic that uses Fourth St SE and University Avenue SE through the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood.

With the 35W bridge down or rebuilt, we are heavy with traffic. To divert 25,000+ vehicles and 1,500 buses daily to existing streets--including Riverside, Franklin Avenue and the streets in our neighborhood--from Washington Avenue would be folly.

The Prospect Park neighborhood association is also concerned. They have taken a position requesting the Met Council to delay a decision on the campus routing until the results of the U studies are available. Those U studies involve the northern--Dinkytown trench--route for the Central Corridor Light Rail.

We urge you to think about what not having a tunnel and closing Washington Avenue only to light rail would do to the city.

Sincerely,  
Arvonne Fraser  
Marcy-Holmes, Minneapolis

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**Subject:** Central Corridor

Thank you for your work on Metropolitan Council and the Central Corridor project. Without contributions from citizens like you, there would be no such project.

I am a member of the Macalester Groveland Community Council Board and liaison to the District Council Collaborative. Upon taking on the assignment late last year, I anticipated an interesting and informative experience monitoring the Central Corridor project. It has been that but I am surprised by what I find in the planning assumptions. In short, the project makes much less sense to me without the "infill" stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western. When considering future development, I believe that overlooking Cleveland Avenue also is a mistake. Here are the reasons:

- The residents of the neighborhoods along the line should be advantaged by the presence of the line. With stations spaced one mile apart and with anticipated cuts in #16 bus service, that criterion is simply not fulfilled. Residents of nearby neighborhoods, like mine, have fewer options to conveniently reach the train, which will certainly affect our use of it.
- Station spacing of one mile in an urban neighborhood is not good design. DCC studies show a departure from good design practice in other urban light rail projects. I have asked planners at Ramsey County Regional Rail and the Metropolitan Council about the discrepancy and received only vague, non-committal answers. It seems clear that experience in other cities was inadequately considered and that a questionable assumption got locked in place.
- Leaving questionable design assumptions such as distant station spacing in the project compromises the ability of citizen advocates to sincerely back the project. That is the dilemma that I now face.

I hope you will find a way to make this right.

Thank you.  
Joel Clemmer

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**Subject:** Light Rail Stations

Dear Metropolitan Council members,

Jewish Community Action (JCA) is writing to the Metropolitan Council to ask for your approval of three additional stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues. JCA was part of the organizing of the University Avenue Community Coalition, a diverse coalition of faith, labor, neighborhood and community organizations committed to racial equity and equitable development along University

Avenue. Adding stops at these three intersections is critical to achieving racial equity as part of the largest public investment in this community in 50 years. JCA is a 12 year old non-profit organization that brings together Jews from diverse components of the Jewish community to take action on social and economic justice issues.

There is no question that a critical reason for building the light rail transit system is to improve transportation within neighborhoods within St. Paul. It does not make any sense to invest hundreds of millions of dollars on University Avenue that does not meet the demands of people along the corridor. Given the very large concentration of people living near these three stops, many of whom are transit dependent, and especially given the racial make-up of these communities, it is absolutely necessary to add these stations to the route. We cannot build a system that primarily improves trips between the two central cities as a means to support suburban commuters. Service and accessibility are more important than speed for these communities. If we ever have any intention of improving racial equity and achieving racial justice in our communities, we must add these three stations. It is not good enough to simply add the infrastructure so the stations may be added at a later time.

Additional stations at Hamline, Victoria, and Western, and retention of the current service frequency of Route 16, would substantially increase access to LRT, which in turn means improved access and shorter travel trips to jobs, schools, essential services, and stores. LRT stations also would create more opportunities for neighborhood revitalization and economic development in communities that have experienced under-investment for far too long. We are very pleased that the St. Paul City Council and Ramsey County Board have passed resolutions supporting these three stations if funds are available. We believe the Met council must take the next step and approve these stops with the understanding that funds will be identified to keep the project on its current timeline and budget.

We are just as anxious as you to see the project go forward and to get it built on time and on budget. But we must ensure full access to those whose needs are being used to justify this project and need this major transit investment the most. This is a system that will be in place for many generations so we must build it to fit the community and meet its diverse needs. We look forward to working together with you to make sure the most accessible system can be built to serve the community. Building the correct transit system must be more important than adhering to an arbitrary cost effectiveness index.

Thank you for your support.  
Vic Rosenthal, Executive Director Jewish Community Action

Subject: Washington Ave. Tunnel

Lynette, I strongly support the Central Corridor tunnel under Washington Ave as a student, bike commuter, and neighbor who has to deal with bus and vehicle traffic around Washington on a daily basis. I believe that the safest option for the University ~~community is with the current plan for a tunnel under Washington Ave. Thank you for your~~ consideration and support of the tunnel and helping to make this a reality. Have a great day!

Sincerely,  
Dan Pastorius  
Student, Minneapolis

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Subject: In Support of the Tunnel

I am writing you in support of the proposed tunnel option for the Central Corridor Light Rail Line. As a student and bike commuter, I believe that this is the best possible option to ensure safe and efficient transportation through the University of Minnesota campus.

Traffic in this area is already chaotic every morning; other proposed plans will only wreak further havoc. I have also attached resolution passed by the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly resolution on this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

Brent Kudak, MS2  
Univerisity of Minnesota Medical School  
Minneapolis

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Subject: Support for tunnel through U of M on light rail line

My name is Eleanor Purdy and I'm a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. I'm writing to express my support for the design of the new light rail line that includes a tunnel running through the U of M campus, as opposed to a street-level line along Washington Ave.

I studied at the U of M during my undergraduate career in 1998-2002, and returned to campus for my MA this past fall ('07). I've spent plenty of time along Washington Ave during this time and can assure you that a tunnel along this area of the light rail line is necessary. If you haven't already, I'd urge you to spend 10 minutes walking or driving along this portion of the proposed line.

This light rail line will be around for a long time, and we need to think of what will be best for residents, students, and the city in 2060--even if it means a higher price tag today. I know that if we don't include a tunnel in the light rail line today, we will pay for it in the future.

Thank you for your consideration. Please support the tunnel through the U of M!

Eleanor Purdy

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**Subject: Support for CC Tunnel**

I've been asked by GAPSA (Graduate and Professional Student Association) at the U of M to voice my support for the plan for a Tunnel under Washington Avenue for the Central Corridor. You may be familiar with that organization's support as well (see attachment).

Personally, I have always believed a tunnel is without question necessary in that particular location. Especially since a tunnel could not be added in the future without a total rebuild, other features that could be more easily added later should be sacrificed now for the sake of securing federal funding. Things like stations or landscaping, and perhaps shortening the terminus in St. Paul.

Thank you.

Don Jacobson, Graduate Assistant  
School of Journalism and Mass Communication

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**Subject: Central Corridor Lightrail, U of MN**

I support an underground tunnel for the lightrail where it passes through the University of Minnesota. I believe an underground system would be safer due to the heavy foot traffic in this area.

Thank you, Sara Schmelzer, Graduate Student, U of MN

**Subject:** Campus Lightrail

I am a graduate student in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Minnesota. I support putting lightrail in a tunnel through campus. I believe it will be safer and better for traffic.

Thank you, Albin Dittli, Webmaster  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
University of Minnesota

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**Subject:** Letter of support for additional LRT stations

Please find the attached letter of support from the Summit Hill Association/District 16 Planning Council of St. Paul regarding the three additional LRT stations along the Central Corridor.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Jeff Roy, Exec. Director  
Summit Hill Association

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**Subject:** Light rail tunnel through campus

Dear Met Council Member:

I understand the council is deciding whether to route light rail through the University of Minnesota campus using a tunnel. The alternative is more traffic jams on campus as light rail trains are added at grade, tying up the streets of this already-congested transportation hub. Please choose the tunnel.

I know you are concerned about cost. As a Saint Paul property taxpayer, I am, too. But this tunnel is a 100+ year solution to an old traffic problem that is only getting worse. Please don't opt for the 100+ year mistake of grade-level trains through campus. In the long run (and the Met Council's purpose is to think about the big picture and the long run), the right solution is cheaper as well as better.

Engineers and bureaucrats gave us the cut-rate "solution" of the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis, leaving a legacy that nobody wants. The excuse that a mere 40 years ago they could not have imagined the extra traffic and burdens that caused the bridge collapse is nonsense: the Romans and Chinese built bridges that still carry traffic today, thousands of years after construction. Good construction lasts.

Please don't "save" my taxes by building another flop. Spend the money now and do the job right the first time.

Sincerely,  
Tom Donaghy  
University employee

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**Subject: Washington Ave Tunnel Support**

I strongly support the Central Corridor tunnel under Washington Ave as a student, bike commuter, and neighbor who has to deal with bus and vehicle traffic around Washington on a daily basis. I believe that the safest option for the University community is with the current plan for a tunnel under Washington Ave. Thank you for your consideration and support of the tunnel and helping to make this a reality. Please see below and the attached document for the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly resolution on the issue. Have a great day!

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**Jeremy Johnson**  
University of Minnesota Medical School

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**Subject: light rail tunnel through campus**

I am writing in support of a tunnel for the proposed light rail service through the University of Minnesota campus. I believe that a tunnel would be vital to maintaining the safety and traffic flow along Washington Avenue. I am a current graduate student who bikes to campus every day. I have to cross Washington Avenue at Harvard St and the intersection is quite busy already. I believe that adding a light rail on the ground level would only add to congestion in the area. I urge the Metropolitan Council to see the value of the light rail tunnel for the future of transportation through the University. I think it would be shortsighted to avoid a tunnel based on the upfront cost of the design. I thank you in advance for your time and work on the matter.

Sincerely,  
Adam Frye

**Subject: 3 stations**

I urge you to include full construction of LRT stations at Hamline, Victoria, and Dale as part of the project scope that the Met Council will approve on February 27th. The health and viability of these neighborhoods along University are closely tied to the LRT project. Future economic development will occur around station areas and these neighborhoods deserve the same opportunities for future investment that other neighborhoods along the corridor will receive.

As you consider these stations for the project, I remind you that your decision on February 27th will have a huge impact on the future success of the LRT, University Ave. businesses, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Do the right thing now--build it right and the community will thank you.

Sincerely,  
Linda Winsor  
University UNITED and U-Plan Community Planning Studio

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**Subject: you CANNOT replace the 50 with so FEW stops!!!**

I live right off of Hamline. IF it is true that LRT will replace route 50 AND the 16 will diminished, THEN I (with many others) will have LESS mobility.

I have been involved in the LRT planning, but I have been very discouraged to find out that I will have less mobility.

I find myself wondering WHY should I support such a transit

system that not only excludes many of it's proximal residents, but actually reduces their ability to get places.

I STRONGLY urge you to support additional stops on the University Avenue (Central Corridor) light rail line at Western Ave., Victoria Ave. and Hamline Ave. These proposed stops has the potential to increase ridership at a fraction of the cost of other components to the project. Moreover, additional stops turn what would otherwise be a pass-through between the two economic hubs of the state into a viable transit option for some of the most transit-dependent communities in the region.

We all know that this project is an opportunity to truly improve people's lives. Transportation is second only to education in its ability to make social mobility possible. These additional stops will benefit neighborhoods that have some of the region's highest percentages of poverty, racial and ethnic diversity, and households without vehicles.

This transit line presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Twin Cities. We need to build it right!

Sincerely,  
Scott Rosenthal

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**Subject:** Logical idea for light rail

I have followed the Central Corridor debate on and on and on, and since the Washington Avenue Bridge is apparently a mess, here's a logical solution:

- 1) Get the line over to the new 35W bridge from 5th. Street, wherever you can.
- 2) Run the train along University Avenue to Dinkytown
- 3) Get the nice people at the U to provide you with a right of way THROUGH campus to Stadium Village
- 4) Stadium Village to University Avenue and it goes along its merry way to Saint Paul.

You already have the train stopping at Cedar Riverside. If you get the U to extend their own busses to the Train Station, when you have the West Bank licked.

By going over the new 35W bridge, you will already have a structure capable of handling the load. By going to Dinkytown and through campus, you serve the entire neighborhood, U campus, the Hospitals and Stadium Village.

Having it run past Dinkytown will GREATLY turn this sleepy area into a major shopping area. And, also, if you do this, then at a later date, a train COULD turn over to Como, run past the Fairgrounds on its way to Roseville, Shoreview, White Bear Lake and finally to Stillwater, servicing a vast part of that area....and you will have already created the infrastructure from Downtown Minneapolis to Dinkytown!

Please, whomever opens this email, please see that Mr. Bell sees it. I believe these suggestions are simple common sense and would provide the most bang for the buck.

Barry Margolis  
Minneapolis, MN

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**Subject:** LRT stops at Western, Victoria, and Hamline

Dear Peter,

Thanks again for coming to our neighborhood on February 9 to hear our input on the Central Corridor LRT. Your outreach on this is appreciated.

People in our part of the city see the stops at Western, Victoria, and Hamline as very important to give access to transit-dependent residents. We think these stops will increase ridership on the line and become an important part of the overall re-development of University Avenue through Saint Paul. Our neighborhood is changing—it is becoming increasingly diverse ethnically, small businesses along the corridor are multiplying, and residential density is on the upswing.

I know the Metropolitan Council is wrestling with difficult decisions on costs and construction timelines. Please give full consideration to the long-term benefits of a true “community connector” through the heart of our cities.

Sincerely,

Frank Schweigert  
Hamline Midway District 11

**Subject:** Central Corridor Scenario

~~Dear Chair Bell and Council Member Beach,~~

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I am deeply troubled by the revelation, at this late date, that it would not be possible to build the three stations on University Avenue within the project using contingency funding if contracts and required expenses come in below the 30% required contingency in the budget. Given such strong community support for infill stations and the high degree of Council and project partner interest in a scenario that includes at least one of the infill stations I think it is imperative that one or more options be offered for consideration by the Met Council that include building the three stations and come in under the \$23.99 CEI.

I would ask that you request of staff that they look at one or more scenarios with some of those elements removed to see if it would be possible to bring the project in under the CEI with the building of the three stations included. As you will see if you look at the chart, Option F comes in at a \$24.63 CEI as presented. This means we need only gain a \$.64 reduction in the CEI to build the three stations. Another alternative is Option E, which requires only a \$.15 reduction in the CEI, and would guarantee at least one station. This might be achieved by building a single track connection to the VMF and/or reducing the additional project mitigation fund now at \$20,000,000.

Another way of building the stations within the CEI would be to build them within the project and include infrastructure for one or more other stations -- perhaps the Capitol East station where there are already other stations close by, or one of the 29th Ave or Westgate stations, where again the stations are close together. Please understand I am not advocating for this solution, but it is an alternative that should be fully explored.

The first time we became aware of not being able to use contingency funds to build out stations was at the Committee of the Whole meeting on Wednesday. Before that, we had been assured by both Ramsey County Commissioners McDonough and Carter that it would be possible to use contingency funds, if they became available, to build out stations, which would result in service for transit-dependent communities on the eastern end of University when the line opens in 2014. If the limitation we've recently learned about is indeed the case, it is only fair to the community to put a CEI-compliant scenario with one or more infill stations on the table for full discussion on the 27th.

Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

While I am very much in favor of the central corridor line, I am vehemently opposed to the placement of the route. I think it is a big mistake to put the line down the middle of University Ave. This will cause a very large interruption of traffic, regardless of what light metering system is used. Those regularly using Hiawatha Ave. and the exits at 494 and 34th Ave. can attest to that. I understand the difficulty and expense of displacing homes and businesses along one side of the street or the other, but that would be a better solution than to disrupt the flow of traffic across University Ave. Another solution would be to route the train below grade when intersecting with main thoroughfares, such as Snelling, Lexington, Rice, Dale, etc. At times, I have waited up to 7 minutes at the intersection of Hiawatha and 46th Street E waiting to get through the intersection from 46th Street. Going below grade for local commuter trains in Oslo, Norway, has helped lessen the interruption of traffic for their city and can do the same for St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Regards,  
Erik Hamilton

## Attachment 4: Comment Cards

As a lower town resident, I am very concerned about the LTC route planned east of the Union Depot. Do not turn the train on Wacouta or Broadway. Take the route east past the Diamond Products Property. Do not ruin 20 years of historical area preservation. – Anonymous

It is imperative that the Central Corridor Light Rail trackage be completed along 4<sup>th</sup> Street to the Union Depot in front in St Paul, but not necessarily to the back concourse of the depot. The diagonal route from 6<sup>th</sup> and Cedar to 4<sup>th</sup> Street, instead of the 90 degree turn makes better sense and consolidates two stations into one. – Anonymous

Stations should be enclosed like bus shelters. The Hiawatha LRT are not enclosed but are heated which is useless. Central LRT should run on St Peters Street Downtown stall to serve Xcel Center which will be closer to entrainment district. – Anonymous

2014 will be a big year for St Paul. The LRT will be a big plus for St Paul. It will bring more shops and places to eat and more jobs for St Paul. I love the LRT in Minneapolis and I will love it in St Paul too. I will love it when you can ride from St Paul to Big Lake. Keep up the great job. – Anonymous

I am a former Mac Groveland resident and current Longfellow, Minneapolis resident and I do not approve of “getting this built” what ever the cost. I want to state as a resident who travels the Twin Cities on all forms of transit but a skateboard that this LRT project does not bring transit to the Central Corridor, nor does it bring transit oriented development to the corridor. Both exist in the form of fabulous, frequent warm buses and in the form of Frogtown. Make no mistake, I beg you to recognize the nature of the transit oriented development that our city could enjoy along University. Infrequent stops lead to very different types of transit oriented development than frequent stops do. We can't go back to today's University Avenue if we alter the development to an infrequent stop oriented nature. In 15 years we might not have middle class African American or Hmong people still living along the 3 extra station intersections if we do not keep transit great for them now.

- Katie Gumpertz, Minneapolis

I'm 27 years old and I have been in this community all my life. My parents were already affected by the 94 project. I also have 4 children, 3 sons and 1 daughter. I'm on MFIP and Metro Transit is and has been my means of transportation until I start to drive or get a car, which I probably won't be getting any time soon. My income is very fixed. My children and I need the LRT to stop at Victoria and Hamline. Lexington is too busy already and I might have to risk taking my kids to that busy intersection just to get on the LRT. There are too many stops in Minneapolis and the ones downtown St Paul are too close. Why do we, the community have to keep suffering? The 16 & 50 routes have the most passengers picked up between Dale and Hamline. Please put the stop where the families need them most.

- Debbie Pearl Peoples, St. Paul

If the purpose of LRT is to transport people then it needs to stop for the people. As vice chairman of the board for ASANDC and a homeowner in the Aurora St Anthony neighborhood, I strongly recommend that LRT stop at Hamline, Victoria and Western Avenues. Please do not reduce the frequency of the #16 bus on University Avenue. Our senior citizens, disabled and all others who rely on this transportation will be greatly affected.

- Leetta Douglas, St. Paul

I feel there should be more stops other than Lexington and Dale in my neighborhood, Aurora St Anthony. Many people like me an 80 year old senior citizen cannot walk a mile to get on the LRT. I would like to see stops at Victoria, Western and Hamline Avenues.

- Bertha Douglas, St. Paul

Yes there should be stations at the afore mentioned stops, however it is imperative that the St Paul African American Community doesn't not fall victim to another Rondo Fiasco of the Nineteen Sixties. We have paid our dues, so don't double dip on our community again. Anything short of fair in this endeavor will or at least should outrage the Twin Cities in the general and African American Communities.

- Deb Pleasants, St. Paul

I am a tax payer and a Ramsey County resident and attend church in district 8 (Holly and Grotto. I am annoyed that this project will not provide the three "infill" sessions totaling a cost of only 16.5 million to provide access for those in the Corridor who are most dependent on public transit. This is one of the Federal guidelines that have to be met to provide access for those who need it. This is opening the project to a lawsuit – why rush this? This is a simple social justice insure that the planners cannot ignore. I have used inner city public transportation and it is vital to residents and quality of life.

-Bill Curtis, Shoreview

In support of additional 3 stops which are important for all surrounding affected communities and small minority businesses. Please do not be penny wise and dollar foolish. Remember the neighborhoods that are affected.

-Claire Press, St. Paul

I am a long term employee and also graduate of the University of Minnesota. My observation is that the light rail should run at grade on Washington Avenue through the University and that the most vehicle traffic should be diverted around the campus. The real danger to pedestrians will not come from the light rail but already exists as four lanes of high volume traffic through the heart of a major urban campus, bisecting the central mall of the east bank. Now is a wonderful opportunity to remove this pedestrian hazard and reunite the campus. It would also reduce the immediate impact on pedestrians of the high volume of auto emissions on campus frequently trapped by regional air inversion. The University of Minnesota is studying this option, although they have not presented it to the Metropolitan Council. I strongly recommend that the Metropolitan Council, MnDOT and Minneapolis work together to develop this option. It is also the most cost effective solution.

- Les Everett, St. Paul

Please address vibration impact on Microscopy facilities - Greg Haugstad UofM

Advocate for additional stations on Victoria, Hamline and Western Avenues - Sehoya Cotner, District 10 St. Paul

Pressure University of Minnesota about elevate rail with nice esthetics like the bridge over Highway 62 – David Gutierrez, St. Louis Park

I live close to Snelling and University and I am concerned about the potential increase of traffic at that intersection. The stop will affect the traffic and congestion at the Snelling and I -94 intersections as well. At the same time, I am also concerned about the light rail having too many stops. Too many stops will make the light rail less effective resulting in the ride being longer than necessary. I am not against the Victoria, Hamline and Western stations, but there are other stations that may not be needed – Neng Vue, St. Paul

Add 4 infill stations; straighten the alignment in SE Minneapolis and Downtown St Paul. Stay at grad through the University of Minnesota. I live at 17<sup>th</sup> and Iglehart. Through the East Bank campus, I currently favor the transit and pedestrian mall over the tunnel. I remain open to the northern alignment through Dinkey town and look forward to the study results. East of the Stadium Village there is a detour between 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and Washington that is unnecessary. If the train remains on University for that segment, capitol and operating costs will increase the CEI and travel time will decrease. I understand the roadway narrows in that area and capacity for automobiles would be diminished, but it is high



time we affirm priority for transit and anticipate a reduction in automobile dependency. Climate stability and the environment are at stake. Moving further east, there are 4 additional stations necessary to achieve a coordinated and predictable transit system. It defies common sense for the train to bypass intersecting bus routes at Cleveland, Hamline and Victoria denying the opportunity to transfer and limiting rider ship potential. I also support a station at Western and advocate for an intersecting bus route there, a route not indicate in the draft EIS. St Paul's major north and south streets occur at half mile intervals. In urban areas the best practice suggests parallel bus routes occur at half mile intervals. That is a happy coincidence to be taken advantage of. Yet further east I hope the management committee will examine a straightened downtown alignment terminating at 4<sup>th</sup> street. The two candidate streets indicated on your map are Robert and Jackson. The straightened alignment will reduce capitol and operating costs increase travel time thus improving the CEI. One must also consider the pedestrian environment and vehicle traffic. Turning trains produce wheel squeal and halt traffic in at least three directions. The preferred alignment will partially close 4 downtown streets, the straightened alignment but one. While there is a black little corner in my heart that recognizes traffic congestion can result in mode shift, I do not recommend causing it unnecessarily. We cannot serve all common destinations with one line, we must take advantage of efficiencies in the system and allow transfer to any of the many westbound buses on 6<sup>th</sup> street to serve the core business district and the Excel entertainment district. As for the Union Depot, the extension is not just expensive; it is unnecessary and harmful to the pedestrian environment with two additional turns. I consider a one or two block walk at the end of my ride to be an excellent connection.

– Mike Madden, St. Paul

## Comments from the Midway Chamber of Commerce 2/20/08 meeting

This won't reduce traffic congestion on University Avenue. The people that ride the buses will take the LRT which doesn't change anything. University Avenue is already congested enough, plus it is the alternate for 94 when that is backed up. This is a big waste of our tax money.

Most of our customers come from south of University Avenue and drive trucks. I'm concerned that they will have difficulty getting to us during construction and we will lose customers permanently because of it.

The Raymond station display board states "on street parking nearby". As an owner in the area, I would hope this station would not be advertised as a "park and ride" which it implies. Parking is already tight. Signs that limit parking to 1 hour or so must be posted.

Is it possible to run express and local trains on the same line?

Adopt the acronym T-CART and watch your stock rise.

Will the business owners in the Midway Shopping Center (on University Avenue) incur any expenses for this project?

My business is at Vandalia. I need to go to both downtowns yet the closest station is Raymond. I think a ½ mile between 2 stations is too far apart for a dense residential and business community.

Who is the ridership? Local residents and businesses vs. people in both downtowns & U of M?

Need stations at Victoria, Western, Fairview, and Hamline to serve the members of this chamber & the residents of this community who live, work and play here. Many of whom do not have cars.

University of Minnesota: If the tunnel option cannot happen, I think that Mayor Rybak's idea of a "pedestrian plaza" on Washington couple with a retrofit of the Washington Avenue bridge is best. I work in the North End of St. Paul, but I love in downtown Minneapolis (a stone's throw from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue bridge).

I believe that some of the pedestrian crossings should go over the train – "pedestrian bridge" – which I believe would be safer than crossing the tracks. I think a "bridge" would be essential at the Snelling crossing, and possibly Lexington and Rice.

As a resident of downtown Minneapolis, I am aware of how the LRT Hiawatha Line has spurred development along the line, as well as the fact a number of businesses along the line suffered during construction (e.g. Pickled Parrot restaurant at 5<sup>th</sup> St. N. & 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N.) With that in mind, it is essential to mitigate damage done to existing businesses (especially restaurant row – between Rice and Lexington – iconic businesses like Turf Club, Midway Books) as new businesses blossom.

**Attachment 4: Letters, resolutions and handouts received**

## **Midway Chamber of Commerce** **Central Corridor Alternative Alignment Plan**

Since 2004, the Midway Chamber of Commerce and the Central Corridor Partnership have taken a leadership role in ensuring light rail is built on time and on budget in the east metro. Because Central Corridor is our organization's top priority, we have stepped forward to develop a list of compromises that meet the business community's needs and stay within budget. These recommendations come from a special ad-hoc committee formed from the Saint Paul Chamber's Transportation Policy Committee and some members of the Central Corridor Business Advisory Committee. The cornerstone of this plan is compromise; we recognize each party involved has shown tremendous movement to make this project a reality.

This compromise has been formed with the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority and reflects our collective priorities. For the first time, stakeholders on the east side of the alignment will stand together, clearly demonstrating to the Governor that we are ready to make the necessary decisions to ensure the Central Corridor LRT is built on time and on budget.

Specifically we agree with the following recommendations of the Saint Paul Chamber of Commerce and The Central Corridor Partnership:

- 1) Maintain the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) line with the addition of the 4<sup>th</sup> and Cedar Street Option in downtown Saint Paul.
- 2) Maintain the Alignment station stop in front of the Union Depot and build the most cost effective maintenance facility on currently held public land that would complement a future expansion to the concourse level of the Union Depot.
- 3) Any cost savings available after making necessary adjustments should fund local projects along University Avenue and the alignment itself that result from construction.

Although these recommendations are major cost-cutting measures, we acknowledge the project is still over budget. The business community is not prepared to make concessions on the timeline of this project and strongly encourages compromise from all partners.

Just as we have demonstrated compromise, the other portions of the line must be devised with a solution that stays within the project's budget and timeline.

Regarding the proposed additional stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western we support Ramsey County's recommendations:

RESOLVED, The Central Corridor LRT Line should be constructed to both meet current transit demands in the region and accommodate additional ridership associated with developments, such as those anticipated in the Central Corridor Development Strategy. To that end, additional stations on University Avenue (at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues) should be designed and the necessary substructure constructed in the current phase to facilitate the build-out of each station, as it is justified by travel demand, with minimal disruption to LRT operations, University Avenue businesses, and the residents along the Line; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The construction of at least one of these stations must be a priority during this phase of building the line if there is money available in the project budget;

The Midway Chamber of Commerce remains a strong proponent of this project and we are gratified to see so many of our private and public partners working collaboratively to work through these complex issues to ensure the successful completion of this important connection for the entire Metropolitan Region.

Lori Fritts  
President

February 13, 2008

To: Metropolitan Council  
Re: Comments - Central Corridor LRT in Saint Paul

Cc: Governor Tim Pawlenty  
Ramsey County Board  
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority  
Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman  
Saint Paul City Council  
Capitol River Council

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am a long-time supporter and user of mass transit, a long-time downtown Saint Paul business owner and a resident, I continue to follow with great interest the planning process for the Central Corridor.

In the 1990's plans were envisioned to turn the depot's platform area into a housing complex, later a soccer stadium was envisioned, and for the depot's magnificent concourse; a transportation museum. No plans envisioned passenger trains. In 1999 I contacted Mayor Norm Coleman encouraging him to consider looking into the possibility of helping to bring passenger trains back to the depot. The detailed illustrations I later submitted of the possibilities for the property helped him and others to envision a new future for the depot, with the postal facility left in place if necessary.

The following are my concerns and suggestions to share with you about the Central Corridor planning, I urge you to please take the time necessary to review them .

1. Starting from west to east; LRT is supposed to ease traffic congestion, this line is but a third link in what will ultimately be a metro wide system. A tunnel thru the U of M campus will go the furthest in easing traffic congestion in that area.
2. Regarding the addition of stations along University, the Hamline Station is certainly the most worthy of consideration due to its being in the heart of that shopping district. Adding the two additional stations which I do not believe have intersecting bus routes is not in the best interest of the system as a whole.
3. With all due respect to those individuals and organizations supporting a LRT link to the *front* of the Union Depot, having LRT on Fourth Street is not the best option for downtown, nor is the nearby planned LRT maintenance facility.

To install LRT down Cedar Street *then* Fourth Street will eliminate as many as 175 on-street parking spaces - I have counted these spaces, from Cedar and Exchange to Fourth and Broadway. And up to fourteen of those blocks will go from two traffic lanes to one traffic lane. This scenario will increase congestion, not ease it. Union Depot's drive-up lane will be gone. With LRT's final stop in front of the Depot, a nearly 2 ½ block walk would be required between future connecting trains.

4. Apparently an alternate option to a direct Cedar to Fourth Street turn is for the Cedar Street line to run diagonally across a block from Fifth to Fourth. To do this the destruction of the vacant, yet perfectly tenable and attractive former Bremer Bank Building would need to occur. Within this building is the *only* skyway link from the heart of downtown to the Crown Plaza Hotel, Saint Paul Hotel, The Lowry, City Hall, public library, Excel Center, etc. Perhaps the vacant portion of this block will be redeveloped after a LRT line runs across it, perhaps not for a decade. Who, and how, will the missing ½ block skyway link be replaced? Its closure will be a major inconvenience to countless people. At street-level a public "Square" is envisioned as part of a transit station here. Adjacent to the most troublesome bus stops downtown this will not work out well.
5. My understanding is, three scenarios have been proposed to access to the proposed Lowertown LRT Maintenance Facility:

Scenario 1. Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot and turn south just after Wacouta. Mid-block an elevated platform would begin and take the lines over Kellogg Boulevard to the depot platform area. This plan it seems would limit the layout, design and access to a future platform train station, and would require use of a significant portion of the depot platform area which the postal facility currently uses. The Depot Bar would be displaced and two prime lots available for redevelopment would be lost. Noise impact in this area would be high.

Scenario 2. Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot to Broadway then turn right, travel down Broadway and cross over Kellogg at grade and rise up the existing postal facility ramp. This option would end on street parking in this area and reduce traffic lanes to one. Access to the Farmer's Market would be impacted. Noise impact in this area would be high. This plan also seems to limit the layout and access to a future platform train station and require use of a significant portion of the depot platform area which the postal facility currently uses.

Scenario 3. Apparently, this seems is the most favored scenario at this point. Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot and continue until east of the Northern Building then turn right and encompass a small park and surface parking lot before crossing Kellogg at grade. This option would end on street parking in this area and reduce traffic lanes to one. Access to the Farmer's Market would be impacted. Noise impact in this area would high.

6. **The peak use for the maintenance facility I understand would be at night when over 20, perhaps 30 trains would return *home* to Lowertown after midnight and leave again before sunrise. Some 40 to 60 trains would move thru this compact area in the middle of the night.** If the line is successful a third car may be added to some trains increasing their length to over 250 feet. Most residents here have no idea how their neighborhood would be disrupted.
7. A primary difference between downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul is that our downtown has existing housing *immediately* adjacent to the proposed LRT line, and with our narrower streets here, train sounds will be greatly amplified. At each station stop bells ring and at each turn, slight or great, wheels will grind and screech.
8. Colorful computer generated illustrations from the City of Saint Paul - Central Corridor Development Strategy which depict how a Fourth Street line will appear have numerous inaccuracies and exaggerations. Cedar and Fourth Streets are not Nicollet Mall nor are they downtown Saint Paul's most attractive thoroughfares. These illustrations should show nothing less than reality after the line is in place. By removing most vehicular traffic, Fourth Street *will* become more barren and *less* pedestrian friendly.
9. **Much praise has been given to Saint Paul's historic Lowertown neighborhood, our Lower Landing riverfront and the new nature sanctuary east of both. The proposed Lowertown LRT maintenance site is in the absolute middle of these remarkable places. This property is too valuable and deserves a higher use than a train maintenance facility. I urge you to strongly consider an alternate maintenance facility site off University Avenue in Minneapolis** – I am told it is an industrial area with no housing. The Hiawatha maintenance facility is mid-line. The Central Corridor's can be as well.
10. The planned relocation of the downtown postal facility it seems is years away. Construction of the Central Corridor may be completed within seven. The best link to the Union Depot I have heard is still clearly a Cedar Street tunnel which would exit the bluff adjacent to the depot platform. This plan would not adversely impact Lowertown as the Fourth Street line will, and could be implemented whether the postal facility relocates or not. This is the most effective, thoughtful, environmentally, and residential friendly concept envisioned.

A LRT connection to the Union Depot should be the best connection, the first time. The Fourth Street proposal, particularly one with a Lowertown maintenance facility attached is bad for business, bad for Lowertown and bad for downtown. In the meantime, on an interim basis, it is entirely appropriate to end the Central Corridor line at Cedar and Fourth Streets.

The Central Corridor planning process is about putting in place a transportation network that should last centuries. Saint Paul deserves only the best it can be, the first time. Please help make this happen. In closing, the following is a January letter published in the Pioneer Press:

*“While I have long supported mass transit returning to Saint Paul's Union Depot, the time may be at hand to set this goal aside. Given that the proposed light rail line to Saint Paul continues to be seriously over budget (as is this nation), and apparently in danger of losing federal (and state?) funding if significant concessions are not made, the primary goal should be getting this line to the heart of downtown; Cedar Street at Fourth Street to be specific. The line concluding at this point would still be an historic accomplishment and great legacy for all who have taken part in the planning and design process.*

*The final link to the depot can wait and should not be rushed - it deserves proper funding and beautiful design. Saint Paul, and the Union Depot, deserve nothing less.*

*Bill Hosko, Saint Paul*

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of assistance in helping you reach your decisions.

Best Regards,

Bill Hosko

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February 21, 2008

To: Metropolitan Council  
Re: Comments - Central Corridor LRT in Saint Paul

Cc: Governor Tim Pawlenty  
Ramsey County Board  
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority  
Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman  
Saint Paul City Council  
Capitol River Council

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am a long-time supporter and user of mass transit, a long-time downtown Saint Paul business owner and resident. In 1999 I was the first person to approach Mayor Norm Coleman about bringing passenger train service back to the historic Union Depot after two previous proposals envisioned housing then later a soccer stadium atop the depot's platform area (neither of which included trains). The Union Depot at its peak hosted 70 passenger trains a day on its massive platform area in the 1940's. The detailed illustrations I later submitted to our mayor in 2000 (site plan is attached) helped him and others to envision a new future for the depot, with the large USPS mail sorting facility left in place if necessary.

On February 13<sup>th</sup> I sent my thoughts and suggestions to a number of you regarding Light Rail Transit (LRT) in downtown Saint Paul, more details are included with this update.

My purpose here is to help decision makers, elected officials and certainly the residents, business and property owners in the core area who will be directly impacted by LRT in downtown understand there is more to this proposal which you may not have yet seen or been introduced to either during public discussions or by the LRT planners. The goal of the Central Corridor line is to ultimately terminate at Union Depot.

I strongly disagree with the recent rejection of a Cedar Street tunnel to connect LRT to the Union Depot in favor of a less costly Fourth Street connection. This course of action will later be viewed as another major planning mistake which will short change a still struggling downtown and riverfront area. Ultimately there will be no cost savings to the public as the following may show. There are many issues to review and there is no brief way to express them.

1. On Cedar Street heading into downtown beginning at Exchange Street, on street parking will be eliminated, the two existing traffic lanes will be narrowed to one. These changes to Cedar can not be avoided.

2. The three scenarios which would bring LRT from Cedar Street to the depot:  
Scenario 1: Envisions a tunnel beginning on Cedar, just past Fourth Street where the grade rises up to Kellogg Boulevard. The tunnel would travel under Kellogg Boulevard and curve eastward while under Kellogg Park and exit below the Robert Street Bridge inline with the depot platform which begins at this point. This scenario would allow an immediate train to train connection when future commuter/passenger train lines reach the depot from Hastings, North Branch and hopefully the MSP International Airport. The projected cost for the tunnel was rejected as being too expensive and attention has shifted to a Fourth Street link.

Scenario 2: The Fourth Street link envisions the Cedar Street line turning east (left) onto Fourth. To do this the twin tracks running along the east side of Cedar would shift west in front of the Pioneer Press building in order to make the 45 degree turn - this would cut off the one remaining traffic/bus lane on Cedar between Fifth and Fourth (Vehicles can not cross the lines except at intersections). Once on Fourth the twin rail lines would continue to the front of the Union Depot.

Scenario 3: Envisions the Cedar Street line running diagonally across a city block from Cedar and Fifth Streets to Minnesota and Fourth Streets, then continue on Fourth to the front of the Union Depot. The vacant, former Bremer Bank Building on the corner of Cedar and Fifth would come down, as would the only skyway link from the heart of downtown to the Crown Plaza and Saint Paul Hotel, Lawson, City Hall, The Lowry, the library, Rivercentre and Xcel Energy Center (embedded within the vacant bank building is the half block long skyway system link).

3. With the combined installation of LRT on Cedar *and* Fourth Streets as many as 175 on-street parking spaces will be removed and nearly \$400,000 in annual meter revenue will be gone. On Fourth Street, not including lost delivery and free evening/weekend parking spaces, up to 92 metered spaces will be removed. Up to fourteen downtown blocks will go from two traffic lanes to one traffic lane.
4. Other than in rare situations like a Nicollet Mall plan, loss of on-street parking is not good for business or downtown residents. Proponents explain Fourth Street will become an art-filled gateway to the “entertainment district”, coffee shops will open. Street vendors and “jugglers” will appear during major events. As far as the lost on street parking, a “new paradigm” needs to be embraced planners say and people need to begin taking mass transit downtown. These same urban planners never address the poor behaviors on many bus routes, and they generally do not own businesses, including retail or food service businesses, and have little or no investment in downtown Saint Paul and drive themselves home, often outside of Saint Paul.

5. With the loss of on-street parking and traffic reductions Fourth Street *will* appear more barren and become *less* pedestrian friendly. For years, despite adopted master ‘plans’ our downtown business environment has continued to decline. Our retail environment has nearly collapsed, and continues to slowly erode. With their colorful and at times exaggerated computer generated illustrations these urban planners have sold some on the idea that Fourth Street will become “a pedestrian friendly street-scaped precinct”. This will not be possible when even nearby Wabasha Street has become a shell of its former retail corridor over the last ten years.
6. It is true as the urban planners say that many new housing units have been constructed adjacent to the Hiawatha LRT line (many in Bloomington near the MOA) none of have been built along this line in downtown Minneapolis. Since their LRT began operating four years ago, no vacant downtown lot along this line has been developed. Street level commercial vacancies remain. At or near its intersection with Nicollet Mall retail vacancies have increased.
7. Having LRT in downtown Saint Paul turn directly onto Fourth from Cedar as previously mentioned will require that, the single lane of traffic remaining on Cedar will be eliminated between Fifth and Fourth. If this occurs traffic movement will be further restricted and buses would not be able to continue to Kellogg and over to their staging area on Minnesota Street between Kellogg and Fourth.
8. The option of running LRT diagonally thru the block between Cedar and Minnesota Streets will require as previously mentioned the destruction of the former Bremer Bank Building which in turn will sever of a primary skyway link in downtown. This vacant building remains the most attractive street level structure on Fifth between Wabasha Street and Lowertown. Half of this block has been a parking lot for decades. The bank building’s removal will open an unattractive side-view of the much taller Athletic Club building. The newly created two *triangles* of vacant land will be more costly to develop.
9. With downtown Saint Paul continuing to have the highest office and retail vacancies in the metro, and having several other more attractive parcels available, finding a corporate tenant or condominium/hotel/apartment developer for these parcels will be challenging.
10. Skyway businesses severed from the core area will have difficulty surviving the loss of walk-by traffic from the core area. Commercial space now separated from the main system will be more difficult to lease.
11. Downtown’s most troublesome bus stops are located either on this block or in close proximity. By installing a “place of arrival” and a “square” on this block as part of the LRT station, the problems with anti-social behavior will grow. In the mean time how long will the half block skyway link remain missing? Until the block is redeveloped, will a temporary one be built? Will a free-standing permanent one be built? Who will pay for it?

12. With LRT on Fourth Street, the primary delivery and tenant pick-up lane for the full-block First National Bank complex will be gone. Stopping is already not permitted on Fifth and Robert Streets adjacent to this complex and stopping is only possible along small area of Minnesota Street.
13. On Fourth Street the LRT twin rails will be on the south side of Fourth Street. With the LRT station in front of the Union Depot, the depot's drive-up lane with parking will be eliminated; negatively impacting the businesses and residents here.
14. With LRT's final stop in front of the Depot, a nearly 2 ½ block walk will be required to reach future commuter or long-distance trains on the track-side of the depot.
15. Another factor here is a LRT Maintenance Facility is proposed for the southeast corner of Lowertown, on the south side of Kellogg in the shadow of the Lafayette Bridge. To reach this facility LRT in front of the depot would continue east.

Three scenarios exist for a connection to this facility:

Scenario 1: Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot and turn south/right just past Wacouta Street. This plan would utilize vacant blocks prime for redevelopment and eliminate the west alley entrance to Lowertown Lofts and displace the Depot Bar. Mid-block an elevated platform would begin to take the lines over Kellogg Boulevard to the depot platform area. Permanent noise impact in this area would be high. This plan would significantly limit the layout, design and access to a future platform train station.

Scenario 2: Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot to Broadway then turn south/right, then travel down Broadway to cross over Kellogg at grade. This option would end on street parking in this area and eliminate all traffic on Fourth between Wall and Broadway in order to allow the twin tracks to shift north/left in order to make the south/right turn onto Broadway. The south entrance to the Farmer's Market would be eliminated, parking on Broadway between Fourth and Kellogg would be eliminated. Traffic on Broadway between Fourth and Kellogg would become one lane, one way, towards Kellogg. Noise impact in the area would be high.

The rails after crossing Kellogg at grade would travel up an existing ramp to reach the platform area. This is the only ramp up to the platform area which the USPS uses 24/7. This plan would significantly limit the layout, design and access to a future platform train station.

Also, where Fifth Streets ends at Broadway traffic must turn left or right. The right turn lane is also a bus route. The two-way traffic on Broadway way between Fifth and Fourth would become one way being traffic would no longer be able to reach Fifth from Broadway.

Redevelopment of the Diamond/Gillette site will be impacted significantly by these traffic restrictions. Traffic signals would need to be installed on Fourth at Broadway, Wall and Wacouta.

Scenario 3: Dual tracks would continue on Fourth past the depot, Wall, and Broadway then continue on past the north side of the Northern Building. They would then turn south/right and run past the east sides of the Northern and Tilsner Buildings before passing over Kellogg at grade. The park and adjacent surface parking lot here would be reduced in size or eliminated. At Kellogg the rails would cross at grade then rise again to the newly raised grade of the maintenance facility site.

Of the three scenarios this one impacts traffic on Fourth the least but it would still end on street parking in this area and reduce traffic lanes to one. Access to the Farmer's Market would still be reduced. Noise impact in Lowertown would be highest.

16. The peak use for the maintenance facility would be at night when most of the 31 two car trains would return *home* to Lowertown and leave again before sunrise.
17. If the line is successful a third car will be added to some trains increasing their length to over 250 feet.
18. A significant difference between downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul is that our downtown has existing housing *immediately* adjacent to the proposed LRT line and our streets are narrower. These facts particular pertain to Lowertown. Train sounds will be more *amplified* in downtown Saint Paul.
19. At each station stop, and at each downtown intersection automated bells ring four times and at each turn, slight or great, wheels will grind and screech.
20. Seven days a week, approximate time between trains will be 7 minutes at peak travel times, 10 to 15 during the day and every 20 to 30 minutes after 10 pm until 1 am. Train bells, while not unpleasant sounding, will be heard all day, everyday, as far as three blocks from Fourth Street. Apartments in Kellogg Square and most in Galtier's towers will hear them, every Lowertown building from Sixth Street south will clearly hear them.
21. All trains enroute to the maintenance facility after 1am will sound their bells at intersections and begin again before sunrise when they leave.

22. Much well deserved praise has been given to Lowertown, our Lower Landing riverfront and the new nature sanctuary east of both. Yet now in the middle of these special places, and not in keeping with the adopted master 'plans', a train maintenance facility is proposed.
23. From this facility two rail spurs will reach out someday and bring LRT to the back of the depot concourse in order to finally complete the train to train link. Most if not all LRT trains which would have been ending their runs in front of the depot will then continuing on thru Lowertown to reach the platform.
24. The site plan I submitted to Mayor Norm Coleman in 2000 was in keeping with and respectful to Lowertown. It remains as valid for consideration today as it was eight years ago. The Union Depot platform area is a magnificent space, and should not be marred or particularly, hemmed in, by a train maintenance facility.
25. There remains an alternate LRT maintenance site available off University Avenue in Minneapolis. Well away from housing, historic neighborhoods, remarkable river frontage and nature sanctuaries. The Hiawatha maintenance facility is mid-line. The Central Corridor's can be as well.

In closing, one of the primary purposes of LRT is too ease traffic congestion. A Fourth Street LRT route does not uphold that goal. Traffic Engineers should be waving red flags. The primary case for LRT stopping in *front* of the depot is to help close the Central Corridor budget shortfall. The amount of permanent disruption and high costs associated with a Fourth Street LRT line is not in the best interests of Saint Paul and will ultimately save no taxpayer dollars.

When the depot is fully operational as a transit hub, and Diamond Gillette is redeveloped, this area will not possibly be able to function well given the restrictions and traffic congestion a Fourth Street LRT line will bring to the area.

The relocation of the downtown USPS postal facility remains years away. Construction of the Central Corridor may be completed within six. Whether the postal facility relocates or not, the Cedar Street tunnel remains the most cost effective, thoughtful, environmentally, business and residential friendly concept envisioned. And when funding becomes available, then lets do it right!

Here is what Saint Paul gains: No perfectly tenable building will be torn down, no major skyway connection will be severed, no skyway level businesses will suffer a loss of customers, no downtown resident, businessman or visitor will be inconvenienced by the lack of a skyway connection to hotels, city hall, the library or convention center, only the least amount of parking or traffic disruptions possible will occur, only the fewest amount of downtown residents possible will be disturbed by LRT bells and grinding wheels, no infringement upon the Farmer's Market will occur, no closure of an alley to artists' lofts will occur, no loss of Lowertown greenspace will occur, no disruption related to LRT will affect the future redevelopment potential of vacant lots on Wacouta, no disruption related to LRT will affect the redevelopment potential of the Diamond/Gillette site, the Vento nature sanctuary will remain least disturbed, the front of the Union Depot itself will be least impaired, and lastly the grand Union Depot platform will be free to receive the best planning possible for public access to and from the platform area and for future commuter and long distance trains and bus service.

In the meantime, on an interim basis, it is entirely appropriate to end the Central Corridor line at Cedar and Fourth Streets. It would remain an historic accomplishment for Saint Paul and certainly a major first step in making Saint Paul a regional transportation hub.

The Central Corridor planning process is about putting in place a transportation network that should last centuries. Saint Paul deserves only the best it can be, the first time. All of us should want nothing less for this city.

What can you do? Be part of the process and share your input! The final decision on the Central Corridor LRT route in downtown Saint Paul will be made by the Metropolitan Council board on Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. To learn more or to share your thoughts with the Metropolitan Council, visit their website [www.centralcorridor.org](http://www.centralcorridor.org). From here you can link to the offices of elected officials who have been a part of the process to date as well. You are also welcome to phone the Central Corridor planning offices at 651-602-1954.

Sincerely,

**Bill Hosko**

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billhosko@yahoo.com





February 20, 2008

**Transportation Equity and  
Stops for Us Campaign**

Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

Aurora/Saint Anthony  
Neighborhood Development  
Corporation

Community Stabilization Project

District Councils Collaborative of

- Saint Paul and Minneapolis
- North End-South Como, D-6
- Thomas-Dale, D-7
- Summit-University, D-8
- Como, D-10
- Hamline-Midway, D-11
- Saint Anthony Park, D-12
- D-13, Lexington-Hamline,  
Merriam Park, Snelling-  
Hamline
- Macalester-Groveland, D-14
- Summit Hill, D-16
- CapitolRiver Council, D-17
- Marcy-Holmes Assoc.
- Prospect Park-East River  
Road Improvement Assoc.
- Southeast Como  
Improvement Assoc.
- University District  
Improvement Assoc.
- West Bank Community  
Coalition

Hmong Business Association

Jewish Community Action

JUST Equity

Model Cities, Inc.

Organizing Project of African  
American Congregations—  
MICAH

Saint Paul NAACP

Saint Paul Urban League

UFCW Local 789

University UNITED

Mr. Peter Bell, Chair, Metropolitan Council  
390 Robert Street N.  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

RE: Central Corridor Alignment

Dear Chair Bell:

As you heard at the recent Listening Sessions, many community members feel strongly that stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline will improve access to LRT and help to ensure that all our neighbors and neighborhoods benefit from this major public investment. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the additional Listening Session held on February 9, 2008 at the Goodwill/Easter Seals building, which enabled many more of our community members to deliver their input in person.

We respectfully wish to supplement oral and written input received to date with the following:

- A written petition supporting stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline. (E-mail petitions will arrive independently.)
- Letters of support from St. Paul district councils, Minneapolis neighborhood associations, and community organizations. (Additional letters of support are pending.)
- Letter of support signed by elected officials at all levels of government. (Additional signatures are pending.)

We are very pleased to see infrastructure for three infill stations as part of all the project scenarios generated to date and the build out of one or more infill stations included in four scenarios. The inclusion of the stations in preliminary engineering studies and the recent agreement among Ramsey County stakeholders were important first steps toward building these stations. Community members, remain committed to seeing these stations built as part of the first phase of construction; we will continue to monitor project progress and to seek out opportunities to ensure that these stations open along with the rest of the line in 2014.

Carol Swenson, Community Liaison  
District Councils Collaborative

On behalf of the Transportation Equity and Stops For Us Campaign

Attachments

**District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul & Minneapolis**

**Comments/Recommendations  
on the Central Corridor Light Rail Project  
Metropolitan Council Listening Session  
February 11, 2008**

I'm speaking on behalf of the District Councils Collaborative of St Paul and Minneapolis (DCC), a coalition of fifteen city-recognized neighborhood organizations located on or near the Central Corridor light rail line. In both Minneapolis and St Paul, our member organizations are part of official planning and development review processes and we work to ensure that citizen voices are heard when public decisions are made.

In June of 2006 we announced our strong support for the Central Corridor light rail line, pointing to this as a once-in-a-lifetime investment for the Twin Cities and the metropolitan region. But, we cautioned, we need to do it right.

In our Vision Statement, we speak of the Central Corridor line as *"the backbone of the regional Metro Area transit system"*. And we go on to say: *"The light rail line on University Avenue will anchor the regional system in the diverse communities of the two central cities, from the Minneapolis Transit Hub to the Saint Paul Union Depot, connecting people and places along the line with one another and with the entire region."*

With this vision in mind, we are here to speak to the importance of finding a way to build stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline NOW, as part of the first phase of the project,— and yes, we know this means finding space for them within the draconian Cost Effectiveness Index.

You have in your packets the Executive Summary of a DCC research report issued in November 2007, which identifies a number of reasons why these stations should be built. I hope you'll take the time to review the findings later.

Today, I'd like to move forward from that report to focus on a question we hear more and more as we approach decision time – why do we need to build these stations now? Why not just rough them in and build them later?

To address this question, we need to dig deeper into the implications of deferring construction of these much needed stations.

**Let's look together at how our neighbors and neighborhoods would be directly impacted by the loss of these stations.**

In your packets, you have a series of maps. What they show is that many of the region's most transit-dependent households are concentrated on the eastern end of the line between Snelling and the Capitol. Transit is their sole means for living independently and getting to jobs, school, medical care, and shopping.

The first map identifies areas where there is a high ratio of household members who are either too young or too old to drive; many are disabled and cannot operate a vehicle. You can clearly see the concentrations of transit dependent people at the eastern end of University Avenue.

The second map shows percentages of households living at or below the poverty level, and again you can see the large concentrations of low-income people throughout the Frogtown and Summit-University neighborhoods. In many cases, they can't afford to buy a car – even an old clunker; so they too depend on transit to get to work, school, the doctor, the pharmacy or the grocery store.

The two final maps show the ethnic and racial breakdown of people who live within a ¼ mile of a light rail station. The first map has no stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline; the second shows the result with those stations included. Again, you see the concentrations of households with racially or ethnically diverse backgrounds at the eastern end of University Avenue. In Frogtown, for example, minority households make up as much as 73 percent of all households.

**Now I'd like you to consider how many of our neighbors would have improved access to light rail if stations were built at Western, Victoria, and Hamline.**

Looking again at the last two maps, you can see, without these stations many transit dependent people will be a 1/4 mile or more from an LRT station. In actual numbers, we're talking about 7,600 people who would gain easy access to the light rail with the inclusion of these stations in the project. 77% of these people – almost 6000 of them -- would be African-Americans, Asians and other people of color.

¼ mile is generally considered a comfortable distance to walk to transit; for an able-bodied person, it takes 5 to 10 minutes. Hiawatha statistics show that some LRT riders will walk farther, but imagine if you are disabled, elderly, a single parent with children and stroller, or there are life-threatening windchills like Sunday. Would you walk ½ mile to get to an LRT station? Suppose you had no choice.

It is often pointed out that everyone in this area is within ¼ mile of some sort of transit, either bus or rail. This may be true, but you have to take it one step further and ask how frequently does that bus come. The #16, which is meant to provide local transit service between stations, will arrive only every 30 minutes in off-peak hours and every 20 minutes during peak hours when the light rail is up and running.

**Finally, let's look at what effect the loss of these stations would have on prospects for neighborhood revitalization and economic development, especially around Victoria and Western.**

The City of St Paul's University Avenue Development Strategy acknowledges that the eastern end of University Avenue presents market development challenges and will require incentives to redevelop, but it goes on to recommend that "the small storefronts and independent retailers ... should be supported and the businesses preserved."

Western is the heart of the Southeast Asian business community. Immigrant entrepreneurs from Southeast Asia have invested in this area and created a vibrant commercial district for small businesses. They have found a home near the State Capitol, and, as a member of the Hmong community testified on Saturday, they want to stay. A station at Western would help make that possible; it would signal that the region values their investment and wants them to stay.

Victoria is a link to the Rondo neighborhood and the African-American business community that was decimated by construction of I-94 and now has prospects for incremental redevelopment. There are several parcels at this intersection that are prime prospects for redevelopment. A station at Victoria

would help rebuild the economic core of African-American community and signal to its youth that the region believes in and supports its future.

Hamline, which is already seeing redevelopment, has potential for much more. The Hamline station would also be within a ¼ mile walk of Concordia University and Skyline Tower, the center of St. Paul's Somali community.

Stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline would be catalysts to help ensure a viable future for the many small and large businesses at the eastern end of University Avenue. Let's invest now so our neighborhoods don't fall into disrepair.

Some have suggested that these stations could be "roughed in" and built out at a later date. Such a proposal perpetuates a failure to provide fair and convenient access to transit improvements, severely hindering the mobility of transit dependent populations who live in our neighborhoods today. Let's ensure that the neighborhoods that bear the burdens of light rail running through their communities, benefit fairly and equitably from this major transit investment?

The District Councils Collaborative wants to see this project go forward as a national model for building a true "community connector". We think it's time to make a clear commitment to our central city neighborhoods along the line, to guarantee that our most transit-dependent, low income, and ethnically diverse neighborhoods will share equally in the benefits of light rail. By making these stations our highest priority for inclusion in the Central Corridor project, we can build a line that will truly be a strong backbone for our regional transit system, connecting the neighborhoods and the Twin Cities to the entire region.

As you prepare to make difficult decisions on this major transportation investment, we ask you to carefully consider the importance of including these three stations in the Central Corridor alignment—and to think about what *not including* them would mean. Please look again at the maps in your packet and think about who would lose out if we don't include these stations and how many people would win if we do. Let's not wake up fifty years from now to broken neighborhoods around Victoria and Western. Let's build a light rail line that will make us all proud, and let's build this line right from the beginning.

Anne White  
Chair, District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

## Central Corridor LRT Project

### The Case for Stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues

#### Executive Summary

November 2007

#### INTRODUCTION

The Central Corridor is home to some of the region's most diverse neighborhoods. The neighborhoods between Snelling Avenue and Rice Street are characterized by many of the factors that contribute to higher transit ridership—relatively high densities and percentages of renters, lower vehicle ownership rates and incomes, and a large number of both origins and destinations within the corridor.<sup>1</sup> Despite these and other compelling factors, which would suggest close spacing, stations are spaced at one-mile intervals—Rice Street, Dale Street, Lexington Parkway, and Snelling Avenue.

Adding Stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues would:

- 1) be more consistent with station-spacing practices in other municipalities.
- 2) be more consistent with the corridor's character as a local corridor as opposed to a commuter corridor.
- 3) tap high ridership potential in the corridor given socio-economic and geographic characteristics.
- 4) provide transportation service equity. The LRT is a major public investment, largely justified by the economic, demographic, and geographic characteristics of these neighborhoods, yet with current 1-mile spacing, access for these very residents is substantially limited.
- 5) create more opportunities for future economic development
- 6) strengthen the goals and objectives of the Central Corridor LRT Project.

#### **1. Proposed 1-mile station spacing is not consistent with the state-of-the-practice.**

- According to the municipalities with station spacing guidelines, the common practice in areas similar to the Central Corridor is to space stations between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles apart. In addition, these places also use the percentage of transit-dependent populations as a key consideration for station siting.
- Other US city LRT alignments through neighborhoods with similar characteristics have spaced stations between .18 and .75 miles. Even a proposed line along a San Jose Freeway has stations spaced at  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile!

#### **2. Corridor supports local trips, 1-mile station spacing does not.**

- The DEIS notes, that "most trips being made by people who live in the corridor are not downtown oriented." (p. 1-13) The Met Council's New Starts application notes "this is not simply a commuter corridor. Benefits are distributed throughout the day." (p.A-2-4) and "Only about 3% of trips with both an origin and a destination on the corridor are downtown to downtown trips." (p. A-2-3)
- On a time-savings basis, the express buses along 1-94 will continue to fulfill the needs of downtown to downtown commuters.

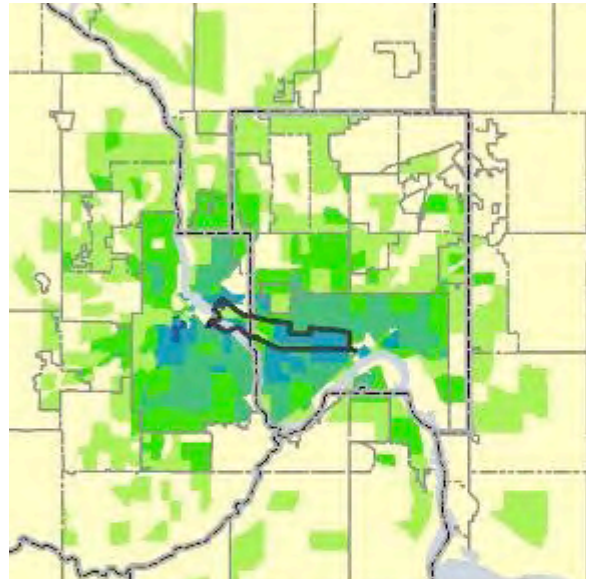
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<sup>1</sup> See literature review in "Additional Stations: Making the Case. Research report for the District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Mary Kay Bailey. November 2007.

### 3. Potential for ridership increases — literature survey and applications in the Central Corridor.

#### Land Uses

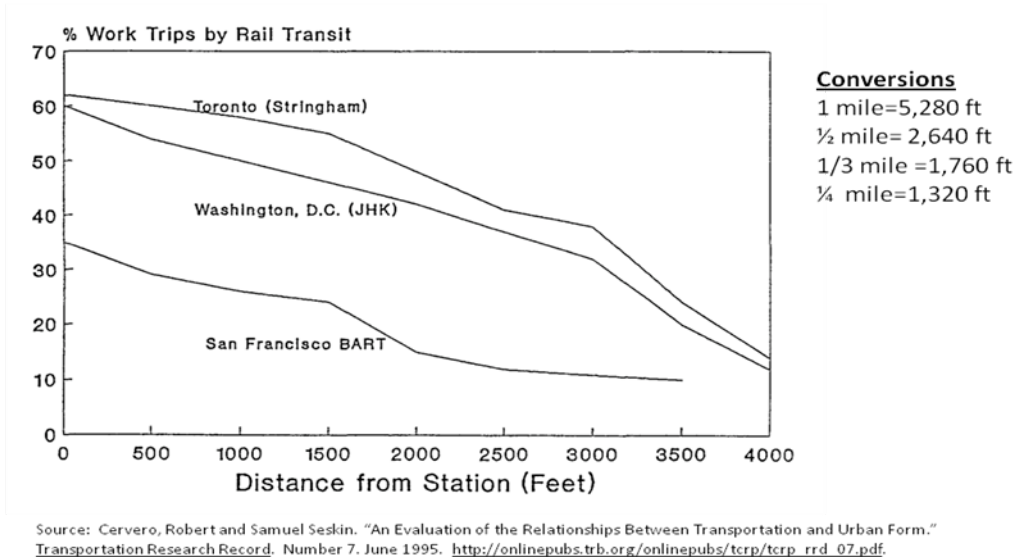
- Concentration of origins and destinations in corridor can dramatically increase transit use.<sup>2</sup> University Avenue and the surrounding neighborhoods are rich with single and multifamily residences as well as employment centers, schools, retail, service, religious, institutional and other uses.
- Residents, whose homes are near a transit station, are twice as likely to use a rail transit than employees whose office is near a transit station.<sup>3</sup> The area surrounding this portion of the Central Corridor is moderately high density residential.
- Met Council data shows that within the Midway/University area (one of the region's seven designated employment centers) there is a high concentration of residents who both live and work in the corridor. The Institute for Race and Poverty notes that 31% of University Ave corridor residents live and work in the corridor. Given that between 65-69% of all Metro Transit Trips are work-related, it seems likely that the transit riders in this corridor would be taking "intra corridor trips" as opposed to trips to either downtown.



Excerpt of Met Council Map; shaded areas indicate home origin of Central Corridor (outlined area) work trips; areas with increasingly darker shading have correspondingly higher percentages of home origins. Map Data Source: 2004 Census LEHD.

#### Proximity to Stations

Studies consistently show that distance to a transit station matters. While one recent study has shown transit riders in Portland and San Francisco to walk an average of .47 miles to transit, many other studies show that ridership begins to drop off at shorter distances from a station. One-mile-spacing means more people will have to walk further.



<sup>2</sup> Parsons Brinkerhoff Quade and Douglass. Transit and Urban Form. TCRP Report 16. National Academy Press. Washington, DC: 1996. P.4. [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp\\_rpt\\_16-1.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rpt_16-1.pdf)  
<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



- One researcher found that people are only willing to walk for five minutes (1,250ft) in an “attractive but not weather-protected area during periods of inclement weather.” In Minnesota that matters given the extreme winter temperatures.
- The Metropolitan Council’s “Guide to Transit Oriented Development” defines walking distance as 2,000 feet (just over 1/3 of a mile.)<sup>4</sup> Looking at an aerial photo (Figure 4) of the neighborhoods surrounding Lexington Parkway and Dale Street, with 1/3-mile buffers around the planned station locations, it is easy to see the number of homes that will be outside of this comfortable walking radius.



- Current spacing puts people out of easy reach of some key neighborhood destinations. Adding the three stations improves access to these destinations as indicated in the table below.

Destination	Distance to Nearest Proposed Station	Distance to Nearest Additional Station
Galtier Elementary School	.5 miles to Snelling	.16 miles to Hamline
Concordia University	.86 miles to Lexington	.44 miles to Hamline
SuperTarget	.54 miles to Snelling	.16 miles to Hamline
Drew School	.61 to Dale	.43 to Victoria
Ryan Park	.67 miles to Dale	.42 miles to Victoria
Frogtown Family Resource Center at 377 University	.5 miles to Dale	0 miles to Western
Wilder Square programs at 919 Lafond	.72 miles to Lexington	.48 miles to Victoria

<sup>4</sup> Metropolitan Council. “Guide to Transit Oriented Development.” 2006. [http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/TOD/Compact\\_dev.pdf](http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/TOD/Compact_dev.pdf)

### *Socio-Economic Variables*

- Studies demonstrate that lower incomes, higher percentages of renters, lower vehicle ownership rates, and being a member of a minority population positively influence transit ridership.
- DEIS reports that the Thomas-Dale and Summit-University neighborhoods have the highest poverty rates in the St. Paul portion of the corridor at 35.5% and 32.5%, respectively, this compares to 16.7% city-wide. In addition the two neighborhoods also have a greater percentage of no vehicle households (31.5% and 27.7%, respectively) than the city average of 18.2%.
- According to 2000 Census data—and as reported in the Central Corridor Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)—the neighborhoods of Hamline-Midway, Thomas-Dale, and Summit University are comprised of 25%, 73%, and 56% minority populations, respectively. This compares to a citywide average of 36%.
- DEIS reports that nearly 1/3 of residents in the entire corridor don't own a car and that the population over 65 and under 18 is projected to increase (these individuals are likely to be more transit-dependent as they are unable, unwilling, or not licensed to drive).
- DEIS reports, "Concentrations of population with mobility limitations can be found throughout the study area, especially near the downtowns and between Snelling Avenue and Dale Street. Regardless of their statistical attributes, much of the population in the study area depends on public transportation, which results in one of the highest transit ridership routes in the seven county metropolitan area."<sup>5</sup>
- The Route 16A Bus, which serves the Central Corridor, has one of the highest ridership levels in the metro region, clearly indicating the transit-dependency and need for access within this corridor.

#### **4. Bring Transportation Service Equity to neighborhoods between Snelling Avenue and Rice Street.**

- The characteristics of these neighborhoods (income, race, vehicle ownership) are being used to support of the project, yet these same neighborhoods are getting the least amount of service from it.
- Station spacing and proposed cuts in bus service create less convenient transit access for transit-dependent residents.
- These neighborhoods carry many burdens of the region's transportation system and deserve a greater share of the benefits.
- Current station-spacing moves people through and not into these highly transit-dependent neighborhoods.

#### **5. Additional stations can create opportunities for future economic development.**

- According to the Central Corridor Development Strategy, the area around Hamline Avenue is a very large "area of change" while Western Avenue has a moderate amount of space to intensify development (Victoria Avenue has a small area, but is completely surrounded by dense residential neighborhoods.)
- According to the Development Strategy, the market demand for housing, retail, and office space slackens east of the big box retail areas of the Midway. Consultants have noted that it will take public investment to strengthen the real estate potential of the area. Without stations at Victoria and Western, it is unlikely that these areas will see economic investment as a result of the LRT.

#### **6. Additional stations are true to the goals and objectives of the DEIS.**

Adding stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline would:

- Better improve economic opportunity and investment along the corridor (Goal 1)
- Acknowledge the....aspirations of each place served...(Goal 1, Objective 2)
- Expand opportunities for all users to move freely to, through and within the Central Corridor (Goal 3, Objective 2)
- Enhance the existing transportation infrastructure to serve the high number of transit dependent persons in the Central Corridor (Goal 3, Objective 3)

<sup>5</sup> Central Corridor Draft EIS, page 1-3.



### **Implications for the CEI**

- Constrained by federal government “cost effectiveness index (CEI)” measured as the cost per hour of user benefits. This number must be less than \$23.99 to secure funding and it is currently over \$25. Generally, the CEI is worsened when ridership decreases and LRT passenger travel time, capital cost (both design/engineering and construction costs) and operating costs increase.
- Ridership projections used to calculate the CEI are determined by modeling methods known to underestimate transit riders and trips. Recent testimony from a Congressional hearing reports “The overall data show that the majority of recent rail lines built with Federal funding through the New Starts program are performing at least as well as pre-construction projections. Some lines, such as Minnesota’s Hiawatha Light Rail and the Metro Red Line in Houston are outperforming their ridership estimates 15 years ahead of projections. It is interesting to note that some of these lines would not have been funded if rated solely on their Cost-Effectiveness rating. For example, the Hiawatha Line received only a low-medium Cost Effectiveness rating.”<sup>6</sup>

An option to address this project consideration: “Off-Model” Analysis.

- According to FTA’s 2007 New Starts Reporting Instructions, applicants can use “off-model” analysis for “special markets (such as... travelers to sports venues and other special venues, and any other markets not considered by the local travel-forecasting procedures).” The Central Corridor will be serving several special venue markets in both downtown Saint Paul and downtown Minneapolis. And, as pointed out earlier, the corridor has a significant transit-dependent market that the regional model may not be adequately reflecting in its ridership projections.
- A possible tool to explore fine-grained ridership projections is the *Direct Transit Ridership Model*, which was developed by the nationally recognized transportation planning and engineering firm Fehr and Peers. The model predicts transit demand based on the characteristics of neighborhoods and transit services at the station area, complementing the conventional regional model.
- Given the weight of the CEI in the New Starts review process, it is essential that ridership be estimated as accurately as possible.

### **Implications for the National Environmental Protection Act - Environmental Impact Statement**

- Stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline were not included in the DEIS. Additional NEPA-quality analysis will most likely be needed if they are to be in the final project. An option to address this project consideration: Ensure that NEPA-quality analysis is conducted for additional stations, concurrent with the preparation of the Final EIS, and subsequently included as an amendment or a supplemental EIS.

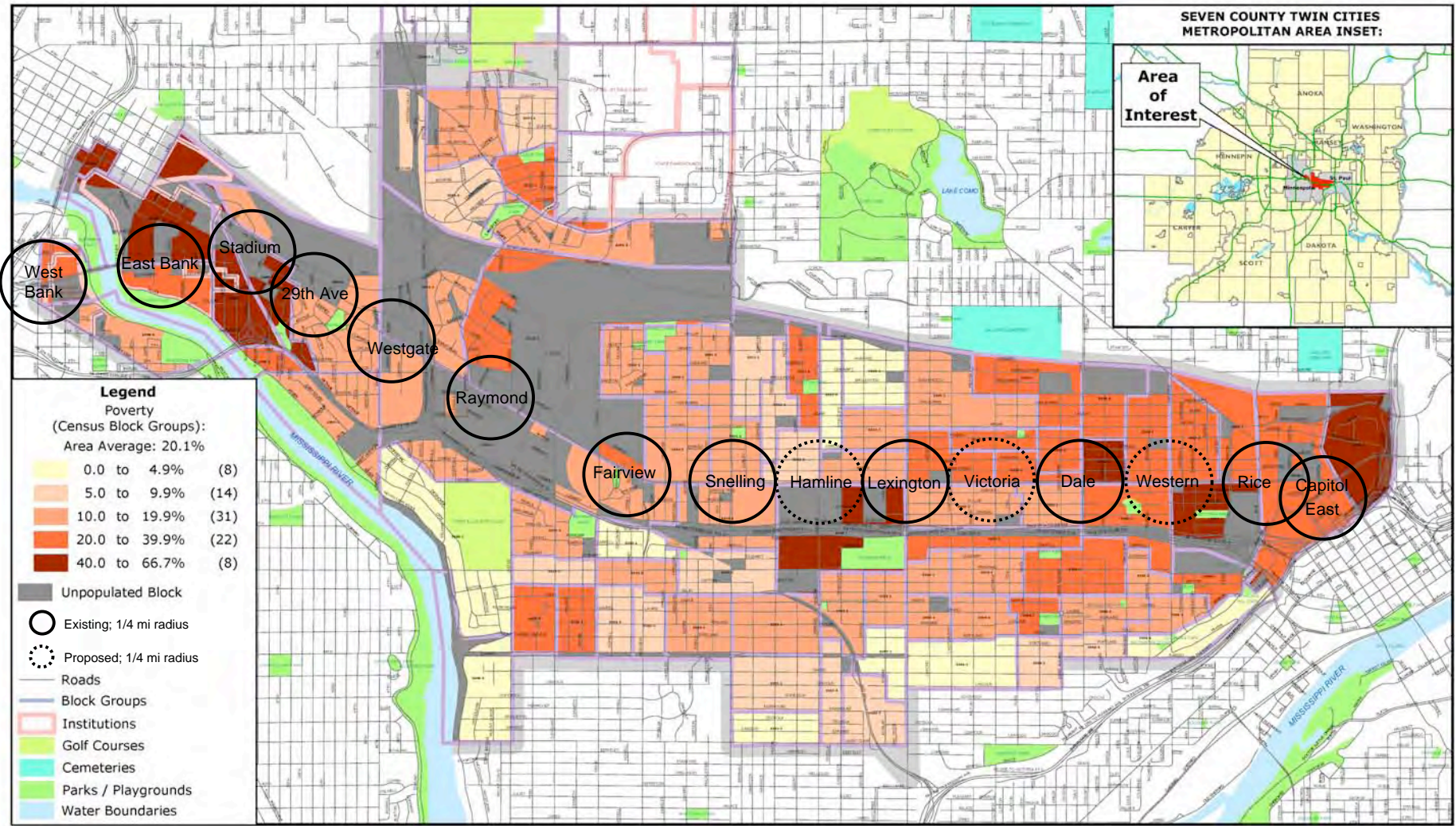
### **Conclusion**

The strongest argument for additional stations is the provision of transportation service equity. Our research found that in many ways, the characteristics of the neighborhoods between Snelling and Rice are being used to support and justify the project, yet these very neighborhoods are getting limited access to this major transportation investment. Although there are significant regulatory and administrative challenges to adding stations, there are ways in which they might be overcome. Given the potential benefits of these stations to both the neighborhoods and the regional system, the District Council Collaborative strongly urges political leadership and project decision-makers to explore all options and find a way to build stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline.

**For more information, contact:** Carol Swenson, Community Liaison, District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. 651-249-6877 | [carol@dcc-stpaul-mpls.org](mailto:carol@dcc-stpaul-mpls.org) | [www.dcc-stpaul-mpls.org](http://www.dcc-stpaul-mpls.org).  
The District Councils Collaborative wishes to gratefully acknowledge financial support from the Saint Paul Foundation and the F. R. Bigelow Foundation.

<sup>6</sup> Shelley Poticha’s September 27, 2007 testimony. Available at: <http://transportation.house.gov/Media/File/Highways/20070926/POTICHA%20testimony%209%2026%2007.pdf>

# UNIVERSITY CORRIDOR AREA Percentage of Persons Below Poverty Line by Census Block Groups, 2000



**Legend**

Poverty  
 (Census Block Groups):  
 Area Average: 20.1%

0.0 to 4.9%	(8)
5.0 to 9.9%	(14)
10.0 to 19.9%	(31)
20.0 to 39.9%	(22)
40.0 to 66.7%	(8)

- Unpopulated Block
- Existing; 1/4 mi radius
- Proposed; 1/4 mi radius
- Roads
- Block Groups
- Institutions
- Golf Courses
- Cemeteries
- Parks / Playgrounds
- Water Boundaries

Data Sources:  
 2005 The Lawrence Group  
 2005 Metropolitan Council  
 2002 Minnesota Department of Transportation  
 2004 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority  
 2000 U.S. Census SF3



Note: University Corridor Area consists of 33 U.S. Census Transportation Analysis Zones that are contained or somewhat contained by the St. Paul neighborhoods of St. Anthony Park, Hamline Midway, Merriam Park, Lexington-Hamline, Thomas-Dale and the Minneapolis neighborhoods of Prospect Park/E. River Road and University.

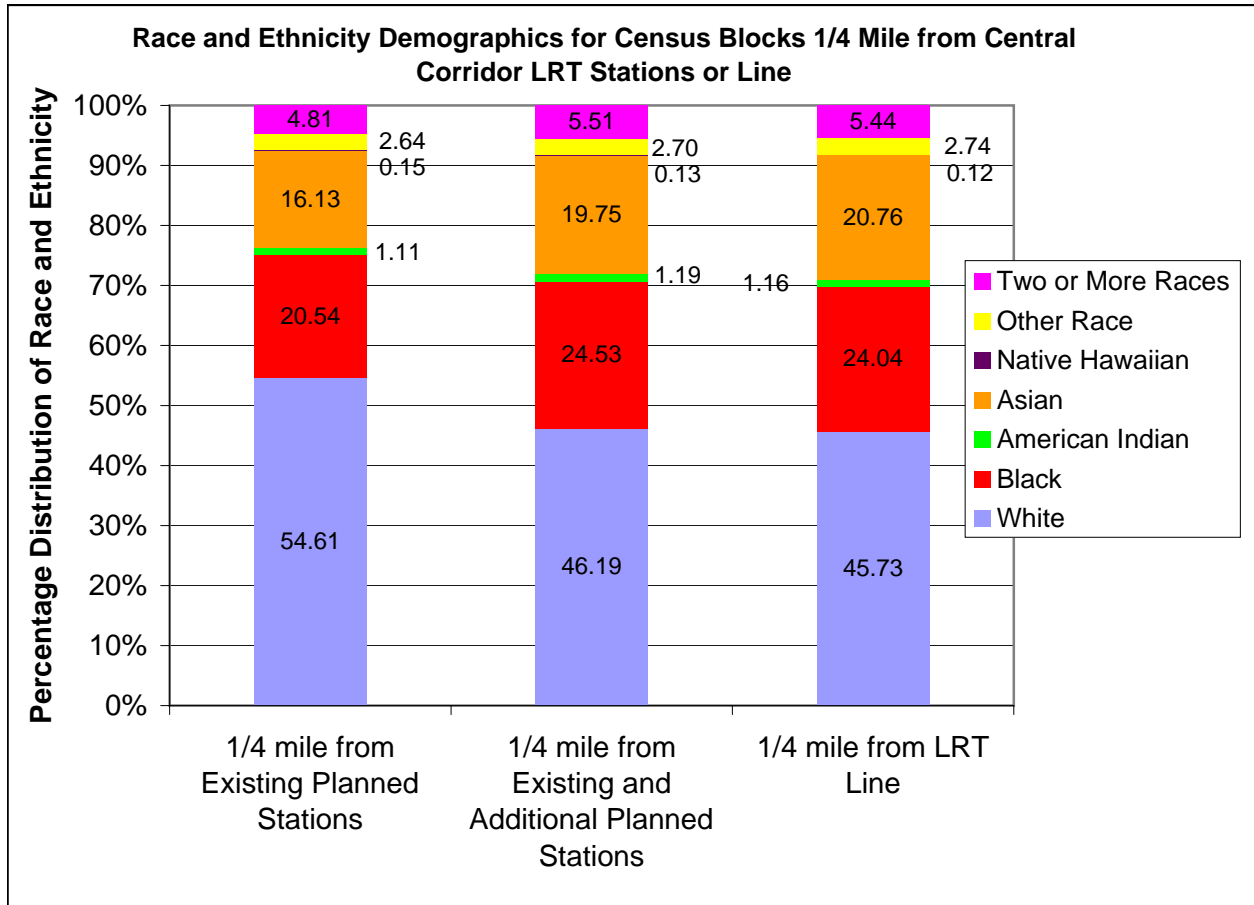
**Race and Ethnicity Demographics for Census Blocks  
1/4 Mile from Central Corridor LRT Stations or Line**

	1/4 mile from Existing Planned Stations		1/4 mile from Existing and Additional Planned Stations		1/4 mile from LRT Line*	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
White	11,660	54.6	13,371	46.2	13,963	45.7
Black	4,386	20.5	7,100	24.5	7,339	24.0
American Indian	238	1.1	344	1.2	355	1.2
Asian	3,445	16.1	5,717	19.8	6,338	20.8
Native Hawaiian	33	0.2	38	0.1	38	0.1
Other Race	564	2.6	781	2.7	836	2.7
Two or More Races	1,026	4.8	1,594	5.5	1,662	5.4
Hispanic**	1,320	6.2	1,814	6.3	1,915	6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,352</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>28,945</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>30,531</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: 2000 U.S Census SF1, proximity calculations by Eric Myott, Institute on Race and Poverty.

\* Excludes blocks in downtowns Minneapolis and Saint Paul

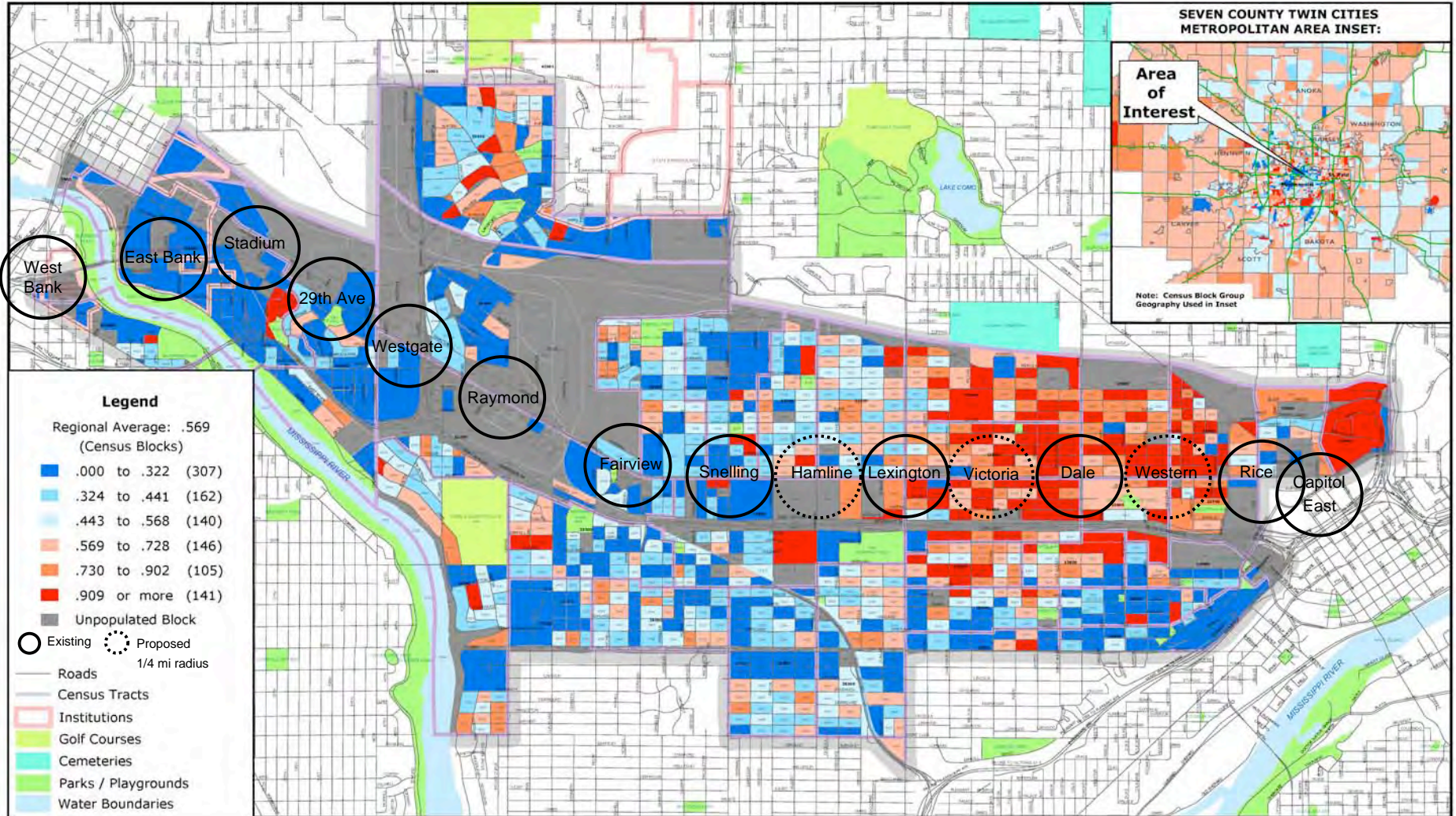
\*\* Hispanics are an ethnic group and can be of any race



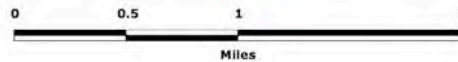


## UNIVERSITY CORRIDOR AREA

### Dependency Ratio: (Population Under 18 and Over 64 / Population 18 to 64)



Data Sources:  
2005 The Lawrence Group  
2005 Metropolitan Council  
2002 Minnesota Department of Transportation  
2004 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority  
2000 U.S. Census SF1

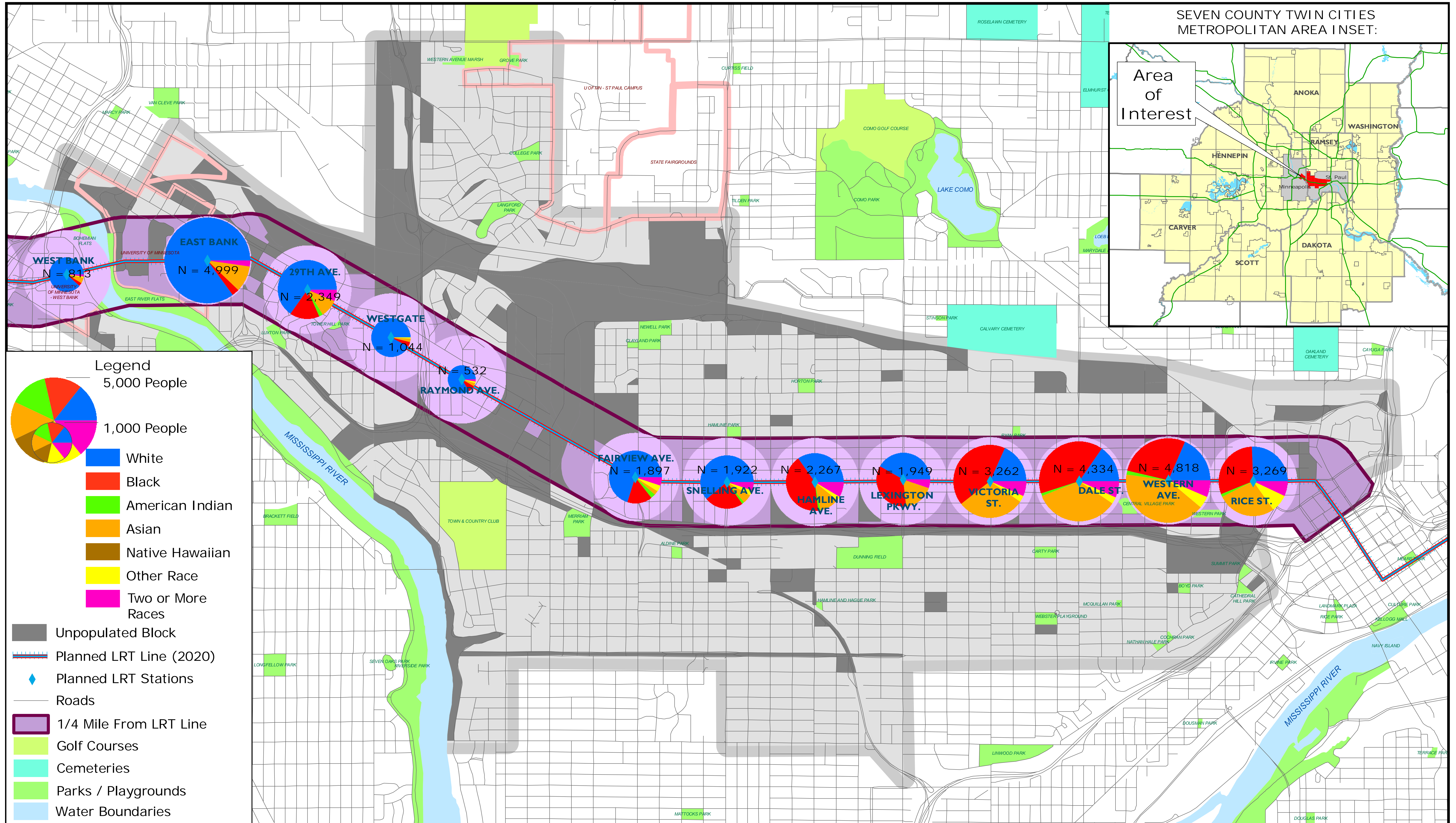


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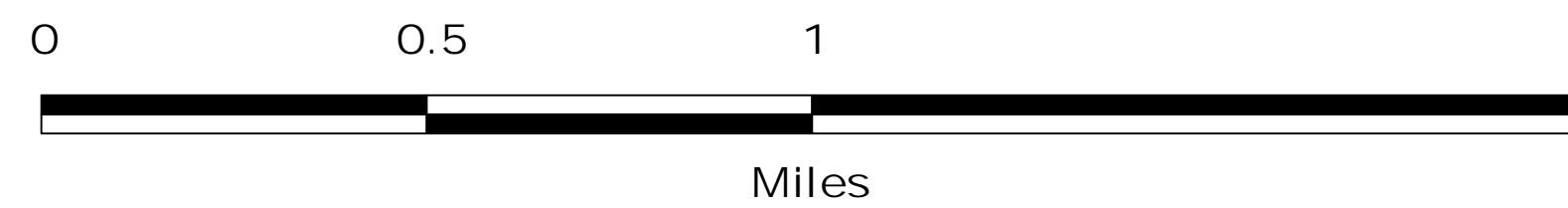


# UNIVERSITY CORRIDOR AREA

## Proposed LRT Line and Additional Station Areas, Size and Distribution of Population by Race within 1/4 mile of Proposed LRT Stations



Data Sources:  
 2005 The Lawrence Group  
 2005 Metropolitan Council  
 2002 Minnesota Department of Transportation  
 2004 Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority  
 2000 U.S. Census SF1

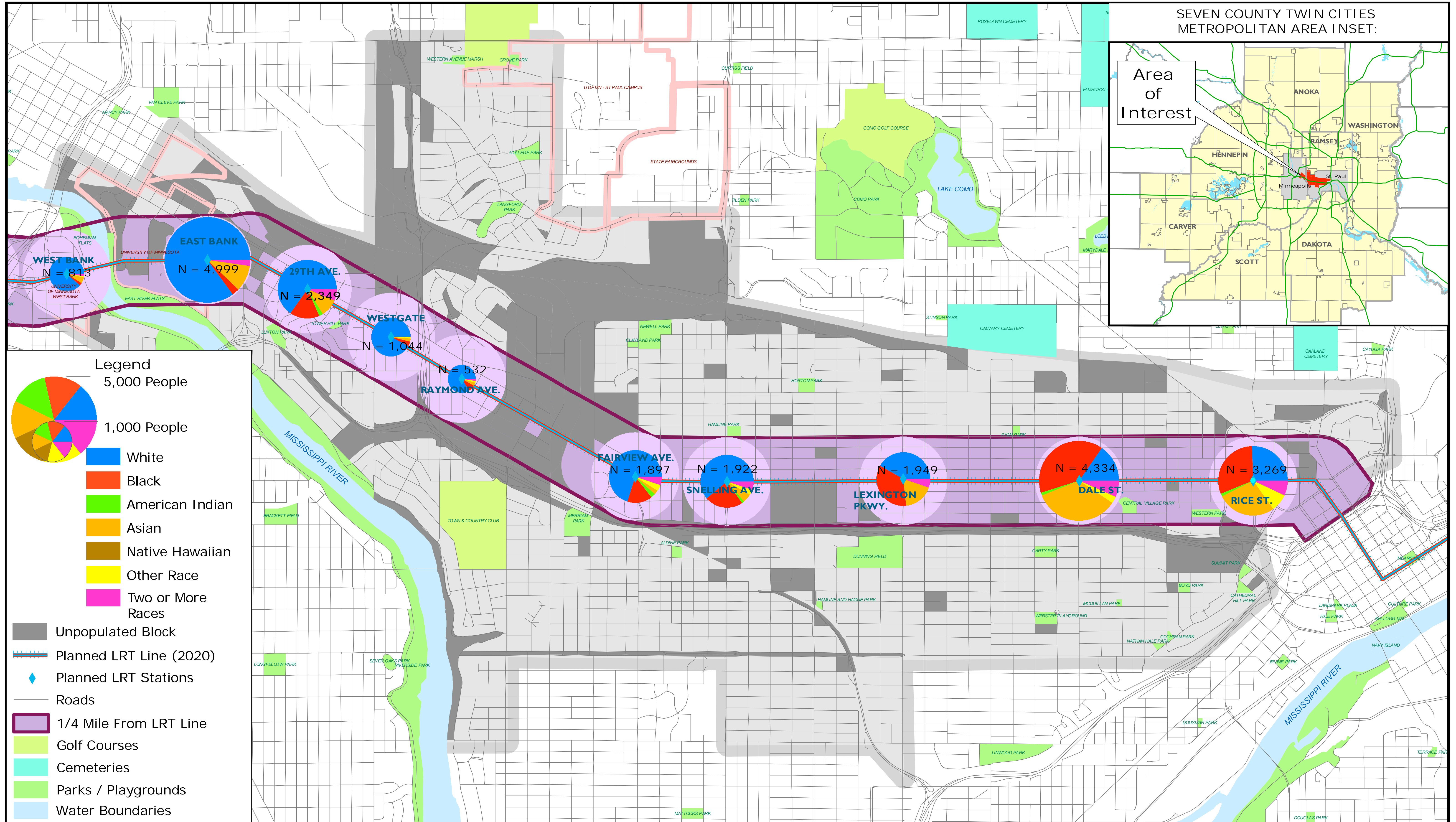


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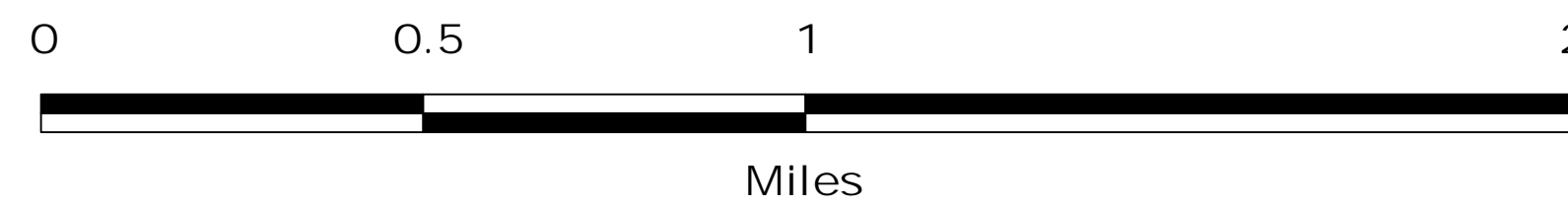


# UNIVERSITY CORRIDOR AREA

## Proposed LRT Line and Station Areas, Size and Distribution of Population by Race within 1/4 mile of Proposed LRT Stations



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*To improve the social and economic well being of the communities we serve.*

December 10, 2007

Carol Swenson, Community Liaison  
District Councils Collaborative of St. Paul and Minneapolis  
Central Corridor Resource Center  
1080 University Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Dear Ms. Swenson,

On behalf of the Aurora/St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation, I am writing to express support of the implementation of additional CCLRT stations at Western Ave., Victoria St., and Hamline Ave. ASANDC has served low-income and minority residents of the Ward One neighborhoods of St. Paul for 27 years, and it has always been our mission to ensure that these residents are considered in the public policy and development decisions that will impact their quality of life.

We believe that a transit project that is developed through our neighborhood, especially one being justified by its service to the communities along the line, must truly benefit its members, who have greater need for transit access than anywhere else along the Central Corridor. Conversely, we believe the study prepared for the District Councils Collaborative on the need for additional stations provides more than sufficient evidence that, under current plans for stations at one-mile intervals, many residents will actually *lose* access to the public transit they need. When low-income and minority communities who are in the *most* need of a public project receive the *least* benefit (or do not benefit at all), the issue becomes one of social, racial, and environmental justice. As such, the current plans directly and blatantly conflict with the justification for the CCLRT as an FTA New Starts Project.

ASANDC is fully aware of the constraints created by the Cost Effectiveness Index. We also recognize that the CEI is an extremely flawed formula that does not account for the specific needs within the area of this particular project. We hope that the decision-makers for the CCLRT will join us in working with our elected officials at all levels to identify the possibilities of adding these additional stations either through the CEI or by working around the CEI. We believe it is beyond doubt that, regardless of the CEI, these stations are absolutely essential for the CCLRT to provide benefit to our communities.

Sincerely,

Nieeta Presley  
Executive Director  
ASANDC



November 28, 2007

Carol Swenson, Community Liaison  
District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis  
Central Corridor Resource Center  
1080 University Avenue W.  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

**SECIA**

*(see-key-ah)*

**837 15th Ave SE  
Minneapolis, MN  
55414**

**www.secomo.org  
secomo@secomo.org**

**612-676-1731**



*The Southeast Como*

**Improvement Association**

*works to maintain and enhance the*

*physical, social, and economic*

*environment of*

*our neighborhood.*

*Through programs that serve our*

*community's present and future*

*needs, through communication,*

*stewardship, and citizen*

*involvement, we strive to foster a*

*sense of community and to promote*

*the neighborhood as a vibrant place*

*to live and work.*

Ms. Swenson:

The Southeast Como Improvement Association's (SECIA) Community Liaison, Lynn Anderson, has presented to our Executive Committee a request to support the additional stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline. The Executive Committee reviewed the electronic DCC Update and the information provided by Mr. Anderson, and we feel confident in expressing our support for the increased number of stations.

There is little reason to spending millions of dollars in taxpayer money on a transit system that does not effectively meet the demands of its constituents. Building the Central Corridor Light Rail only makes sense if it serves the residents living along the corridor. It is our understanding that the Central Corridor is not intended to be the preferred commuter option between downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis, but rather it is intended to serve the neighborhoods and the local population along the corridor. Service and accessibility are more important than speed for these communities.

The SECIA Executive Committee fully supports the addition of the stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline. We are optimistic that the elected officials at the local, state and federal levels will agree that building the correct transit system for the Central Corridor is more important than adhering to an arbitrary Cost Effectiveness Index.

Sincerely,

W. Menken  
SECIA Board President





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Community Center

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Rosalie Moore

Edward Swanson

Carl Nelson

Annie Heideman

Richard Kleinbaum

Michelle Beeman

December 10, 2007

District Councils Collaborative  
c/o Carol Swenson  
1080 University Avenue West  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

Dear Ms. Swenson,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Summit-University Planning Council. We want to express our support of additional light rail stops at Hamline, Victoria, and Western along the Central Corridor.

Thus far, there are no planned stations at Hamline, Victoria, and Western. The stops at Lexington and Dale are not sufficient to meet the needs of this community. This train should benefit our community, not merely push people through it. Being forced to walk a distance of one mile from one stop to the next is not a reasonable expectation for transit riders in the Summit-University neighborhood. We want the light rail to serve our residents, as well as those between downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

Studies have shown that development and growth occur around the light rail stations. Our community deserves the opportunity to experience part of this growth. This is just one more reason Summit-University Planning Council is in full support of additional stops at Hamline, Victoria, and Western.

If you have any questions or need to contact me for any other reason, I can be reached at (651) 228-1855 or [irna@summit-u.com](mailto:irna@summit-u.com).

Sincerely

Irna L. Landrum  
Community Organizer

St. Anthony Park Community Council/District 12  
890 Cromwell Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55112  
651/645-5002 (t); 651/645-5993 (f); www.sapcc.org

ST. ANTHONY PARK



January 17th, 2008

Carol Swenson, Community Liaison  
District Council Collaborative  
Central Corridor Resource Center  
1080 University Avenue W  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

**Subject: Additional LRT Stations**

Dear Ms. Swenson,

I am writing to convey that the St. Anthony Park Community Council strongly supports the addition of four light rail stations at Western, Victoria, Hamline and Cleveland Avenues. For reasons that have been eloquently stated by the DCC and other neighborhood organizations, it is clear to the SAPCC that this line will not reach its potential without the additional stations. For a small price relative to the total cost of the project, the Met Council could significantly enhance the usability and positive environmental justice impacts of the line. The SAPCC thinks this will lead to higher ridership, more equitable transit service, and a more comprehensive transit system.

The Board of Directors also voted to include Cleveland Avenue as desired station location, for many reasons. Including Cleveland is consistent with the need for 1/2 mile spacing throughout the corridor. A Cleveland station would correspond with the goals in our District Plan, both to see more residential housing in the immediate vicinity of Cleveland and University and our transportation goals. The SAPCC District Plan calls for a connection to North St. Anthony Park over the railroad tracks on Vandalia, just one block west of Cleveland. The City of St. Paul is currently conducting a NW Quadrant Transportation Study which will examine that possibility in detail. To the south, Cleveland connects directly with two major sources of transit-users, the College of St. Catherine and the University of St. Thomas. These characteristics make Cleveland an important neighborhood transportation corridor that would greatly benefit from the addition of a LRT station. Although we see additional stations at Victoria, Western and Hamline as more immediate and pressing needs, the addition of a station at Cleveland Avenue would present significant benefits to the surrounding communities as well.

On behalf of the St. Anthony Park Community Council, I send thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Renee Lepreau'.

Renee Lepreau, Community Organizer



## HAMLINE MIDWAY COALITION

Hamline Park Building • 1564 Lafond Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104 • 651 696 1986 • fax 651 693 6123 • District11@golast.net

December 19, 2007

Mr. Peter Bell, Chair  
Metropolitan Council  
399 North Robert Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

**Subject: Additional LRT stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues**

Dear Chairman Bell,

The Hamline Midway Coalition (District Council 11) believes the future of the Central Corridor LRT line depends on meeting the needs of the local communities through which the line travels as well as the needs of riders traveling between St. Paul and Minneapolis. In order to address both needs, the HMC feels strongly that the line should include stops at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues – and the most cost-effective way to include additional stations is to build them when the line is laid. At a minimum, these stations should be designed and planned, and the initial engineering should support their introduction at a minimum cost in the near future.

Some have argued that constraints imposed by the Cost Effectiveness Index (CEI) prohibit initial inclusion of these stations. However, cost savings can be met with changes to other parts of the line, where issues of social equity are not as critical. Also, any decreases in travel times resulting from additional stations would be balanced by increased local ridership. Further, we are concerned that the existing CEI is an inappropriate evaluative measure applied to projects in urban transit corridors.

In order to adequately meet the needs of local communities, and to address the impacts of line construction and resulting development, additional stations should be coupled with a robust bus system along and feeding into the corridor. Facilitating easy transfer among transit modes, as well as easy access to transit by foot and bicycle, is essential to a successful project.

We urge you to support LRT stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues.

Sincerely,

Michael Jon Olson, Executive Director  
On behalf of the Board of Directors

*Dedicated to making the Hamline Midway neighborhood a better place to live and work.*



# PPERRIA

Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association, Inc.

February 18, 2008

To: Ann White and Carol Swenson, District Councils Collaborative  
From: Executive Committee of the Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association

Subject: Light Rail Stations on University Avenue

Our organization has participated in the deliberations of the DCC, and we are impressed with the care and depth of the study that has led to the proposals for additional light rail stations in St Paul.

PPERRIA therefore supports the construction of the additional stations on University Avenue in St. Paul at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues.

Sincerely,

Richard Poppele  
PPERRIA President

Founded in 1901-The Oldest Neighborhood Association in Minneapolis

86 Malcolm Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414

# District Council 13

Serving the Snelling Hamline, Lexington-Hamline, and  
Merriam Park Neighborhoods

1 February 2008

Chairman Peter Bell  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Roberts Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Dear Chairman Bell,

At its meeting on January 2, 2008, the District 13 Council Board of Directors approved the following resolution:

**Resolved, that District 13 Council supports the addition of light rail stations in the Central Corridor at Western Avenue, Victoria Street and Hamline Avenue, and requests a study of the possibility of a station at Cleveland Avenue as changes to the line are considered).**

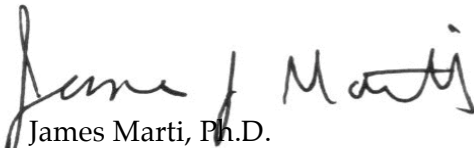
The District 13 Council strongly supports the Met Council's efforts to bring light rail transit to the Central Corridor. We look forward to the many positive effects the line will have on the neighborhoods that adjoin the light rail line. Indeed, we see this line primarily as a local connector, not a commuter line, since downtown-to-downtown trips are anticipated to make up only about three percent (3%) of total light rail usage in the corridor. An important objective should therefore be to serve the residents and businesses in neighborhoods through which the train will pass, especially those with the highest percentages of low-income, minority and transit-dependent residents.

Stations that are spaced one mile apart, as currently proposed between Snelling Avenue and Rice Street, might result in many local residents having to walk one-half mile or more to the nearest station -- an unpleasant prospect given our cold Minnesota winters (and hot, humid summers). Under current plans which call for: 1) light rail stations at one-mile intervals; 2) elimination of the #50 bus; and 3) less frequent service for the #16 bus, **many residents along University Avenue may be faced with reduced transit access once the light rail is built.** One mile spacing is also not the norm along similar urban light rail lines in other cities; 1/4 - 3/4 miles between stops is more common.

The District 13 Council Board is well aware of the constraints imposed by the Cost Effectiveness Index to qualify for federal funding. We also understand that decisions about configuration of the line must be made in a timely manner for construction to begin by 2010. However, the required budget cuts should not sacrifice the needs of people with the greatest need for and predicted use of improved transit access and the economic development local transit riders will foster.

We support the recommendations of the District Councils Collaborative and urge the Metropolitan Council to make every effort to find a way to build LRT stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues. We are also requesting a study of a Cleveland Avenue station, but recognize this study may need to be done later due to time and cost constraints.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Marti". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

James Marti, Ph.D.  
President, District 13 Council

xc: Metropolitan Council members  
Central Corridor Management Committee  
District Councils Collaborative

December 10, 2007

Carol Swenson, Community Liaison  
District Councils Collaborative of St. Paul and Minneapolis  
Central Corridor Resource Center  
1080 University Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104

Dear Ms. Swenson,

Jewish Community Action (JCA) is writing to the District Councils Collaborative to join the collective effort in convincing the Metropolitan Council to approve three additional stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues. JCA was part of the organizing of the University Avenue Community Coalition, a diverse coalition of faith, labor, neighborhood and community organizations committed to racial equity and equitable development along University Avenue. Adding stops at these three intersections is critical to achieving racial equity as part of the largest public investment in this community in 50 years. JCA is a 12 year old non-profit organization that brings together Jews from diverse components of the Jewish community to take action on social and economic justice issues.

There is no question that a critical reason for building the light rail transit system is to improve transportation within neighborhoods within St. Paul. It does not make any sense to invest hundreds of millions of dollars on University Avenue that does not meet the demands of people along the corridor. Given the very large concentration of people living near these three stops, and especially given the racial make-up of these communities, it is absolutely necessary to add these stops to the route. We are less concerned about whether one or two stops are removed from downtown to make it more feasible to add these additional stops, but we know they must be added. We cannot build a system that primarily improves trips between the two central cities as a means to support suburban commuters. Service and accessibility are more important than speed for these communities. If we ever have any intention of improving racial equity and achieving racial justice in our communities, we must add these three stops.

We look forward to working together with elected and appointed officials at the local, state and federal levels to make sure the most accessible system can be built to serve the community. Building the correct transit system must be more important than adhering to an arbitrary cost effectiveness index.

Please let us know if you have additional questions or need more information. Thank you for your cooperation on this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Vic Rosenthal,  
Executive Director





December 11, 2007

Dear Central Corridor Management Committee Members,

University UNITED strongly supports adding additional LRT stations at Hamline, Victoria, and Western Avenues. Our support rests on the principle that LRT should serve these neighborhoods most in need, rather than pass them by. Furthermore, University UNITED agrees with the following points from the ***Central Corridor LRT Project, The Case for Stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues, November 2007:***

***“Adding Stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues would:***

- 1. be more consistent with station-spacing practices in other municipalities.***
- 2. be more consistent with the corridor’s character as a local corridor as opposed to a commuter corridor.***
- 3. tap high ridership potential in the corridor given socio-economic and geographic characteristics.***
- 4. provide transportation service equity. The LRT is a major public investment, largely justified by the economic, demographic, and geographic characteristics of these neighborhoods, yet with current 1-mile spacing, access for these very residents is substantially limited.***
- 5. strengthen the goals and objectives of the Central Corridor LRT Project.”***

University UNITED urges you to support having LRT stations at Hamline, Victoria, and Western Avenues.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian McMahon



February 2008

**Transportation Equity and  
Stops for Us Campaign**

Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

Aurora/Saint Anthony  
Neighborhood Development  
Corporation

Community Stabilization Project

District Councils Collaborative of

- Saint Paul and Minneapolis
- North End-South Como, D-6
- Thomas-Dale, D-7
- Summit-University, D-8
- Como, D-10
- Hamline-Midway, D-11
- Saint Anthony Park, D-12
- D-13, Lexington-Hamline,  
Merriam Park, Snelling-  
Hamline
- Macalester-Groveland, D-14
- Summit Hill, D-16
- CapitolRiver Council, D-17
- Marcy-Holmes Assoc.
- Prospect Park-East River  
Road Improvement Assoc.
- Southeast Como  
Improvement Assoc.
- University District  
Improvement Assoc.
- West Bank Community  
Coalition

Hmong Business Association

ISAIAH — St. Paul

Jewish Community Action

JUST Equity

Model Cities, Inc.

Organizing Project of African  
American Congregations—  
MICAH

Saint Paul NAACP

Saint Paul Urban League

UFCW Local 789

University UNITED

Mr. Peter Bell, Chair, Metropolitan Council  
390 Robert Street N.  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

RE: Central Corridor Alignment

Dear Chair Bell:

The Central Corridor LRT project is an opportunity to extend the benefits of transit to many more people in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. We are just as anxious as you to see the project go forward and to get it built on time and on budget. But we must ensure full access to those whose needs are being used to justify this project and need this major transit investment the most. We firmly believe that it is essential to add LRT stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline and to preserve the current frequency of Route 16 bus service.

The Central Corridor Draft EIS states: "Concentrations of population with mobility limitations can be found through the study area, especially near the downtowns and between Snelling Avenue and Dale Street. Regardless of their statistical attributes, much of the population in the study area depends on public transportation, which results in one of the highest transit ridership routes in the seven County metropolitan area" (pp. 1-3). This statement is borne out in Census statistics that show poverty rates as high as 35.5 percent, minority populations as high as 73 percent, and no-vehicle households as high as 31.5 percent. Similar Census statistics also apply to areas between Dale and Rice Streets.

Additional stations at Hamline, Victoria, and Western, and retention of the current service frequency of Route 16, would substantially increase access to LRT, which in turn means improved access and shorter travel trips to jobs, schools, essential services, and stores. LRT stations also would create more opportunities for neighborhood revitalization and economic development in communities that have experienced under-investment for far too long.

Some have suggested that these stations could be "roughed-in" and built out at a later date. But there is not yet a commitment to build those stations. Building the stations later also presents a significant problem since the Met Council has indicated the frequency of #16 bus, which currently serves University Avenue, will be significantly diminished when LRT opens. This would mean that before the stations are added, a large number of people would actually see a reduction in transit service as an indirect result of LRT.

Either outcome, failing to ensure that the stations are added in the future, or a service reduction in the interim, is unacceptable. It would perpetuate a larger failure to provide fair and convenient access to transit improvements, severely hindering the mobility of existing transit dependent populations. It also raises the question: "Who benefits and who pays?" Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Communities* clearly prohibit intentional and unintentional discrimination and disparate impacts when a public investment is made.

The Central Corridor LRT can connect our urban neighborhoods to each other and to the regional economy. The region is only as strong as the neighborhoods and cities within it, and building stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline would go a long way toward transportation equity for the populations within the corridor.

Chair Bell, we invite you, the Met Council, and Governor Pawlenty to work with us to build these stations and to preserve the current frequency of Route 16 bus service.

Betty McCollum, Member of Congress (MN 04)

Keith Ellison, Member of Congress (MN 05)

Dick Cohen, Minnesota Senate, District 64

Sandy Pappas, Minnesota Senate, District 65

Ellen Anderson, Minnesota Senate, District 66

Mee Moua, Minnesota Senate, District 67

Erin Murphy, House of Representatives, District 64A

Michael Paymar, House of Representatives, District 64B

Cy Thao, House of Representatives, District 65A

Carlos Mariani, House of Representatives, District 65B

John Lesch, House of Representatives, District 66A

Alice Hausman, House of Representatives, District 66B

Tim Mahoney, House of Representatives, District 67A

Sheldon Johnson Minnesota, House of Representatives, District 67B

Toni Carter, Ramsey County Board of Commissioners

Janice Rettman, Ramsey County Board of Commissioners

John Brodrick, Board Member, Saint Paul School District

Cc: Governor Pawlenty  
Metropolitan Council Members

# RESOLUTION

*Graduate and Professional Student Assembly – University of Minnesota*

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**Date:** September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007

**Author:** Kristen Denzer, President; Bree Richards, Vice President for Student Affairs; Kristi Kremers, At-Large Director; Geoff Hart, COGS Senator

**Topic:** Support for the Central Corridor Light Rail Line to go Through a Tunnel on Campus

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**WHEREAS**, the Central Corridor Light Rail Line will be going through the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities Campus on Washington Avenue; and

**WHEREAS**, a considerable percentage of the ridership on the Central Corridor Line will be University of Minnesota students, employees, and visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, according to the Federal Railroad Administration, "deaths in grade crossing accidents are the second-leading category of deaths associated with railroading"<sup>1</sup> and "elimination of at-grade crossings...offers the greatest long-term promise for optimizing the safety and efficiency of the two modes of transportation"<sup>2</sup> (trains and motor vehicles); and

**WHEREAS**, the benefits of a tunnel appreciably outweigh the added upfront material costs; and

**WHEREAS**, a tunnel under Washington Avenue for the Central Corridor cannot be added once the line is completed without significant cost and construction; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly supports the plan for the Central Corridor Light Rail Line to go through campus via an underground tunnel on Washington Avenue.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration, *Federal Railroad Administration Action Plan for Addressing Critical Railroad Safety Issues*, 16 May 2005, p. 9, <[http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/safety/action\\_plan\\_final\\_051605.pdf](http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/safety/action_plan_final_051605.pdf)> (10 September 2007).

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad Administration. Federal Railroad Safety Accountability and Improvement Act (proposed), p. 10, <<http://www.fra.dot.gov/Downloads/Counsel/legislation/2007RailSafetyBill.pdf>> (10 September 2007).

# Summit Hill Association

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District 16 Planning Council  
860 Saint Clair Avenue  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105  
Telephone 651-222-1222  
Fax 651-222-1558  
www.summithillassociation.org  
e-mail: summithill@visi.com

February 22, 2008

Peter Bell, Chair  
Metropolitan Council  
390 Robert St. North  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1805

Dear Chairman Bell:

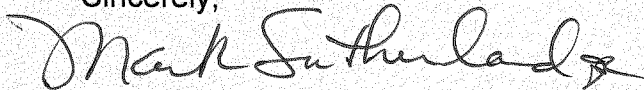
As the district council representing the Summit Hill neighborhood in St. Paul, we have been following the recent discussions regarding the Central Corridor LRT and the local community's desire for three additional stations in order to better serve those communities along the line and provide easier access to the LRT in the future for their residents. The District 16 Planning Council has had a sitting representative on the District Council Collaborative (DCC) since its beginning.

The Summit Hill Association/District 16 Planning Council met at its February 14, 2008 monthly meeting to consider the request of local communities regarding the three stations and voted to support their request in the following resolution:

*Resolved, that Summit Hill Association/District 16 Planning Council supports the construction of light rail stations in the Central Corridor at Western Avenue, Victoria Street and Hamline Avenue.*

Thank you for considering our views on this issue. We hope that you and the Met Council will support the community in this matter.

Sincerely,



Mark Sutherland, President  
Summit Hill Association/District 16 Planning Council

## **Midway Chamber of Commerce** **Central Corridor Alternative Alignment Plan**

Since 2004, the Midway Chamber of Commerce and the Central Corridor Partnership have taken a leadership role in ensuring light rail is built on time and on budget in the east metro. Because Central Corridor is our organization's top priority, we have stepped forward to develop a list of compromises that meet the business community's needs and stay within budget. These recommendations come from a special ad-hoc committee formed from the Saint Paul Chamber's Transportation Policy Committee and some members of the Central Corridor Business Advisory Committee. The cornerstone of this plan is compromise; we recognize each party involved has shown tremendous movement to make this project a reality.

This compromise has been formed with the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority and reflects our collective priorities. For the first time, stakeholders on the east side of the alignment will stand together, clearly demonstrating to the Governor that we are ready to make the necessary decisions to ensure the Central Corridor LRT is built on time and on budget.

Specifically we agree with the following recommendations of the Saint Paul Chamber of Commerce and The Central Corridor Partnership:

- 1) Maintain the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) line with the addition of the 4<sup>th</sup> and Cedar Street Option in downtown Saint Paul.
- 2) Maintain the Alignment station stop in front of the Union Depot and build the most cost effective maintenance facility on currently held public land that would complement a future expansion to the concourse level of the Union Depot.
- 3) Any cost savings available after making necessary adjustments should fund local projects along University Avenue and the alignment itself that result from construction.

Although these recommendations are major cost-cutting measures, we acknowledge the project is still over budget. The business community is not prepared to make concessions on the timeline of this project and strongly encourages compromise from all partners.

Just as we have demonstrated compromise, the other portions of the line must be devised with a solution that stays within the project's budget and timeline.

Regarding the proposed additional stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western we support Ramsey County's recommendations:

RESOLVED, The Central Corridor LRT Line should be constructed to both meet current transit demands in the region and accommodate additional ridership associated with developments, such as those anticipated in the Central Corridor Development Strategy. To that end, additional stations on University Avenue (at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues) should be designed and the necessary substructure constructed in the current phase to facilitate the build-out of each station, as it is justified by travel demand, with minimal disruption to LRT operations, University Avenue businesses, and the residents along the Line; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, The construction of at least one of these stations must be a priority during this phase of building the line if there is money available in the project budget;

The Midway Chamber of Commerce remains a strong proponent of this project and we are gratified to see so many of our private and public partners working collaboratively to work through these complex issues to ensure the successful completion of this important connection for the entire Metropolitan Region.

## Midway Chamber of Commerce Comments

This won't reduce traffic congestion on University Avenue. The people that ride the buses will take the LRT which doesn't change anything. University Avenue is already congested enough, plus it is the alternate for 94 when that is backed up. This is a big waste of our tax money.

Most of our customers come from south of University Avenue and drive trucks. I'm concerned that they will have difficulty getting to us during construction and we will lose customers permanently because of it.

The Raymond station display board states "on street parking nearby". As an owner in the area, I would hope this station would not be advertised as a "park and ride" which it implies. Parking is already tight. Signs that limit parking to 1 hour or so must be posted.

Is it possible to run express and local trains on the same line?

Adopt the acronym T-CART and watch your stock rise.

Will the business owners in the Midway Shopping Center (on University Avenue) incur any expenses for this project?

My business is at Vandalia. I need to go to both downtowns yet the closest station is Raymond. I think a ½ mile between 2 stations is too far apart for a dense residential and business community.

Who is the ridership? Local residents and businesses vs. people in both downtowns & U of M?

Need stations at Victoria, Western, Fairview, and Hamline to serve the members of this chamber & the residents of this community who live, work and play here. Many of whom do not have cars.

University of Minnesota: If the tunnel option cannot happen, I think that Mayor Rybak's idea of a "pedestrian plaza" on Washington couple with a retrofit of the Washington Avenue bridge is best. I work in the North End of St. Paul, but I live in downtown Minneapolis (a stone's throw from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue bridge).

I believe that some of the pedestrian crossings should go over the train – "pedestrian bridge" – which I believe would be safer than crossing the tracks. I think a "bridge" would be essential at the Snelling crossing, and possibly Lexington and Rice.

As a resident of downtown Minneapolis, I am aware of how the LRT Hiawatha Line has spurred development along the line, as well as the fact a number of businesses along the line suffered during construction (e.g. Pickled Parrot restaurant at 5<sup>th</sup> St. N. & 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N.) With that in mind, it is essential to mitigate damage done to existing businesses (especially restaurant row – between Rice and Lexington – iconic businesses like Turf Club, Midway Books) as new businesses blossom.



# PPERRIA

Prospect Park and East River Road Improvement Association, Inc.

February 15, 2008

To: Chairman Peter Bell and the members of the Metropolitan Council

From: PPERRIA Executive Committee

Subject: Light Rail Decisions before the Council in February

We note that decisions concerning the proposed Central Corridor Light Rail scheduled to be made in February 2008 will set the stage for the next several decades. Our understanding is that the decisions will be made without full and adequate information. We therefore propose delaying final decisions until full information is available. And we look forward to working with the Council to assure the success of the project.

1. The proposed route through or around the University of Minnesota has not as yet been sufficiently studied to provide confidence that an optimum and cost-effective routing can be identified. The current study by the University will not be completed for several months. Thus binding decisions made in February will necessarily be made on incomplete information. Since the routing east of the Mississippi in Minneapolis may have significant impacts on the Prospect Park neighborhood, we propose that a final decision about the routing be delayed until complete information is available. Even if this delays the entire project, we believe it is better to get it right than to act out of expediency with the risk of creating significant future problems.

2. We look forward to working with the Metro Council and the city of Minneapolis to assure that stations located in Prospect Park enhance both the entire transit system and the Prospect Park community. We are concerned however that the routing through Prospect Park respect the neighborhood. In particular we urge that any proposed use of eminent domain have full neighborhood support.

Sincerely,

Richard Poppele  
PPERRIA President

Members of the Executive Committee

Richard Poppele, President

Joe Ring, Past President

Betts Zerby, Secretary

Lois Willand, Treasurer

John Holmquist, Vice President

Andy Mickel, Vice President

Florence Littman, Vice President

Phil Anderson, Vice President

Susan Larson-Fleming, Vice President

Tom Kilton, Vice President

Founded in 1901-The Oldest Neighborhood Association in Minneapolis

66 Malcolm Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414



cc:

Cam Gordon, Minneapolis City Council

Peter Wagenius, Senior Policy Side, Minneapolis Mayor's Office

Mike Christenson , Director Minneapolis CPED

Karen Himle, University Relations VP

Katherine O'Brien University Services VP

Ann White District Council Collaborative

Peter McLaughlin, Hennepin County Commissioner

Wendy Menkin, SECIA

Arvonne Fraser, Marcy-Holmes

Doris Wickstrom, Cedar-Riverside



# HAMLIN MIDWAY COALITION

Hamline Park Building ♦ 1564 Lafond Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55104 ♦ 651-646-1986 ♦ Fax 651-641-6123 ♦ district11@gofast.net

December 19, 2007

Mr. Peter Bell, Chair  
Metropolitan Council  
390 North Robert Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

**Subject: Additional LRT stations at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues**

Dear Chairman Bell,

The Hamline Midway Coalition – District Council 11 – believes the future of the Central Corridor LRT line depends on meeting the needs of the local communities through which the line travels as well as the needs of riders traveling between St. Paul and Minneapolis. In order to address both needs, the HMC feels strongly that the line should include stops at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues – and the most cost-effective way to include additional stations is to build them when the line is laid. At a minimum, these stations should be designed and planned, and the initial engineering should support their introduction at a minimum cost in the near future.

Some have argued that constraints imposed by the Cost Effectiveness Index (CEI) prohibit initial inclusion of these stations. However, cost savings can be met with changes to other parts of the line, where issues of social equity are not as critical. Also, any decreases in travel times resulting from additional stations would be balanced by increased local ridership. Further, we are concerned that the existing CEI is an inappropriate evaluative measure applied to projects in urban transit corridors.

In order to adequately meet the needs of local communities, and to address the impacts of line construction and resulting development, additional stations should be coupled with a robust bus system along and feeding into the corridor. Facilitating easy transfer among transit modes, as well as easy access to transit by foot and bicycle, is essential to a successful project.

We urge you to support LRT stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline Avenues.

Sincerely,

Michael Jon Olson, Executive Director  
On behalf of the Board of Directors .

*Dedicated to making the Hamline Midway neighborhood a better place to live and work.*



SAINT PAUL AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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## **Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce** **Central Corridor Alternative Alignment Plan**

Since 2004, the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and the Central Corridor Partnership have taken a leadership role in ensuring light rail is built on time and on budget in the east metro. Because Central Corridor is our organization's top priority, we have stepped forward to develop a list of compromises that meet the business community's needs and stay within budget. These recommendations come from a special ad-hoc committee formed from the Transportation Policy Committee and SPACC members of the Central Corridor Business Advisory Committee. The cornerstone of this plan is compromise; we recognize each party involved has shown tremendous movement to make this project a reality.

To that end we submit to the Executive Board a final position on the Alignment. This compromise has been formed with the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority and reflects our collective priorities. For the first time, stakeholders on the east side of the alignment will stand together, clearly demonstrating to the Governor that we are ready to make the necessary decisions to ensure the Central Corridor LRT is built on time and on budget.

- 1) Maintain the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) line with the addition of the 4<sup>th</sup> and Cedar Street Option in downtown Saint Paul.
- 2) Maintain the Alignment station stop in front of the Union Depot and build the most cost effective maintenance facility on currently held public land that would complement a future expansion to the concourse level of the Union Depot.
- 3) There is a legitimate issue concerning the proposed additional stations at Hamline, Victoria, and Western. We support building infrastructure now that creates long-term cost savings and allows these stops to be built at a future date.
- 4) Any cost savings available after making necessary adjustments should fund local projects along University Avenue and the alignment itself that result from construction.

Although the Chamber has suggested major cost-cutting measures, we acknowledge the project is still over budget. The business community is not prepared to make concessions on the timeline of this project and strongly encourages compromise from all partners. Just as we have demonstrated compromise, the other portions of the line must be devised with a solution that stays within the project's budget and timeline.

REMARKS OF ARVONNE FRASER—821 – 7<sup>th</sup> St SE, Minneapolis, MN.

RE: CENTRAL CORRIDOR LRT AND THE UNIVERSITY AREA AT METRO COUNCIL LISTENING SESSION, Weisman Gallery, February 6, 2008

As a resident of this University area virtually all my adult life, who lives near the bridge that fell down, I urge the Council to do this LRT line right rather than quickly. Although I am president of the Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association, I speak in my individual capacity since our board has not yet taken a formal position on the diversion of the line from a tunnel under Washington Avenue to another route.

I share the University's position that a surface line up Washington Avenue would be dangerous and inefficient. Washington Avenue simply is not wide enough for all the trucks, cars and pedestrians that have to use it plus an LRT line.

Closing Washington Avenue to little but the LRT would also be disastrous. One only has to drive East River Road, right outside this building, to know it is simply not feasible for use by all the traffic currently on Washington Avenue. It is a parkway, part of the Great River Roads system. In places it is so narrow that if a truck is parked at the back of the University hospital, traffic becomes one lane, with a cliff on your left if going upriver. Alternatively, traffic could be diverted to University and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets through our neighborhood but those streets are overburdened with or without the 35W bridge.

Thus, the best alternative for the LRT is a northern route, using either the new 35W bridge, which our neighborhood successfully campaigned to be built to hold a future LRT, or bridge no. 9, now a pedestrian walkway from the University's East and West Banks, formerly a freight train bridge.

The Dinkytown trench, as we call it, could easily be used for LRT. That

trench is a railyard, a rail line to nowhere but for one spur ending near the Stone Arch bridge. Diverting the LRT to the north would serve the campus, the new stadium and link back to University Avenue beyond the stadium.

I and many of my neighbors urge you take time to redesign a northern LRT route. As we learned from the bridge that fell down, it is better to do things right than rush or pretend that things are fine.

Thank you.





# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

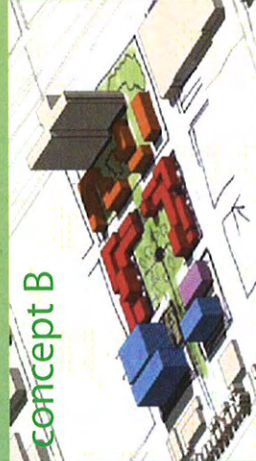
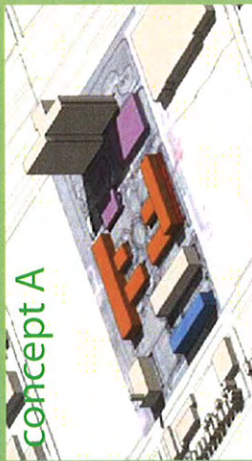
## Hamline Station Area



### Open Parcels

	Area	Acres	% of total
Parking lots	876,411	20.00	37.8%
Remaining Area	1,452,653	33.35	62.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,329,064</b>	<b>53.35</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

# Concepts from AIA 150 Charrettes, 7 June 2007



in square feet	A	B	C
Housing	268,869	157,744	513,255
Office	79,240	420,800	307,440
Commercial	43,800	82,074	192,910
Civic	47,348	13,860	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>439,257</b>	<b>674,478</b>	<b>1,013,605</b>
Green Space	19,920	225,204	99,934



**Benita B Warns  
1440 Lafond Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55104-2438  
651-641-1037**

February 11, 2008

Met Council Chair Peter Bell, quoted in February Monitor newspaper, said,

“This line will not be imposed on a community. Everybody does need to feel they were legitimately heard. I have the responsibility to listen until I understand.”

Around 1989-1990, a task force made up of University Ave. corridor residents and business owners studied 3 LRT alignments – Pierce Butler, I-94, and University Ave. The overwhelming choice was I-94.

In October 2002, the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority decided, without citizen input, to change alignment to University Ave. Most RCRRA members do not live anywhere near University Ave. or I-94. The RCRRA is IMPOSING its will upon us.

University Avenue is a LOCAL transportation artery. The vast majority of the current transit users do not travel between the downtowns, they travel between local destinations. The #16 bus stops frequently to accommodate this highly localized travel demand.

LRT is designed to be an express travel method. As an express mode, LRT is not compatible with such a highly localized street as University Ave. Freeways, like I-94, are designed for express travel. LRT is much better suited to run along the freeway service drives. Widening the bridges over I-94 will create room for the stations, there would be no major business disruptions during construction, and the new line would not be direct competition for the #16 bus route. There is a lot more “underutilized (less dense)” land near the freeway than along University, which can accommodate the desired development.

Concerning LRT, Peter Bell also said, "More riders are middle and upper class, and more are white. Some of this is because of where it (Hiawatha line) is located, but this is the trend across the country." Mr. Bell's statement confirms what I have said all along – that building LRT on University Ave. would create a 2-tier transportation system. LRT is for rich, white people, while the leftover bus service is for the poor, non-whites who need the local stops for their everyday business.

Bus service on University Avenue MUST be maintained at its current frequency and capacity, regardless of what you do with LRT. But, if you build LRT on University Avenue, additional stops at Hamline, Victoria, and Western are mandatory. However, if you build LRT where it belongs – along the freeway – then you won't need to add stops or be concerned with the redundancy of a bus and an LRT line trying to share the same road. Building costs will be cheaper, and then LRT just might qualify for federal funding.

Peter Bell – are you listening?



Benita B Warns



2/11/08 Listening Session



District 17

CapitolRiver  
Council

332 Minnesota Street Suite W122 Saint Paul, MN 55101 (651) 221-0488 FAX (651) 221-0581  
Website: [www.capitolrivercouncil.org](http://www.capitolrivercouncil.org) E-mail: [info@capitolrivercouncil.org](mailto:info@capitolrivercouncil.org)

## CapitolRiver Council, District 17

### Position Statement on the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project: Downtown Alignment

Through a process co-sponsored by CapitolRiver Council and the St. Paul Planning Commission, downtown leaders spent great time and thought crafting the downtown portion of the Central Corridor Development Strategy. Based on the work, the St. Paul City Council adopted an officially preferred route for light rail downtown. That alignment brings light rail from University Avenue, south on Robert Street, west on 12th Street, south on Cedar Street to 5th & Cedar, crossing the University Club block to 4th & Minnesota, and continuing eastward along 4th Street to a stop in front of Union Depot.

CapitolRiver Council strongly affirms its support for the light rail alignment outlined in the Central Corridor Development Strategy, and adopted by the Saint Paul City Council. We urge the County, Met Council, State and Federal governments, at minimum, to support and build the light rail route laid out in the plan in the initial phase of light rail construction. We believe such a route is feasible within the federal cost effectiveness constraints, as it reduces the Cost Effectiveness Index (CEI) by 39¢ over the existing proposal in the DEIS. Such a route is essential to solidify downtown St. Paul's long-term regional economic prospects.



# CapitolRiver Council

District 17

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332 Minnesota Street Suite W122 Saint Paul, MN 55101 (651) 221-0488 FAX (651) 221-0581  
Website: [www.capitolrivercouncil.org](http://www.capitolrivercouncil.org) E-mail: [info@capitolrivercouncil.org](mailto:info@capitolrivercouncil.org)

February 4, 2008

Peter Bell  
Chair  
Metropolitan Council  
390 N. Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Position on Downtown Scoping Issues

Dear Chair Bell:

The CapitolRiver Council, District 17 strongly urges the Metropolitan Council to adopt the downtown Saint Paul "diagonal" alignment and to take the Light Rail Transit (LRT) to the front of Union Depot, as it makes scoping decisions.

The CapitolRiver Council (CRC) is the city-sanctioned District Council representing downtown Saint Paul. We are the only organization in downtown that simultaneously represents building owners, civic organizations, businesses and residents. In addition to residents from all quarters of downtown, our board includes representatives of such organizations as HealthEast/St. Joseph's Hospital, Catholic Charities Unity One Credit Union, the RiverCentre Convention and Visitor's Authority, the St. Paul TMO, small businesses, both the Downtown Building Owners Association (DBOA) and the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA), and Capital City Partnership.

For over ten years, CapitolRiver Council has closely watched the development of plans for an LRT connecting the downtowns of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. During that time we have listened to presentations from City and County staff on possible downtown alignments, including alignments that would serve both the entertainment district and the central business district. We even proposed and considered a small loop through downtown, and consequently met with City engineers to gain an understanding of why that wasn't feasible. Eventually, after numerous presentations, meetings and deliberation, we came to understand the reasoning for routing the LRT down Cedar, and put our support behind the alignment.

Through the years, we have been unwavering on one conclusion: LRT must go to Union Depot. Early on, we recognized that a stop at the Union Depot would revitalize the Depot's role as a regional intermodal transportation hub. We also recognized that there are many people living within a quarter mile of a stop in front of Union Depot. Right now at least 2,500 people live within that radius, including hundreds that live in buildings that fall under affordable housing guidelines. The Crane-Ordway and the American House buildings cater to residents who depend on public transit. Many other buildings, from the Tilsner and Northern Warehouse Co-ops to Sibley Park and Court Apartments have significant income-restricted units, filled with many transit-dependent residents. By the time the LRT is completed, there will be at least 3,000 people living within a quarter mile of Union Depot. This is undoubtedly one of the most dense station areas along the entire line.

As you know, the city's downtown LRT Task Force, composed of both business and resident representatives (including CRC representatives), looked at the DEIS alignment for downtown and suggested that the 6th & Cedar and Kellogg Square stations be combined into a single station on the block bound by 4th, 5th, Cedar, and Minnesota, with the LRT running diagonally through the block. As it turns out, such a treatment helps reduce the CEI by 39¢, about 20% of the amount required to reduce the CEI to meet Federal standards. This diagonal alignment has been met with great enthusiasm by members of CapitolRiver Council. CRC then supported the adoption of the resulting Central Corridor Development Strategy by the City Council.

While CapitolRiver Council has passed previous resolutions supporting LRT going to the Union Depot, we felt that a reaffirmation of our support is necessary. Consequently, on Wednesday, January 16, 2008, at a regular meeting of our 35-member Board of Directors, the following resolution was passed unanimously:


Through a process co-sponsored by CRC and the St. Paul Planning Commission, downtown leaders spent great time and thought crafting the downtown portion of the Central Corridor Development Strategy. Based on the work, the St. Paul City Council adopted an officially preferred route for light rail downtown. That alignment brings light rail from University Avenue, south on Robert Street, west on 12th Street, south on Cedar Street to 5th & Cedar, crossing the University Club block to 4th & Minnesota, and continuing eastward along 4th Street to a stop in front of Union Depot.

CRC strongly affirms its support for the light rail alignment outlined in the Central Corridor Development Strategy, and adopted by the Saint Paul City Council. We urge the County, Met Council, State and Federal governments, at minimum, to support and build the light rail route laid out in the plan in the initial phase of light rail construction. We believe such a route is feasible within the federal cost effectiveness constraints, as it reduces the Cost Effectiveness Index (CEI) by 39¢ over the existing proposal in the DEIS. Such a route is essential to solidify downtown St. Paul's long-term regional economic prospects.

The local community has spent countless hours and effort ensuring Union Depot can be acquired and will play a central place in the future of downtown. From a regional planning perspective, we should ensure our two downtowns continue to play a central role in the region's economy. We believe that extending light rail in phase one to at least the front of Union Depot may be key to downtown's future place in the regional economy.

As the Metropolitan Council deliberates on the downtown alignment, please keep in mind that the "diagonal to Union Depot" is a community-supported alignment, that it reduces the CEI, and further has the capacity for serving a large and growing population.

Sincerely,



Bill Englund  
Chair, Board of Directors  
CapitolRiver Council

cc: Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty  
State Senator Sandy Pappas  
State Representative Carlos Mariani  
Met Council Members  
Central Corridor Management Committee (CCMC) Members



Rec'd 2/15/08  
RHC

## WEST BANK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

1808 Riverside Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55454 • 612.673.0477 • FAX 612.673.0379

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February 13, 2008

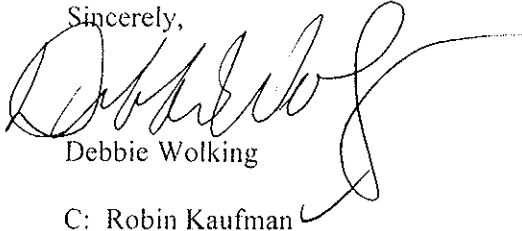
Jessica Hill  
Community Outreach Coordinator  
Metropolitan Council  
390 Robert Street North  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1805

RE: More Cedar Riverside Petitions

Dear Jessica:

The petitions keep coming in. I'll keep sending them to you.

Sincerely,



Debbie Wolking

C: Robin Kaufman



Previously Community Solutions Fund

69 Signatures



**WEST BANK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

1808 Riverside Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55454 • 612.673.0477 • FAX 612.673.0379

---

February 7, 2008

Jessica Hill  
Community Outreach Coordinator  
Metropolitan Council  
390 Robert Street North  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1805

RE: Cedar Riverside Petition

Dear Jessica:

I am enclosing copies of the petition from the Cedar Riverside community supporting the Cedar Avenue station location. Community members were very happy to see the drawings presented at the meeting on December 17, 2007 showing the Cedar Avenue connection to the station platform. We will continue to watch the planning process to ensure the final plans include this feature. We would like you to have copies of the petition for your records.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wolking

C: Robin Kaufman



Previously Community Solutions Fund

# TRANSIT for Livable Communities



February 11, 2008

Peter Bell, Chair  
Metropolitan Council  
390 N. Robert Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Dear Chair Bell:

Transit for Livable Communities is writing to offer our comments on the Central Corridor light rail project prior to the meeting of the Metropolitan Council on February 27, 2008. As you may know, our organization was founded in the mid 1990's during discussions about light rail in the Central Corridor – then envisioned as a rail line down Interstate 94. We strongly support light rail in the Central Corridor and we are eager for this project and other rail and bus projects to move forward.

Attached to this letter is a two-page document that outlines our Board's policy positions on the Central Corridor project. Those policy positions were developed in 2006 and revised in 2007. In this letter, we highlight our organization's positions on the issues of most immediate concern for the Council meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>. They are these:

- First, we support a street level alignment for light rail on Washington Avenue through the University of Minnesota campus (not a tunnel). We believe that a Washington Avenue transit mall with bus and train service will improve accessibility for pedestrians and transit users, improve safety, and make the campus a national model in sustainable transportation. We also believe that it will improve the small business environment on Washington Avenue.
- Second, we support the addition of one or more stations along the East End of the line between Snelling and Rice Street to improve accessibility for neighborhood residents and provide greater opportunity for transit oriented development. High frequency service should also be maintained for the #16 bus and north/south bus service in the corridor should be greatly expanded.
- Third, in downtown St. Paul we support a more direct routing of light rail with a connection to Union Depot along 4<sup>th</sup> Street. We support the elimination and consolidation of stations in downtown St. Paul including the proposed combined station on the block at 4<sup>th</sup> and Cedar. To reduce costs and right angle turning movements we also support elimination of the routing east to Jackson Street. The Union Depot should become a multi-modal station for the east metro that connects local buses, light rail, statewide bus service, Amtrak, and future high-speed rail to Chicago.

We appreciate the Council's support of this important project, and we understand the need to meet the CEI to obtain federal funding, without which this project will not move forward. Nevertheless, we call on the Council, within that framework, to prioritize the siting and development of improved connections in the community and other transit, pedestrian, and bicycling facilities. These priorities are essential to the Corridor's future success, both in terms of economic development, and to reducing vehicle miles traveled in this corridor and throughout the region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lea Schuster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lea Schuster  
Executive Director



# Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Policy Brief

The Central Corridor will be the core transit connector for the Twin Cities region, connecting the two largest downtowns, the University of Minnesota, and the state Capitol. The corridor has strong bus ridership and contains many diverse neighborhoods and a strong small business community. The east end of the corridor includes the Rondo Community, which suffered severe displacement in the last century caused by the construction of Interstate-94.

Improving transit in the Central Corridor will provide current and new transit riders with faster, more reliable, more frequent and more cost-effective service. It will help address traffic congestion, air and noise pollution, disinvestment in our core cities, and suburban sprawl. Any transit investment in the Corridor must preserve key community assets and meet the needs and interests of the communities through which it passes. To ensure community participation in transportation and land-use decision making, timely education and outreach about decision making processes are required. Resources to authentically integrate community input are also necessary.

Transit for Livable Communities recommends the following policies for the Central Corridor.

1. **Transit technology:** Light rail transit (LRT), rather than bus rapid transit (BRT) or other bus alternatives, is the appropriate technology for the Central Corridor. LRT can best accommodate the projected ridership over the long term while improving air quality and reducing traffic noise. LRT also provides easier and faster boarding for wheelchairs, bicycles, and strollers, and people carrying groceries or luggage.
2. **Alignment:** The Central Corridor transit line should follow a University Avenue alignment. Placing light rail in a freeway median provides faster travel times but makes transit oriented

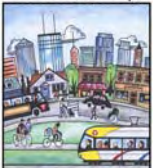
development and pedestrian access to stations much more difficult.

Transit for Livable Communities supports a surface alignment for LRT that runs along Washington Avenue through the University of Minnesota campus to reduce costs and improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment. The surface alignment for light rail in downtown Minneapolis works well.

Whatever alignment is chosen for LRT in downtown St. Paul should include a connection along 4<sup>th</sup> Street all the way to Union Depot.

3. **Location and number of stops:** One or more additional stations should be considered on the east end of the line on University Avenue, with agreement from the city and community to increase development density at those station locations. Portland's Interstate Corridor, a corridor similar to University Avenue, has stops about every half-mile. One or more proposed stations in downtown St. Paul or elsewhere could be eliminated to ensure appropriate spacing and a competitive Cost Effectiveness Index under the federal New Starts program. The overall impact must be carefully evaluated as more stops can increase ridership, while the increased travel time tends to reduce ridership.
4. **Construction mitigation.** Construction staging and mitigation strategies from cities like Salt Lake City, Utah, and Portland, Oregon, (Interstate corridor) should be used to minimize the impacts on existing businesses and residents.
5. **Pedestrian/bicycle environment:** Transit for Livable Communities strongly supports a full reconstruction of University Avenue to improve the pedestrian environment and development

TRANSIT for



Livable Communities

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*Transit for Livable Communities is a regional, nonpartisan organization working to reform Minnesota's transportation system. Through advocacy, organizing, and research, we promote a balanced transportation system that encourages transit, walking, biking, and thoughtful development.*



potential. Funding should come from state, regional and local sources including federal flexible funding through the Metropolitan Council, rather than the federal New Starts program, so as not to negatively impact the project's Cost Effectiveness Index.

Transit for Livable Communities also recommends that pedestrian and bike friendly design guidelines be adopted in the corridor. This includes improved facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists such as bike racks, street trees, pedestrian scale lighting, benches, and pedestrian signal countdowns both at the stations and along the Central Corridor.

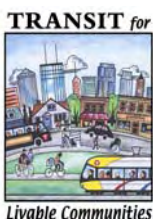
6. **Roadway design and safety:** University Avenue should be redesigned to incorporate traffic calming principals that balance the needs of all users (transit, bike, pedestrian, auto, truck) and to promote driving at or below posted speeds and thereby promote a safer transportation system.
7. **Density:** Development should reinforce transit use, increase the viability of neighborhood retail and the quality of neighborhood life. Generally, a minimum residential density of 12-24 units per acre is usually needed to support fixed route bus service (frequency of 15 minutes or less), and 12-30 units per acre for light rail.
8. **Design:** Developments should be transit and pedestrian friendly. This generally means that: buildings face the street and include windows and architectural details that enhance the streetscape and increase safety; parking is concentrated off street or in the rear of buildings; drive-through uses are restricted; signage is regulated; alleys are enhanced as pedestrian routes, and historic preservation is encouraged.
9. **Diversity of uses:** City zoning, site plan and other regulations should encourage a mix of commercial, residential, and retail uses with a de-emphasis on one-story "big box" stores.

10. **Integration of density, design, and diversity.**

Transit for Livable Communities recommends the thoughtful integration of density, design, and diversity to enhance and preserve neighborhoods that are healthy, vibrant and livable.

11. **Affordability:** Housing development should ensure life cycle housing for a range of incomes and household needs. Light rail can play an important role by reducing the need for expensive underground parking and by encouraging location efficient mortgages, both of which make housing more affordable for everyone.
12. **Community preservation:** Transit for Livable Communities recommends emphasizing a "sense of place" in order to preserve and improve community, cultural, and historical amenities.
13. **Bus service:** Retain the #94 route express bus service between the two downtowns. Bus service within the corridor should be restructured to ensure "high frequency" service along University Avenue. North/south mainline service connecting with University Avenue stations should be expanded. Signal priority should be given to buses and trains along the corridor.
14. **Parking:** Development should minimize the amount of off-street parking needed and provided through use of shared parking, car sharing, and unbundling the parking from the cost of the development. Generally, off-street parking should be located behind, in, or under any structures. On-street parking is desirable and should be metered. A Parking Benefit District should be considered. Angle parking should be considered for reasons of adding additional parking or traffic calming. Local regulations should emphasize maximum number of spaces allowed instead of minimum.

1/31/08



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