

SWLRT Community Advisory Committee Recommendation to the SWLRT Corridor Management Committee

June 30, 2015

The SWLRT Community Advisory Committee agreed on the following recommendation to be presented to the SWLRT Corridor Management Committee prior to their vote on SWLRT scope and budget scheduled for July 1, 2015:

- We urge leaders on the Corridor Management Committee, and eventually the Metropolitan Council, to consider adopting cuts that would total less than the \$341 million target. If we value this project as an economic and equitable development catalyst, as many of us do, then it is worth paying some of the extra cost that has recently been identified from the project budget itself. At some point the cuts being considered are more about addressing geographical balance and serving political sensibilities – we should not reduce the functionality of the line to concerns about broadly “sharing the pain” of service reductions. This corridor project is worth every dollar we invest in it if we apply an equity lens, and the return on that investment will drive economic growth and employment opportunities for many decades into the future – it’s worth the extra cost. *(Text from June 30, 2015 Southwest Equity Commitments table letter to SWLRT CMC)*
Vote: 17 for, 3 against

- Honor community MOUs/Agreements and recognize the sacrifices that have been made by cities and the sacrifices they are now being asked to make while making the line as beneficial as possible for people and the communities.
Vote: Unanimous

- Regarding, safety and accessibility:
 - Need to ensure that budget reductions don’t end up creating dangerous traffic patterns for cars, bikes, pedestrians, especially in the long run
 - Accessibility to work, housing, and recreation for all should be the reason for this project. Reductions in parking, stations, etc. should be done with caution as they impact ridership and overall benefit

Vote: Unanimous

- We urge that both Eden Prairie Town Center and Southwest Stations be built because the potential future affordable housing and job/business development at Eden Prairie Town Center. Southwest Station has strong bus connections that represent 12% of total ridership, which is the largest percentage of any station.

Vote: 16 for, 4 against

- Recognize that at least six stations; EPTC, SW, Blake, Penn, Van White, and 21st are critical for low wealth communities and communities of color.

Vote: Unanimous

- If stations are deferred, the first priority should be to add back deferred stations, as funding becomes available.

Vote: 17 for, 3 against

- The second priority is improving accessibility to stations

Vote: 17 for, 2 against, 1 Abstention

- Value and protect bicycle infrastructure

Vote: Unanimous

- We urge the Metropolitan Council to create and make public the plan to mitigate and lessen the impacts of cuts; and aggressively seek additional funding sources to mitigate the impacts of these cuts including but not limited to:

- Art/landscaping/beautification
- Mitigate the environmental impacts along the light rail line.
- Lost opportunities of Transit Oriented Development

Vote: Unanimous