

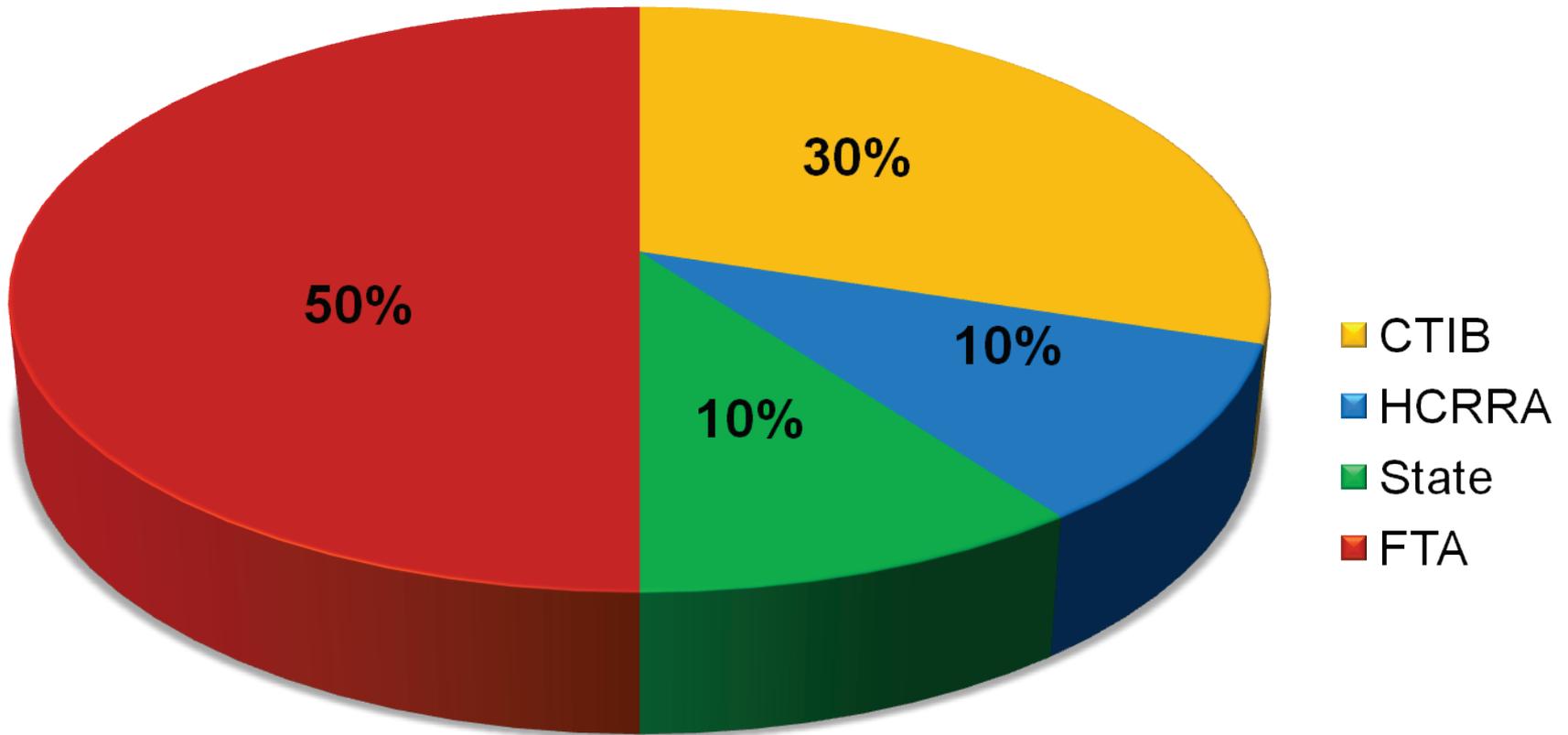


## Town Center and Southwest Options Summary

6/30/15

	Town Center (PE Plans)	Town Center (Eden Road)	Southwest (Defer Town Center)
<b>Parking</b>	115+ on-street spaces, plus budget for 160 off-street surface spaces, location of majority unidentified (feasible?)	70 on-street spaces, plus budget for 160 off-street surface spaces, location of majority unidentified (feasible?)	450 additional ramp spaces
<b>Bus Circulation</b>	Feasible/Included in proposed budget	Feasible? Not included	Feasible & Included
<b>Infrastructure Mitigation</b>	1. Eden Road Extension 2. North/South Roadway	None Included in proposed budget	None requested

# Project Budget: Sources of Funding



**\$1.65 Billion**

**\$675 Million Committed Locally**

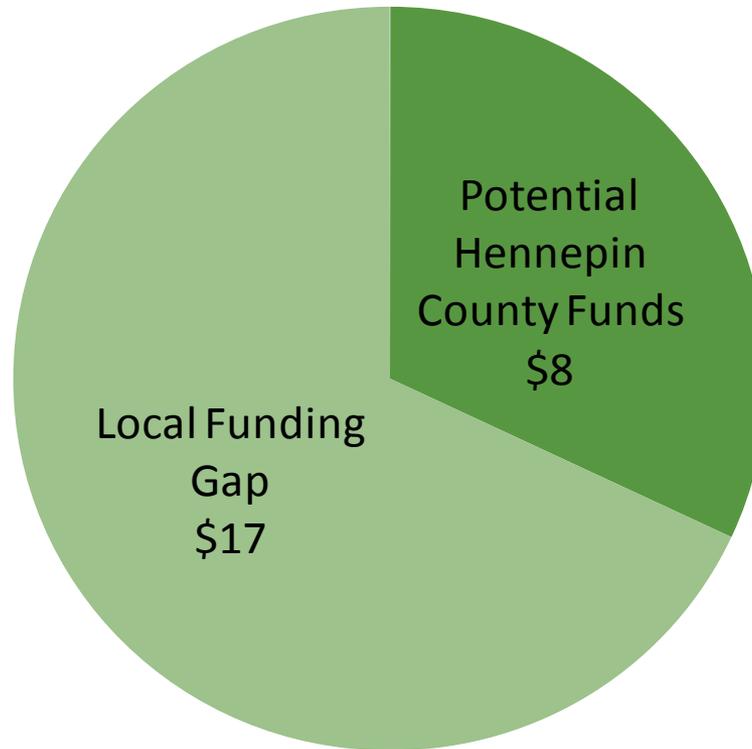
# Additional Funding Needed

SWLRT Ending at Southwest Station \$1.744B Budget (\$ millions)



# SWLRT CMC Scope Recommendation Local Funding Needed

**\$25 Million Local Funding Gap  
(\$ millions)**



## Southwest Equity Commitments

Letter to SW CMC

6/30/15

Dear Southwest Corridor Management Committee leadership,

The Southwest Equity Commitments table is a group of organizations working to advance [equitable outcomes](#) for low-wealth communities of color and indigenous communities in the planning and build out of the Southwest Light Rail Transit project.

As co-chairs of the Southwest Equity Commitments table, we are writing to you because our coalition of corridor-based organizations has significant concerns about the potential for cuts to stations along the line that could disproportionately impact communities of color. As a table we believe that the Southwest LRT can provide opportunities to our communities by providing better access to good transit service, create job and career opportunities in the construction and operation of the line, and create business and economic development opportunities for people of color. We also believe that all of these require significant investments in the creation and preservation of good, safe, affordable housing at and near station areas to ensure that current residents will have access to these potential benefits.

In particular, the 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Van White, Penn, and Royalston Stations all would provide significant access to the SW LRT for residents of North and South Minneapolis and in some cases, provide opportunities for equitable transit oriented development at and around station areas. Joint development plans at the Blake Road Station in Hopkins provide similar opportunities to increase the economic and social vitality of this node and provide essential connections to renter households and low-wealth communities of color. We are also interested in working to protect access, business development, and housing opportunities for members of the Somali and East African community in Eden Prairie, especially around the areas of the Golden Triangle and Town Center Stations.

Pedestrian and biking connections to stations and preservation of existing bicycling facilities are also important. For many low income transit riders, their main form of transportation outside of transit is walking and/or bicycling. People of color are bicycling more than white people [as a recent report noted, [The New Majority: Pedaling Towards Equity](#)]. Trail and pedestrian structures should be preserved Penn, Beltline, Louisiana and Opus, especially since these facilities are not charged against the project's cost effectiveness index.

While we understand that there are concerns about the increased cost estimates to the SW LRT line, we feel that the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, the five cities, and other stakeholders along the line should not rush to make cuts to get the cost down to what could be a fairly arbitrary target. If cuts are to be made, these cuts should certainly not compromise future transit/bicycling/walking connections, jobs, and economic development opportunities to communities of color, indigenous communities, and low-wealth people.

We strongly recommend that decisions related to cutting costs for the SW LRT line be viewed through a racial equity impact analysis (Voices for Racial Justice has a basic outline [here](#)) that looks into which populations will be impacted by changes in existing plans. Any racial equity impact analysis should follow good environmental justice principles, including in situations where an impact will be experienced, the lead project authority should provide information on what mitigations they would commit to implement to lessen or remove unfair burdens to low-wealth communities of color. In recommending this step, we

are mindful of federal policies that require local authorities to propose “... measures to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse environmental and public health effects and interrelated social and economic effects, and providing offsetting benefits and opportunities to enhance communities, neighborhoods, and individuals.” [Order 5610.2(a), [Department of Transportation Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations](#)]

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 geographic 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.

Given the role of the Southwest LRT Corridor Management Committee (CMC) in making decisions that will ultimately impact communities of color along this line, we also request that seats on the CMC be immediately made available to leaders of organizations from historically underrepresented communities. Recently steps were taken to ensure that leaders from the community were seated as full members of the Bottineau CMC – we believe this serves as a good model for equity that the SW LRT project should follow. This is a necessary and overdue step in advancing towards more equitable results in the planning and construction of the line.

In order to discuss these concerns and our interest in making seats available on the SW CMC, the Southwest Equity Commitment table would like to meet with lead staff and CMC leadership of the Corridor Management Committee in the coming weeks.

On behalf of the Southwest Equity Commitments table, we sincerely thank you for your attention to this matter,

Asad Aliweyd, co-chair  
Executive Director  
New American Academy  
Eden Prairie, MN

Shauen V. T. Pearce, co-chair  
Executive Director  
Harrison Neighborhood Association  
Minneapolis, MN

c.c. Met Council Chair, Adam Duininck