

The Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) Project and Saint Paul's Central Corridor Development Strategy



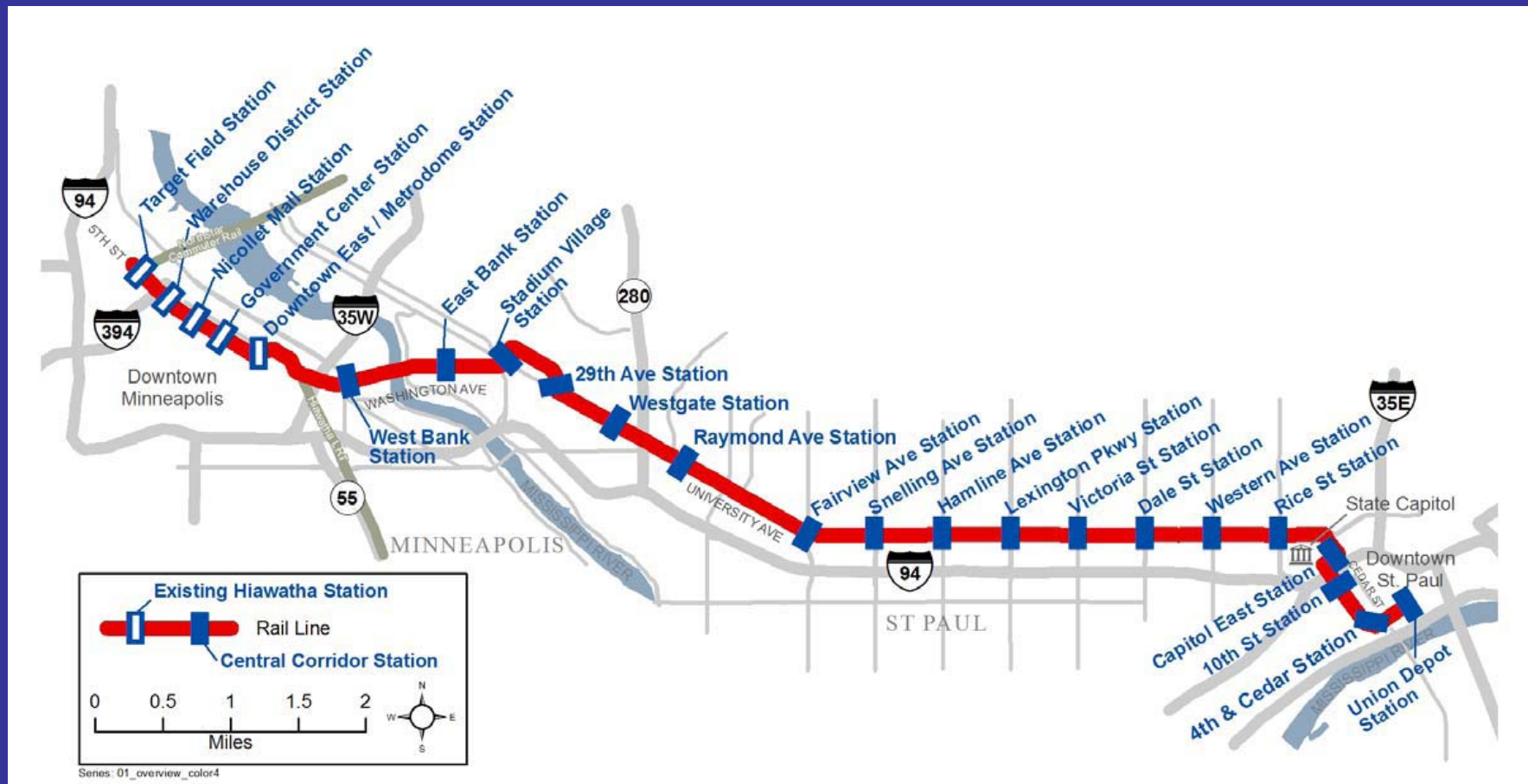
Lambda Alpha International
May 14, 2010

Lucy Thompson, City of Saint Paul
Dept. of Planning & Economic Development

Central Corridor LRT

- An **11-mile** corridor between downtown Minneapolis & downtown Saint Paul
- Between the downtowns, alignment runs down the middle of University Avenue, which is primarily a commercial street
- **2nd** LRT line for Twin Cities; Hiawatha is **1st**
- **18** new stations, plus **5** shared with the Hiawatha Line in downtown Minneapolis

Central Corridor LRT Alignment



Central Corridor LRT – cont.

- Projected weekday ridership: 38,000 by 2020 and 43,000 by 2030
- Cost: \$957 million
- Multiple jurisdictions: Metropolitan Council (lead); Cities of Saint Paul & Minneapolis; Ramsey and Hennepin Counties; University of Minnesota

Funding Sources

Source	Amount	Percentage
FTA	\$478,450,000	50.0%
CTIB	\$283,950,000	30.0%
State of MN	\$ 91,546,000	9.57%
RCRRA	\$ 66,411,000	6.94%
HCRRA	\$ 28,239,400	2.95%
City of St. Paul	\$ 5,200,000	.54%
CCFC	\$ 520,000	.05%
Met Council	\$ 2,583,600	.27%
TOTAL	\$956,900,000	100.0%

LRT Vehicle



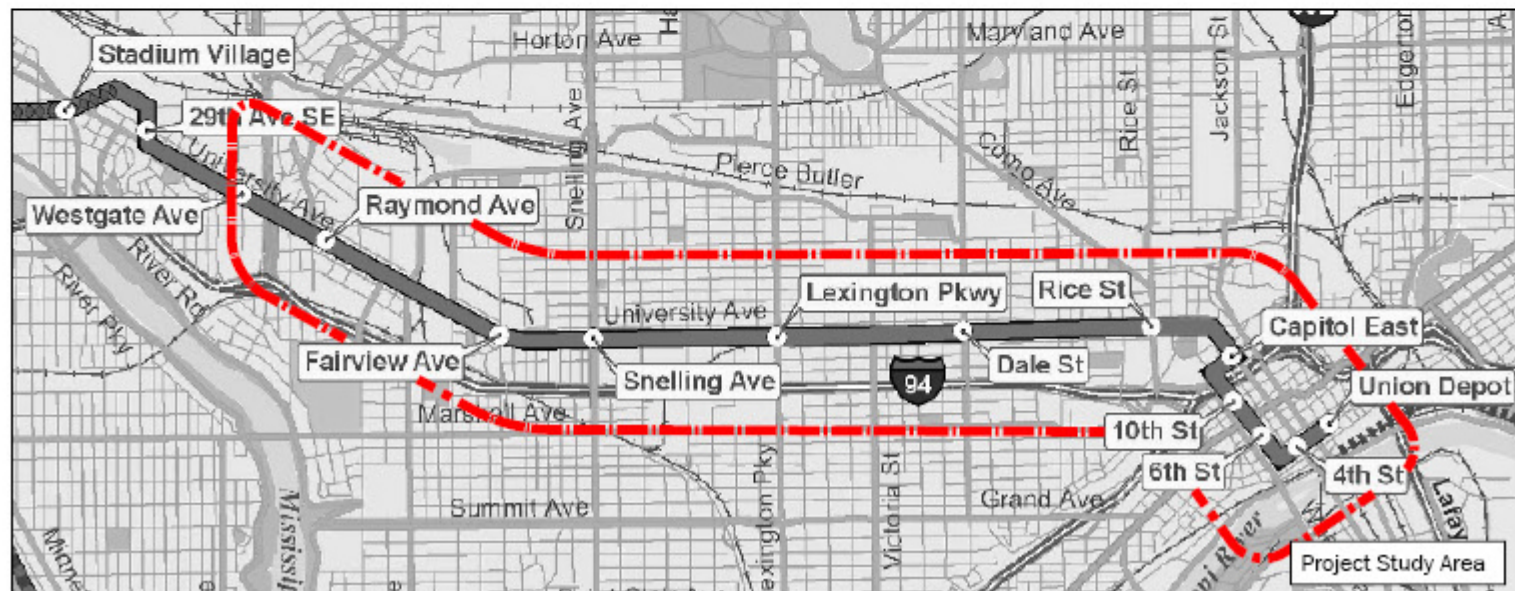
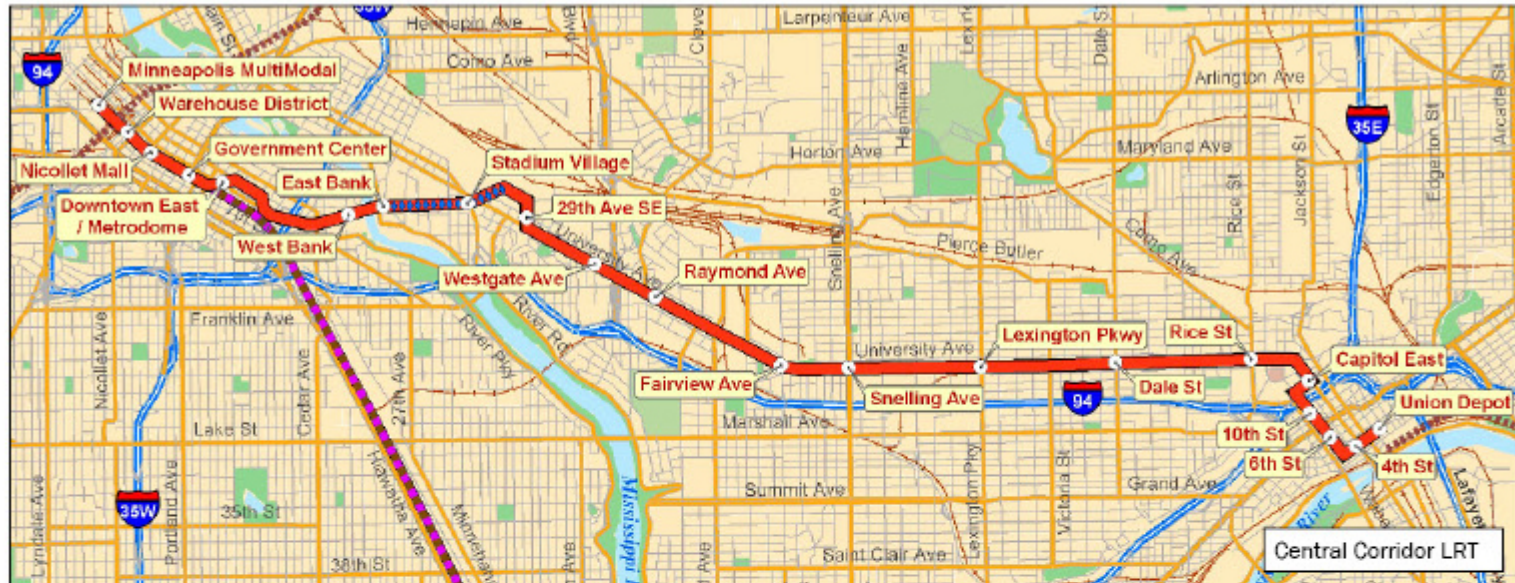
When Will It be Completed?

- Federal Transit Admin. approval to proceed – Dec. 2006
- Preliminary Engineering and Final Design – mid-2007 to Spring 2010
- FTA approves Full Funding Grant Agreement – Nov. 2010
- Construction – 36-48 months (2010-2013)
- Schedule for Saint Paul portion:
 - Fall 2010 – Capitol Area and 4th Street
 - 2011 – St. Paul/Mpls. border to Hamline Ave. and Cedar Street in downtown St. Paul
 - 2012 – Hamline Avenue to Capitol
- Schedule for Minneapolis portion:
 - 2011-2012 – Washington Avenue, including bridge
 - 2012 – Stadium Village to St. Paul/Mpls. border
- Line opens (2014)

TWO SEPARATE “TRACKS”

- LRT transit improvements (Metropolitan Council is the lead agency)
- Development planning (City of Saint Paul is the lead for the portion of the route in Saint Paul)
- Central Corridor Development Strategy initiated by Mayor Coleman to take advantage of potential of LRT to attract new investment and transform the corridor

Central Corridor LRT will connect the downtowns of the Twin Cities



The Central Corridor Today



Small-scale retail and residential uses



Strip shopping centers with large surface parking lots



Fast-food restaurants and auto-related uses



A very wide street – 120 ft. R.O.W.



New senior housing



Historic warehouse reuse for office/retail



New rental and ownership housing



Creating a Central Corridor Development Strategy

- Two citizen task forces – University Avenue and Capitol/Downtown
- August 2006 – April 2007
- Recommendations were adopted by the Mayor and City Council as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan in October 2007
- Creates a vision and strategy for how Central Corridor should grow and change over the next 20-25 years in response to the LRT investment.

Each task force focused on distinct sets of issues:

University Avenue Taskforce



Downtown / Capitol Area Taskforce



University Avenue Task Force Key Issues

- 1. Gentrification**
- 2. Minority and small business development**
- 3. Stations – number, development potential**
- 4. Future redevelopment sites – appropriate scale, land uses**
- 5. Mixed-income housing**
- 6. Parking and traffic management**
- 7. Greening the Corridor**
- 8. Pedestrian/bicycle access to Corridor**

Downtown/Capitol Area Task Force Key Issues

1. Planning for key redevelopment sites

- Athletic Club block**
- Union Depot/Diamond Products area**
- Sears site**
- League of Minnesota Cities block**

2. Pedestrian connections to entertainment district and other parts of Downtown

3. Connectivity – between transportation modes, between street and skyway

4. Safety



City of Saint Paul CENTRAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Adopted October 24, 2007 as a chapter of the Comprehensive Plan

Where We Are Today

What We Want

What It Should Look Like

How We Get There



ZAH
ASSOCIATES



Development Strategy Contents

Where We Are Today

Introduces the Development Strategy and answers a series of important questions

1

What We Want

Describes what the Central Corridor is, and how the community would like to see it improve

2

What It Should Look Like

Outlines directions for building types, streetscapes and open spaces along the Corridor

3

How We Get There

Recommends policies, programs and strategies to help guide future-decision making

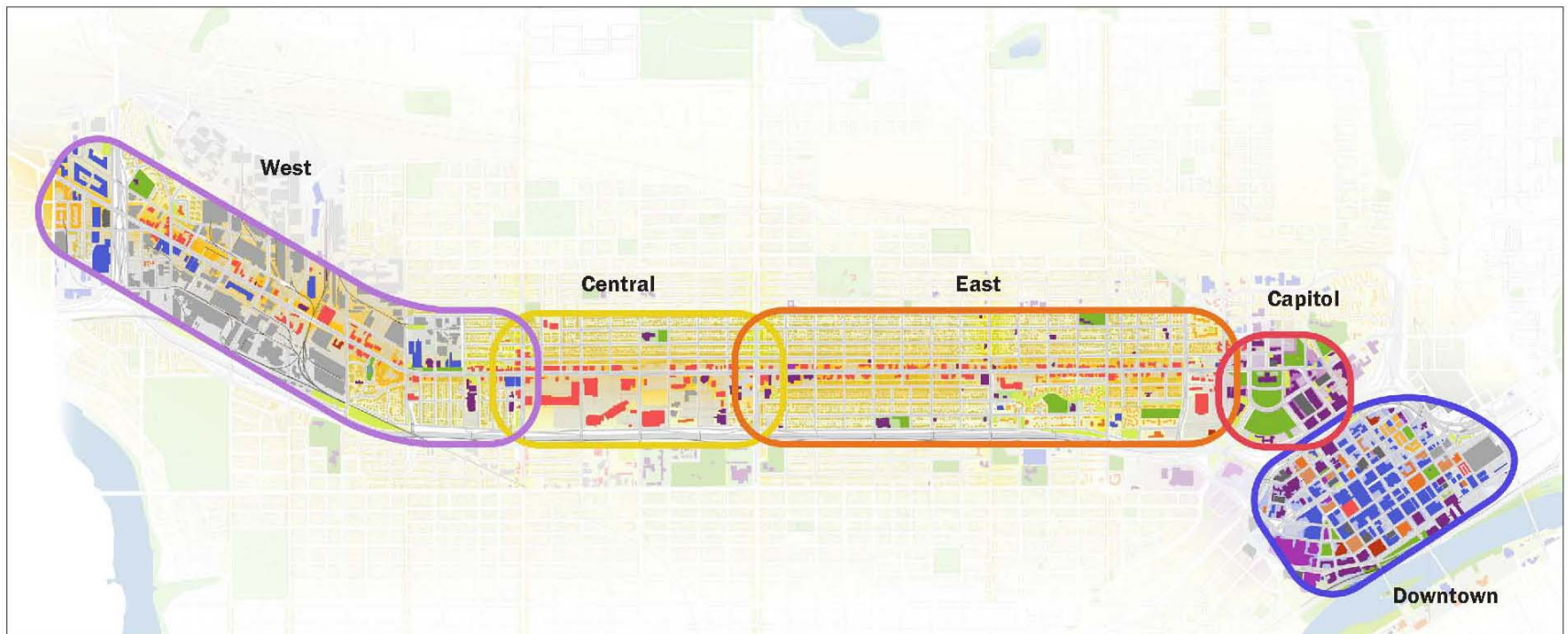
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1.3

The Corridor Today

WHERE WE ARE TODAY | WHAT WE WANT | WHAT IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE | HOW WE GET THERE

The corridor has different segments. The east segment contains a population that is very diverse and has lower incomes than the rest of the corridor. There are also many small businesses. Concerns about gentrification are greatest here.



From a real estate standpoint, the Central Corridor is not one real estate market, but five (5) distinctive sub-markets, each with visibly different land use characteristics and dramatically different demographic profiles.

Colliers Market Analysis

- Plan for what the market can support.
- Development potential estimated by station area – Westgate, Raymond, Fairview, Snelling, Lexington, Dale, Rice, Capitol, Downtown
- Total estimated development potential for Central Corridor, 2010-2030:
 - Rental Units: 9,100-11,250
 - Ownership units: 2,175-3,450
 - Office: 5.7 million sq. ft.
 - Retail: 1.0 million sq. ft.
 - Hotel: 1,000 rooms

What We Want

CENTRAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

2

Section 1 establishes an understanding of what the Central Corridor is, and how a shared vision and strategy for its future development can help it improve over the next 30 years. The purpose of this section, “What We Want”, is to begin describing these improvements – the community’s vision for the Central Corridor - as recorded throughout the Development Strategy process.

In this section you will find:

Section 2.1 – “The Vision”, which answers the important question: What kind of place do we want the Corridor to become?

Section 2.2 describes the foundation for the Vision in an accompanying set of “Principles”, which are the ‘Big Ideas’ public investment in the Central Corridor LRT should help to achieve.

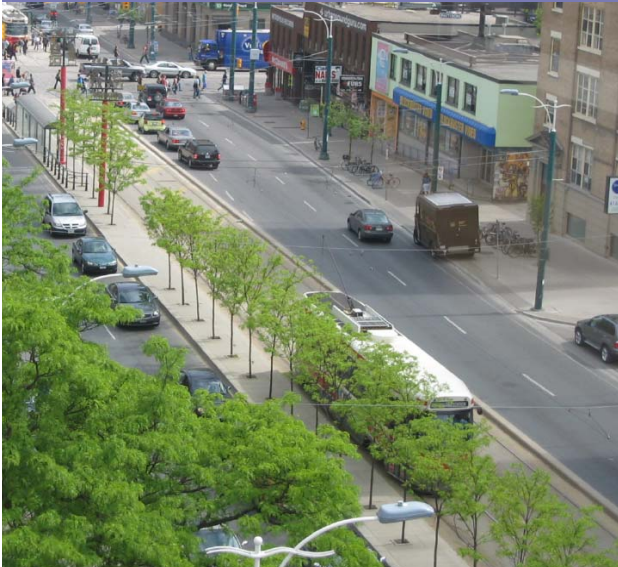
Section 2.3 takes a closer look at each of the Principles through a series of related “Objectives & Strategies”. For each Principle, a set of Objectives describe things the community actually wants to see happen or change over time; while recommended Strategies provide some ideas for getting started on these through new programs and partnerships that will be necessary to achieve the Vision.

Section 2.4 – “90 Initiatives for the Corridor”, outlines many tangible initiatives that can begin the process of positive change along the corridor. This is a comprehensive account of all the places the community said weren’t working well enough, and which future growth and development in the Corridor should help to improve.



Our Vision for the Future of the Corridor:

The Central Corridor will build on its assets to become a place that has stronger businesses, more vibrant neighborhoods, and more beautiful urban places. Along University Avenue and in the downtown, the Corridor will invite residents, shoppers, employees and visitors to linger on safe, pedestrian-friendly, attractive, tree-lined boulevards; establish a home and sense of community in stable and diverse neighborhoods; and work and invest in an area that provides a range of employment and economic opportunities.



1 Reposition Saint Paul in the Region

**2 Benefit and Strengthen the Diverse Communities
along the Corridor**

3 Link and Foster Economic Activity

**4 Improve People's Mobility throughout their
Community**

**5 Improve the Image and Quality of Life along the
Corridor**

6 Involve Collaboration from Design to Operation



What It Should Look Like

CENTRAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

3

Building on the Vision, Principles and Initiatives identified in Part 2, Part 3 - ‘What it Should Look Like’ outlines a series of directions with respect to the Building Types, Streetscapes and Open Spaces along the corridor. The purpose of this section is to translate the objectives, strategies and initiatives into a series of built form and open space responses that can inform the recommendations in the Strategy.

In this section you will find:

In Section 3.1 – “Public Spaces and Places”, a streetscaping and public realm framework is introduced. This aims to help attach the LRT to the Central Corridor through strengthened connections, pedestrian-friendly streets and a series of new and improved districts and open spaces.

With the public realm framework in place, Section 3.2 – “Defining Areas of Change and Stability” examines the potential for change along the corridor and identifies those areas along the corridor where new development or change is expected to occur and inversely those areas where the existing character should be preserved and enhanced.

Section 3.3 – “Towards a Transit Supportive Corridor” takes the areas of change and identifies a series of appropriate building responses along the Corridor that respond to the unique and changing conditions along the route. For each building type the intentions and a series of principles are provided. These are then applied to a demonstration site along the Corridor to illustrate what development might look like and how it might occur.

Section 3.4 – “In the Downtown” takes a more focused look at the LRT as it traverses through the downtown. It examines a series of strategies and opportunities aimed at promoting greater balance between vehicles and pedestrians, enhancing transit connections, and re-activating the street level.

Part 3 concludes with Section 3.5 – “At Stations” which outlines a series of 10 key principles for station design aimed at celebrating the stations and enhancing their accessibility, functionality and civic benefit to the corridor.



3.3

Key Principles of New Development

WHERE WE ARE TODAY | WHAT WE WANT | WHAT IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE | HOW WE GET THERE

Making Development Fit



Achieving Transit-Supportive Land Use & Densities



Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking



Creating a Green, Attractive & Connected Pedestrian Environment



3.1

Public Realm Framework – Special Zones

WHERE WE ARE TODAY | WHAT WE WANT | WHAT IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE | HOW WE GET THERE



Raymond LRT Zone

LEGEND

A CENTRAL STRING OF PARKS

- New Parks
- Existing Parks For Improvement

SPECIAL ZONES

- LRT Zone

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES AND PLACES

- Existing Public Art
- Opportunity For New Public Art
- Special Bridge Treatments
- Character District
- Gateway Area

REMARKABLE STREETS

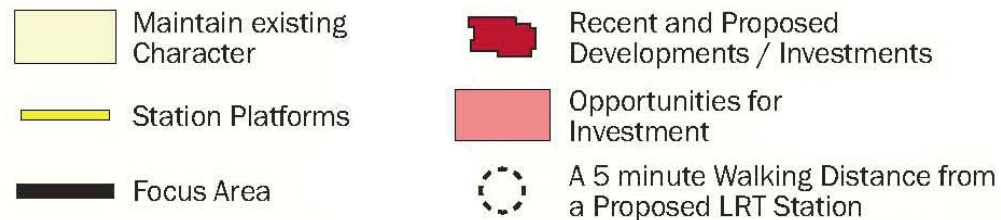
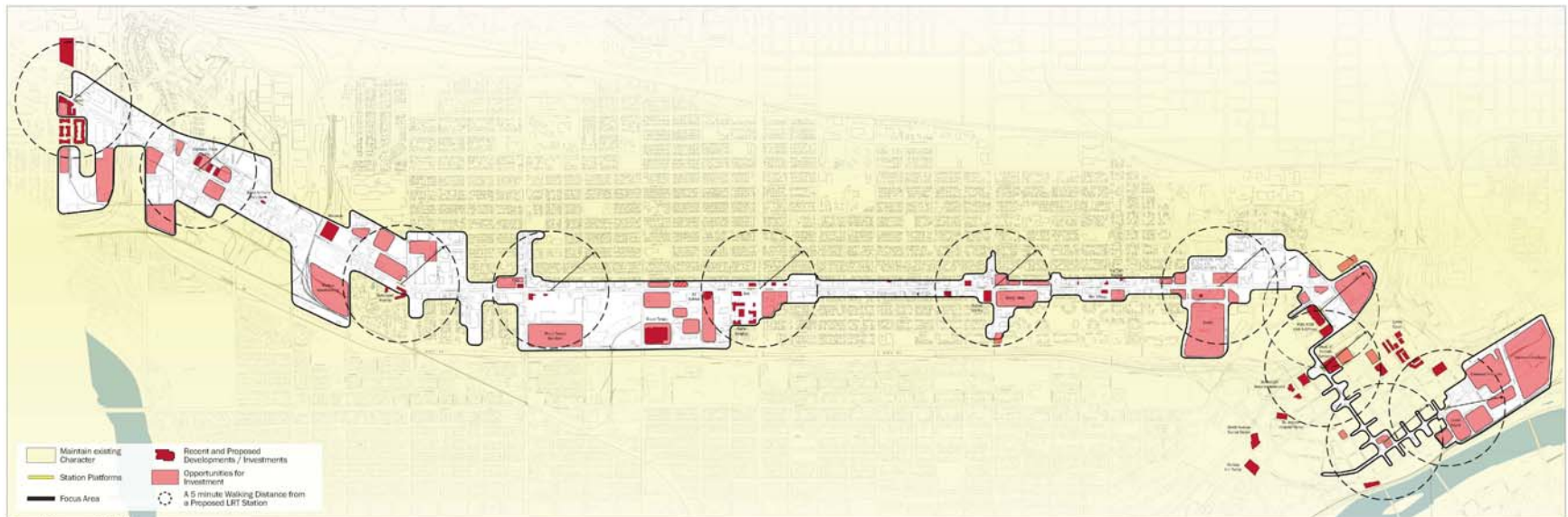
- The Avenue
- Park Streets

CONNECTING TO THE CORRIDOR

- Green Boulevards
- Green Linkages
- Existing Bike Routes
- Proposed Bike Routes

Defining Areas of Change & Stability

LRT has the potential to result in many positive changes along the Corridor. Identifying the potential for positive change and ways to manage this change is the primary aim of the Development Strategy.



3.3

Responding to Different Places – 7 Development Typologies

WHERE WE ARE TODAY | WHAT WE WANT | WHAT IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE | HOW WE GET THERE



Low Rise Neighborhoods



Marketplace Intensification



Urban Villages



Larger Front & Back Sites



Half-Depth Infill Sites



Full-Depth Infill Sites



Urban Infill Blocks

3.1

Transforming the Avenue



THE AVENUE TODAY

3.1

Transforming the Avenue



ADDING THE LRT

3.1

Transforming the Avenue



NEW TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

3.1

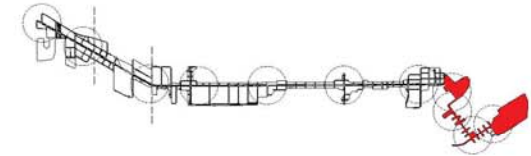
Transforming the Avenue



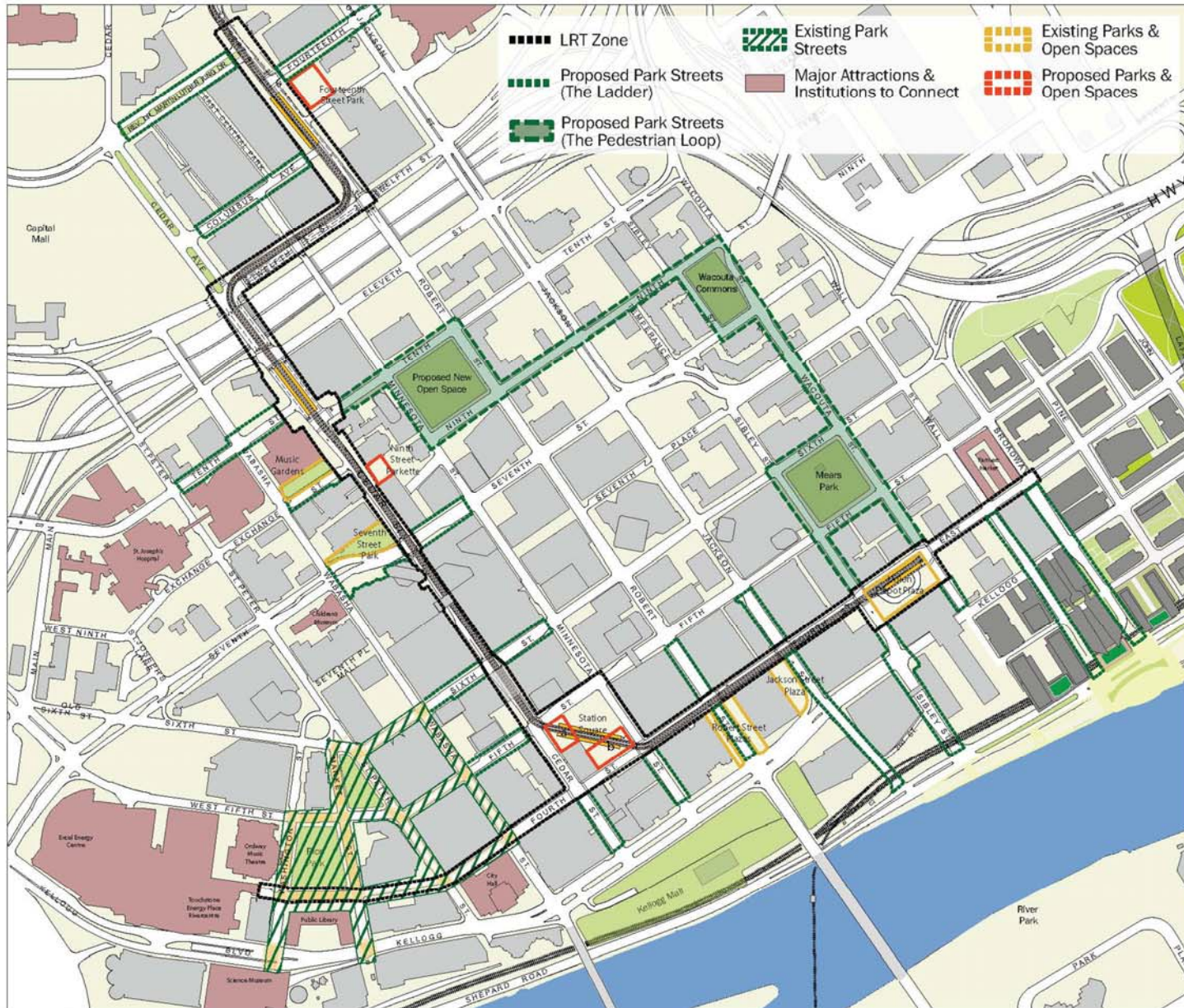
FRAMING THE STREET

3.4

Connecting The LRT To The Downtown



WHERE WE ARE TODAY | WHAT WE WANT | WHAT IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE | HOW WE GET THERE









How We Get There

CENTRAL CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

4

Having described how the community would like to see the Corridor change and improve over time (Section 2), and illustrating what that change should look like (Section 3), this last section presents recommendations on “How We Get There”. These implementing policies, programs and strategies have been crafted to help guide future decision-making so that investment and growth in the Corridor is compatible with the community Vision for the future of the Corridor as set out in Section 1.

In this Section you will find:

Section 4.1 introduces the concept of a “Transit Opportunity Zone” – an enabling policy layer that identifies the Corridor as a priority for new tools, programs and capital improvements; and which contains a transit-supportive planning and development regulatory framework.

Section 4.2 – “Regulatory Framework Recommendations” begins with the question ‘What does a Transit-Supportive Regulatory Framework Look Like?’, and identifies a series of best-practice ‘tests’ for the regulation of transit-oriented development opportunities. Using these ‘tests’ as a reference, it goes on to identify the strengths and potential gaps in Saint Paul’s planning framework, with recommendations for transit-supportive ‘tune-ups’.

The Development Strategy concludes with Section 4.3 – “Implementation – 19 Community-Building Strategies”, which expands on the strategies identified in Section 2 with specific recommendations on building new partnerships, setting new standards, and conducting further planning and analysis. This section goes on to elaborate on approaches for six of the priority issues, concerns and objectives identified by the community. These include strategies for a Green and Sustainable Corridor, an Inclusive Housing Strategy, Parking Management, Strengthening Local Businesses, Securing Community Benefits, and Mitigating the Effects of LRT construction.

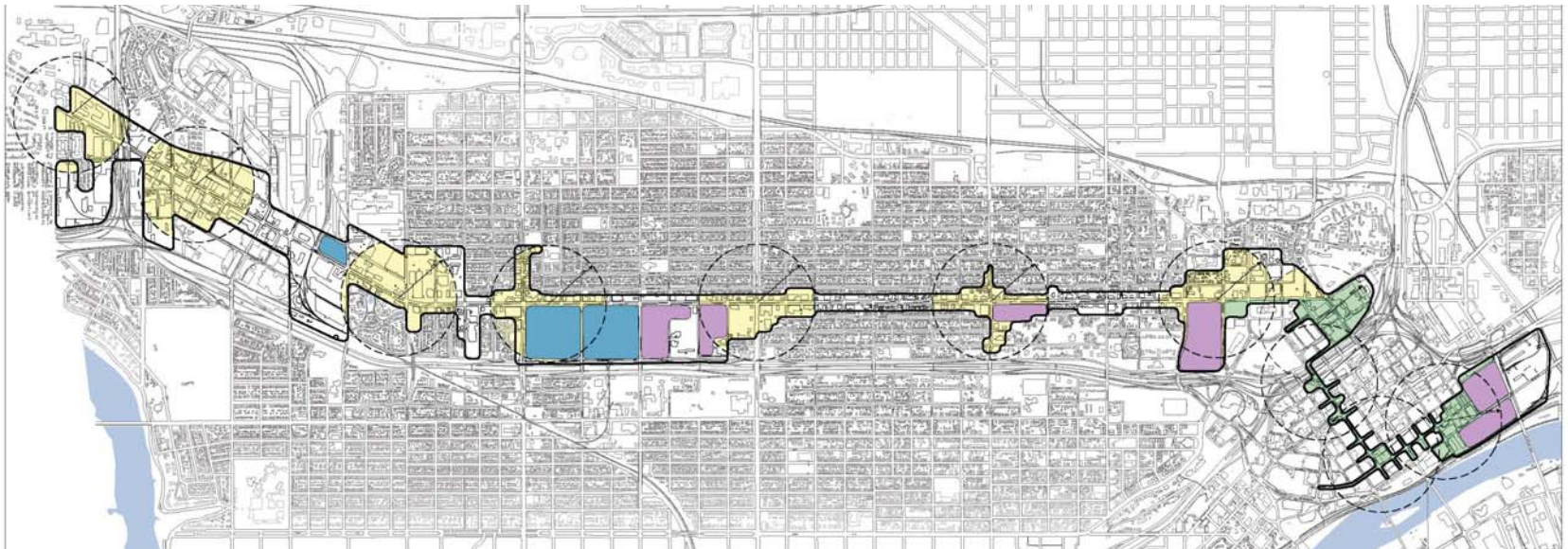


4.1

A Transit Opportunity Zone

WHERE WE ARE TODAY | WHAT WE WANT | WHAT IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE | HOW WE GET THERE

This section focuses on a new concept for the Central Corridor: the Transit Opportunity Zone. This multi-faceted, geographically-defined zone is intended to be an enabling mechanism to support and encourage opportunities for improvement and investment along the Corridor.



The zone is comprised principally of two policy layers:

- 1) A priority area for a range financial and policy initiatives
- 2) A regulatory layer of transit-supportive planning and development directions

Central Corridor LRT 7 STATION AREA PLANS



Westgate



Raymond



Fairview



Snelling



Lexington



Dale



Rice



City Of Saint Paul
Christopher Coleman, Mayor

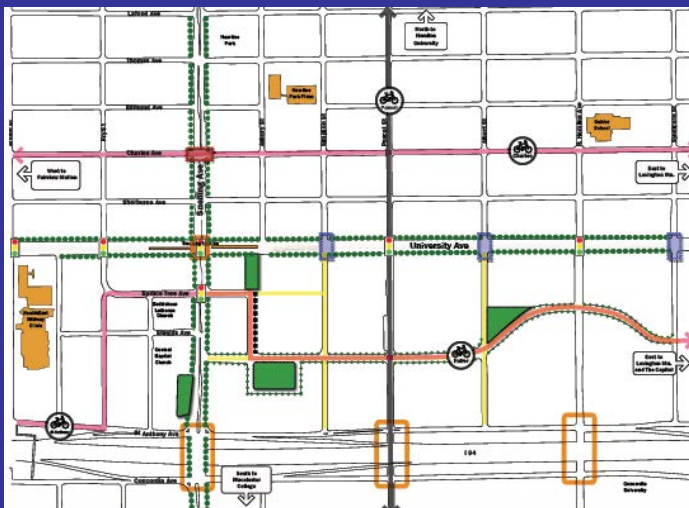


URBAN
STRATEGIES
INC .

Adopted October 22, 2008

Station Area Plans Themes

- Public Realm
- Mobility
- Land Use
- Built Form





Implementation Activities Underway

Directly related to LRT:

- **Push for 3 additional LRT stations** (Western, Victoria, Hamline). City of Saint Paul committed to paying for one of the three stations (all 3 now funded). City is currently completing station area plans for these stations.
- **Streetscape Improvements** – City has committed approx. \$13.5 million to pay for “above the base” streetscape improvements (boulevard trees, twin lantern lighting, sidewalk & pedestrian crossing enhancements, median improvements).

University Ave. Baseline Streetscape



University Ave. Enhanced Streetscape



Implementation Activities Underway

- **Zoning Code amendments** - changes to regulations regarding land use, building form and parking
- **Parking Mitigation** - addressing the loss of 85% of on-street parking
- **Affordable Housing** – Frogtown Square project; LAAND grant \$ to purchase land for affordable housing
- **Business Assistance** – efforts by U7 and University Avenue Business Association

Zoning Code Amendments

- **Central Corridor Zoning Overlay** - temporary requirements in place for 3 years while a more detailed zoning study is completed
- **Zoning overlay key elements:** minimum buildings heights and floor area ratio at station areas; building and parking placement requirements; reduced parking requirements; limit on auto-oriented uses.
- **Central Corridor Zoning Study** started Fall 2009. First phase – changes to Zoning Code regulations. Second phase – property rezonings. To be completed by Summer 2011.

Parking Mitigation

- Parking workshops held over summer 2009 for 11 critical need areas.
- Business and property owners worked with City and Metropolitan Council staff to determine options for addressing parking needs for each area.
- Options include shared parking, combining lots, adding spaces, improving access/lighting/striping, better use of cross-street parking
- City has committed \$2.5 million to address needs.

Affordable Housing

Example project:

- Frogtown Square – mixed-use project on NE corner of Dale/University. Starting Spring '10.
- Retail on first level and 50 units low-income senior housing on floors 2-4.

Land banking for affordable housing:

- \$2 million in LAAND \$
- Two sites purchased – former Saxon Ford and Midway Chevrolet properties.

Business Assistance

- U7 (collaborative of 7 University Ave. based organizations).
- Providing technical and financial assistance to businesses to **survive** (construction) and **thrive** (after LRT is running).
- Funding provided in part by Central Corridor Funders Collaborative.

More Information

- City of Saint Paul Central Corridor development planning - www.stpaul.gov/centralcorridor
- Metropolitan Council Central Corridor LRT project information – www.centralcorridor.org