

Southwest Transit Corridor – Collaborative Planning Workshop II

Developing a Corridor Strategy – Goals & Priorities

Idea of creating a “hub” at these stations

- A focal point in the daily lives of the community members
- *What stations begin to achieve this? Where are the gaps based upon proposed uses?*

City building Goals – Overall Goals

- Each different, each a demonstration
- What the 21st century neighborhood and city (transit-oriented with reduced auto dependency) looks like, how it works
- *Will the land uses around the stations help to achieve city goals? Where are conflicts?*

Reflecting a new set of priorities – socially, environmentally, economically, physically

- Mixed Use – *of the total acres within ½ mile radius of the station, only 3% are designated as mixed use?*
- Integration with neighborhoods
- Non motorized Mobility – walkability, trails/bikes
- Sustainability - energy use, stormwater, waste management.
- Aging in place, kid friendly
- Economic stimulus for new economy - *25,000 new jobs created around the stations. How to maximize this potential and build housing along the line to match the anticipated new jobs?*

Working creatively with time

- Building incrementally toward a larger goal
- Will evolve
- Plant the seeds
- Can't do everything instantly
- Template for the ‘perfect’ may fail

Work at multiple scales simultaneously

- The whole line – as a line of force
- The hubs – 10 – 15 minute walks
- Immediate Station areas

Developing a Corridor Strategy – Key Ingredients to Maximize Development and Station Potential

Make every aspect count toward whole

- Transit oriented development
- Building ridership
- Getting more people out of their cars
- Density, mix, walkability, synergies
- “Village - feel” is defined by a grid street pattern, with short walkable blocks
- Intricate mix of building types and uses

Mix of Uses

- Employment – optimize 2 way use of transit and walk to work
- Targets for balance between residents and employees
- Residential - variation in housing types and population densities
- How to provide ‘affordable housing’
- Achieving a sustainable housing mix including young people, families, empty nesters and seniors,– Full Life Cycle Housing
- How to get neighborhood supporting amenities – shopping, schools, daycare, healthcare, recreation – building Complete Communities
- Diverse street level retail activity in close proximity to transit station
- Culture, Recreation, Entertainment- An environment within which cultural and community resources can thrive

Test Market reality

- Starting points - realistic change at the margin
- Can the market absorb land uses and over what time period? What are the strengths of different sectors?
- What are the current demographics and who would need to be attracted to meet the performance objectives?
- Build on trends – demographic cohorts already in community

Getting the Right Building typologies

- Architecture that sends the right messages
- Not just the look
- Space forming, user friendly, active edges, sense of place
- Horizontal and vertical integration
- Active ground floors
- Set the bar high – competitions, RFP’s

Transportation impacts

- How to plan for gradually making the shift from private auto dependency to transit oriented use?
- Related to changes in modal split - walk in, cycle, local buses

Using Parking as a positive ingredient

- A moving target – will change over time (see elsewhere)
- Ramps to Minnesota as snow to the Inuit
- Key chess piece
- Multi-use, pricing policy evolves, ground floors, architecture, integrated,
- How provided, How it evolves
- Flat floors, adaptive re-use

Combining the Ingredients

- “How you make it dense” – Jonathan Barnett
- A focus on place making
- Built form – heights and densities, building typologies
- Expanding the public realm
- Connections and linkages
- Leveraging key local assets and resources
- It is the relationships that count
- Synergies among basic land uses
- Also with and among public facilities
- Potential for shared facilities
- Among different public facilities – daycare, library, community centre, recreation, schools etc.
- Use of lower levels in multi-use buildings for some of these facilities. Not only may there be cost savings but there
- Social benefits in terms of greater concentration and overlap of uses
- Getting away from the suburban paradigm of every facility standing alone on its own large and isolated footprint
- Place these chess pieces along with retail strategically on major pedestrian routes that are part of people’s daily life routines.

Making a there there

- What is this place in the life of the community – more than just a transfer point...?
- Things to do
- Sense of space
- Information
- Role of arts
- Special uses
- The architecture, landscape, graphic design of the stations
- Branding and Messaging - another kind of place away from auto-dependency
- The cool factor – not just utilitarian – rail vs. buses

Role of Public Realm

- Design
- Building it early and well
- Securing funding for the public elements – can’t be left out...

- Complete streets incorporated (walkability, bikeability) into the land use and transit station design and functionality - FTA new guidance for transit areas.
- Parks and public spaces – ‘Station Squares’ as key elements in ‘placemaking’ for
- Contribute to City greening; aesthetically pleasing spaces; healthy communities.
- Meeting points – common ground
- Information about community
- Use of new technologies – WiFi

Examples

- Toronto – new generation of transit hubs
- Sweden – life at the stations – pubs, services
- Japan – in the stations
- Copenhagen – building around the stations

Implementing a Corridor Strategy – Deliver the Vision

Value of a Precinct Plan as a living instrument

- Starting points
- Goals
- Illustrations
- 3 scales – Station Area, the surrounding Hub (10 minute walk at least), the line
- By seeing these stations together what is the larger pattern?
- Not overly prescriptive but allows for interpretation and improvisation as opportunities arise

Components of Precinct Plan

- Planning and Policy Context
- Vision for the Precinct
- Planning Principles
- Creating a Vital Neighborhood
- Public Realm
- Land Use
- Built Form
- Integration with Transit
- Parking strategies
- Sustainability Goals
- Coordination with other City and Development Initiatives
- Phasing
- Implementation Mechanisms –Zoning, Precinct Plan, UD Guidelines

Using the Precinct Plan

- Plan only as good as the use that is made of it
- Day job
- Proactive and unfolding – my experience in Saint Paul

Case for a Planning *and* Development Entity

- Need to contemplate implementation issues early in the study process
- To implement the best possible plan, both from an urban-design/city-building point-of-view and from a financial point-of-view, may need to have the power to purchase, own, expropriate, sell and develop lands; work with property owners, direct development incentives
- Consider creating a development agency within overall project organization
- Common practice in many countries
- Enhance local capacity to drive development
- Risks and opportunity costs of not having this arm
 - Less integrated hubs
 - Greater difficulty and delay in getting development to occur
 - Loss of an opportunity to stimulate and shape development on adjoining lands

- Loss of potential ridership
- Less ability to improve the modal split due to fewer residential or commercial units
- Loss of potential revenue
- Loss of property tax revenue for the municipalities
- Overall much less leverage from the expenditure of public money.

Implementing a Corridor Strategy – Tools & Strategies

- Tools - combination of Sticks and carrots
- Some things can regulate
- Others need to stimulate
- Combination of regulatory requirements and performance based targets What are the appropriate planning tools which can be adapted for the SW Corridor to meet the specific challenge we are trying to address – PUD, PDA, Performance Zoning, Incentive Zoning, Form-base Codes
- Land Use performance objectives
 - Relationship between performance objectives and projected growth
 - Breakdown of housing - setting targets for the mix
 - Housing units - mix, type and market (level/percentage of affordable housing)
 - Minimum retail square footage - neighborhood support amenities\regional services
 - Office square footage - job growth/innovation
- Parking - numbers, types, location
- Built-form and density
 - Maximum\minimum heights and densities, building typologies
- Sustainability targets
 - Integrating sustainability initiatives – energy, waste management, storm water management – setting performance goals at both the district scale and for individual buildings
 - LEED, LEED ND, other
 - Energy, hours of sunlight, wind conditions
 - Providing municipal infrastructure in new and innovative ways
- Public facilities and spaces – proactive
 - Facilities, Parks and Open space, public gathering spaces at the stations-place making
- Incentives
 - Financing/Investment:
 - Funding opportunities - public/private partnerships, land bank, TIF, state and federal funds
 - Local development incentives? How do they differ? Can they be aligned to reduce developer confusion?

- Partnerships (crucial)
 - On the public side - Transit operators and development are mutually reinforcing, integrated goals (development entity above)
 - Need to make this connection – joined at the hip from the start
 - Who are the private/ non-profit market partners?
 - Public/private
 - Existing land owners, new solicitations and partners, how big, how many, what roles?
 - What are the opportunities to maximize partnerships with existing owners?

- Leverage ownership of public land

Participation techniques

- Work with the Citizen League to develop and implement a new public participation process.
- Managing relationships to existing communities
- When and how to involve and engage citizens? What do they value? How to provide clarity in their role within the process?
- Build credibility and enthusiasm
- Engage in Precinct Planning workshops

Getting the right DNA from the outset

- Use of key chess pieces to stimulate and kick start
- Nucleus with as many of the ingredients as possible
- Development priorities and how will they have the largest initial impact
- Set the tone - getting simple things like:
 - Great coffee shop
 - Flower market
 - Convenience food
 - Library, Community Center

Questions

- Process and Coordination
 - Who creates the Precinct Plan?
 - Who is the keeper of the Precinct Plan?
 - Who will manage the process and coordinate the public and private initiatives? Within cities and through collaboration.

- Are existing planning tools adequate?
 - Could a new land use tool along the corridor be developed?
 - Are there ways to collaborate?
 - How would it be implemented?
 - Are legislative changes needed?

- Potential for Use of Community Works funding and resources

- Support for Precinct Planning
- Identify partnership responsibilities for next steps moving forward.
- Maximum the opportunities available through the Community Works Project Including its project goals, geographic boundaries, participating organizations, organizational structure, work plan, administrative oversight and budget