

Southwest Transit Corridor

ULI MN, through its Housing Initiative (funded by the Family Housing Fund, with support from MN Housing) and its Connecting Transportation and Land Use Systems (CTLUS) initiative (funded by The McKnight Foundation) has partnered with the SW Corridor municipalities and Hennepin County to provide two workshops focused on creating a ***thriving, sustainable transit corridor***.

ULI MN and the Regional Council of Mayors have a strong tradition of effective partnerships among private, public and civic institutions. The southwest corridor offers a unique opportunity to support an integrated, aligned, collaborative approach, across municipal boundaries, where land uses become the place making strategies that informs the design of the transit line and maximizes transit investments that will connect a full range of housing choices, the environment, transportation and jobs.

Through its Housing, Transportation, Environment and Job Growth Initiatives, ULI MN proposes to support Hennepin County with a focus on the following activities:

Raise awareness, cultivate partnerships, and convene stakeholders - Engage public and private sector leaders to foster collaboration, share knowledge and join in meaningful strategic action.

- Build on the learning's of the Funders Collaborative/Central Corridor.
- Harvest and apply best practices and insights from national and local experts, e.g. Great Cities Collaborative (San Francisco); Marilee Utter, Citiventure; Ken Greenberg; <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/codeexamples.htm>.
- Foster partnership interest to support SW Corridor land use strategies, e.g. the Family Housing Fund, MN Housing, the McKnight Foundation, Itasca Project, Brookings Institution, Center for Transit Oriented Development (CTOD), LISC, BlueCross BlueShield Active Living Program, and Citizens League.
- Convene public/private stakeholders, e.g. County Commissioners, Mayors, City Council members, Met Council, legislators, chambers, business leaders.

Develop a Cohesive Corridor Investment Framework - The Southwest Corridor is the first transit line in the metro area that spans from a central city through several suburban communities. This provides an important opportunity to engage stakeholders across municipal boundaries. Station area plans have been, or will be, completed for each station area; however, these are long term visions. In order to maximize the corridor's potential, maximize private investment and inform transit design and engineering, a specific real time corridor investment framework is needed to knit the station areas together and serve as a base line for an ongoing land use transition strategy as the corridor evolves over time. There is urgency in establishing this base line as it is expected that the new starts application will be submitted in May or September.

- Support a Hennepin County contract to establish a corridor investment framework, based on the Central Corridor model that includes: corridor wide goals and strategies; performance objectives, outcomes and metrics; and sources and uses.
- Select 1-2 Southwest station areas to demonstrate place making transition planning that includes a full range of housing choices connected to jobs and amenities. Build on the assets

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of the community, with the ultimate vision in mind, with the understanding that not all the elements are yet in place. Support a mechanism to protect station areas until the transit is there and mature.

- Use the investment framework and station area transition planning to inform the design of the line.
- Align the planning and regulatory system to send a crystal clear message about expectations and streamline the approval process for projects that meet expectations. **Make it easier to do better.**
- Assemble and commit to maintain a comprehensive data base and mapping series with all of the information developers need to complete due diligence and feasibility assessments.
- Apply Excensus community change data (ULI MN Housing Initiative relationship with Excensus).
- Apply the Center for Transit Oriented Development's (CTOD) **Walkability Analysis** and develop strategies to support recommendations.
- Apply BCBS active living principles.
- Foster dialogue and develop aligned and integrated work plans to implement the framework among municipal, county, and metropolitan council planners and engineers and the private sector.
- Partner with Citizen's League to evaluate and support effective innovative citizen engagement strategies.

Identify funding strategies and attract financial resources – The federal government is moving towards funding criteria that connect transportation investments with livable communities principles. This direction is being championed by the private funding community as well. Southwest Corridor partners must be strategically aligned to compete effectively for these resources to invest in place making and amenities.

- Support a proactive strategy to seek planning and implementation funding for an integrated corridor transit/land use approach based on livable communities principles, e.g. Partnership for Sustainable Communities, Living Cities, the McKnight Foundation.
- Identify and establish needed development and redevelopment tools, e.g. innovative financial models (partner with Family Housing Fund Rethinking Housing Finance project), value capture, TIF for TOD, joint powers agreements, tax-sharing.
- Explore the potential of Public Private Partnership models to accelerate the build out of the line.