

STATION AREA PLANS

Adopted October 22, 2008



Table of Contents

1	Securing Parkland and Public Spaces	- 04 -
2	Securing Streets and Blocks	- 09 -
3	Enhanced Mobility Strategies	- 12 -
4	Innovative Parking Strategies	- 16 -
5	Public Art	- 20 -
6	Transition Over Time	- 22 -
7	Building Momentum - TOD Demonstration Sites	- 24 -
8	Green Development	- 26 -
9	Innovative Financial Resources	- 28 -

The Station Area Plans, Introduction, and Moving Forward chapters are adopted as addenda to the Central Corridor Development Strategy.

The long term objectives set out in the Central Corridor Development Strategy and related Station Area Plans are numerous and ambitious. These objectives are intended to encourage both the retention of diverse businesses throughout the Central Corridor and investment in new high quality private sector development to increase jobs, housing choices, tax base, economic vitality and the strengthening of the urban fabric of the community. Achieving these objectives will require the means and the resources to build new parks, create opportunities for expression through public art, improve mobility and connectivity through the creation of new streets and bicycle routes, find new ways to accommodate the demands of the automobile, as well as of many other worthwhile objectives. Moving forward with these initiatives will involve many challenges and strategies must be reassessed continually to ensure that they are serving to support economic vitality, multi-modal transportation and quality of life. Each will require implementing new strategies and identifying new resources, and demand the collaboration of many partners, including various levels of government, local businesses, private landowners and developers, District Councils, Community Development Corporations, charitable foundations (including the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative), advocacy groups such as University UNITED, and many others. In nearly all cases, these objectives and recommendations are a call to stakeholders to challenge the status quo, and to work together to create the quality of life and place that these communities aspire to.

The following nine sets of recommendations have been compiled here to provide a reference point for new ideas, tools and approaches to solving many of the Central Corridor's most pressing issues, as identified through stakeholder consultation throughout the CCDS and station area planning processes. Each of these describes the key opportunities and challenges associated with a particular recommendation; provides a series of implementation tools and strategies; and identifies a number of key strategic partners for ongoing collaboration and negotiation. However, for the purpose of considering development proposals within the Central Corridor it is understood that the inclusion of the ideas, tools and approaches included in the nine sections of this Moving Forward chapter shall not, when evaluating development proposals within the Corridor, be interpreted as imposing additional standards or special conditions when approving or denying development proposals within the Corridor until such time as further analysis has been completed on their consistency with these documents and other applicable City policy, and actions are taken to implement them.

1.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

The parks and recreational spaces recommended in the station area plans are essential to attaining the full potential of the station areas. These assets set the context for higher intensity development, particularly with respect to residential development. In addition to setting the development framework of the station areas, these spaces improve the cohesion of surrounding neighborhoods by creating connections within the highest intensity areas, and by developing pedestrian links from the heart of the community to the Avenue.

Many of the station areas within the Central Corridor lack suitable park and recreational spaces and passive outdoor gathering places. This shortage is perceived to degrade the image and quality of life along the Corridor, the improvement of which is a key objective of area stakeholders. Barriers to creating new and improved spaces are numerous, and include a shortage of available capital for acquisition, construction and maintenance of grounds and facilities; an ill-suited parkland dedication ordinance; uncertainty with respect to future demand; and in several instances a lack of large or available parcels.

While residential and commercial intensification will increase demand on existing park and open space resources, it is the single best apparatus through which to improve and expand these important amenities. In concert with redevelopment opportunities, park and open space improvements may be accomplished through public investments, public incentives for private development such as tax increment financing and development rights transfers, an improved parkland dedication process, use of STAR funds and other special revenue sources, density bonuses, an increased tax base and other available legislation and tools as described below.



FIGURE 1.1 - Saint Paul has had tremendous success creating new large and small parks and open spaces.



FIGURE 1.2 - The Dale Station Area is an example of a community lacking a distinct outdoor focal point.

1.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Include Parkland Dedication Ordinance in Forthcoming Regulatory Framework Review: The City of Saint Paul Parkland Dedication Ordinance (PDO) was enacted to ensure that neighborhood park and recreation facilities are sufficient to meet the demands generated by new housing, commercial and industrial developments. The ordinance legislates that new development shall contribute to the creation or improvement of these amenities through the dedication of land for the creation of new park spaces, and/or submission of cash-in-lieu of land for deposit within a parkland development special fund. Where cash is provided in-lieu, the development fund shall be used for the development and/or improvement of park, playground, trails, open space or conservation purposes within an adjacent planning district located within one-half mile of the proposed development.

Though the PDO cannot on its own secure the total area of park and open space identified in each station area plan, it is one of the City’s best tools to assist in doing so. However,

there are some basic premises of the ordinance that are, at best, ill-suited to creating new parks and open space along the Corridor and, at worst, work against the larger Corridor goals of transit-oriented development and a better balance between movement modes. For example, the land dedication formula is linked to the amount of new parking provided in a project, while the CCDS and station area plans encourage a reduction in parking in order to promote density and transit use.

A thorough review of the PDO and its “fit” with the CCDS and station area plans should be conducted as part of the follow-up regulatory study City staff will be doing to implement the station area plans. This review should be conducted in consultation with property owners and developers who may be directly affected by the ordinance, as well as other interested stakeholders and community representatives. Other issues to be explored include the area within which cash-in-lieu funds may be spent, the value basis for calculating the cash-in-lieu amount, and priorities for parkland dedication along the Central Corridor.

Capital and Operations & Maintenance Budget Allocation:

The City’s Parks and Recreation department will need to augment each of the strategies identified here with capital budget allocation for the purchase and long-term maintenance and programming of new park spaces. Staff resources will also be required for the detailed analysis of demand for new park spaces, and participation in all master planning and development approvals processes.

Encourage Density:

As mentioned above, the long-term redevelopment and intensification of station areas will be the single best apparatus through which to improve and expand parkland and related facilities. In addition to securing required parkland dedication, new residential and commercial development will increase property and sales tax revenue and expand the local constituency base, creating additional pressure for the allocation of capital budget resources.



FIGURE 1.3 - Saint Paul’s Parkland Dedication Ordinance will assist in realizing the conceptual open spaces identified in each Station Area Plan, including the Rice Urban Village Community Park.



FIGURE 1.4 - Options should be examined to provide additional park space for high-density apartment buildings.



FIGURE 1.5 - Large and small redevelopment sites should contribute their fair share to parkland dedication.

Development Response in Station Areas: Not all parkland and open spaces within station areas need be publicly owned. Properly designed and accessible, portions of privately owned land, whether small pocket parks, a residential forecourt or commercial plaza, and streetscaping incorporated into landscaped side yards and development setbacks, can create equally interesting opportunities for public gathering, recreation, and improving the appearance of the Corridor. Privately owned open space land additionally keeps the responsibility of maintenance with the land owner, rather than transferring these costs to the municipality.

Private investment should be encouraged to devote some portion of project budgets to the provision of on-site or right-of-way streetscape improvements proximate to their property, details of which should be negotiated through the site plan approval process. The Streetscape Master Plan being prepared jointly by the City and Metropolitan Council through the preliminary engineering process can provide direction as to the nature and character of the open space and streetscape improvements to be secured through individual developments.



FIGURE 1.6 - Private open spaces can also contribute interesting and attractive gathering places.

Further, comprehensive master plans for larger Urban Village sites, which should be consistent with the objectives identified in respective station area plans, can identify the approximate location for larger parks and open spaces, several of which may cross neighboring property boundaries. In these instances, City of Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development and Parks and Recreation staff should work with development proponents to plan built form and circulation responses that maintain the integrity of the long term vision.

Special Assessment Taxing Districts: A special assessment is an improvement which directly benefits an adjacent property. Common special assessments can include street improvements, sidewalk upgrades and repair, water and sewer construction, and street lighting, each of which constitute a direct and unique benefit as the result of a public project. The amount of a special assessment payable by an adjacent, or impacted property is based on how much the property benefits (usually measured by a pro-rated, linear measurement of adjacency) from the improvement and the cost of the project. The amount a property benefits from an improvement may also be measured by the increase in market value of the property due to the improvement. A local improvement may benefit properties that are not abutting the improvement and those properties may also be assessed.

As the provision of public open space and parkland provides both a public benefit, and may additionally increase the market value of adjacent properties, the suitability of implementing Special Assessment Taxing Districts within station areas should be explored.

Financing Strategy - Community Benefit Agreements (or zones): These consist of legally enforceable contracts between a developer and a consortium of community groups. They usually spell out a range of quantifiable benefits that the developer agrees to provide as part of a development project. In exchange, the local community shareholders promise to support the proposed project before government

bodies that issue the necessary permits and often needed subsidies.

CBA agreements can provide a mechanism for community groups to shape the development and capture more community benefits, including the construction of publicly or privately owned open spaces and parklands.

Development Density/Intensification Bonuses: These are not direct financing mechanisms, but development concessions that can promote density immediately adjacent to station areas to offset the cost of land per unit or per square foot of building cost. The negotiation of development bonuses may involve the dedication of additional land for the assembly of park space, or additional project budget reserved for privately funded streetscape improvements or open spaces. As relaxation of building footprint requirements and allowance for higher F.A.R.'s will invite higher density development around stations, the additional benefits of promoting density, as described above, will also be achieved.



FIGURE 1.7 - The size and location of the conceptually named Snelling Commons, as illustrated in the Snelling Station Area Plan, should be determined through a comprehensive master plan for the entire south-eastern quadrant of Snelling Avenue and University Avenue.

1.3 Strategic Partners:

Saint Paul Parks & Recreation. Staff should be involved in all future development and site plan approval processes to assist in determining the suitability of various types of public and private open spaces; advocate for capital budget resources; determine compliance with applicable parkland ordinances; monitor activity and demand for additional park and recreation space, and design new public open spaces within Station Areas.

Saint Paul Planning & Economic Development. PED staff will be critical to the ongoing communication of the CCDS and Station Area Plan's Vision and Principles; and leading any negotiations with developers.

Metropolitan Council. City staff should continue to work with Met Council on finding resources for improving the open spaces and streetscaping along the entire route of the Central Corridor LRT; and in formulating a Streetscaping Master Plan.

District Councils. Representatives should work with PED and Parks staff on the review of proposed open spaces; consult with local stakeholders to assess the value-added of new parks and open spaces; and lobby for increased budget and resources for parkland acquisition and construction.

Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. Consistent with the CCFC's goals of making the Central Corridor safe for all users, and maximizing positive community impacts by integrating light rail transit into surrounding communities, this invaluable organization should be approached regarding potential new funds and resources for parks and open spaces.

Trust for Public Land. This non-profit land conservation organization's initiatives include a Parks for People program, which promotes access to parks, playgrounds and natural areas for residents of cities and suburbs. This organization has been active in the Twin Cities area, and should be considered a valuable long-term partner in identifying strategies and resources for securing and improving park spaces.

Blooming Saint Paul. This program has been a part of numerous neighborhood revitalization initiatives through street beautification and community gardening projects. Blooming Saint Paul may be able to provide assistance in improving existing parks and open spaces, and contributing to their ongoing operation and maintenance.

Invest Saint Paul / The Mayor's Office. Where identified demonstration sites fall within Invest Saint Paul's Frogtown-Thomas/Dale-Aurora St. Anthony boundaries, capital investment funds should be secured for the acquisition of additional parkland.

The Central Corridor Design Center. The Central Corridor Design Center is an initiative by the City of Saint Paul to apply the proven practices of the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Design Center along the Central Corridor. Its mission is to be a champion and advocate for the principles and vision of the Central Corridor Development Strategy as they guide public and private investment in the corridor. The CCDC may assist in this regard by providing technical assistance to small businesses to redesign their facilities to take advantage of the LRT, and the education and training of City staff, consultants, developers and property owners in maximizing transit-oriented design opportunities along the Corridor and in the neighborhood.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

U-Plan. U-Plan, a program of University UNITED, will provide technical support services to community groups, small businesses, and other stakeholders.

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. For those areas within the CAAPB's boundaries, the CAAPB has planning, design and zoning jurisdiction. Implementation of the tools and strategies recommended in this section will require the cooperation, collaboration and approval of the CAAPB.



SECURING STREETS AND BLOCKS

2.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

One of the greatest challenges in building successful transit-oriented communities and places throughout the Central Corridor, particularly where larger, future Urban Village sites have been identified, will be the creation of a regularized street and block pattern where none exists today. The advantages of these flexible development frameworks, which consist of a regular urban pattern of streets, buildings, sidewalks and open spaces, are already prevalent in the Central Corridor. For example, the recent 808 Berry Place, Emerald Gardens, and Wacouta Commons redevelopment projects have transformed large, formerly under-utilized parcels into the newly strengthened cores of their respective urban neighborhoods. The success of these developments, which have acted as catalysts for new shops, housing types, and more legible and attractive pedestrian routes and connections, is inextricably linked to the connectivity with adjacent uses and neighborhoods made possible by an urban street and block pattern.

Large development parcels create opportunities to increase investment and to improve both vehicular and pedestrian



FIGURE 2.2 - A reliance on large areas of surface parking restricts through access, erodes quality of place, and prohibits the potential for new transit-supportive development.

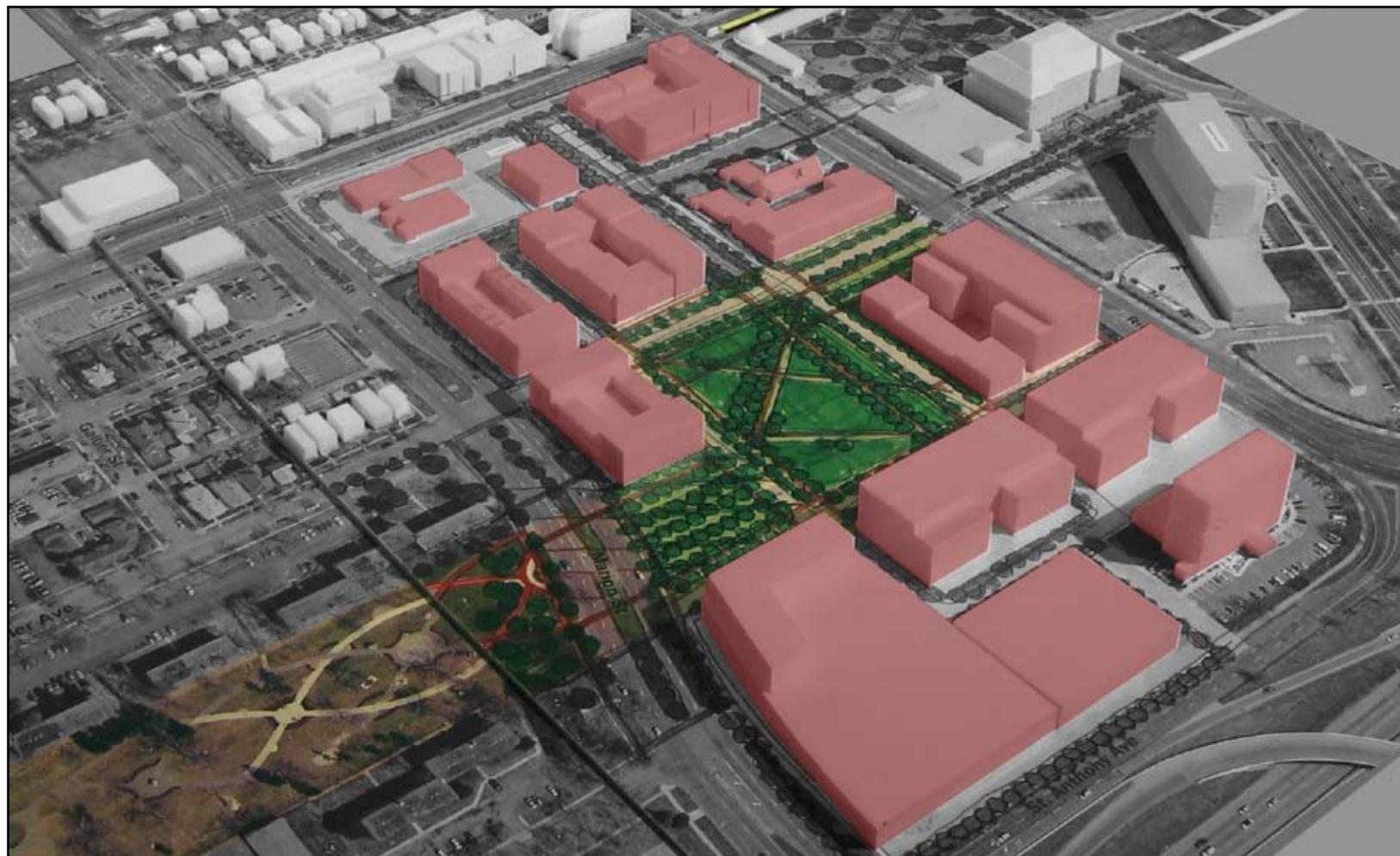


FIGURE 2.1 - Reintroducing a normalized urban pattern of streets and blocks is critical to the success of creating transit-supportive environments throughout the Central Corridor. The conceptual Rice Urban Village illustrated here is structured around a new north-south street, an extension of the existing Fuller Avenue, and flexible development blocks.

access. However, large development parcels can also create barriers to vehicular and pedestrian access, and undermine the investment potential of strategic parcels by restricting access and eroding the ability to create a streetfront address. These large, suburban-type blocks sometimes result in an uncoordinated array of private surface parking lots and driveways, and create a blighted appearance that diminishes adjacent parcels and streets.

Barriers to securing new streets and blocks through the development process are numerous, though the biggest challenge to their implementation is the uncertainty of negotiating with multiple land owners. The piecemeal accommodation of many different, often competing, objectives and standards on an application-by-application basis will reinforce the status quo and prohibit progress. Realizing the vision for this area must entail a more collaborative effort, as outlined below.

2.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Transfer of Development Rights: Many landowners equate the dedication of land with the loss of both property and the development densities associated with it. If dedication is sought, positive and flexible incentives should be developed. One means of mitigating the loss of development potential on one site is to permit transfer of development rights or allow the sale of lost development potential to another landowner.

Financing Strategies-Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA): This program directs funds to projects that connect development with transit, intensify land uses, connect housing and employment, provide a mix of housing affordability, and/or provide infrastructure to connect communities and attract investment. As the construction of new roads for the purpose of providing improved movement networks will be vital to connecting development with transit, the Livable Communities Demonstration Account may provide financing options to assist in this regard.

Determine and Implement Best Planning Mechanisms to Secure New Streets: The redevelopment of large sites through creation of a long-term master plan should be encouraged. Each plan should be executed generally in accordance with the conceptual frameworks illustrated in each station area plan that show the approximate location of future streets, blocks and open spaces. Inclusive in these master plans should be an explanation of the planning and legislative tools that will be utilized to acquire and construct the proposed network of new streets, such as subdivision, development agreements, public purchase of right-of-way, or site plan approval.

Though securing the creation of a public right-of-way is preferable, where streets will remain in private ownership, the master plan and subsequent development or subdivision agreement should stipulate that roads be built to City standards, and that they be made accessible for use by adjacent parcels and the general public.

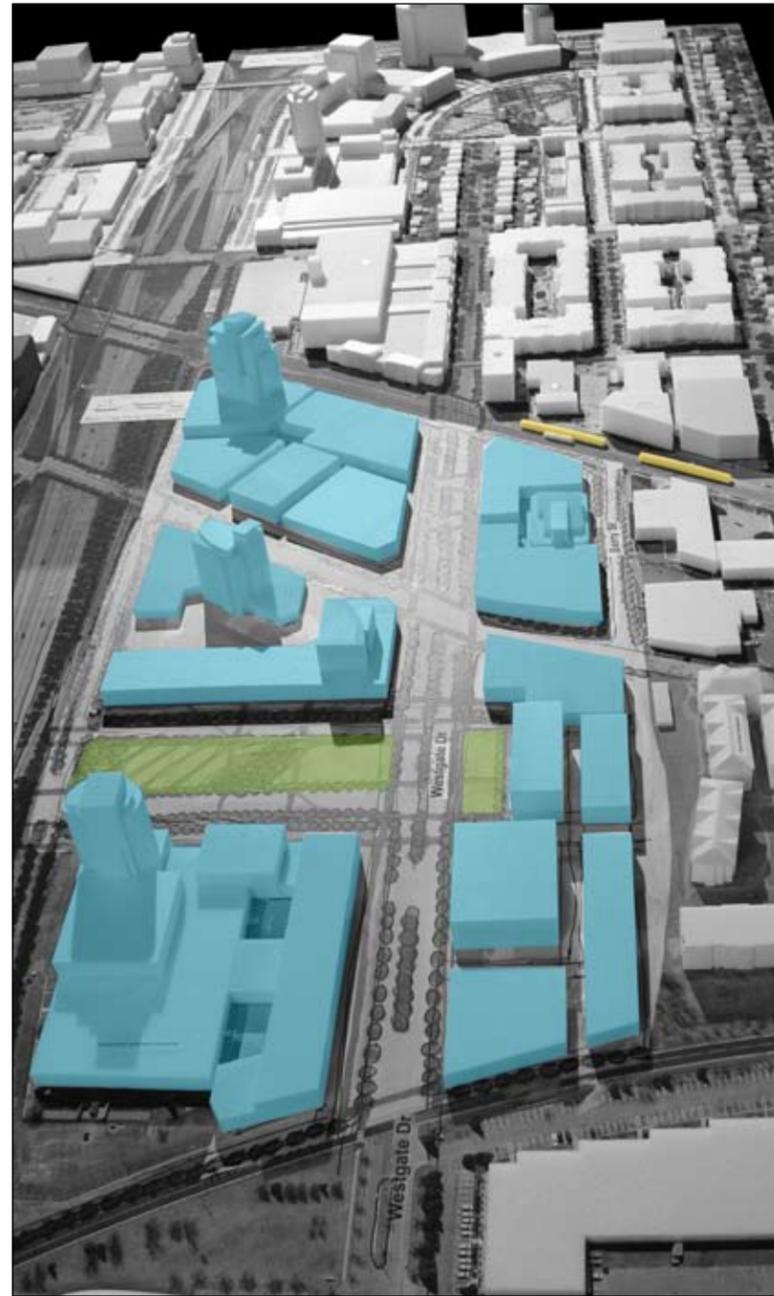


FIGURE 2.3 - Over time there may be an opportunity within the Westgate Station Area to create a more legible connection between the north and south sides of University Avenue, and link the future green spaces anchoring the core of these two distinct villages.

2.3 Strategic Partners

City of Saint Paul PED and Public Works Departments. Both departments will be vital to the negotiation of subdivision plans with landowners; determining density transfers and bonuses; and coordinating the location and design of new streets.

Developers / Landowners. Ultimately, the ability to create new roads and block patterns hinges on the commitment of the public to purchase infrastructure or the investments of property owners consistent with market opportunities and constraints. Compounding this challenge is the need to align new streets across adjacent parcels of different ownership, and with varying degrees of constraints due to existing buildings and driveways.

State of Minnesota. The City of Saint Paul should work closely with the State of Minnesota to determine the legislative and financial feasibility of implementing the recommendations contained within this report, including the implementation of a TIF District to finance infrastructure and land assembly costs.

Metropolitan Council. Concurrent with the State of Minnesota, the City of Saint Paul should work with the Metropolitan Council in investigating the same issues as outlined above.

The Central Corridor Design Center. The Central Corridor Design Center (CCDC) is an initiative by the City of Saint Paul to apply the proven practices of the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Design Center along the Central Corridor. Its mission is to be a champion and advocate for the principles and vision of the Central Corridor Development Strategy as they guide public and private investment in the corridor. The CCDC may assist in this regard through design review and guidance of the Central Corridor LRT and other public realm improvements; design development conversations with large and small property owners; and technical assistance to small businesses to redesign their facilities to take advantage of the LRT and proposed public improvements.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. For those areas within the CAAPB's boundaries, the CAAPB has planning, design and zoning jurisdiction. Implementation of the tools and strategies recommended in this section will require the cooperation, collaboration and approval of the CAAPB.

3.1 Enhanced Mobility Strategies

Opportunities & Challenges: Enhancing mobility – broadly defined as increasing efficient and safe options for people to move between work, home, school, shopping and recreation – is one of the six principles described in the Central Corridor Development Strategy. Creating enhanced mobility options means: 1) creating environments and networks that encourage people to walk, cycle and take transit locally and throughout the region, and 2) providing neighborhood clusters of services, attractions, jobs and housing options that people can access without reliance on a car. Providing and promoting options such as enhanced local transit service, new and improved bicycle networks, car and bicycle sharing programs, new and improved bicycle networks, and a finely grained mix of land uses may over time affect a significant shift in the way people choose to move within the Central Corridor. This, in turn will create livelier, more active streets, reduce congestion, and cut down on harmful vehicle emissions.



FIGURE 3.1 - This new transit-oriented community in Portland, Oregon is an example of an environment that enhances mobility options. A cluster of commercial and residential uses linked to transit, parking and bicycle facilities through a network of generous sidewalks, streetscaping and attractive open spaces, encourages transit riders, motorists and cyclists alike to walk between their various destinations.

3.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

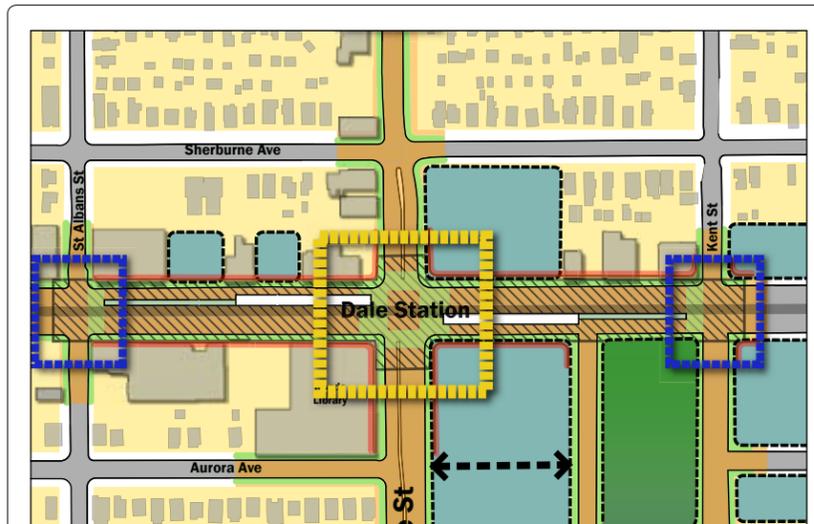


FIGURE 3.2 - The Dale Station Area Mobility Enhancement Area will facilitate movement between public transit and this Station Area's numerous activity generators, including Rondo Library, The Uni-Dale Site, and local parks.

The Station Area Mobility Enhancement Area: The Station Area Mobility Zone represents the confluence of many layers of activity and movement in the immediate proximity of the station: LRT passengers running to make a bus connection, passengers moving from bus to bus, students walking to school, pedestrians making their way to the corner store or place of work; shoppers along the Avenue, and residents going to the parks and squares, all needing to be balanced with motorists making turning and through movements; cyclists commuting to public transit; and truck traffic exiting off the Interstate.

This complex choreography is repeated at each station area along the corridor, and requires additional consideration for the safety, convenience and amenity of the pedestrians moving daily through the future multi-modal hub of these key intersections.

The Mobility Enhancement Area recommendations contained within the Station Area Plan Chapter 1 – Introduction, and within individual station area plans, should be given priority in future discussions and negotiations with Central Corridor infrastructure and development partners, including Metropolitan Council, land owners and various City of Saint Paul departments.

Promote Auto Sharing Programs: These increasingly popular programs offer the convenience of a private automobile for short shopping and errand trips without the financial commitment, responsibility and environmental impact of owning a car full time. Usually dispersed in parking lots throughout medium and high-density residential and commercial areas, paying members conveniently book shared cars on-line for as little or long a duration as needed. Car keys are kept on-site in lock boxes, with master lock box keys distributed to program members. This system allows users to easily access cars anywhere the service is provided, and at anytime throughout the day and evening without need for arrangements with a central reservation office. This service is already offered in the Twin Cities through organizations such as ZipCar and HourCar, though currently with limited availability within the Central Corridor.

Increasingly, the success of these programs is encouraging cities to permit shared automobiles in residential developments to count towards meeting minimum required parking standards. In addition to reducing the need for the purchase and maintenance of private automobiles by future residents, this option is an attractive marketing feature for developers, and helps to reduce development and unit purchase costs by lowering the number of required structured parking stalls.

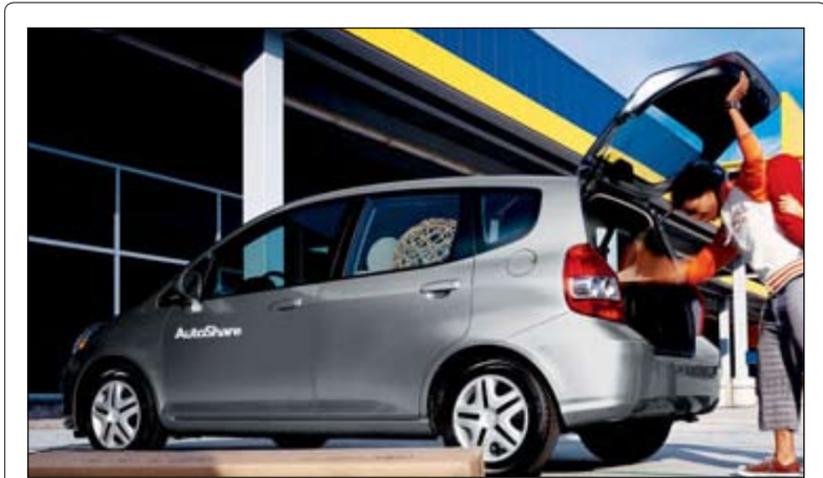


FIGURE 3.3 - Automobile sharing programs in some cities are increasingly being offered in new residential developments. These are decreasing the number of required parking stalls for construction, and providing a convenient alternative to car ownership.

Initiate a Bike Share Program: In principle, these programs are identical to the auto sharing program described above, though operate in a less structured manner. Bicycles are often painted in a uniform color to make them instantly recognizable and less susceptible to theft, and are typically dispersed throughout a defined service area at high traffic locations. Operated on an honor system, members access bikes as needed with master lock keys, and are expected to return bikes after a short period of time to the same or adjacent location. Through the work of local bicycle advocacy groups, numerous cities are currently investigating or implementing bike share programs, including Chicago, Louisville, and Annapolis.

Enhanced Bicycle Infrastructure: Improving bikeways throughout the Central Corridor will be critical to promoting this active and convenient form of transportation. Each of the seven station area plans identified preferred options, as expressed by stakeholders, for improving and expanding the existing bicycle network throughout the Central Corridor. Principle among these options is improving north-south and east-west bicycle connections to University Avenue, so that residents and students can easily access the LRT and many shops and services located along its length.

In addition to expanding routes, enhancing bicycle infrastructure should also include the creation of bicycle commuter plazas near transit stations. These plazas should be designed into new and/or future park spaces, and incorporate some combination of bicycle lockers, sheltered bicycle racks, and on-site bike maintenance and repair services.



FIGURE 3.4 - Bicycle commuter plazas should be located close to public transit and provide sheltered bicycle parking, bicycle lockers, and on-site bicycle repair services.

3.3 Strategic Partners:

City of Saint Paul PED. PED should investigate the feasibility of reducing minimum required parking standards in residential developments in exchange for the implementation of transportation demand management techniques, including: securing a long-term, on-site arrangement with an auto sharing program; providing subsidized transit passes for residents; access to a bike sharing program; implementation of a car pooling program; and others. PED should also be actively engaged in all discussions related to the scope and design of future improvements to bicycle infrastructure.

City of Saint Paul Public Works Department. Proposed bicycle routes identified in station area plans are subject to further analysis to determine the scope and type of bikeway. Saint Paul Public Works staff will need to work closely with colleagues and stakeholders from PED, the Saint Paul BAB, Saint Paul TMO, and others in determining the design and prioritization of these future routes.

Saint Paul Bicycle Advisory Board. This group should be engaged to continue to advocate for improved bicycle infrastructure, and to assist in identifying the best location and configuration of bikeways and commuter facilities near LRT and bus stations

St. Paul Smart Trips. As the Transportation Management Organization for the City, Smart Trips should work with local partners to provide information about parking in the corridor, and to promote opportunities for walking, bicycling, and transit.

Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. Consistent with the CCFC's goals of making the Central Corridor safe for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists, this invaluable organization should be approached regarding potential new funds and resources for implementing a bike share program, and allocating funds for the creation of bicycle commuter plazas.

Transit for Livable Communities. This is a non-profit organization with the stated mission of improving the quality of life in Minnesota communities through a balanced transportation system that encourages transit, walking, biking, and transit-oriented development. This organization may be able to assist with the research, implementation and promotion of the various movement enhancing strategies described here.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. For those areas within the CAAPB's boundaries, the CAAPB has planning, design and zoning jurisdiction. Implementation of the tools and strategies recommended in this section will require the cooperation, collaboration and approval of the CAAPB.

4.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

According to the Metropolitan Council, ninety-three percent of the projected ridership of Central Corridor will come to the stations by foot, bicycle, or bus. However, accommodating parking for all destinations and uses in the Station Areas will be an important challenge as the Central Corridor evolves. Public and private efforts must address the needs of the existing businesses and residents, as well as new development, and the loss of on-street parking due to LRT construction. Additionally, the challenge of managing potential Hide & Ride parking in the station areas will require comprehensive and continuing implementation of parking strategies. Already, the high value of land within the Station Areas dictates that Park & Ride lots will not be a viable and long-term use of property. For a line that will truly serve and enhance these transit-oriented neighborhoods, it is critical that planning focus primarily on contributions that can be made to future LRT ridership and the pedestrian realm, while being sensitive to the existing demand for business and resident parking.

Clearly, the oversupply of surface parking at some locations is a large contributor to the historic and ongoing underutilization of land – a condition that has created a barren feel throughout large portions of the Central Corridor. A combination of Code standards, business requirements and cost factors have resulted in extensive surface parking throughout a large portion of the Central Corridor. A transformation to structured/underground parking will need to happen over time in conjunction with new development patterns that can financially support such parking. Existing surface lots will also need to be retrofitted to relocate curb cuts off of University Avenue (where practical) and be landscaped. Finally, the loss of on-street parking due to LRT construction calls for short- and long-term planning.

New parking strategies are not without barriers however. The primary impediment to the creation of structured parking is the substantially higher development cost per stall when compared to surface parking lots. In addition to requiring a strong market and development densities high enough to warrant this additional investment, structured parking costs are typically passed on to future residents and commercial tenants, thus reducing the affordability and accessibility of new development.

In addition, sharing parking and access requires a high level of cooperation between independent landowners, businesses and the public sector. Where competing long-term objectives and schedules clash over the future redevelopment of neighboring parcels, public sector intervention may be appropriate to identify and implement innovative parking strategies.



FIGURE 4.1 - Large areas of under-utilized surface parking is one of the greatest detractors from the image of the Central Corridor as a vibrant, attractive and safe place.

4.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Resist Pressure for New Surface Parking, Improving Existing Lots:

The establishment of new, single-use surface parking lots with frontage on the Avenue, and the expansion of existing surface lots with frontage on the Avenue, should be discouraged within ¼ mile of stations. Along the rest of University Avenue, new private, single-use surface parking lots should generally be discouraged. Where shared surface lots are built, these should be located to the side or behind buildings, should have limited widths not to exceed 60 feet of frontage on the Avenue, and must incorporate landscaping buffers to minimize the impact on the pedestrian environment.

Optimize Use of Existing Parking: The following strategies will maximize existing off- and on-street parking throughout the Central Corridor;

- Remaining on-street parking can be expanded somewhat by eliminating curb cuts on major streets. Such additional parking should be done carefully so as not to erode necessary sidewalk widths.
- On-street parking on University Avenue and on major side streets should be metered. Time limits on such parking should encourage high turnover where the parking directly serves businesses (15 to 30 minutes).
- Parking on north/south cross streets within 600 feet of University Avenue (except where safety demands no on street parking) should be signed for limited time parking with a minimum of 15 minutes and a maximum of 4 hours, depending on land uses in the immediate area.
- Surface parking lots should generally be accessed from side streets or alleys.
- Use residential parking permit districts as a tool to balance the needs of residential and business parking, and to discourage all-day commuter parking in close proximity to businesses.
- City restrictions on alley use may need to be modified to permit commercial parking and access.
- During the LRT construction period consider temporary changes to existing parking regulations to allow more flexible use of existing excess parking to meet employee and customer parking along the corridor.

Maximize Use of Structured Parking: The concentration of parking within a shared parking ramp assists with many objectives of the station area plans, including preserving high-value land for private development and the creation of new open spaces; and reducing the amount of under-utilized parking in the Corridor by allowing on and off-peak users to share the same centralized parking supply.



FIGURE 4.2 - Work with local partners to secure the lease and shared use of existing surface and structured parking spaces during off-peak demand hours. This partnership will help reduce the demand for parking stalls in future development.

The following strategies should be explored and implemented to promote these opportunities:

- All new development within ¼ mile of stations and all major developments along the Avenue should attempt to meet parking demands through new structured parking (above or below grade) or use of existing surface parking supply.
- Major redevelopment sites should be explored for opportunities to create shared, structured (above or below grade) parking in conjunction with existing or future development.

Establish Transit-Supportive Parking Requirements and Standards: This process entails establishing appropriate and balanced parking ratios by reducing the minimum requirements and establishing maximum standards for parking as part of new developments. A baseline exemption to required parking, where buildings under 4,000 square feet would be exempt from providing any parking, should be considered to support the reuse and infill of small, traditional storefront businesses. Such regulations should be based on heavier transit use, an improved pedestrian realm, and the development of compact, mixed-use land uses along the Avenue and within the ¼ mile station areas.

Finding the right balance, however, between meeting market demands for parking versus limiting new off-street parking to encourage transit use is a delicate process. Reducing the minimum amount of parking required will help to reduce development costs, increase housing affordability and support transit ridership. Too great a reduction, however, may have the negative effect of spilling parking demand and traffic on to neighborhood streets, or reducing the competitiveness of destination-oriented businesses that have a regional draw. Additionally, the parking maximum cannot be so restrictive as to put undue pressure on residential on-street parking to meet the needs of new development or to hinder or discourage new development altogether.

Manage Demand for “Hide and Ride” Near Stations: The key to effective management of “Hide and Ride” requires comprehensive parking strategies within and around the station area. The establishment of residential permit parking areas on east/west streets adjacent to stations will discourage commuters from parking all day, while utilizing new technologies (such as computerized license plate recognition) can create more cost-effective and accurate enforcement in both residential and commercial areas.



FIGURE 4.3 - The Westgate Station Area has been identified as a strategic location for a potential municipally-operated Park and Ride facility, due to its position at the confluence of transportation infrastructure and high potential for new employment uses.

Establish a Central Corridor Parking Management Organization: A parking organization is a cooperative effort that is primarily responsible for the provision of shared commercial (and residential in some instances) parking during both on and off-peak demand hours. Associated costs of operations and maintenance are typically covered through revenues generated through parking stalls. This program may be managed by a business association or organization, or by a transportation management organization.

Redesign Small Shared Parking Lots: Individual Station Area Plans identify several places where a Parking Organization could work with the land owners to redesign one or two smaller shared lots based on demand. These lots are much less expensive and complex to build than larger, centralized parking ramps; provide a high level of flexibility and efficiency in meeting both short-term commercial and residential use; and can be accommodated on sites immediately adjacent to stable neighborhoods with little to no adverse impact to adjacent residences.



FIGURE 4.4 - The provision of a municipal lot does not necessarily entail the construction of a structured park and ride facility. Smaller surface lots dispersed throughout the Corridor offer greater flexibility with respect to location and range of users (which may include both commercial and residential), and are cheaper and simpler to build.

Securing New Streets and Blocks: The introduction of a traditional street and block pattern on larger sites will create new opportunities for on-street parking, as well as improve circulation to off-street parking lots and structures.

Financing Strategy - Special Assessment Districts: Businesses may participate in a voluntary shared parking agreement, funded by special assessments, to make improvements to a shared lot near their property. The existing model for this is the existing Places to Park program, in which the City manages an annual lease agreement and assessments for the property owners and benefiting businesses.

Financing Strategy - Parking Improvement Districts: These districts gather revenues from parking meters and paid parking lots and redirect these funds back into the designated district. The funds are usually applied towards community improvements, such as streetscape enhancements, business marketing programs, or snow removal, but can also be used to maintain shared parking lots and structures, or improve alleys.

Parking Improvement Districts have also been used to establish authority for municipalities to collect parking funds in-lieu of providing actual parking. Similar to a parkland dedication, a private developer or property owner will pay a municipality a fee for the purpose of maintaining or operating a shared municipal lot or structure.



FIGURE 4.5 - Revenue from parking meters and municipal lots should be reinvested back into the areas they serve. These funds may be used for the construction of new lots or improvement of existing structures.

4.3 Strategic Partners

City of Saint Paul PED, Public Works, and Department of Safety and Inspections. These departments should work collaboratively to determine appropriate minimum and maximum parking ratios; work with developers and businesses to find alternative and shared solutions to meeting parking demand as outlined above; and establish Parking Improvement Districts where appropriate. Reevaluate the implementation and management of residential permit parking in the city.

St. Paul Police and Finance Department. Support new technologies for better enforcement of on-street parking regulations.

Metropolitan Council. City staff should continue to work closely with Metropolitan Council to meet with business owners and assess parking needs during and after LRT construction.

District Councils. Representatives should act as a liaison between residents and City staff on the issue of on-street residential parking, particularly where commercial overflow parking or “hide and ride” becomes problematic on residential streets.

Central Corridor Design Center. Staff should be consulted on site plan approval applications to assist in identifying options for configuring and sharing parking and service access.

Local Businesses. Local business owners, the Midway Chamber, and other business organizations should be consulted regularly on the issue of meeting parking demand; and to identify opportunities within the business community to share or lease parking spaces.

St. Paul Smart Trips. As the Transportation Management Organization for the city, Smart Trips should work with local partners to provide information about parking in the corridor, and to promote opportunities for walking, bicycling, and transit.

State Legislature. Property tax laws related to parking are vested in state law and would need to be amended.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

University UNITED. To assist in the ongoing review of development applications in conjunction with District Council offices, and to continue enriching dialogues around improving the character and quality of area planning and development.

U-Plan. U-Plan, a program of University UNITED, will provide technical support services to community groups, small businesses, and other stakeholders.

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. For those areas within the CAAPB’s boundaries, the CAAPB has planning, design and zoning jurisdiction. Implementation of the tools and strategies recommended in this section will require the cooperation, collaboration and approval of the CAAPB.

5.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

Public Art uses multiple media to shape the form and experience of public place. Visual, literary, conceptual and performance artists and composers all have roles in this important work.

Artists should be engaged as members of the professional creative teams that will design the Central Corridor station areas' public and private developments: their public art may be the landscape, structures and surrounding streets.

Artists may be commissioned to create works to be integrated into station areas: their public art may be permanent objects or displays. It may be temporary installations, performances, or art events that will continually refresh the experience of light rail travel over time.

Public art may be words, forms and sounds that illuminate the stories of these important places. It may be the music that signals the coming train or that enlivens the experience of waiting and gathering. It may be interactive or still. It may speak of history, civic values, and social conditions; it may express aspirations for the future. It may be the pure expression of one person's vision and experience told in a civic context.

Public art strengthens these important public places as the vessels of civic life.



FIGURE 5.1 - This flexible public art installation in Montreal, Canada permits rotating exhibits of art, photography, and cultural and commemorative displays.

5.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Engage Artists in LRT and Station Area Planning and Design: Engage artists as members of professional teams to plan and design LRT and related infrastructure improvements and station areas. Through their early collaborative participation, they will work with design professionals and the community to shape the form and experience of these public places. As artists are engaged in design teams, their public artwork should help integrate all the elements of the station area including the overall station, transit infrastructure, streetscape and station area landscape.



FIGURE 5.2 - The Wabasha Street Retaining Wall is an innovative example of integrating public art within a public works project (photo courtesy of District Del Sol).

Commission Artists to Create Site-Specific Permanent Works: As opportunities for amenity, interpretation, way-finding and creative expression are identified, commission artists to create permanent artworks for stations, streetscapes and station area landscapes.

Plan and Provide For Temporary Installations and Public Art Events: As stations, streetscapes and station area landscapes are designed, provide for artists and communities to refresh the experience of these public places through temporary art installations and art events that would be produced over time.

Establish a Budget for Public Art through Capital Budgets and Arts Funding Programs: Require an appropriation of no less than 1% from each eligible capital development project budget in the station areas to fund the involvement of artists in project design and the creation of site-specific artworks.

Encourage Private Property Owners and Developers to Support Public Art: Use the City's negotiating powers to require and encourage investment in public art for private capital projects along the Central Corridor in station areas, especially in those areas where private property intersects the public right of way.

Support and facilitate the work of non-profit arts and community organizations: Through public grant programs, such as STAR, support non-profit arts and community organizations in their efforts to envision and develop public art. Provide a workbook for these organizations to use as they seek City approvals and permits for public art project development.

Require Public Art Stewardship: Include in public art design and development consideration of sustainability. Permanent public art budgets must include a line item to be held for long-term maintenance.

5.3 Strategic Partners:

Metropolitan Council. LRT implementation provides for public art that should be coordinated with this Station Area Planning document and other local efforts.

Public Art Saint Paul. This non-profit organization is the City's partner in planning, creating and caring for art in Saint Paul's public realm. Supported by foundations, corporations and individuals, its programs encompass Placemaking,

Public Art Stewardship and Education. It produces Western Sculpture's Park's exhibitions and Wing Young Huie's 6-mile University Avenue photography project; it sponsors the City's Public Artist Residency.

The City's Public Artist in Residence. The Resident Artist, housed in the City's Public Works Department, is a key member of city teams in planning and design of the public realm and a valuable resource for both public agencies and private developers.

FORECAST Public Art. This non-profit organization works to strengthen and advance the field of public art throughout the Twin Cities by promoting art and local artists. The developer of demonstration projects on private property along University Avenue, FORECAST's grant program is a valuable resource for realizing many public art opportunities identified in the station

area plans.

The University of Minnesota and City of Minneapolis Public Art Programs. In considering the wholeness of the Light Rail line, public art programs of the University and the City of Minneapolis Public Art Program are essential planning and strategic partners.

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. For those areas within the CAAPB's boundaries, the CAAPB has planning, design and zoning jurisdiction. Implementation of the tools and strategies recommended in this section will require the cooperation, collaboration and approval of the CAAPB.

Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. CCFC seeks to maximize the positive community impact of light rail transit and create vital transit-oriented districts at stations. It is a prospective resource for supporting public art along the Corridor.

Saint Paul STAR Program. The sales tax reinvestment program is a significant prospective source of public art, particularly of temporary installations and events that are not eligible for funding through capital funding resources.

City of Saint Paul Departments of Public Works and Parks and Recreation. These City agencies are vital public art partners – as planning and design collaborators and as facilitators of public art project development and implementation.

University UNITED. This non-profit organization is the lead partner in planning and development of Dickerman Park, a model of public art as placemaking collaborative process.

Saint Paul District Councils. District Councils along the length of the Avenue have interest and experience in initiating and developing public art projects, including the Hamline Midway Coalition's Paint the Pavement and other streetscape programs. They are valuable resources for engaging the community in the public art process, developing a neighborhood vision of characteristics and qualities that should be reflected and celebrated in public art at each station area, connecting artists to citizens, and helping to select artists that are responsive to the sensibilities of each neighborhood.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

6.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

Meeting the full development potential of the Central Corridor, as conceptually illustrated in each Station Area Plan, will occur over a long period of time. Recognizing the market may not be uniformly ready to respond to the ambitious visions illustrated in each plan, nor to the full extent of the Transit Opportunity Zone (TOZ) regulatory framework outlined in the Central Corridor Development Strategy, both sets of policy documents should allow for market transformation and uptake over time.

For example, a near-term development proposal that does not meet density expectations for central, strategic sites, or does not secure a shared parking agreement with a neighboring land owner, yet meets other long-term objectives such as increasing the range of available housing types or providing active uses at grade, should be accommodated. In these instances, proponents of development applications should demonstrate how specific physical and/or market constraints make the full range of station area objectives difficult to achieve, how the general intent and purpose of the CCDS and respective Station Area Plan will be met, and additionally how other standards are being met and/or exceeded. A developer may also demonstrate how the current proposal may accommodate future development that will be consistent with the Station Area Plan. In general, new development should not preclude the opportunity for future intensified development or establishment of a street grid as envisioned in these plans.

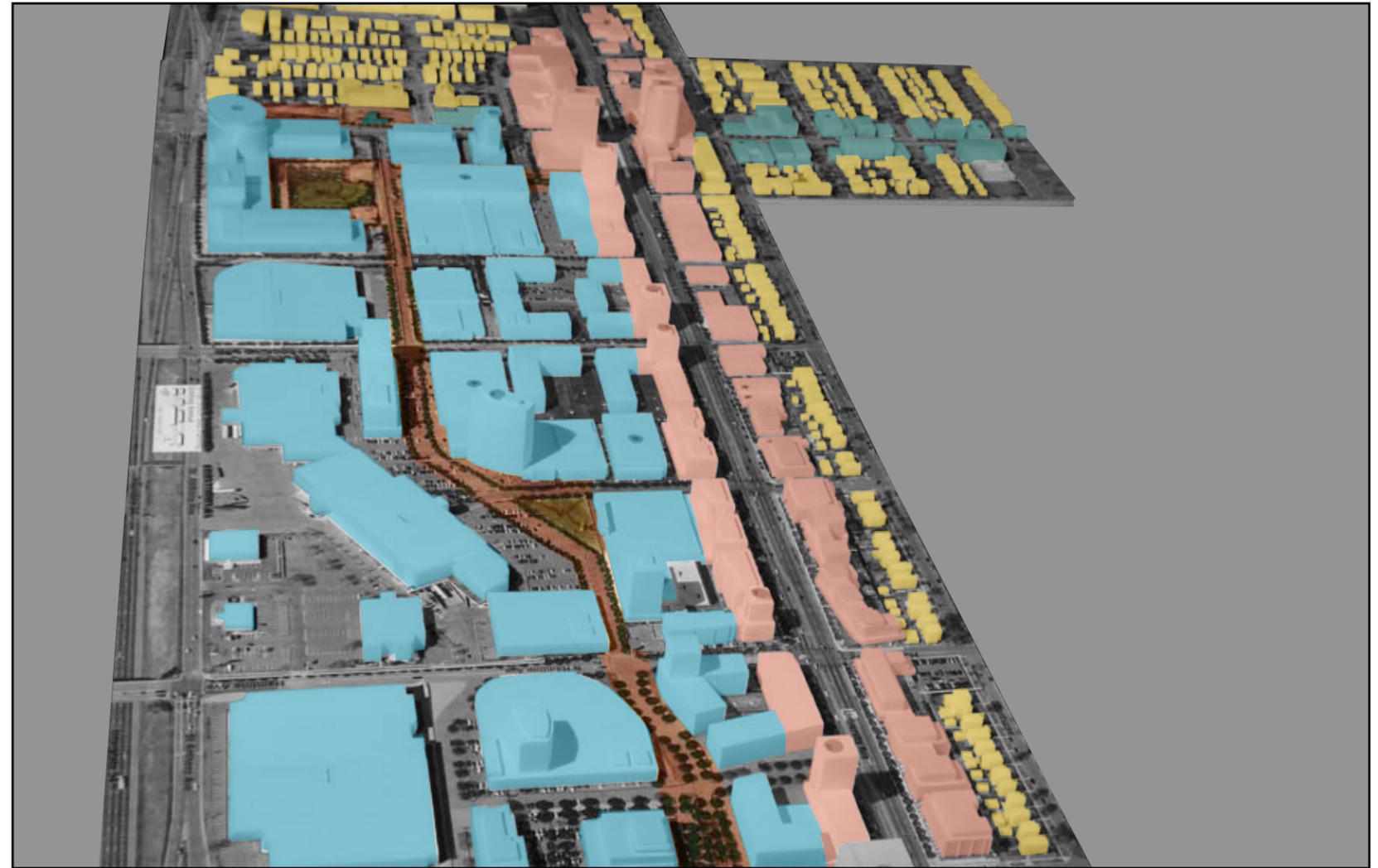


FIGURE 6.1 - The conceptual image for the Snelling Station Area's future redevelopment will take a long time to realize. In the interim, City staff, developers and local stakeholders should work collaboratively to ensure each new piece in the puzzle makes a positive contribution to its surroundings, and does not preclude future opportunities to create a transit-supportive and attractive environment.

6.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Zoning Amendments: The City of Saint Paul should explore ordinance amendments that are compatible and supportive of the visions as described in the Station Area Plans.

No Maximum Densities Over Short Term: Over the short term, maximum densities should not be regulated within Station Areas. The near-term limited market potential should not be constrained by capping densities, but rather regulated through performance-based policy framework regulations that control building heights, scale, transition and orientation with respect to adjacent buildings and neighborhoods.

Over the longer term, if market conditions improve so that this strategy would not stifle development, maximum densities should be set below where the market has shown demand for development intensity and yield. The subsequent negotiation of density bonuses may then be used to secure funds for public realm improvements.

Development Matrix: A Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Matrix should be prepared to assist City officials and staff in evaluating the benefits of development proposals in terms of economic value and transit-supportive principles included in the CCDS. The TOD Matrix may be structured to include two nominal rankings. The first determines the relevance of a particular benefit to the subject property in light of the site area, configuration, access, current market conditions, long-term vision of the Station Area Plan, and others. The second rates the application's contribution to each of the potential benefits outlined in the matrix. These tools should be utilized during pre-submission consultation with property owners and/or their agents and to assist both City staff and project proposers in evaluating and explaining potential benefits of proposed development and ways in which proposals can be enhanced in keeping with the goals of the Station Area Plans.



FIGURE 6.2 - The Development Matrix tool will assist City of Saint Paul staff in explaining to developers the long-term objectives for respective station areas. It may also be used to assess the merits and shortcomings of individual development applications, and to facilitate discussion and negotiation between City staff, developers and local stakeholders. It has been designed to be flexible and responsive to changing market demand over time.

6.3 Strategic Partners:

City of Saint Paul PED and Department of Safety and Inspections. These departments will continue to be primarily responsible for the evaluation of zoning applications, and analysis and negotiation of public financing for some proposed developments. Creating and implementing a TOD matrix, as outlined in this chapter, may assist City officials and staff in reviewing potential benefits of development.

District Councils. Representatives should be involved in the continued review of development applications at an early stage and throughout the review of development applications to ensure compatibility with District and Area Plans.

Professional Resources. Valuable community-based professional resources, such as the Central Corridor Design Center, Public Art Saint Paul, University UNITED, and U-Plan should be utilized to assist in the analysis of development applications, the completion of TOD matrices, and in identifying opportunities for improving development and infrastructure proposals.

Developers. Land owners and developers will have the opportunity to evaluate perceived benefits of proposed development using the Matrix as an analytical tool.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. For those areas within the CAAPB's boundaries, the CAAPB has planning, design and zoning jurisdiction. Implementation of the tools and strategies recommended in this section will require the cooperation, collaboration and approval of the CAAPB.

7.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

Within each Station Area Plan, a TOD Demonstration Site has been identified as a strategic parcel that, due to willing partners or given catalytic potential, is a strong candidate to explore innovative solutions and strategies on multiple fronts including: new development and public realm standards, economic development opportunities, securing parkland, and innovative parking, regulatory and financing strategies. These sites offer the opportunity to leverage the success of station specific sites to create precedents in future negotiations for redevelopment sites within the surrounding area and to demonstrate new methods that promote city building along the Central Corridor.

Realizing success with these demonstration sites will require two things: a strong partnership and working relationship between the City and land owner(s); planning that both reinforces the long-term vision as set out in the relevant Station Area Plan, and provides sufficient flexibility to allow developer and property owners to take advantage of market opportunities and enhance the economic vitality of the area while improving block patterns, pedestrian routes and park spaces.

7.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Create Redevelopment Partnerships: The City of Saint Paul should work closely with station area land owners to create a detailed redevelopment concept that reinforces the vision for the surrounding station area.

Financial Assistance Program - Strategic Investment Program: Offering special incentive financing designed to assist businesses considering relocation to Saint Paul from elsewhere may help landowners to secure large-scale institutional and other employment-intensive tenants for large scale redevelopment parcels. Loan amounts and terms are indexed to employment projections, payroll, entity credit history, distance from Saint Paul, revenue generation and type of facility. Funds may be used for capital expenses, leasehold improvements, renovation costs, parking and transit.

Financing Strategy - Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA): Administered by Metropolitan Council, this program directs funds to development or redevelopment projects that connect development with transit, intensify land uses, connect housing and employment, provide a mix of housing affordability, and/or provide infrastructure to connect communities and attract investment. Demonstration Account funds are intended for use with projects that demonstrate innovative and new ways to achieve and implement these statutory objectives. As such, joint applications from the City of Saint Paul and development partners must clearly convey the broad, community-based benefits achieved through the proposed development, and its alignment with the current planning policy framework.

Development Density/Intensification Bonuses: These are not direct financing mechanisms, but development concessions that can promote density immediately adjacent to station areas to offset the cost of land per unit or per square foot of building cost. Promoting such a favorable development climate may attract new investment to currently under-utilized demonstration sites, though must also be balanced with the need to demonstrate to area residents the effects and benefits derived from increased development densities.

7.3 Strategic Partners:

City of Saint Paul PED. Planning and Economic Development staff are critical to the ongoing communication of the CCDS and Station Area Plan's Vision and Principles; working with development partners on the creation of comprehensive redevelopment master plans and development frameworks; and negotiating development approvals with proponents.

City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation. Staff must assess the current and forecasted demand for park and recreation space within and adjacent to TOD demonstration sites.

Invest Saint Paul / The Mayor's Office. Where identified demonstration sites fall within Invest Saint Paul's Frogtown-Thomas/Dale-Aurora St. Anthony boundaries, capital investment funds should be secured for private and community development projects that improve physical and economic conditions.

Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. Consistent with the CCFC's goals of long-term capacity building and engagement and involvement in the planning process, this organization should be approached regarding securing resources to meet the place-making objectives of TOD Demonstration Sites.

Metropolitan Council. Securing LCDA funds (where suitable) will require close collaboration with Metropolitan Council staff.

District Councils. These agencies will be critical to building community support and enthusiasm for future redevelopment of these strategic sites. Representatives from District Councils should be kept apprised of development negotiations to ensure local voices are strongly represented.

Central Corridor Design Center. This valuable resource may provide technical assistance in drafting and/or review of plans, development frameworks and open space plans for demonstration sites.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

University UNITED. To assist in the ongoing review of development applications in conjunction with District Council offices, and to continue enriching dialogues around improving the character and quality of area planning and development.

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board. For those areas within the CAAPB's boundaries, the CAAPB has planning, design and zoning jurisdiction. Implementation of the tools and strategies recommended in this section will require the cooperation, collaboration and approval of the CAAPB.

8.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

Green Development is about encouraging environmentally sustainable development infill, and public realm projects that protect and enhance overall health, natural environments, and quality of life. Policy should encourage developers and community leaders to revitalize the Central Corridor and build a more sustainable community as related to impacts on: energy, water use, solid waste, stormwater, and indoor air quality during construction and operations.

This sustainable trend is ever-changing and policies are rapidly being formed all over the country in both public and private sectors. Saint Paul has created its own program called Sustainable Saint Paul to examine green building policy, education and outreach. Other projects are also on their way, such as the Riverfront Corporation's Water Quality initiative and expanding Watershed Regulations. The Central Corridor project presents an opportunity to focus and integrate these regional-wide initiatives and also develop long-range projects like District Energy, biodiversity planning and regional stormwater mitigation.

The first needed step is to review existing codes and policies to help identify obstacles which may currently make it difficult to generate greener developments. Incentives should then be incorporated into future policies as to not deter current trends.

8.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Green Building Program Requirements: Sustainable Saint Paul has instituted a policy that all newly constructed public buildings to follow LEED-NC Silver and is in the process of examining Green Building Standards for private development with public financing as related to Energy; Water Use, Building – Landscape; Solid Waste; Stormwater; Indoor Air Quality, measured by Green House Gases; Biodiversity; Heat Island; Open Space; Vehicle Miles; and Night Sky. Explore adding green building requirements for private development.

Structural and Financial Incentives: Incorporate structural incentives into new zoning, such as expedited and fast-track permitting, tax credits, grants, and other financial incentives to leverage the market.

Design Kit-of-Parts and Platforms with a Green Eye: Construction of new roads and LRT platforms provides an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the City of Saint Paul's investment in the green movement. A decision has been made to develop a kit-of-parts design for each station, as opposed to conceptual design at each station. This allows for universally designed components that manage the stations' own stormwater and inception from University Avenue. Use of permeable materials, green roofs, recycled stormwater for cooling, photovoltaic paneling and other strategies can become a community aesthetic and learning tool.

Incorporate Concepts into Future Zoning: Smart Growth, LEED-ND criteria, Transect and Transit - Oriented Design (TOD) concepts, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Mapping the Process: Establishing a baseline of environmental factors helps to measure success, quantify impact and inform continued progress. Baseline mapping, such as air (CO₂) / GRG, Water Biodiversity, wind power feasibility, etc. marks progress and growth. Map the Natural Flows to direct development and target opportunities such as energy, wastewater, stormwater (e.x., SWIMM).

Central Corridor Design Center - Technical Assistance: Technical assistance is about empowering people so they are willing to take chances they may otherwise not be able to do. A Center, similar to the Chicago Center for Green Technology, or The Green Institute, NexuxBoston, may become a catch-all for developers, builders, architects, and the neighborhood to learn more about sustainable trends, funding opportunities, and regulations.

8.3 Strategic Partners:

Sustainable Saint Paul. This City-led initiative should be involved in the review and design of sustainable development techniques and practices. Innovative examples of sustainable development within the Central Corridor should be showcased through Sustainable Saint Paul's awards program.

City of Saint Paul Public Works and Parks and Recreation Departments. Both departments will be instrumental in implementing these recommendations, tools and strategies; and in the design and review of sustainable building practices within future development proposals.

The Central Corridor Design Center. The Central Corridor Design Center is an initiative by the City of Saint Paul to apply the proven practices of the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Design Center along the Central Corridor. Its mission is to be a champion and advocate for the principles and vision of the Central Corridor Development Strategy as they guide public and private investment in the corridor. The CCDC provides a wealth of leadership in energy and environmental design.

Saint Paul Public Schools. Sustainable building techniques employed throughout the Central Corridor should be showcased and taught to area students.

University UNITED Environmental Group. This organization may assist in supporting valuable resources in the design and incorporation of sustainable building practices such as the Snelling Avenue Greenstreet Initiative.

Midway-Chamber, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups. To ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

Capitol Region Watershed District. This organization can advise on best practices for managing stormwater for new development.

St. Paul Ramsey County Public Health. The "Active Living Ramsey County" initiative is working to bring about and sustain changes in design, transportation, and public/private policies to cultivate and support a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily lives.

9.1 Opportunities & Challenges:

Traditional funding sources, including municipal capital budgets and private sector investment, cannot alone meet the objectives for new park spaces, streetscaping, local business development, or other initiatives throughout the Central Corridor. Many of the tools and strategies listed in 'Chapter 9 Moving Forward' identify potential innovative financial resources, including Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Invest Saint Paul, and the STAR Program, for supporting and implementing these projects and improvements. Each of these resources is described below in greater detail.

9.2 Exploring Tools & Strategies:

Tax Increment Financing: Tax increment financing is the ability to capture the increased property tax revenue from new development within a defined geographic area to help pay the costs of redevelopment. These costs may include land acquisition, demolition and site clearance, site improvements, public utilities, and certain other eligible costs. It is used to encourage redevelopment that would not normally occur without assistance to create jobs, redevelop blighted areas, remediate polluted sites and construct affordable housing. Tax increment financing is governed by a complex set of state statutes that makes it difficult to use for area-wide improvements.

The City should explore the following policy ideas for improving tax increment financing as a tool for reinvestment:

- Saint Paul, in collaboration with other regional jurisdictions, should seek legislative authority to establish local increment-based financing for specific activities within transit corridors.

- The financing source would be the increased value captured in a Transit Opportunity Zone (TOZ) as defined by each municipality. Saint Paul should adopt the TOZ as defined in the Central Corridor Development Strategy.
- Specific terms such as the percent of increment to be captured and the duration of the district should be based on a more specific financial analysis of the expected development costs related to the transit improvement.
- Eligible uses of funds may include:
 - New construction of affordable housing
 - Substantial rehabilitation of existing housing
 - Financial assistance to mitigate disproportionate increases in property taxes caused by increasing values in the Corridor
 - Small business assistance
 - Streetscape improvements (lighting, seating, plantings)
 - Parks/open space
 - Structured/shared parking

Invest Saint Paul: This current initiative of the Mayor's office is a collaborative effort to strategically channel City and private resources into revitalization strategies for four City neighborhoods being challenged by recent economic and social downturns and disinvestment. One of the four neighborhoods includes the Central Corridor east of Lexington Parkway. Invest Saint Paul initiatives focus on three areas including: quality of life issues, jobs and economic development, and youth and family services.

Current activities include:

Quality of Life:

- Intensive, targeted investment in a two square block area in each identified neighborhood that results in physical and social transformation in 18 months.
- Mortgage foreclosure prevention and vacant building programs.
- Strategic large scale development projects that align with Invest Saint Paul goals.
- Community crime prevention and outreach.

Jobs and Economic Development:

- Small business retention and expansion.
- Workforce development.

Youth and Family:

- Supplemental education initiatives including: "Second Shift" (after school activities), early childhood, tutoring, and homework centers.
- Dental sealant initiative – extending school-based dental care to children in Invest Saint Paul neighborhoods.
- Emergency Medical Services Outreach, Parks and Recreation Mobile Team, and Community Resource Days.

STAR (Sales Tax Revitalization) Program: The City of Saint Paul collects an extra ½ cent sales tax to pay off capital expenses related to improvements to the Saint Paul Civic Center complex and for capital projects to further residential, cultural, commercial and economic development in both Downtown Saint Paul and Saint Paul neighborhoods. In 1994, the City Council established the Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) Program, which includes the Neighborhood STAR and Cultural STAR Programs, to distribute the remaining sales tax proceeds.

Neighborhood STAR Program Overview

- The Neighborhood STAR Program awards loans and grants for capital improvement projects in Saint Paul neighborhoods, and is funded with 50 percent of the sales tax proceeds.
- Of that 50 percent, program allocation goals are sixty percent for loans and forty percent for grants. Funds are awarded annually through a competitive application process.
- Proposals can be a project, program, or strategy that results in capital improvements in Saint Paul. Innovative proposals are encouraged, and these proposals may be generated by neighborhood and civic leaders, organizations, and businesses.
- Examples of eligible activities include: improvements of residential, commercial and industrial property, economic development efforts; minor public improvements.
- Eligible applicants include any public, private, or non-profit entity located in or doing business in Saint Paul.
- Funding recommendations are made to the Mayor and City Council by the 21-member STAR Board, which is appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council.

Regional Transit-Oriented Development “Bank”:

This potential new concept could be a powerful tool for aggregating financial resources for new development along transit corridors:

- The City and its partner jurisdictions should explore seeking legislative authority and financing to create a special transit development “bank” that will have the capacity to aggregate funds and invest them along transit corridors throughout the region to encourage high quality transit-oriented development that, by definition, provides mixed-income housing.
- The authority should be housed within a regional or statewide agency with appropriate advisory committees to shape both policy and resource allocation.
- Financing sources—several of which would require their own State legislation—that could be aggregated (in whole or in part) into a single funding stream could include:
 - Inter-governmental grants/loans from existing federal or state programs.
 - Federal appropriations related to LRT construction, but not counted in the CEI (Cost effectiveness index).
 - State tax credits (new).
 - State fund for focused neighborhood reinvestment (new).
 - State special appropriation for housing in transit corridors.
 - Affordable housing fund to which developers can contribute in lieu of producing the units in a given development (new).
 - Increase in county mortgage registration tax with amount dedicated to affordable housing (new).
 - Increase in regional sales tax with proceeds dedicated to specific capital priorities (new).
 - Family Housing Fund and other philanthropic sources.