



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

### **In this Section you will find:**

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

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

The Development Strategy concludes with Section 4.3 – “Implementation – 20 Community-Building Strategies.” Expanding on the strategies identified in Section 2, specific recommendations are made on building new partnerships, setting new standards, and conducting further planning and analysis. This section goes on to elaborate on approaches for six of the priority issues, concerns and objectives identified by the community: green and sustainable Corridor, inclusive housing, parking management, strengthened local businesses, community benefits, and mitigating the effects of LRT construction.



# A Transit Opportunity Zone

**This section focuses on a new concept for the Central Corridor: the Transit Opportunity Zone. This multifaceted, geographically-defined zone is intended to support and encourage opportunities for improvement and investment along the Corridor.**

The Transit Opportunity Zone (TOZ) is composed principally of two policy layers – an **enabling layer** that establishes a priority approach for a range of financial and policy incentives, planning efforts, infrastructure investments, economic development initiatives and capital improvements; and a **regulatory layer** that contains a set of transit-supportive planning and development directions.

These constituent layers - designed as mutually-reinforcing and adaptive - are meant to be phased in over time. They should be introduced as a higher baseline standard built from the transit-supportive principles and regulations described here, and implemented with increasing rigor as the Corridor responds and evolves within the 30-year study horizon.

## How to Make It Happen - Two Policy Layers

### The First - An Enabling Layer

The LRT investment offers a critical impetus to build momentum and leverage complementary city-building initiatives. However, the LRT investment will not on its own be able to address all community ambitions for city-building along the Corridor. Improvements to transit, public spaces, streetscaping, public art, expanded economic opportunities and new forms of housing are only some of the components necessary to achieve the full scope of the vision. Achieving the vision for the Central Corridor will require a concerted effort on many fronts; the coordination of city, regional and other agencies; and public and private investment.

The key question is how to best position the Corridor to enable positive change. There are many tools and incentives already at hand to support success. They include community economic development programs, housing rehabilitation programs, financial incentives and planning regulations. Our recommendation is that the full range of tools currently available continue to be applied towards the Corridor and adjacent neighborhoods. In addition, these tools should be analyzed to determine if revisions to existing programs or new programs are needed to accomplish the positive changes envisioned.

More specifically, it is recommended that the “Areas of Change” identified on Page 37 define the geographic basis for a designated Transit Opportunity Zone. Such a zone would be augmented with the following enabling policies:

- a **recommended priority zone** and focus area for programs, policies and incentives already deployed by the City, regional and County governments that support the range of city-building and neighborhood strengthening initiatives identified in this Strategy, as well as those additional strategies and initiatives described in Section 4.3 of this report. The Areas of Change and Stability delineated in Section 3.2 of this report should form the basis for more detailed priority zones, within which public policy and available resources should be focused to both preserve neighborhoods and/or encourage growth and investment;
- the creation of a multi-disciplinary **City TOZ team** comprised of officials from various City departments (Planning and Economic Development, Public Works, Parks, etc.). This team will be charged with implementing policy directions consistent with the recommendations of the Development Strategy; working with developers on incentives and bonus packages, alternate redevelopment scenarios and financing models that optimize the development potential of strategic sites and secure inclusionary housing; preparing future station area plans; and coordinating consultation and communications with area residents, businesses and stakeholders;
- the creation of a **Design Review and Advisory Resource**, similar to the Design Center, responsible for close collaboration with property owners on preliminary redevelopment concepts and the review of active development applications;
- the enactment of an **interim regulatory ordinance** based on the structure of the proposed TOZ regulatory framework described in Section 4.2
- the preparation of **station area plans**, the recommended boundaries for which are defined as TOZ Station Areas in Section 4.2 of this report; and,
- coordination with the Comprehensive Plan (small area plans in particular) and other planning policy on where change will be permitted and encouraged, versus where neighborhoods will be protected and enhanced. The Areas of Change and Stability delineated in Section 3.2 of this report should provide the basis for this distinction.

### The Second - A Revised Regulatory Layer

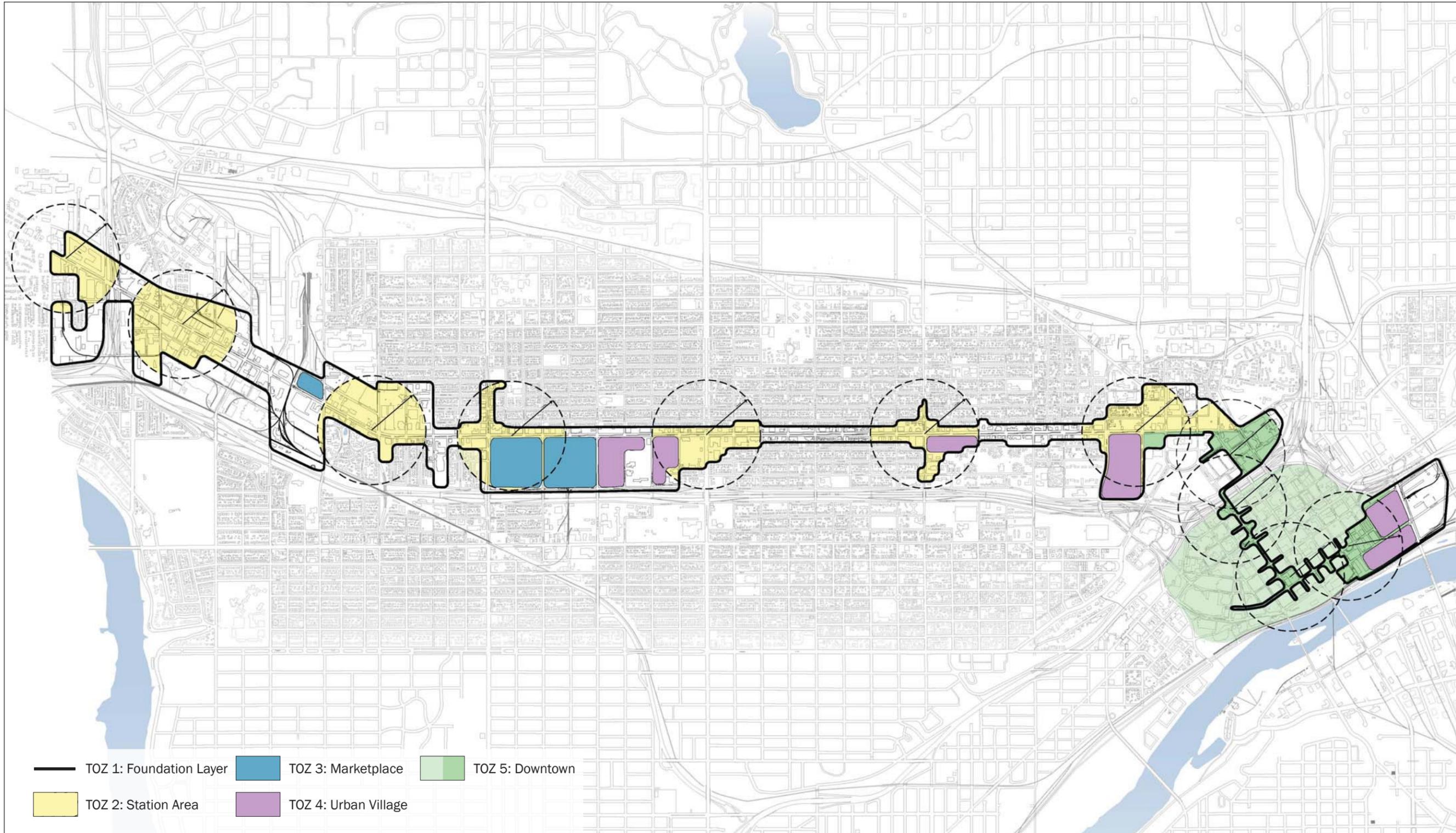
An important component of the Transit Opportunity Zone is a review and “tune-up” of the existing regulatory framework in Saint Paul. The most successful transit-supportive planning frameworks are based in inclusionary, mixed land-use planning policies, rather than the traditional segregation of uses through zoning. They place emphasis on the quality of the public realm and pedestrian experience, as opposed to prioritizing the rapid movement of automobiles. They promote flexibility and performance, rather than prescription and regulation. And they permit a range of appropriate design and development responses that can evolve over time to respond to changing market/demographic demands and expectations.

This is true of planning and development policy at all levels – from the strategic principles and direction of a Comprehensive Plan, to the locally-based vision of a precinct or small area plan, and finally to the specific development controls of a zoning ordinance. A transit-supportive framework is one that fully integrates these layers, ensuring each are designed to be compatible with and reinforce one another. Fortunately, much of the land use and planning policy guiding growth, investment and movement in Saint Paul already meets these objectives. Both the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, for example, are models of sustainable, transit-supportive planning.

Where ample room does exist for refinement is within the Zoning Ordinance, where some adjustments are needed to better align the Central Corridor Development Strategy with a progressive, transit-supportive framework. To allow for this process to occur and be effective, an interim zoning provision should be implemented, while a full zoning study is undertaken. This interim zoning should not change existing zoning, but modify the underlying regulations to exclude uses or standards not considered supportive of pedestrian- and transit-oriented environments. Examples of the policies, guidelines and restrictions that may be contained within these interim regulations include lowered parking standards for commercial uses, prohibition of drive-through businesses, minimum building densities, maximum retail floor areas, and detailed urban design guidelines that promote pedestrian-friendly buildings and streetscapes.

Within the timeframe permitted by the interim ordinance provision, the City of Saint Paul should undertake revisions to the many layers of its regulatory framework to ensure they comply with the vision and objectives of this Strategy. Section 4.2 provides the basis for these revisions, beginning with a series of 5 Key Framework Principles.

The diagram at right identifies the proposed boundary of the Transit Opportunity Zone. Embedded within this zone are additional regulatory layers for station areas, marketplaces and urban villages. These regulations are described in Section 4.2.



**Transit Opportunity Zones**

## Regulatory Framework Recommendations

**Section 3.3 identified four Key Principles for all new development in the Corridor. Each of these are based in the best practices of transit-oriented development, and are grounded in the community and stakeholder input recorded throughout the Development Strategy process. In summarizing the transit-supportive status of Saint Paul's regulatory framework, these five principles were applied as "tests" with which to gauge the strengths and potential weaknesses of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and other policies, and to identify "tune-up" opportunities where gaps exist.**

### What Does a Transit-Supportive Regulatory Framework Look Like? Five Key Principles for the Central Corridor

For the purpose of creating the framework recommendations contained in this section, a *fifth* key principle, Adaptive Over Time, has been added in response to the diverse market and physical conditions along the Corridor. The resultant five framework principles are as follows:

1. Making Development "Fit"
2. Transit-Supportive Densities
3. Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking
4. A Green, Attractive, Connected Pedestrian Environment
5. Adaptive Over Time

#### 1) Making Development "Fit"

Promoting infill development is an important means to increasing residential and employment density close to planned station areas. This type of growth, which can occur both within and adjacent to stable, residential areas, and within evolving mixed-use downtown precincts, must consider many different relationships in order to be successful: to the street and public realm to which it is oriented; to future development opportunities on adjacent reinvestment sites; and to the neighborhood in which it is inserted. To this end, specific guidelines, recommendations and rules may include requirements for minimum and maximum setbacks, façade stepbacks, building heights, street-level activation with legible and accessible uses at grade, minimum building frontages, transitions in scale, sensitivity to built heritage resources, preservation of opportunities for shared vehicular access, and others.

Collectively applied, these rules will promote building forms along the Corridor that fill in current gaps and reinforce the street edge, thus redefining and re-imagining the Avenue and downtown with an interesting and active streetscape; and providing an appropriate transition in scale and height to adjacent residential areas. It may also be appropriate to create different rules for various sub-areas within the Corridor, in order to respond to specific strategic opportunities (proximity to transit stations), or within larger redevelopment areas (such as the Midway Shopping District, Capitol Hill Urban Village and downtown).



Transit ridership is being increased with new developments such as the Lofts at Westgate. Setting a minimum development density for the Central Corridor will help to continue to promote transit use by expanding ridership.

#### 2) Transit-Supportive Densities – Integrating Land Use Planning and Development Decisions with Public Transit Investment

Minimum and maximum development densities regulate the amount of development deemed appropriate for a particular site or area. A minimum development density is typically set to realize the development potential and opportunity of a strategic parcel of land (often in proximity to transit), and to discourage inappropriate, lower-density building types. Maximum densities prohibit the "over-development" of an area.

Minimum/maximum development densities are typically expressed in one of two ways:

- 1) FAR – or Floor Area Ratio, the ratio of the total built space relative to the total area of a site; or
- 2) units/acre – expressed in terms of the number of dwelling units or employees within a prescribed geographic area.

Setting a minimum development density for key strategic areas along the Central Corridor will help promote a more efficient use of land; support investment in and use of public transit by expanding the ridership base; and discourage auto-oriented building types that are incompatible with the finer-grain, pedestrian-priority vision for the Corridor.



A new residential building in Toronto, Ontario uses a podium and generous setbacks to "fit in" with the surrounding street character.

### 3) Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking

New ways of thinking about parking - its provision, location, and appearance - are critical to the creation of a transit-supportive, pedestrian-oriented environment. The following are recommended directions for regulating how much, where and how parking is provided.

#### **How Much? Easing parking requirements.**

Parking standards are typically expressed as a minimum number of parking spaces per total area of a specific land use. These standards are often uniformly applied within a municipality, regardless of access or proximity to alternate forms of transportation, such as public transit or bicycle networks. They also often favor the provision of private, on-site parking areas, leading to an over-supply of spaces and loss of strategic development opportunities.

A combination of reduced parking requirements along the Avenue; possible caps on the voluntary supply of off-street parking in downtown, maximized opportunities for on-street parking; surface parking at the rear of development sites and in ramps, where appropriate; and relaxed restrictions on the provision of shared, off-site parking facilities may collectively:

- encourage transit as an alternative to the private automobile;
- promote creative and efficient parking management solutions;
- reduce barriers to the redevelopment of small sites and heritage buildings; and
- encourage a more efficient use of land.

#### **Where? Minimizing voids in the urban fabric.**

Surface parking lots degrade the built environment in favor of open expanses of asphalt. This condition is worsened where large, under-utilized redevelopment parcels provide an abundance of surface parking in highly-visible locations. These voids are auto-oriented with few or no pedestrian amenities, and they deter movement and connection by foot between different uses and destinations.

The evolution of the Corridor into a vibrant pedestrian and urban place will require ordinance restrictions on the creation of new, single-use surface parking lots, both on University Avenue and in downtown. Wherever possible, on-site parking should be provided at the rear of buildings and/or in shared parking ramps.

#### **How? Consolidating access to reduce gaps in the streetscape.**

Gaps in the streetscape deter the successful redevelopment of urban corridors; they create the feeling of a gray, sprawling and unsafe environment, and reduce investor confidence. In addition to degrading the built environment, private lots require points of entry via numerous driveways. These curb cuts, which literally “cut” through the pedestrian realm, create points of conflict between pedestrians and automobiles, reduce the number of available on-street parking spaces, reduce opportunities for streetscape amenities such as trees and benches, and eliminate opportunities for infill development in strategic locations.

Saint Paul may wish to introduce policies through its station area plans and Zoning Ordinance that restrict the amount of surface parking and number of curb cuts along the Corridor in favor of parking access via side streets and shared alleys. This will help to create a continuous street frontage, minimize conflict between pedestrians and cars, and maximize convenient on-street parking to support local businesses.



High-quality landscaping and pedestrian amenities, such as along this street in Toronto, Ontario, can make even busy avenues pedestrian-friendly.

### 4) A Green, Attractive, Connected Pedestrian Environment

Setting minimum standards and requirements for landscaping maximizes opportunities to create green transit corridors, creates a pedestrian-friendly commercial/business environment and public realm, can assist in visually reducing the scale of a wide street, and generally improves the visual appearance of a place.

The lack of street trees and green spaces along the Corridor is a priority issue for stakeholders. The addition of new landscaping, robust street trees, and green gathering spaces will assist in softening the gray appearance of the Corridor and create visual breaks in the scale of the right-of-way width. These “green” priorities are already reflected in many existing policies.

#### **5) Adaptive Over Time**

The full development potential of the Central Corridor will occur over a long period of time. Recognizing this, a transit-supportive zoning ordinance should establish an appropriate departure point for a high-quality transit corridor, and allow for market transformation and uptake over time.

For example, a building proposal that does not meet the general building height expectations for the Corridor, yet would create local jobs, reduce gaps in the streetscape through full lot frontage, and reduce on-site employee parking in favor of incentives for transit ridership, should be accommodated. The Zoning Ordinance should therefore be revised to set new, clear and high standards for strategic, transit-supportive zones, yet remain adaptive in its implementation to allow for a range of suitable development scenarios over time.



Continuous street frontage, such as along this street in Hartford, Connecticut, helps improve the public realm and create safe and inviting streets.

# Regulatory Framework Recommendations

**This section summarizes the existing regulatory framework guiding growth and investment along the Central Corridor, and identifies potential transit-supportive ‘tune-ups’ for each.**

## Building on the Current Framework

### Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (2002)

#### Purpose

The Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan is comprised of a series of interrelated chapters, with the Summary and General Policy chapter providing a broad focus on economic and community development, and the Transportation Plan guiding future decisions on streets, traffic, parking, public transit, bicycling and pedestrian connections. Generally, the Comprehensive Plan sets out a road map for city development that focuses on improving the built and natural environment, expanding mobility and connectivity, promoting economic growth and enhancing quality of life.

#### Stated Objectives & Opportunities

- Foster the growth of neighborhoods as urban villages that provide opportunities for living, working, shopping and a range of housing choices.
- Promote a vibrant downtown with activated streets and high architectural and public realm design standards.
- Promote redevelopment and investment in the University Avenue corridor with higher densities at strategic transit supportive locations.
- Reverse the sprawling nature of regional development patterns and its reliance on the private automobile by significantly improving local public transit service and promoting regional transit investments.
- Leverage improvements in transit infrastructure (transit stops, pedestrian connections, bikeways, signs, lighting) to improve neighborhood character.
- Target public investment and economic development incentives around major transit destinations and LRT stations.
- Develop a network of interconnected on-and off-street bike routes - completing a regional bikeway system.

#### Transit-Supportive Tune-Up

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the need to accommodate projected growth for the Twin Cities region within built-up areas via sustainable development supported by a healthy public transit network. Further, the Ten Principles for City Development are a model of transit-supportive and place-making objectives. The Comprehensive Plan also includes excellent guidelines for the siting and treatment of buildings and parking, including bringing buildings out to meet the sidewalk, locating parking lots to the

side and rear of buildings, and screening parking lots from the street.

The Plan also states that the City will support the provision of “just enough commercial parking in small parking lots fitted into available space,” and that the City will limit the number of curb cuts on commercial blocks. These are excellent transit-supportive, place-making principles. They should be carried through subsequent layers of the regulatory framework, particularly the Zoning Ordinance, and utilized in the review of future development proposals.

Recommended refinements include:

- An expanded section on University Avenue (Objective 6.3 of the Land Use Plan) may include greater emphasis on securing community benefits and services through new commercial and residential investment, improved north-south connections to the Avenue, the re-introduction of a more regular block pattern in the Midway Shopping District, and the identification of strategic redevelopment nodes where higher-density development and the creation of new urban villages are both appropriate and desirable.
- Emphasis on the evolution of University Avenue as a sustainable, green, landscaped corridor with an abundance of healthy street trees.
- Greater emphasis in the Transportation Plan on the vital role of the public realm in encouraging transit use, and in promoting passive modes of movement as an alternative to the private automobile.
- Partnering with Met Council and Metro Transit to identify opportunities for future stations at Western, Victoria, Hamline and Transfer as well as potential extensions to, the Central Corridor line. Land use, planning, development and public infrastructure decisions should be coordinated within identified expansion areas to preserve opportunities for expanded transit service, and for the creation of transit-supportive environments.



### Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan Downtown Development Strategy (2003)

#### Purpose

This 10-year policy plan, based in the principles of the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, was created to respond to the changing nature of downtown, where a dramatic increase in residential population, the emergence of a cultural and entertainment cluster as a regional destination, and planned transit improvements are reshaping the role, appearance and function of Saint Paul’s core.

#### Stated Objectives & Opportunities

- Improve connections and encourage a more active street life within the downtown by providing a safe and attractive pedestrian network and reorienting retail to the street. The LRT should act as an impetus to improve Cedar and Fourth Streets as pedestrian, bicycle and transit corridors.
- Continue to attract new residential development, particularly in identified Priority Housing Opportunity Areas, that meets a diversity of household and socio-economic needs.
- Downtown’s ability to compete for and attract new employment, particularly in the highly-sought-after “creative” sectors, will be enhanced through improved transportation options, a compact core with a diversity of quality commercial office space, and the creation of an enlivened “24-hour” neighborhood offering a mix of uses and cultural activities.
- Decrease the number of single-occupancy vehicle trips and demand for parking in downtown by increasing the range of mobility options. Planned investments in LRT and commuter and high speed rail should be supported.
- Engage Public Art Saint Paul to produce a Public Art Plan.

#### Transit-Supportive Tune-Up

The focus of the Downtown Development Strategy on livability, appropriately balanced land uses, and a pedestrian-oriented and connected public realm are hallmarks of planning for a transit-supportive environment. Recommended refinements include:

- Amend the Downtown Development Strategy to identify Fourth Street as a preferred “park street”. Identify streetscaping and way-finding measures to improve Fourth Street as a main east/west pedestrian route anchored by Union Depot, Mears Park and Lowertown at one end, a new transit plaza/landmark development at the Athletic Club Block in the middle, and Rice Park and the Entertainment District at the other end.
- Explore the possibility of incorporating a new Downtown Saint Paul Visitor’s Center at the base of the transit plaza/landmark development opportunity on the Athletic Club Block.

- Expand the list of downtown gateways to include the Union Depot plaza. Promote an improved standard of landscaping, public art and public realm features consistent with its status as the future heart of a regional transit network.
- Identify a proposed new park space on Ninth Street (the unused portion of the lawn south of Central Presbyterian Church).
- Identify strategies to ensure Cedar evolves as a pedestrian-friendly LRT zone. These may include enhanced street planting; improved streetscaping, including decorative paving to improve legibility and enhance awareness of LRT; and pedestrian amenities, such as pedestrian-oriented lighting, garbage receptacles, transit shelters and seating to promote pedestrian comfort.
- Explore the possibility of directing parking meter revenues towards the maintenance and enhancement of streetscaping and public realm amenities in the downtown.
- Evaluate existing bus service and routes into and through downtown in light of new LRT service.



### Comprehensive Plan for the Minnesota State Capitol Area (1998)

#### Purpose

The primary vision for the future of the Capitol Area is a reconciliation of the physical and cultural divide that has grown between the Capitol Area campus and Saint Paul's adjacent neighborhoods, while maintaining the integrity and symbolic quality of the Capitol itself. This document describes various opportunities to realize this vision, as well as the goals and objectives of the CAAPB as it manages growth and change within the Capitol Planning District.

#### Stated Objectives & Opportunities

- Promote a strong sense of arrival and place at entrances to the campus through the use of distinctive gateway features, enhanced bridge crossings, public art, attractive landscaping, and mixed-use, infill development to attract pedestrian activity.
- Reinforce Cedar Street as a principal view corridor and major visual and physical connection between downtown and the Capitol Building and surrounding campus, as was originally envisioned by the Cass Gilbert.
- Realize the under-utilized development potential of the Sears Block, with a series of finer-grained streets, mixed-use buildings and a revitalized Sears store.
- Address the current heavy reliance on the automobile by encouraging pedestrian, cycling and transit modes of transportation.
- Alleviate parking overflow problems into adjacent neighborhoods and businesses.

#### Transit-Supportive Tune-Up

Recommended refinements include:

- Amend the list of recognized gateways to the State Capitol Area to include LRT stations, which will function as gateways in their own right.
- Incorporate guidelines for the design of new LRT stations. Address issues of integrated public art strategies; appropriate standards for materials, size, transparency, lighting, and landscaping; and the incorporation of campus directories, signage, and other way-finding devices.
- Reinforce the potential of the Sears Block to evolve as a more dignified seam between the western edge of the Capitol campus and the Summit-University neighborhood. The northern boundary of the Sears site should be identified for its potential to transform the eastern terminus of University Avenue into a thriving linear gateway for the Capitol area.

### Precinct and Small Area Plans

#### Purpose

The City of Saint Paul regularly conducts detailed planning exercises for neighborhoods undergoing changes in land use, socio-economic status and development activity. The plans emphasize development principles and guidelines that promote the higher-level objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, identify priority redevelopment opportunities and propose revised regulatory standards. A sample of the plans reviewed to date include the Franklin-Emerald Small Area Plan, the Historic Lowertown Small Area Plan, the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan, and the University/Dale TOD Plan.

#### Stated Objectives & Opportunities

- Improve to the overall public realm, including new residential amenities such as play areas and gathering spaces, and an enhanced pedestrian realm with increased activity and public safety.
- Promote broad mixes of uses, including continued employment, institutional, commercial and residential.
- Improve mobility and reduce vehicular traffic and parking demand in the area by promoting development of LRT with a stop at Union Depot, and creating bicycle trail links to regional trail and bicycle networks.

#### Transit-Supportive Tune-Up

Recommended refinements include:

- Revise the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan to identify 10th Street and Fourth Street as future "Park Streets."



# Regulatory Framework Recommendations

## Zoning Ordinance

Notwithstanding the recommendations to augment the City's current zoning regulation for land within the Central Corridor study area, as set forth in Section 4.2 of this document, the City intends to conduct a separate zoning study of the current zoning regulation applied in the study area to determine whether the current regulation will implement the vision, principles, and objectives of the Development Strategy. It is expressly understood that if this separate zoning study finds that there is a need to adopt new zoning regulation as necessary in order to implement the Development Strategy that these new regulations will be incorporated into the zoning code. Further, if new zoning regulations for the purpose of implementing the Development Strategy are adopted, it is understood that any conflicting zoning regulation set out in Section 4.2 shall be superseded by the new zoning regulation adopted as a result of the separate zoning study. In addition, pending the adoption of any new zoning regulation from the zoning study, the zoning standards in Section 4.2 are advisory only.

### Purpose

Saint Paul's Zoning Ordinance was recently revised to include the new Traditional Neighborhood (TN) zones, which are districts "intended to foster the development and growth of compact, pedestrian-oriented urban villages." These permissive zones promote complete communities where various forms of housing, commercial uses and employment opportunities coexist. Design standards additionally ensure a high quality of development and compatibility with adjacent stable neighborhoods. TN zones are already in place for several sites along the Corridor.

### Stated Objectives & Opportunities

- Encourage a compatible mix of commercial and residential uses within buildings, sites and blocks.
- Focus new development close to major transit streets and corridors.
- Provide additional choices in housing.

### Transit-Supportive Tune-Up

While the City's TN zone structure offers some important clues to structuring a zoning regime for the Central Corridor, it is recommended that a new Corridor-specific zoning designation be introduced: the Transit Opportunity Zone (TOZ). The recommended TOZ designation consists of a broad Foundation Layer, or TOZ 1, which would generally apply across the entire Area of Change identified on page 84. The exception is the downtown TOZ 5, where refinements to the current downtown ordinance provisions are recommended as prevailing foundation policy. In addition, there are area-specific augmentations of TOZ 1 for TOZ layers 2 through 5 that address the respective opportunities and characteristics of the redevelopment areas outlined in Section 3.3.

The creation of this new zone - one that is tailored specifically to the Central Corridor - will further reinforce the City's commitment to realizing the strategic, transit-supportive and place-making potential created by this investment, and to achieving the community-endorsed vision set out in this report.

### TOZ 1 - A FOUNDATION LAYER

TOZ 1 applies to the entire Area of Change within the Central Corridor, with the exception of the downtown area. An overarching regulatory layer - one that encourages the best-practice principles and objectives of transit-oriented development - should be applied equally across this zone. The higher-level objectives of this underlying layer should include:

- Planning and building in accordance with a community - and stakeholder-endorsed vision of how growth should occur, commonly in the form of a station area or small area plan.
- Promoting a broad mix of uses and services to regenerate pedestrian traffic and transit ridership throughout the day and evening.
- Creating a high-quality pedestrian environment that is safe, attractive, inter-connected with nearby places, and easily-accessible to transit service.
- Ensuring buildings are oriented to the street, sensitive to their surroundings, and contribute to the attractiveness and character of the area.
- Encouraging residential and commercial development at sufficient densities to sustain a high level of transit service.

The more specific standards of the TOZ 1 Foundation Layer have been crafted to meet each of the five Key Principles described previously in this section. They are as follows:

#### Making Development "Fit"

- A 'build-to' line should promote a consistent street edge with minimal front and side setbacks. Buildings should generally be sited to the property line, except where additional width is required to meet the public realm objectives described in Section 3.1. In these instances, the City should seek an additional setback through a land conveyance, to be secured at the time of redevelopment; or where lands are to remain in private ownership, require some public use or utility in the form of outdoor seating, storefront display or landscaping.
- Minimum setbacks could be required to ensure an appropriate transition of building heights adjacent to residential areas. On development blocks facing residential areas, a base height of 3 stories (approx. 30 feet) could be established, above which a minimum setback of 15 feet may be appropriate.

- Entrances and garage doors for structured and below-grade parking areas should be restricted to side streets and alleys, wherever possible. Parking access from a shared alley where abutting a residential use should be allowed.

#### Transit-Supportive Densities

- A minimum FAR of 1.0 should be established for development sites larger than 25,000 square feet in area.
- Building heights should be a minimum of 2 stories, generally up to 4 stories and, at corners, up to 6 stories.
- Public gathering, landscaped areas, outdoor seating, and land conveyed for public roads should count towards minimum FAR requirements.
- Where development is phased, a phasing master plan should be required to identify how minimum densities will be met over time.

#### Transit-Supportive Access, Circulation & Parking

- On-street parking within a 500-foot radius of a building entrance should count toward parking requirements for retail and commercial uses.
- Residential parking rates should be reduced to match other transit jurisdictions (minimum 0.75/unit; maximum 1.0 unit), or introduce a blended rate that takes into consideration unit size.
- A new uniform non-residential maximum parking ratio of 1 space/300 sq. ft. should be established to account for the mixed retail and commercial nature of new development. Maximums may be exceeded only where structured or underground parking is provided, or where driveways are shared.
- Where off-street parking is required for private development, a payment-in-lieu option should be provided that directs funds to a Municipal Parking Authority for the construction of a shared parking ramp.
- No surface parking may front onto the Avenue except where no alley access is possible. In this instance, detailed site plan review and site specific amendment should be required.
- Surface parking should be limited to no more than 20% of any lot frontage on the Avenue, to a maximum of 56-feet (2 aisles and a driveway.) A landscaped setback between parking and front property line of at least 2 stall widths should be required.
- Breaks between buildings should strictly accommodate pedestrian connections and limited surface parking as described above. They should not be fenced or walled nor used for outdoor storage.
- Curb cuts for single-use driveways should be prohibited unless they access a shared parking lot.

#### *A Green, Attractive, Connected Pedestrian Environment*

- High-quality landscaping and pedestrian connections should be required wherever side yard setbacks between buildings have been provided.
- Impervious surfaces should be limited to a maximum of 50% of total site area. Green roofs, permeable paving, and landscape components should be counted towards the permeable area total.

#### *Adaptive Over Time*

Similar to the current TN Design Standards, the TOZ 1 Foundation Layer should be accompanied by a clear set of design and development standards. Where development proposals do not meet all standards, proponents will be required to demonstrate how specific physical and/or market characteristics make these objectives difficult to achieve, how the general intent of these standards will be met, and how other standards are being met or exceeded.

#### **TOZ 2 THROUGH 5 - AUGMENTING THE TOZ 1 FOUNDATION LAYER**

The following augmentations to the TOZ 1 Foundation Layer address specific characteristics of redevelopment areas as outlined in Section 3.3. The objectives and standards of the underlying TOZ 1 Foundation Layer shall still apply in these areas, except that where a discrepancy exists the augmenting provisions shall prevail. The augmenting layers are:

#### **TOZ 2 Station Areas**

Redevelopment parcels within a five-minute walk of planned stations are among the most strategic and important redevelopment opportunities in the Central Corridor. TOZ Station Areas are delineated by 1/4-mile distance along the Corridor within the Area of Change. This regulatory layer will set the tone for future development and investment in the area by requiring a high standard of architectural and urban design, subject to review through a design review process; minimum development densities; taller building heights, tempered by regulations on mitigating impacts on adjacent residential areas; strict regulations on the provision and location of parking; and high standards for landscaping.

*Generally, all standards of the TOZ 1 Foundation Layer apply to TOZ 2 Station Areas, except that:*

- a minimum FAR of 1.0 shall apply to all sites;
- buildings shall generally be a minimum of 4 stories; at major transit intersections, they may be up to 10 stories, and in appropriate locations, they may be up to 15 stories;
- no surface parking lots over 10 stalls be permitted;
- no drive through retail, car dealership or or auto repair uses shall be permitted;
- a specific build-to line shall be established with allowances for additional setbacks to enhance the pedestrian right-of-way; and
- development proposals shall be subject to design review.

#### **TOZ 3 Marketplace**

The TOZ 3 Marketplace designation shall apply to the market intensification areas - larger parcels of land currently characterized by large-format retail stores and extensive surface parking. These zones will promote gradual infill and intensification through the creation of new shared parking ramps, a finer block pattern and retail format, and a greater mix of uses.

*Generally, all standards of the TOZ 1 Foundation Layer apply to TOZ 3 Marketplace sites, except that:*

- a minimum FAR of 1.0 shall apply to all sites;
- the conveyance of private land for the creation of public roads, parks and spaces shall be secured through development negotiations;
- development shall be a minimum of 2 stories except fronting the Avenue where generally 4 stories shall be the minimum; up to 15 stories may be allowed where appropriate;
- no surface parking is permitted to front University Avenue;
- a small area plan or master plan, shall include a phasing plan to identify how project phases will meet minimum densities over time; and
- development proposals shall be subject to design review.

#### **TOZ 4 Urban Village**

TOZ 4 Urban Village zones consist of large, strategic redevelopment parcels with potential for the creation of new, higher-density, mixed-use communities in close proximity to LRT stations. These new transit- and pedestrian-oriented urban communities shall provide a range of housing, employment and retail uses; create accessible bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly connections to transit and adjacent neighborhoods; and incorporate parking within sensitively-designed ramps, inside buildings or below-grade so as not to detract from the quality of the built environment.

*Generally, all standards of the TOZ 1 Foundation Layer apply to TOZ 4 Urban Village sites, except that:*

- development shall be a minimum of 2 stories except fronting the Avenue, where generally 4 stories shall be minimum; up to 15 stories may be allowed where appropriate;
- development shall proceed consistent with of a small area plan or master plan;
- the conveyance of private land for the creation of public roads, parks and spaces shall be secured through development negotiations; and
- development proposals shall be subject to design review.

#### **TOZ 5 Downtown**

Downtown Saint Paul already has much of the physical and regulatory structure in place to support a high level of public transit. Therefore, the underlying B4 and B5 zones should be retained and fine-tuned with the following specific recommendations with respect to incorporating the broader principles of the TOZ 1 Foundation Layer. In addition, the following presents specific recommendations with respect to incorporating future parking caps and design guidelines within the B4 and B5 zones.

*Generally, all standards of the underlying B4 and B5 zones should remain in place with the following refinements to create the TOZ 5 Downtown ordinance provisions:*

- where off-street parking is provided, an appropriate cap, as a reduced percentage of the minimum provisions, should be implemented for all residential and commercial uses. For example, residential development may only be permitted a total of 75% of the required minimum, equaling 0.75 spaces per residential dwelling. This cap may only be exceeded where provisions for shared and/or leased parking with other residential and/or commercial uses are secured.
- future design standards for the underlying B4 and B5 zones should reinforce and be consistent with recent successful development in the downtown core. This includes orienting buildings to provide a strong outer frame for public parks; requiring transparent and attractive building frontages at grade with pedestrian entrances clearly defined and oriented to a public street; signage of an appropriate scale and appearance for an urban environment; and building heights that provide a transition between the taller buildings in the downtown core and the lower mixed-use character of the area's emerging urban villages.

# Implementation - 21 Community-Building Strategies

The many principles, ideas, concepts, investments and initiatives identified in this document will require partnerships on many fronts to realize their implementation and success.

The following ideas will help these partnerships begin. The 20 Community-Building Strategies should be used to help frame the dialogue around priorities, who is responsible for what, and the identification of future partnerships and collaborations.

Six of the strategies are fleshed out in more detail. The six were chosen in response to priority issues and concerns identified through community consultation. They build on the initiatives identified in the Development Strategy, and are informed by research conducted on precedents and best practices for transit and infrastructure planning throughout North America.

## 1) Transit-Supportive Regulatory Framework

- Interim regulatory controls such as the interim planning ordinance
- Revise ordinance to incorporate principles of the TOZ Foundation Layer and respective Augmenting Layers as appropriate
- Expedited planning approvals
- Opportunities for future stations at Western and Victoria and future extensions of LRT (Fourth)
- Small area plans for transit urban villages

## 2) Sustainable Central Corridor Strategy

- Green infrastructure, green buildings and best practices
- Export Saint Paul as a leader in LRT sustainable
- Union Depot as multimodal hub with transit, rail, bus, car share, bikes
- Smart card technologies to integrate regional transit

## 3) Creative City Strategy

- Fourth Street as Avenue of Arts and Sciences
- University Gallery District (Victoria and Grotto)
- Expansion of Raymond Arts District

## 4) Tourism and Convention Strategy

- Twin Cities LRT pass: discovering the Twin Cities on LRT
- Downtown wayfinding plan, incorporating both street and skyway signage

## 5) Branding and Marketing Strategy – Put Saint Paul “On the Map”

- Saint Paul Gateway at Westgate
- “Great Walks” Guide to Downtown and Avenue neighborhoods
- Union Depot as Saint Paul’s transportation gateway
- Capitol District Gateway
- Downtown wayfinding plan, incorporating both street and skyway signage
- World Cultural Heritage District

## 6) Public Art Strategy: Celebrate the Many “Stories” Along the Corridor

- Integrate artistic input into all phases of planning, construction and consultation related to LRT
- Corridor public art committee
- Station names that reflect the Corridor’s cultures and history
- Incorporating interpretive art in station designs
- Commemorative public art installations
- Community discovery walks
- Dedication of new public spaces
- Engage local artists in securing grants for funding art programs and installations, and in negotiating community benefit agreements for public realm improvements and maintenance

## 7) Public Space Strategy – Greening the Corridor

- 12 new public spaces for 12 stations
- “5000” trees along the Avenue
- Local planting and stewardship programs
- Dickerman Park
- Parking meter revenues to fund streetscape improvements

## 8) Residential Neighborhood Preservation Program

- #16 bus service at current service levels
- Home improvement loans/grants
- Phased property tax relief for fixed-income and low-income owners
- On-going partnerships with CDC for property rehab and infill
- Direct public investment to areas of transition

## 9) Inclusive Housing Strategy

- Rental-to-ownership programs
- Diverse range of housing types to meet life cycle needs

## 10) Displacement Prevention Plan

- Criteria for identifying areas most vulnerable to change
- Baseline monitoring program
- Anticipate socio-economic change in vulnerable areas to offset shifts adversely associated with real estate value increases. Develop tools and strategies to help vulnerable residents and businesses remain in the area

## 11) World Cultural Heritage District

- Lexington to Marion
- Cultural passport: combine incentives to use transit to get to District
- WCHD Advisory Committee for integration with TOZ initiatives
- Promote WCHD in all branding and marketing initiatives
- Commission local artist to design a WCHD Gateway at Lexington

## 12) Strengthen Local Businesses Strategy

- Resource, management and job training
- Financial and technical assistance to small businesses, both along the Avenue and in the downtown
- “Rent-to-own” assistance
- Work with Planning and Economic Development in promoting LRT as major incentive for large businesses/firms to locate in downtown Saint Paul
- Minority contracting
- Support development of new locally-owned minority businesses

## 13) Community Benefit Agreements

- Employment training
- New living wage jobs
- First-source hiring systems
- Daycare spaces
- New open spaces (acquisition & development)
- Public art
- Pedestrian and streetscape improvements
- Affordable housing

## 14) Parking Management Strategy/Toolkit

- Consider user/permit fees that ties the cost of parking to its primary users and encourages more efficient provision
- Shared parking opportunities; facilitate land assembly
- On-street parking opportunities: wrap the corner, consolidate curb cuts
- Design and landscape guidelines for on-site parking
- Standards for surface parking maximums: no net gain
- Committed funds for parking enforcement
- Monitoring program
- Public investment

## 15) Pedestrian Priority Approach / Zones

- Safe pedestrian crossings
- Pedestrian priority around LRT stations
- “Walk to work” and “walk to home” from stations
- Guidelines on orientation and access of buildings
- Ground-floor uses on downtown streets
- Pedestrian demand modeling to plan for safe, easy pedestrian movement

## 16) Central Corridor Bicycle Strategy

- Network of bicycle connections: n/s and e/w
- Strategic locations for bike infrastructure
- Bicycle parking requirements for new development
- Bicycle demand modeling to plan for safe, easy bicycle movement

## 17) 10 Key Principles For LRT Station Design (see Section 3.5)

- Mix of uses
- Future stations at Western and Victoria
- Stations within buildings in downtown
- Integrated bicycle infrastructure
- Design stations for Winter City
- Accessibility requirements
- Landscape requirements

# Elaborating 6 Key Strategies

## 18) Public Education Program: From Design to Operation

- a. LRT promotions to increase community support and ridership
- b. \$1-billion investment as a once in a century opportunity for the community
- c. Community facilities as LRT information zones (ie. Rondo Library, Lao Family Community Center)
- d. One-stop shop
- e. Coordinated messages between agencies to the community to avoid consultation fatigue

## 19) Construction Mitigation Strategy

- a. Collaborate with local residents and businesses
- b. Marketing & information campaign – the Corridor is “Open for Business”
- c. Construction communications program: sharing of detailed construction plans and schedules
- d. Minimal disruption: financial incentives for contractors to minimize disruption
- e. Identify potential construction conflicts with key delivery and service areas in the downtown. Work with downtown businesses in identifying temporary alternatives through construction.

## 20) Resources for Implementation Strategy

- a. Consider using existing City programs and resources in new and innovative ways to finance implementation, including focusing existing programs in the “Transit Opportunity Zone” and adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- b. Request additional state and federal funding to assist with public infrastructure, housing, and business improvement programs within the Corridor.
- c. Consider using innovative programs such as tax-increment financing or business and parking improvement districts to implement area-wide improvements. Propose changes to state law if needed.

## 21) Historic Preservation Strategy

- a. Survey and designate historic buildings and district
- b. Work with District Councils to create guidelines for infill development in historic areas
- c. Explore the use of conservation districts to protect residential neighborhoods with distinct character
- d. Partner with property owners and community developers to rehabilitate older buildings
- e. Interpret historic and culturally significant sites
- f. Educate the greater public about historic and cultural resources along the Corridor

## 1. GREEN & SUSTAINABLE CORRIDOR

Achieving sustainable development is about integrating decisions affecting land use, urban design, engineering, public works, public transit, transportation and building science to ensure that future growth utilizes existing infrastructure investment in a manner that minimizes future impacts on the urban ecosystem. It requires promoting sustainability in every aspect of the Corridor’s evolution: its form, movement patterns, design, uses, and regulation. The six recommended components of a Green & Sustainable Corridor Strategy described below will assist in meeting these goals.

### a. Sustainable Regulatory Framework – Achieving the Right Density and Mix of Uses

The term “regulatory framework” describes the sum of all planning and policy documents with jurisdiction over the redevelopment of a particular site or area. A green and sustainable framework may include requirements and guidelines governing the heights and densities of buildings, appropriate and compatible land uses, and policies that promote the creation of complete communities with options to live, work, rest and age-in-place.

### b. Stormwater Management – Divert, Treat and Re-Use

How can we decrease the volume of stormwater flow being channeled into storm sewers? A Green & Sustainable Strategy may set minimum 50% standards for porous (versus impervious) surfaces as a percentage of total site area as per the TOZ. A number of innovative materials and practices could be incorporated into site and building design to meet these targets, including on-site swales, ponds and wetlands, green roofs, detention tanks and porous paving materials.

The strategy may also consider ways to improve the quality of stormwater being absorbed into soil. Stormwater from traffic, parking areas and non-green roofs is considerably more polluted with heavy metals and hazardous substances, and should be separated and treated before being released into soil or water.

In considering the above issues, recommendations for a dual stormwater management system could include treating polluted stormwater from traffic areas in underground oil separators and settling tanks constructed under parking ramps, and then conveying treated storm runoff into the soil, using it for irrigation for street trees and on-site landscaping, or releasing the treated water into the river. The cleaner water collected from roofs and open spaces can be passively treated in stormwater management ponds before reuse.

### c. Public Realm & Urban Design Guidelines – The TOTAL Built Environment Made Attractive and Comfortable

A sustainable and green environment is one in which the total built environment is made attractive and comfortable in all seasons. In many places, a sustainability audit may be undertaken to identify opportunities to create more sustainable community design. From a built form and public space perspective, guidelines may include:

- regulating heights and setbacks of buildings to preserve solar exposure in pedestrian areas, particularly shopping and public gathering spaces;
- designing passive and active micro-climates for relief from cold weather, including wind screens, solar access and heated waiting areas;
- orienting buildings to the street and to transit stations and requiring principal entrances to face principal streets;
- providing legible and comfortable pedestrian connections between buildings and destinations, and to transit; and
- ensuring a diversity of housing opportunities.

### d. Streetscaping & Planting Guidelines – Progressive Standards for the Health and Vitality of the Urban Forest

- minimum standards for tree pit dimensions, soil volumes, setbacks;
- planting target: “5000 trees along the Avenue; ”
- where there is insufficient opportunity for trees or open space, alternate “greening” techniques for individual blocks, including planting boxes, hanging plants, and others;
- progressive irrigation standards and use of grey water where possible;
- street tree planting and stewardship programs; and
- standards for appropriate species diversity including native species targets.

### e. Green Building Guidelines – Promoting and Achieving High Performance Building Technologies and Construction Practices

- reuse and recycling of building materials along the Corridor;
- retain and reuse existing buildings wherever possible; remove regulatory constraints to the reuse of these structures;
- orient buildings and glazing to maximize solar gain in the winter and minimize it in the summer; and
- use efficient insulating materials that reduce heat loss.

### f. Public Transit - A Viable and Attractive Alternative to the Private Automobile

- promote and invest in transit as an attractive, efficient and affordable alternative to the private automobile;
- integrate transit stops with pedestrian, cycling movements; and
- align traffic engineering and street design decisions to give primacy to the pedestrian; provide safe and easy crossings to stations.

## 2. INCLUSIVE HOUSING

The greatest strength of the Central Corridor is its diversity. The potential for gentrification and displacement of low-income individuals and families from the Corridor as property values rise is a primary concern of area residents, who feel that residents who wish to stay in the area should have the option to do so. The following strategies will assist in realizing an inclusive housing market:

### a. Supply-Side Financial Incentives

These publicly-financed strategies are direct grants, tax breaks and loans made available to developers working within identified (vulnerable) areas in exchange for the provision of affordable housing units. Incentives may include:

- increased availability of low-cost debt financing for housing developments where some portion of investment is geared to provision of low-income rental units;
- enhanced credit for developers through municipal loan guarantees; and
- grants to cover infrastructure and remediation costs associated with redevelopment and brownfield sites.

### b. Supply-Side Regulatory Incentives

These are relaxations and special provisions through the regulatory and approvals process designed to make the provision of affordable housing more attractive to private developers. These incentives may include:

- density bonus programs;
- increasing the opportunity for second units in neighborhoods within transit areas;
- requiring affordable housing on rental projects in exchange for expediting zoning amendments and approvals; and
- increased inclusionary housing zoning requirements at transit station locations.

### c. Home Ownership Assistance

The ability to move area residents from rental units into home ownership is crucial to reducing displacement, and to ensuring that the benefits associated with land appreciation are equitably distributed and enjoyed. Programs to promote greater rates of home ownership include:

- providing municipally-backed financial assistance to first-time homebuyers within identified focus areas;
- permitting accessory dwelling units in single-family neighborhoods as an affordable housing option, and to allow multiple generations of families to share property and “age-in-place”;
- promoting opportunities for condominium development and ownership within the existing neighborhood; and
- expanding the use of community land trusts to maintain long-term housing affordability.

In addition, to address concerns regarding the ability of existing low-or fixed-income home owners to continue to afford to live in the community, property tax relief programs for targeted groups may be considered. These programs could lapse at the time of sale of the property to ensure the benefit accrues to the intended resident, not the property.

## 3. PARKING MANAGEMENT

Perceived parking shortages should not inform major decisions about transit infrastructure, alignment and land use. Research reveals that forecasts of drastic impacts to area businesses and residential communities due to changes in supply of and demand for parking do not materialize; where problems do exist, they can be effectively regulated.

The recommended approach to parking management is to identify where potential conflicts may arise, create a toolkit of best practices for each scenario, and apply and refine these as necessary. This wait-and-see, test-and-monitor approach could be applied to any of the following solutions:

- maximize on-street parking through flexible stall spacing, zoned meters, and reducing the number of curb cuts;
- implement permit parking in residential neighborhoods, typically within a ¼-mile radius of transit stations;
- identify strategic opportunities for small shared commercial lots to support small businesses;
- explore the potential for the establishment of a municipal parking authority for the delivery of shared parking decks and facilities;
- where appropriate, plan for park and ride lots at strategic locations (high employment density/low residential density areas near interchanges);
- reduce parking requirements within identified transit station areas to reduce proliferation of surface lots;
- increase opportunities for shared parking, including municipally- and privately-owned and -operated surface lots and ramps, and common surface lots. These will relieve pressure on adjacent residential areas and remove major barriers to new development; and
- in the downtown, encourage shared parking solutions to facilitate the redevelopment of infill sites currently used for parking.

## 4. STRENGTHENING LOCAL BUSINESSES

Businesses of all sizes play a vital role along the Corridor. Their potential displacement, whether through short-term construction disruption or long-term commercial gentrification, has been identified as a key concern by community groups and stakeholders.

The following strategies have been used elsewhere to support small businesses and promote opportunities for long-term benefit.

### a. Community Development Funds or Loans

The primary objective of community development fund programs is to channel funds or loans to communities or groups in recognized need of financial assistance. Funding sources include various public and private agencies and/or foundations. Guiding principles for distribution of these funds must be clearly described, and typically give preference to projects that provide space for locally-owned businesses and/or employ area residents, provide affordable housing, provide facilities for community and cultural activities, and support small businesses within the impacted construction area.

### b. Façade Improvement Programs

These programs provide funds and/or low-interest loans, either through business associations or to individual businesses, to rehabilitate commercial building frontages. Improvements typically include painting, new signage and lighting, and are often coordinated with neighboring businesses in order to foster a more cohesive district image. Where grants are offered, they are typically on a 1:1 matching basis with private funds.

### c. Promoting Building Ownership

The ability of a commercial tenant to not only remain in place, but to purchase the building in which the business is located will promote long-term financial gains for area businesses as land values appreciate along the Corridor. Municipalities can assist in identifying and matching small business owners with legal, business consultant and lending institutions in order to provide financial assistance (low-interest loans, joint venture purchasing, etc.) and technical support (legal).

### d. Skills Training

Local businesses will need to take advantage of training and seminars in business operation, marketing, and developing long-term business plans. Municipalities can assist in promoting current programs within identified impact areas.

### e. Business Improvement Districts

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are business-community partnerships with the power to self-impose special property tax assessments in order to finance public realm and infrastructure improvements. BIDs are typically created through a petition, with a required majority of local property owners willing to sign on. Once approved by the appropriate governing body, the BID is able to collect the additional revenue and put it to use for identified programs, services and benefits.

The general goals of a BID are to leverage tax dollars to increase funding for transportation and other community improvement projects, improve transportation to make businesses more accessible, increase the long-term property values in a district, and improve the

attractiveness and competitiveness of a district through new aesthetic treatments. Specific activities or services of a BID may include:

- providing streetscape, lighting, benches or other pedestrian amenities;
- providing aesthetic treatments, such as paintings, murals, sculptures and fountains;
- leasing space for sidewalk cafe tables and chairs;
- providing or contracting for the provision of security;
- providing or contracting for cleaning maintenance and other services to public and private property; and
- supporting business activity, economic development and tourism through joint marketing campaigns.

**f. LRT as an Anchor for Major Employers Downtown**

The planned construction of LRT creates significant competitive advantages in attracting major businesses and employers to downtown Saint Paul. The relationship is a mutually supportive and reinforcing one: the increased mobility and lifestyle options promoted by living and working in proximity to LRT are competitive qualities with which cities attract large employers, and employers in turn attract a highly-mobile workforce; while spin-off economic activity from a strengthened residential and employment base in the downtown results in decreased commercial vacancy rates, supports small businesses, promotes a greater range of services and amenities in the core, and creates a captive ridership base with which to support a viable public transit network.

The competitive advantages LRT creates should be touted by all entities promoting downtown Saint Paul as a highly desirable and livable place to live, work and invest.

## 5. ENSURING THE COMMUNITY BENEFITS

The Development Strategy process has been a tremendous opportunity to work with the diverse range of communities and stakeholders along the Corridor. It is also only a starting point from which to establish on-going engagement and partnerships over the course of LRT design and construction, and other complementary Corridor initiatives. Three initiatives will be key to ensuring the existing community experiences the “lift” from the Central Corridor LRT.

- A **program of ongoing engagement**, coordinated between the City and Met Council.
- A **public education program** – from design to operation with ongoing updates on the process and events to increase the public’s awareness of the benefits of LRT.
- Community benefit agreements** are agreements between a developer and local community that bind the developer to deliver various community benefits. These may include enhanced environmental protection, living wage jobs, affordable housing, or funding for new parks and open spaces. The developer in turn may receive neighborhood support for zoning approvals, approval to purchase public land, or access to public subsidies. The Central Corridor Development Strategy includes a wide range of city-building initiatives that could form the basis for negotiating and securing community benefits.
- Jobs.** In coordination with Met Council’s DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) Program and Ramsey County’s Workforce Solutions programs, work to achieve the following goals:
  - Help local residents train for and capture living wage employment opportunities associated with LRT and subsequent redevelopment opportunities.
  - Enforce current policies to ensure and exceed training and hiring goals and goals associated with federally funded projects.
  - Work to encourage the development of new jobs along or near University Avenue that pay living wages, provide affordable health insurance and pension benefits and offer career opportunities beyond entry level positions.
  - Encourage at least 50% local hiring when possible; conduct a first source referral system with training and hiring opportunities targeted for minorities and low-income people.
- Minority contracting**
  - Assist minority contractors to prepare and capture contract opportunities for LRT and subsequent redevelopments.
  - Enforce current City policies to ensure and exceed City contracting goals and goals associated with federally funded projects.
  - Reduce size of bid contracts to ease access of small minority companies into contractual opportunities.
- Minority business development**
  - Expand and create programs that support development of new small, locally owned minority business within new developments along the Corridor.
  - Include business incubators, cooperative enterprises and entrepreneur support services for new business development opportunities.

## 6. CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION

The anticipated and real disruption that will occur as a result of the construction of the LRT line is a critical issue. Fortunately, there are many good precedents for dealing with this and some time to put appropriate measures in place. Approaches to this issue can be grouped into two categories:

- Community outreach techniques**, which focus on educating and assisting business owners with financial and technical support. These include: low interest loans and business planning seminars, education on specifics of design and future operation, promotional signage and marketing campaigns, published construction schedules, and notification of possible areas of disruption through construction.
- Construction management techniques**, which offer incentives and performance bonuses directly to contractors on the basis of efficiency and flexibility.

Examples of both types of programs may be summarized as follows:

- Business and community working groups form to meet and discuss issues on a regular basis. This work is supplemented by of community outreach officers with the responsibility for reaching out to individual groups from diverse communities.
- A Community Coordination Team is formed to review terms of the contractor’s public involvement program and respond to inquiries from the public.
- Access is provided to expert business assistance consulting services to assist with marketing plan development, technical workshops, or one-on-one consultation.
- Low-interest loan programs for small businesses located adjacent to the line are established.
- Organized commuter programs and incentives for using public transit to reduce commuter delays attributable to construction.
- Marketing and information campaigns, including newspaper advertisements, signage for area businesses, information websites, information kiosks, and detailed traffic circulation plans are circulated to businesses and the public.
- Access to businesses for customers and employees is maintained by arranging alternate access when primary access is limited due to construction.
- Identify potential construction conflicts with key delivery and service areas in the downtown. Work with downtown businesses in identifying temporary alternatives through construction.
- An incentive fee evaluation program awards bonuses to contractors for successfully executing construction mitigation programs that preserve access, reduce noise and dirt, etc.