

Meeting Summary

Saint Paul Rail to Multimodal Corridor Plan

Project Advisory Group Meeting #1

March 28, 2017
2:00-3:30 PM

Location

13th Floor Conference Room
City Hall Annex: 25 W Fourth Street, Saint Paul

1. Meeting Attendees

- Saint Paul: Mike Richardson (City PM), Anton Jerve, Merritt Clapp-Smith, Kathleen Anglo, Reuben Collins, Taina Maki, Libby Kantner
- Alta Planning + Design: Rose Ryan (Alta PM), Colin Harris
- Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority: Kevin Roggenbuck
- Ramsey County: Ken Ioso, Joe Lux
- Metro Transit: Scott Thompson
- Metropolitan Council: Heidi Schallberg
- MnDOT: Cameron Muhic
- East Metro Strong: Will Schroeer
- Saint Paul Public Schools: Lisa Jansen
- West 7th/Fort Road Federation: Betty Moran
- Highland District Council: Jeffrey Burton

2. Review scope and schedule

Mike Richardson and Rose Ryan provided background information about the scope and schedule of the project. In 2014, the City of Saint Paul received a TIGER grant to study the potential for redeveloping a former Canadian Pacific Railroad spur (Ford Spur) as a multimodal corridor. The 5 mile unused railroad spur runs roughly parallel to West 7th Street from St. Clair Avenue westward before turning north at St. Paul Avenue and eventually terminating at the southeast corner of the Ford site in Highland Park. A map of the project location is attached.

The project will study options for bicycle, pedestrian, and possible transit use of the railway corridor. The scope of the project includes:

- Public and Stakeholder Review
- Plan Review and Coordination
- Topographic Survey
- Existing Conditions Review
- Project Goals, Evaluation Criteria, and Strategies
- Environmental Screening
- Concept Design
- Preliminary Design
- Operations and Maintenance

The planning study began in February 2017 and will continue through March 2018. The attached Public Involvement Plan includes a detailed schedule.

3. Project Advisory Group structure and expectations

A Project Advisory Group (PAG) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will provide key input and guidance throughout the study. The PAG includes a wider range of agency and community stakeholders, with five meetings anticipated throughout the study. A TAG will be formed with primarily agency stakeholders. The TAG will discuss technical topics in more detail and will meet eight times throughout the study. A list of PAG and TAG agencies/organizations is included in the Public Involvement Plan attached to this meeting summary. The project schedule includes anticipated meetings of each group.

The project team has set the following expectations for the PAG:

- Provide input and guidance during meetings
- Share information with your organization: staff, decisionmakers, constituents
- Help spread the word about opportunities for public input
- Identify concerns that require further coordination with your organization

4. Discuss public involvement

Mike and Rose provided information about the public involvement plan. Public involvement will take place in three phases:

1. **Study introduction:** April – June 2017
2. **Preliminary concept review:** July – September 2017
3. **Revised concept and recommendation review:** October 2017 – March 2018

Mike will be the point of contact for public comments and questions about the study. The city is currently setting up a project website and email blast. The city will set up a separate email notification list for project updates. The city is also sending letters to adjacent residents on Friday, March 31 regarding surveying activities that will occur as part of the project.

Rose reviewed the Public Involvement Plan that is attached to the meeting summary. Attendees brought up several items that would be good to clarify with the public, including the following:

- The value of the Ford Spur for bike/walk transportation trips, as opposed to the Shepard Road corridor. The Ford Spur will be more useful for transportation and neighborhood connections, while the Shepard Road/Sam Morgan Regional Trail is more useful for long-distance recreational use.
- Why this project is starting now, and why it did not start several years ago when funding was awarded.
- Need to define the difference between the Riverview Corridor Study and the Ford Spur, and clarify that the Ford Spur study does not have an influence on whether transit will be included in this corridor. The Ford Spur study will develop design concepts that include transit, because a Locally Preferred Alternative decision for Riverview will not occur until late 2017.

- Interest in including some mention of bike/walk in the name of this project, to help people understand that this project is different than the Riverview Corridor Study.

Rose asked the group for feedback on additional ways to promote opportunities for input. PAG members suggested the following:

- Neighborhood House
- Jewish Community Center
- Brewery Neighborhood Block Club
- Highland District Plan – it is being updated this summer and there will be opportunities to coordinate outreach
- Send flyers home to students who live in the area
- Saint Paul Classic Bike Tour
- Promote to bike shops in the area
- Outreach at bus stops, including hanging physical signs letting people know that a meeting is coming up
- Saint Paul Women on Bikes
- Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition
- Outreach at Cooper's Market instead of Mississippi Market, to better reach underrepresented populations

5. Plan review and coordination needs

Rose highlighted the plans that are currently being reviewed as part of the study, including:

- Riverview Corridor
- Ford Site Planning
- Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan
- Saint Paul Bicycle Plan
- Ramsey County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Metropolitan Council Regional Bicycle System Study
- Small area plans: District 9, 15, Victoria Park, and Shepard Davern
- Great River Passage Plan
- Fort Road Development Plan

Due to the number of overlapping planning efforts in the project areas, Alta will be developing recommendations for a coordination protocol. Kathleen Anglo noted an upcoming master planning effort for Hidden Falls and Crosby Regional Parks. Sibley Plaza is also being considered for redevelopment by the property owner, Pastor Properties.

The group discussed that coordination should be addressed as a two-way relationship. The project should not just react and adapt to previous or concurrent plans, but should also recommend ways that plans and projects can incorporate recommendations that complement the Ford Spur.

6. Project Goals

Project development will be guided by several goals. The PAG split into smaller groups to discuss what stakeholders would like to get out of this project, so that the project team can shape the project goals. Ideas and discussion are grouped into categories on the following page.

- Reimagining the Ford Spur:
 - Think big and understand the innovative possibilities for the corridor
 - Get people excited about the project, including the possibility of co-locating active transportation and transit
 - Explore opportunities for neighborhood connections – different neighborhoods being able to connect in a different way, creating social ties between neighborhoods
 - Show development possibilities – but understand concerns about the impact of property values and property tax increases
 - Share the benefits of the project in the future: ease to get to schools, markets, etc.
 - Dispel myths about the negative impacts of trails and be proactive about sharing benefits of trails
- Community and stakeholder engagement:
 - Very clear and transparent communication about what the study is
 - Avoid exacerbating study/meeting fatigue
 - Build a strong common vision that people support, without overpromising
 - Focused feedback (more specific than Riverview due to smaller area)
 - Strong engagement using businesses as staging points (like Cooper's Foods)
 - Input from potential city and regional users that may not be as involved in the neighborhoods, but would still use the amenity
 - Coordination with SPPS planning – there are connections to schools
- Design:
 - Well-thought-out preliminary concepts, including best ways to co-locate active transportation and transit
 - A clear understanding of where existing infrastructure may need to be adjusted to encourage full and safe use of the spur
 - Confirmation that bicycle and pedestrian facilities will be included as part of the design
 - Consideration of connections to other walking and bicycling facilities and destinations, including West 7th Street, Highland and Mac Groveland neighborhoods, and the Jefferson Bikeway
 - Think creatively about active transportation uses: scooter, skate board, winter uses, etc.
 - Be sensitive about interactions with adjacent properties – for example, consider siting gathering places so they do not feel like they are in someone's residential backyard.
 - Cooperation with Minneapolis people who worked on the Midtown Greenway: Consider similarities with business relationships, especially considering length parallel to West 7th Street and proximity to businesses
- Analysis:
 - Consideration of how Ford site will influence demand on transportation on the route
 - Consideration of how demand and use will impact parking near the spur

- Understanding of potential volume of bikers/walkers/other and how that relates to capacity on important connections, ride times on route and to other destinations
- Understand economic development opportunities: what would be economic benefits, not just costs
- Foster ownership of the vision of this project:
 - First step is getting people to know that something is happening on the Ford Spur - that the rail corridor is not just being ignored
 - Develop pride and confidence in the area
 - Articulate a clear role for people to stay involved after this study and be an advocate for moving forward
 - Help people understand how to be involved in possible phased development of the project
 - Consider a low-funding short term implementation alternative for the project
 - Use study to state case for the Ford Spur as an asset for the city
 - Develop a multi-agency partnership where all agencies have a stake in moving the project forward: city, county, parks, Metropolitan Council, and others
 - Raise the importance of active transportation to be on par with auto transportation, to help make the case for funding and acquisition of the Ford Spur

Mike shared the following goals that were set out in the TIGER grant application:

- Allow future development on the Ford site to be served with more and safer transportation choices
- Connect downtown Saint Paul with diverse neighborhoods in a new, healthy, efficient, and attractive way
- Complement the regional transportation system
- Coordinate the goals and needs of related studies and stakeholder agencies to develop, design, and plan collaboratively
- Foster economic development along the corridor
- Demonstrate innovation in expediting the process of re-purposing an unused freight rail corridor

Based on the ideas generated at the PAG meeting, the project team will refine the goals established in the TIGER grant application. The team will then develop evaluation criteria based on these goals. The criteria will be used to evaluate design options for the Ford Spur. At the next PAG meeting, the project team will present the refined project goals and draft project evaluation criteria.

7. Next steps for the project

The next PAG meeting will be held in May. Other upcoming work includes:

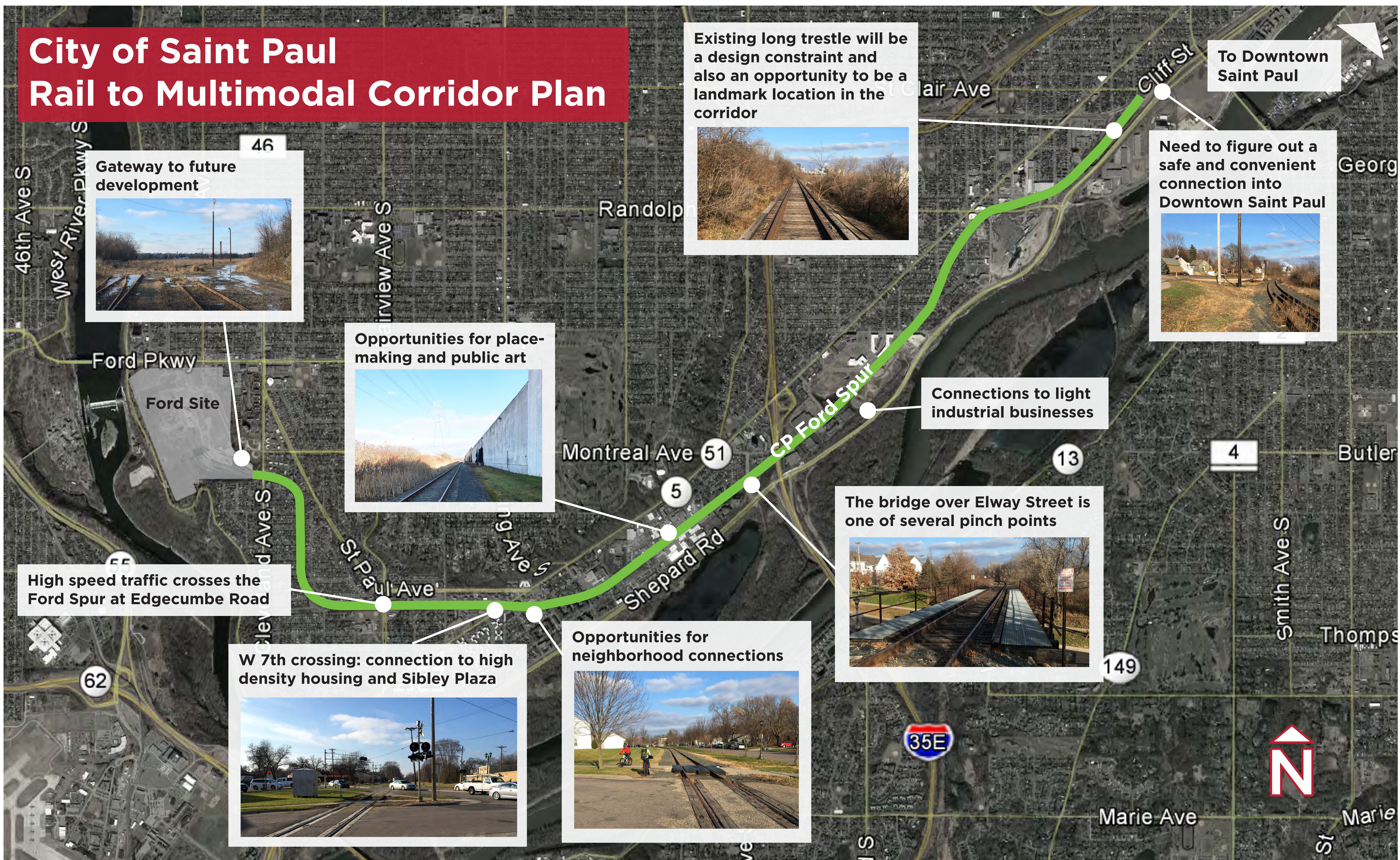
- Public engagement: open house anticipated for May
- Plan review: complete by March 31
- Survey of corridor: beginning April 3, includes a review of right of way data but does not include a boundary survey

- Existing conditions review: complete in May
- Environmental screening report: beginning in April
- Evaluation Criteria: draft criteria for review at May PAG meeting

Attachments:

- Study area map
- Public involvement plan

City of Saint Paul Rail to Multimodal Corridor Plan



Ford Spur Rail to Multimodal Corridor Plan

Public Involvement Plan – March 24, 2017

1.0 DOCUMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to provide a framework for how public involvement activities will be conducted for the Ford Spur Rail to Multimodal Corridor Plan. The City of Saint Paul is evaluating what multimodal options could be planned for the Ford Spur and engagement with agencies, residents, and businesses will provide input and guidance to help form the decision and build momentum for implementation.

This PIP documents the goals of the project, the anticipated stakeholders and participants, schedule, and engagement techniques. It should be noted that the final project name is currently being refined. This PIP and project materials will be updated with the final project name.

2.0 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The overall goals and objectives of the public involvement process for the Ford Spur Project are to:

- 1) *Inform and educate the public about the project*
 - Inform and educate the public, stakeholders, and advisory groups of the goals and objectives of the project
 - Build trust between stakeholders and the project team
 - Identify and engage stakeholders in meaningful ways, including underrepresented populations that are traditionally not involved in transportation decision-making
 - Engage stakeholders throughout the entire process by offering multiple options/methods for public input and questions (as described in Table 2) and multiple types of issues that are open for input, such as the design of bicycling and walking facilities in the corridor, how the corridor connects to the Ford Site, what landscaping or other amenities should be included, etc.
- 2) *Provide ways to enable input in the process and utilize the input into the project outcomes*
 - Acquire an understanding from the stakeholders of what is important and address their concerns
 - Collaborate with the design team to integrate outreach information
 - To develop and implement the solutions with the least impact and best outcomes to the users of the corridor
 - To develop multimodal concept(s) that satisfy the objectives of the project and the stakeholders
 - Engage stakeholders early and often in the process to build momentum for the future selection of recommended concept(s) to be carried forward for further evaluation through the environmental process and funding opportunities

The intended outcome is that stakeholders and members of the public feel satisfied with the level of participation they have been offered, and have had opportunities to provide feedback to the City of Saint Paul in executing a plan that meets the overall purpose and need while also addressing the needs and opportunities raised by citizens.

3.0 STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTICIPANTS

Various groups of local government, organizations, and the community will provide important input for the development and implementation of the project. Project stakeholders are categorized into two groups, detailed below. The first is stakeholders that are invited to participate in the Project Advisory Group. These include agencies, community organizations, and business groups that have an interest in the project. Additionally, several of these agencies are invited to participate in a smaller Technical Advisory Group that will provide input on detailed technical issues throughout the project. Technical Advisory Group Members are identified with an asterisk. Further information about the Project and Technical Advisory Groups is included in Section 5.

The second group below is additional stakeholders that are not included in the Project Advisory Group. These stakeholders will be engaged throughout the project using methods outlined in Section 7.

Project Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group

- City representatives from Planning & Economic Development, Public Works, Ward 2 and 3, and the Mayor's Office*
- Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority*
- Ramsey County*
- Metropolitan Council*
- Metro Transit*
- MnDOT*
- East Metro Strong*
- West Seventh Business Association
- West 7th /Fort Road Federation (District 9 Council)
- Highland District Council (District 15 Council)
- Highland Business Association
- Transit for Livable Communities
- St. Paul Public Schools
- Metropolitan Design Center
- Neighborhood House

Additional Stakeholders and Community Groups

- Canadian Pacific Railway
- Larger businesses, including Summit Brewery, Sibley Plaza, Schmidt Brewery etc.
- Small businesses along the corridor
- Residents
- Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association
- Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
- Other Advocacy Groups
- Schools
- Community Centers
- Faith-based institutions

4.0 TRADITIONALLY UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

The public engagement process will include methods for reaching minority, low-income, immigrant, non-English speaking, elderly, and/or disabled populations, which are often underrepresented in planning processes. To better engage with and address any concerns of these communities, the consultant team will first conduct demographic data analysis and consultation with project partners, then will employ specific actions to engage these communities.

Data Analysis

Using the 2010-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (ACS), which is available at the block group level, the consultant will identify where, in and adjacent to the project area, there are higher percentages of the following populations compared to the city and/or county average:

- Minority residents
- Low-income residents
- Immigrants, including both US citizens who were born abroad and non-citizens who were born abroad
- Residents with any disability
- Residents who speak English less than “very well” (self-assessment per ACS question)
- Residents over the age of 65

If the data analysis shows there are concentrated areas of any of the cohorts listed above, the City of Saint Paul and local neighborhoods will be consulted on specific locational resources that serve these populations – like senior housing, community centers, assistance organizations, ethnic gathering spaces or events, etc. The consultant team will then work with the identified facilities to advertise project events and potentially host community meetings (as summarized in Table 2). If the data analysis shows that there is a need for translation services, common languages in the project area will also be identified.

Additionally, the Project Advisory Group includes several stakeholders that work closely with underrepresented populations. These stakeholders include Neighborhood House, District 9 and 15 Councils, Transit for Livable Communities, and St. Paul Public Schools. These stakeholders will be valuable partners in sharing information about the project with underrepresented populations, providing project feedback, and helping us directly reach these groups through community engagement.

5.0 PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

A Project Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group will be formed to provide key input and guidance throughout the course of the study. Section 3 lists stakeholders that will be invited to participate in both groups. Representation ranges from technical staff at agencies to policy makers and community and/or business representatives.

Five meetings will be held with the Project Advisory Group to leverage their local expertise and resources and establish interest and ownership in the study. Proposed meeting frequency is shown in the schedule in Section 6. Meetings will generally be held one to two weeks prior to a project open house.

Proposed Project Advisory Group meeting topics include:

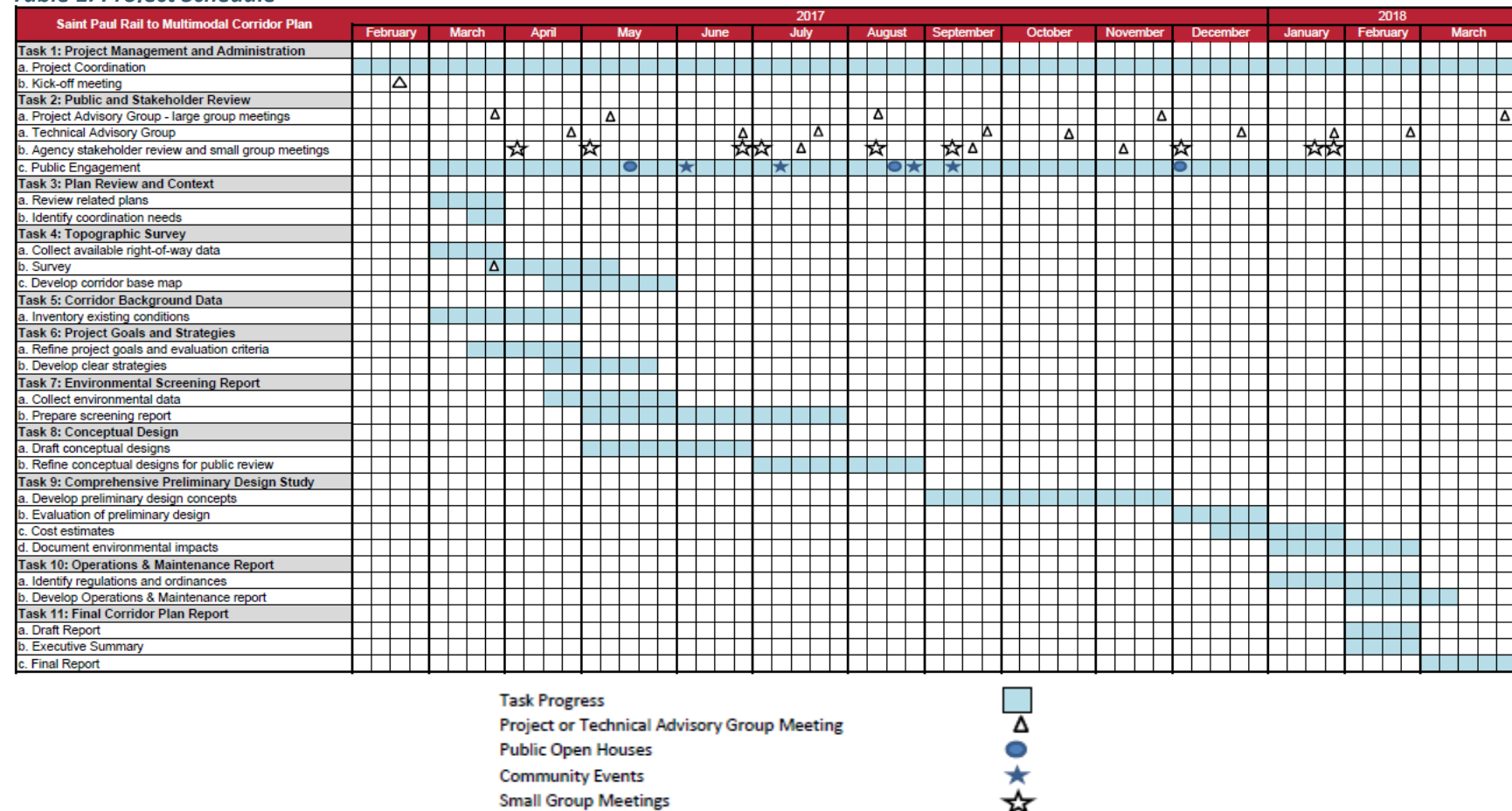
- Vetting goals, principles, and evaluation criteria for the study
- Discussing coordination needs
- Providing input on public involvement plan
- Reviewing conceptual and preliminary designs
- Hear specific concerns and answer questions

A Technical Advisory Group is proposed due to the variety of stakeholder interests and the need to engage agency staff in detailed technical discussions. A total of eight technical advisory group meetings are proposed. Meetings will be general be held on a monthly basis, except for during months when the larger Project Advisory Group meets.

6.0 SCHEDULE

Public and stakeholder engagement will occur throughout the project's development, with the greatest concentration of engagement activities between May and September 2017. The final report will be completed by March 2018.

Table 1. Project Schedule



7.0 OUTREACH IMPLEMENTATION

The following table describes public outreach techniques and activities that will be used throughout the project process. Additional resources for providing project information may include city newsletters, local access television, and city/county websites. Project outreach will generally occur in three phases:

1. Study introduction: April – June 2017
2. Preliminary concept review: July – September 2017
3. Revised concept and recommendation review: October 2017 – March 2018

Table 2: Public Outreach Activities

Task	Target Audience/ Participants	Purpose/Intended Message	Specific Tools	When	Where
Project Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group Meetings (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Advisory Group and Technical Advisory Group – representatives listed in Section 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vetting goals, principles, and evaluation criteria for the study Discussing coordination needs Providing input on public involvement plan and activities Reviewing conceptual and preliminary designs Hear specific concerns and answer questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated discussion topics Active listening Presentations and exhibits Small group discussion 	Monthly from March 2017 to March 2018	To be determined by group, likely City Hall Annex
Open Houses (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All stakeholders/public Public open houses will offer an opportunity for the public to learn more about the project and provide input throughout the project's development 	Purpose of each open house: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the study and discuss constraints and opportunities 2. Present preliminary concepts and solicit feedback 3. Summarize revised concepts and recommendations, and receive any feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations and exhibits Small group discussions Comment tracking matrix Display boards and/or layouts and a summary handout An opportunity for written comments will also be provided Provide materials in alternate formats and languages 	May, August, December 2017 Open houses could be scheduled at varying times in the day to offer more opportunities for attendance	Central location within the corridor

Task	Target Audience/ Participants	Purpose/Intended Message	Specific Tools	When	Where
		before the report is finalized			
Community Events/Small Group Meetings (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group meetings Project booth at community events/festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide project information to residents; capitalize on pass-by traffic Talk to people, understand their concerns and desires, and hear what they have to say about possible concepts Outreach to traditionally underrepresented populations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One on one or small group meetings, or event table Project one pager with contact information “Pop-up” table with project summary handout, display board or poster of proposed improvements (at local events/festivals i.e. National Night Out, Highland Fest Provide materials in alternate formats and languages as needed 	June through September 2017	To be coordinated with specific groups and sponsors. Options include Mississippi Market Natural Foods Co-op, Highland Park Library, community centers or coffee shops
Stakeholder Update Meetings (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highland District Council Transportation Committee West 7th / Fort Road Federation Planning Commission Transportation Committee Historic Preservation Commission Other groups as determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide project updates and solicit specific feedback on issues relevant to the organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation Summary handout 	As determined by staff/ standing meeting times	Standard meeting location of the particular organization
Open House Summaries/ Comment Database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Team, Stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize comments (both verbal and written) Track comments and responses – provide transparency to stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comment tracking spreadsheet Number of attendees/comments 	Following each open house, community event, small group meeting, and comments received via email or phone	Can be posted on website for public viewing
Project Kit for Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For City staff to use at various meetings – internal meetings with other city departments, 	Materials to be coordinated with three phases of project outreach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project kit will include graphics, handouts, and activities to be kept at the city office and 	To be determined by City staff	To be determined by meeting location

Task	Target Audience/ Participants	Purpose/Intended Message	Specific Tools	When	Where
	external meetings as determined by staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project overview Preliminary concepts Revised concepts 	carried to various meetings being attended by city staff		
Agency stakeholder review meetings (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agencies (MnDOT, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit, Canadian Pacific Railway, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review and coordinate on design concepts and project issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agendas, design concepts, and other materials for consideration at least one week prior to agency review meetings 	To be determined	To be determined by agency meeting location
Project Website Updates (12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project information/ updates Notice of upcoming meetings Contact information Develop a database for residents who want to stay informed as the project progresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple graphics and concise text that highlighting key points in plain language and in compliance with accessibility standards Timely updates Online forums & replicate engagement activities from open houses/community events on project website 	Project updates and milestones	City of Saint Paul will host a webpage for the project on the city website. Website updates to be drafted by consultant, reviewed and posted by the City of Saint Paul

8.0 DYNAMIC PROCESS

The activities described in this PIP will evolve over the life of the project and throughout the three phases of outreach. When necessary, this PIP will be evaluated and updated throughout the public involvement timeline. This PIP will continue to respond to the goals of both phases of the public involvement process; however, it can respond to changes in the project as they arise.

9.0 EVALUATION OF TECHNIQUES

The PIP will be evaluated and updated following each public open house. Evaluation of the PIP will be based on the following criteria:

Quantitative:

- How many people attended the open house/meeting?
- How many additional meetings (local stakeholder meetings, community meetings) have taken place since the last PIP update?
- How many newsletters were sent via email or US mail? Were any returned?
- Percent of key stakeholders directly engaged with?

Qualitative:

- What kind of feedback was received on the project website/printed materials?
- What kind of feedback was received on the public open house?
- Was the location of the meeting appropriate?
- Have stakeholders expressed any challenges regarding their participation in the process?

The qualitative measures will be evaluated based on project staff and public in-person feedback. The qualitative measures will be summarized in a meeting summary, which will be drafted following each meeting. Updates to the PIP will be made as necessary based on these discussions.

Results of the quantitative and qualitative evaluation criteria will be tracked and cumulative results and trends will be considered when subsequent updates to the PIP are made. Any schedule changes will also be reflected in PIP updates.