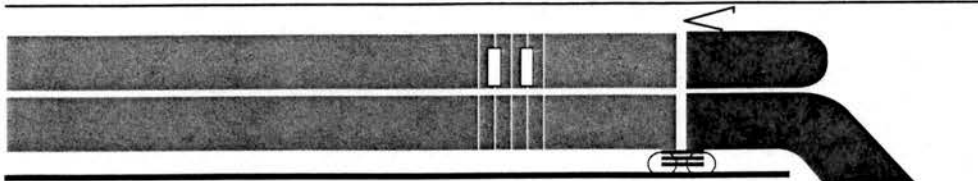




Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority.
Records.

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Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

665 Ramsey County Government Center-West, 50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102 (651) 266-2760 / FAX (651) 266-2761

AGENDA

Regional Railroad Authority Meeting

November 21st, 2000

Immediately following Public Works, Parks & Solid Waste Committee Meeting

Third Floor Council Chambers Courthouse

1. * Approve minutes of the September 26th, 2000, RCRRA meeting
 2. * Selection of Locally Preferred Alternative for the Riverview Corridor
 3. * Approve extension of contract with Davis Communications for community education for the Riverview Transit Corridor through December 31, 2000 at no additional cost
 4. * Approve extension of contract with Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc., for completion of Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study through December 31, 2000 at no additional cost
 5. * Ratify partial payment #16 in the amount of \$104,737.89 to Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas, Inc. for professional consulting services for the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study
 6. Corridor Update
- * Action is requested

Minutes

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY MEETING

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority met on Tuesday, September 26, 2000, in Council Chambers Third Floor Courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Tony Bennett
Commissioner Susan Haigh
Commissioner Rafael Ortega
Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt
Commissioner Janice Rettman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Jan Wiessner

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathy DeSpiegelaere, David MacMillan, Paul Kirkwold,
Vern Wehlage, Bonnie Jackelen, Gene Haselmann,
Karen Tero, Mary Ann Palmer, Tim Mayasich, Jane
McClure, Kris Longhenry

Chair Bennett called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

1. Approve Minutes of the September 12, 2000 RCRRA meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Haigh, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt to accept the minutes of the September 12, 2000 RCRRA meeting.

Ayes – 5, Nays – 0
Motion accepted.

2. Authorize staff to negotiate with BRW, Inc. for Riverview Transit Corridor project implementation services.

Commissioner Rettman asked if this is an additional contract and how much does it cost. Kathy DeSpiegelaere responded that this contract is for additional work on the Riverview Corridor and will depend upon the alternative selected in November. Kathy added that because of federal regulations, the amount of the bid is in a sealed envelope and will be opened during negotiations.

Commissioner Rettman questioned why this is being done before an alternative is selected. Kathy DeSpiegelaere answered that negotiations can be started before an alternative is selected. Kathy added that it would save some time, since normally, soliciting proposals and negotiating contracts take about six months.

Commissioner Haigh noted that receiving only one bid (from BRW, Inc.) shows that the economy is very good because so many other firms must be busy with the contracts that they have and cannot take on more work.

Commissioner Rettman asked about BRW, Inc. already working with us. Kathy DeSpiegelaere remarked that BRW, Inc. hasn't done work on the Riverview Corridor, but is working with us on the Central Corridor.

Motion by Commissioner Haigh, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt to authorize staff to negotiate with BRW, Inc. for Riverview Transit Corridor project implementation services.

Ayes – 5, Nays – 0

Motion accepted.

WHEREAS, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority has issued a request for proposals for the next phase of implementing transit improvements for the Riverview Corridor; and

WHEREAS, A proposal was received from BRW, Inc. Minneapolis; Now, Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, That staff is authorized to negotiate with BRW, Inc. for the scope of work and contract amount for the next phase of Riverview Corridor work; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority will have an opportunity to approve the contract and funding sources at a subsequent meeting.

3. Authorize Chair to sign letter to the Northstar Corridor Development commenting on the Northstar Corridor Advanced Corridor Plan.

Kathy DeSpiegelaere stated that the RCRRRA thought the Northstar Corridor Development agreed with RCRRRA that a transfer station would be located a couple of miles from downtown Minneapolis so transfers could easily be made from commuter rail trains coming/going to/from St. Cloud to Minneapolis to St. Paul to Hastings. Kathy added that she spoke with the Anoka County representative, Tim Yantos, who told her that engineering consultant working on the Northstar Corridor concluded that the station location on Harrison Street in Minneapolis (the station the RCRRRA is interested in) is not feasible. Kathy also added that the Northstar Corridor Advanced Corridor Plan does not list the Harrison Street Station because, according to Yantos, there is no agreement on the site.

Kathy DeSpiegelaere commented that the RCRRRA is being asked to go on record and send a letter to the Northstar Corridor Development and Mn/DOT expressing concern about the lack of the transfer station and asking that this issue be resolved.

Commissioner Rettman asked if the letter is strong enough. Commissioner Bennett responded that the letter is a first step towards getting together and taking a stronger position on it will depend on the outcome of the meeting.

Commissioner Haigh asked what the timeline is on the Advanced Corridor Plan. Kathy DeSpiegelaere answered that comments are due sometime in October.

Commissioner Reinhardt commented that RCRRRA is working with Northstar and other transit corridors in a regional approach and this station is important to that approach. Commissioner Bennett added that the RCRRRA reaffirms its commitment to working with the Northstar Corridor and the regional concept and it should be added to the letter.

Commissioner Reinhardt stated that an amendment should be made to the resolution. The sentence "...Northstar Corridor Development Authority reconsider the location of the Minneapolis Northeast Station..." be changed to "...Northstar Corridor Development Authority locate the Minneapolis Northeast Station...".

Motion by Commissioner Ortega, seconded by Commissioner Rettman to authorize the Chair to sign a letter to the Northstar Corridor Development commenting on the Northstar Corridor Advanced Corridor Plan, with the amendment made by Commissioner Reinhardt.

Ayes – 5, Nays – 0
Motion accepted.

WHEREAS, The Northstar Corridor Development Authority has completed the physical design component of the Advanced Corridor Plan for the Northstar Corridor Commuter Rail line; and

WHEREAS, The Northstar Corridor Advance Corridor Plan includes preliminary station plans for the Minneapolis Northeast and Minneapolis Downtown commuter rail stations; and

WHEREAS, The Northeast Minneapolis commuter rail station is the preferred station to connect with and facilitate transfers with the Central Corridor/Red Rock Commuter Rail Corridor; and

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority has reviewed the Northstar Corridor Advanced Corridor Plan for the Minneapolis Northeast and Minneapolis Downtown commuter rail stations; Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED, That the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority strongly recommends that the Northstar Corridor Development Authority locate the Minneapolis Northeast Station to avoid the necessity of transferring in downtown Minneapolis for commuter rail passengers traveling on Central Corridor/Red Rock Corridor wanting to travel to Anoka County and points beyond, and for commuter rail passengers traveling on Northstar wanting to travel to St. Paul and points beyond; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority recommends that the Minnesota Department of Transportation convene a Northstar Corridor Development Authority joint subcommittee that has requested one member from the Central Corridor, the Red Rock Corridor, the City of Minneapolis, and Mn/DOT to determine the viability of the Minneapolis Junction transfer station and to share and review information regarding the Minneapolis Junction station.

4. Ratify Partial Payment No. 1 in the amount of \$100,777.09 to BRW, Inc. for professional consulting services for the Central Corridor Transit Study.

Motion by Commissioner Haigh, seconded by Commissioner Ortega to ratify Partial Payment No. 1 in the amount of \$100,777.09 to BRW, Inc. for professional consulting services for the Central Corridor Transit Study.

Ayes – 5, Nays – 0
Motion accepted.

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority has contracted for the professional consulting services of BRW, Inc. for the purpose of conducting the Central Corridor Transit Study; and

WHEREAS, BRW, Inc. has satisfactorily completed portions of the work identified in the referenced agreements, and provided detailed invoice documentation for services and costs accrued through May 26, 2000; and

WHEREAS, submittal of invoices and payment documentation to the Rail Authority for ratification at the next scheduled meeting following staff approval of invoice documentation is required; and

WHEREAS, BRW, Inc. Invoice No. 267-09297, Partial Payment No. 1, in the amount of \$100,777.09 attachments thereto, provide the correct documentation of payments due BRW, Inc. through May 26, 2000; Now Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, Payment to BRW, Inc. in the amount of \$100,777.09 for services rendered through May 26, 2000, is hereby ratified.

5. Ratify Partial Payment No. 15 in the amount of \$20,833.62 to Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. for professional consulting services for the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

Motion by Commissioner Ortega, seconded by Commissioner Haigh to ratify Partial Payment No. 15 in the amount of \$20,833.62 to Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. for professional consulting services for the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

Ayes – 5, Nays – 0.
Motion accepted.

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority has contracted for the professional consulting services of Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. for the purpose of conducting the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study; and

WHEREAS, Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. has satisfactorily completed portions of the work identified in the referenced agreements, and provided detailed invoice documentation for services and costs accrued through April 7, 2000; and

WHEREAS, submittal of invoices and payment documentation to the Rail Authority for ratification at the next scheduled meeting following staff approval of invoice documentation is required; and

WHEREAS, Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. Invoice No. 15, Partial Payment No. 15, in the amount of \$20,833.62 attachments thereto, provide the correct documentation of payments due Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. through April 7, 2000; Now, Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, Payment to Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc. in the amount of \$20,833.62 for services rendered through April 7, 2000, is hereby ratified.

Kathy DeSpiegelaere noted that public hearing dates have been set for the Riverview MIS:

October 11, 2000 – West Seventh Community Center – 265 Oneida Street, St. Paul
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. = available for discussion and to answer questions
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. = public comments taken

October 17, 2000 – St. Luke's Lutheran Church – 1807 Field Avenue, St. Paul
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. = available for discussion and to answer questions
7:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. = public comments taken

Commissioner Haigh asked how public comments would be transmitted to the RCRRA. Kathy DeSpiegelaere responded that comments would be assembled for the Commissioners prior to the November 14, 2000 RCRRA meeting where the RCRRA will make a decision on a locally preferred alternative.

Commissioner Haigh asked for a public hearing on a Board day. She commented that she would appreciate an opportunity to talk to the public directly. Commissioner Bennett noted that all Commissioners are invited to each hearing and locations of the two hearings are within a few blocks of proposed routes. He stated that he will check to see if a public hearing can be scheduled on a Tuesday between now and November 14, 2000.

The meeting adjourned at 9:49 a.m.

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

2

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

K. DeSpiegelaere

Authorized Signature

November 14, 2000

Date

Board Action Requested

Selection of Locally Preferred Alternative for the Riverview Corridor.

ACTION IS REQUESTED

Request Justification

- See attached:
1. Proposed resolution
 2. Riverview Corridor Public Involvement Report
 3. Public Comments
 4. Transcripts from public hearings held 10/11/00, 10/17/00 and 10/24/00
 5. Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Executive Summary

Budgeting and Accounting

County Attorney

Risk Management

Documentation certified complete for:

November 21, 2000

Board Date

Kristine A. Longhenry
Signature

November 14, 2000
Date

RESOLUTION

Board of Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

Date: _____ No: _____

(Page 1 of 4)

WHEREAS, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority initiated a Major Investment Study for the Riverview Corridor in October, 1998; and

WHEREAS, The Riverview Corridor was designated as an essential route in the Metro Transit's Transit 2020 plan because it plays a key role in linking the three largest transportation generators in the region: Downtown Minneapolis, Downtown Saint Paul, and the Minneapolis Saint Paul International Airport/ Mall of America Complex. Along with the Central Corridor and the Hiawatha Corridor, Riverview will be a leg of a transit triangle that will be the core of the metropolitan transit system; and

WHEREAS, The neighborhoods between Saint Paul's East side and the Minneapolis Saint Paul International Airport/Mall of America complex are poised for a population and economic development explosion. From their strategic location at the center of the Twin Cities, Dayton's Bluff, Downtown Saint Paul, the West 7th Street neighborhood and the Homecroft/ Gateway area feature some of the busiest cultural and natural amenities in the state, very attractive residential neighborhoods, and some of the largest tracts of undeveloped or underdeveloped land in the central cities; and

WHEREAS, The impending growth of this area will cause significant increases in transportation needs. Today, the only options for meeting those needs are private automobiles, bicycles, taxi service, and in-traffic bus service; and

WHEREAS, According to traffic projections within the Riverview Corridor Major Investment study, these conditions will lead to unacceptable levels of congestion in the area before 2020; and

WHEREAS, In this environment, the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study was conducted to give the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority guidance in selecting a locally preferred transit investment alternative that meets the following goals:

1. Improve access and mobility in the Riverview Corridor and the region.
 2. Support economic and housing revitalization of the corridor.
 3. Contribute to positive economic conditions.
 4. Provide effective and efficient transportation options in the corridor and throughout the region; and
- 1

RESOLUTION

Board of Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

Date: _____ No: _____

(Page 2 of 4)

WHEREAS, The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority approved the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study on August 22, 2000 for the purposes of public review; and

WHEREAS, Three public hearings and numerous other meetings have been held on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study since August 22, 2000; and

WHEREAS, The Study analyzed the following transit alternatives:

1. No build
2. Transportation System Management
3. Bus Rapid Transit
4. Light Rail Transit

Along with their impacts; and

WHEREAS, Public comments have been received and analyzed by Commissioners and staff; and

WHEREAS, The St. Paul City Council has adopted unanimously a resolution recommending selection of Alternative 7, Bus Rapid Transit in the Canadian Pacific Railroad right of way as its preference, subject to modifications and conditions in its resolution; and

WHEREAS, The study indicates that the goals will be best met and the people of Saint Paul, Ramsey County and the Twin Cities Region will be best served by the construction of a Bus Rapid Transit System in the Riverview Corridor. This alternative will best balance the need for rapid transit that serves neighborhood needs and regional needs, the need to preserve housing, commercial space and on street parking, the need for a cost effective solution and the foreseeable funding availability; and

WHEREAS, For this investment in a bus rapid transit system in the Riverview Corridor, the people of Saint Paul and Ramsey County will receive a direct connection to an efficient regional transit system, a new and fast mobility option, an alternative to a serious future congestion problem and the ability to move about the metro area without owning a car; and

RESOLUTION

Board of Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

Date: _____ No: _____

(Page 3 of 4)

WHEREAS, A key element in the busway alternative described below is its flexibility. Because it can move from a dedicated busway to on street configurations, it can be built to minimize disruption to properties in the corridor and maximize benefits in terms of increased ridership and improved access to area amenities, businesses and residential communities; Now Therefore Be It

RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority selects the locally preferred alternative for the Riverview Corridor that is consistent with St. Paul's recommendation. The locally preferred alternative is bus rapid transit in the interests of meeting the transit needs for this corridor now and in future years; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority selects the locally preferred alignment for the Riverview Corridor that is also consistent with St. Paul's recommendation. That alignment is a dedicated lane for buses along or parallel to the following general locations:

- Mall of America to Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport on existing roadways;
- Airport to TH 5 to West Seventh Street on existing bridges and roadways;
- Canadian Pacific Railroad from approximately Alton Street and West Seventh Street to Toronto Street;
- West Seventh Street from Toronto Street to Smith Avenue;
- Smith Avenue/West Seventh Street vicinity in the United Hospital area;
- Fifth and Sixth Streets in Downtown St. Paul;
- East Fifth Street from Broadway to Kittson Street;
- Work with St. Paul to address the needs and preferences for a busway in the vicinity of East Seventh Street from Kittson Street to Metropolitan State University, Ramsey County Regional Railroad right of way, and a connection to the Phalen Corridor;
- Possible uses of portions of I-35E or Shepard Road will be considered; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority is committed to continuing work with residents and businesses affected by the transit improvement; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That accommodations for bicyclists should be implemented for this corridor when the bus rapid transitway is implemented; and Be It Further

RESOLVED, That landscaping to enhance the appearance of the corridor will be an important part of transitway development; and Be It Further

RESOLUTION

Board of Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

Date: _____ No: _____

(Page 4 of 4)

RESOLVED, That the Minnesota Department of Transportation is encouraged to consider a full interchange at I-35E and Shepard Road so that less commuter traffic uses neighborhood streets; and Be It Further

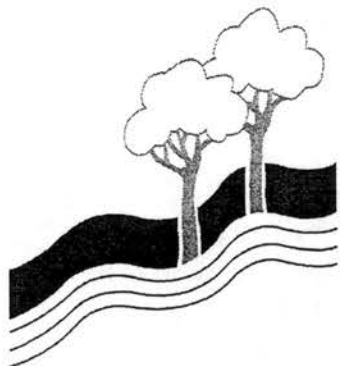
RESOLVED, That Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority will work with the Metropolitan Council to transition implementation of this project to Council jurisdiction.

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

	YEA	NAY	OTHER
Tony Bennett	_____	_____	_____
Susan M. Haigh	_____	_____	_____
Jim McDonough	_____	_____	_____
Rafael E. Ortega	_____	_____	_____
Victoria Reinhardt	_____	_____	_____
Janice Rettman	_____	_____	_____
Jan Wiessner	_____	_____	_____

Tony Bennett, Chair

By: _____
Rafael E. Ortega, Secretary



Riverview Corridor

MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REPORT

November 21, 2000

**Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102
Commissioner Tony Bennett, Chair**

RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REPORT

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Executive Summary:

Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Public Involvement Program and Its Influence on Study Outcomes to Date

The Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Public Involvement Program was designed to assure that public needs are understood by decision-makers and met by the locally preferred alternative chosen by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority. Throughout the study process, public input has been sought, gathered and recorded. This report contains both a summary of concerns raised during the public comment period on the study report and the verbatim comments.

While the Major Investment Study report was designed to outline the technical, environmental and economic feasibility of the four transit alternatives identified in the previous study, the study report was influenced by public comments that have been received throughout the study process.

Though public inputs during the study process varied widely, a number of common themes emerged. Public comment gathered during the study process made clear that any transit investment implemented in the corridor would need to address the following issues:

- General support for improved mass transit regionally and within the corridor
- A need to prevent the loss of housing units in the corridor
- A need for any transit system to effectively co-exist with automobile traffic
- A need to prevent loss of parking for area businesses
- A fear of possible negative neighborhood impacts caused by construction of light rail transit
- A fear of escalating costs of light rail transit
- A need for a long term source of operating funds for transit
- A need to preserve the natural and historic amenities already existing within the corridor
- A need for any transit improvement to serve neighborhood as well as regional needs
- A need for any transit investment to be cost effective

There were voices in the community that objected to any transit investment in the corridor based on one or more of the concerns listed above.

Two public bodies representing citizens of the corridor have taken action address these concerns. The Saint Paul Planning Commission, using data from the draft MIS report, developed a new alternative for a busway that is designed to address projected congestion and transit needs in the corridor without eliminating housing and parking. This new alternative utilizes an appropriation from the State of Minnesota to fund a significant portion of capital costs.

The Saint Paul City Council, representing all citizens of the City of Saint Paul, unanimously passed a resolution in support of the alternative developed by the Saint Paul Planning Commission.

RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT REPORT

The Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study has featured an aggressive grass-roots public involvement program. The purpose of this program was and continues to be to assure that stakeholders in the communities that would be affected by transit investment in the corridor have meaningful opportunities to shape the outcome of the study. Outreach efforts have sought input from residents and business owners within the study area, organizations that represent residents and business owners, officials elected by residents of the study area, and regional stakeholders.

The majority of these efforts have taken place at the neighborhood level and those efforts are documented in this report.

Presentations and discussions in all public involvement activities focused on the objectives of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study as developed early in the study process. In each case, presenters stressed to the community members that four technological options were being studied for application in the corridor in a variety of alignments. The four technological options described were:

- **No Build**
- **Transportation Systems Management**
- **Bus Rapid Transit (Busway)**
- **Light Rail Transit**

Given the consistent level of controversy surrounding light rail transit, staff and consultants working on this project stressed in the content of presentations that the study was designed to place equal emphasis on each of the options.

The public meeting process began with interviews with 46 representatives of the community conducted in January 1999. Those interviews were used to frame the public involvement issues at the beginning of the study. Dates and participants in these meetings are listed in Addendum 1.

The first large public meeting was the public scoping meeting held in March 1999 to introduce the study to the affected neighborhoods and set the parameters of the study. The process continued with two series of Station Area Public Meetings to test preliminary results. These meetings were arranged and funded through the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study and, in many cases, co-facilitated by neighborhood district councils and business associations. In all cases, these meetings were publicized at a level that exceeded requirements of the Federal Transit Administration and the higher standard expected in Ramsey County. Meetings are listed in Addendum 2.

Publicity methods to draw citizens to the meetings included the following:

Paid Display Advertising in the following publications:

- Asian Pages
- Insight News
- Highland Villager
- Saint Paul Legal Ledger

- Pioneer Press
- Riverview Times
- Saint Paul Voice

Media Relations with the following publications:

- Pioneer Press
- Highland Villager
- Star Tribune
- Legal Ledger
- Skyway News
- Community Reporter
- Riverview Times
- Saint Paul Voice
- Asian Pages
- Insight News
- Spokesman

Notices mailed to:

- Transit Vision Task Force members
- SRF Study mailing list
- Interviewee mailing list
- Community contact list

Flyers/Special notices were distributed in areas surrounding the meeting sites.

The format for these meetings included an open house with opportunity to ask questions of transit planners, consultants and elected officials as well as opportunities to review displays and printed matter relating to the Riverview Corridor. Each meeting included a formal presentation and questions and answer period. The goal was to assure that interested residents had access to all information on the study and the opportunity to affect the results and resolve concerns.

Attendance at these meetings varied from fewer than 10 to 125. The scoping meeting and at least one meeting in each series of station area public meetings included representation from the offices of City Councilmembers Mike Harris, Chris Coleman and Kathy Lantry.

The outcomes of each of these public meetings were reported in a newsletter published by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority. Newsletters were mailed to an extensive mailing list that included attendees at all meetings, individuals who have expressed interest in transit and community development issues, members of community councils, elected officials and news media.

In July 1999, the Study conducted a survey of corridor residents to determine the level of understanding and support for the alternatives under study. The survey was conducted by C.J. Olson Market Research. The sample was designed to reflect the demographics of the resident population and was statistically valid.

In the spring of 2000, the study extended invitations to organizations interested in presentations intended to test information coming out of the study in order to allow public input in the final study report. The following individuals and organizations accepted the invitations:

Pastor Walt Wietzke, St. Mark's Lutheran Church
Pastor Jack Dreier, St. Lukes Lutheran Church
Curt Milbern, East Side Area Business Association
East Side Area Business Association (ESABA) Board of Directors
Phalen Corridor Initiative (PCI) Board of Directors
Highland District Council Transportation Committee
Special public meeting on West 7th Developments
St. Lukes Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting
St. Marks Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting
West Seventh Federation Annual Meeting
Daytons Bluff District Council Meeting
Cami Zimmer, Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization

Throughout the study process, input was sought from a technical advisory committee convened to provide feedback on all aspects of the study while it was in progress. This committee met eleven times between April 1999 and July 2000 to review data developed for the study, community issues raised during the study and to suggest area for further study. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee are:

Chair: Mark Filipi, Metropolitan Council
John Byrd, Metro Transit
Kathryn Despiegelaere, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Natalio Diaz, Metropolitan Council
Gary Erickson, Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority
Joe Gladke, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Lorrie Louder, Saint Paul Port Authority
Alan Lovejoy, Saint Paul Planing and Economic Development Department
Steve Morris, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Steve Osman, Minnesota Historical Society-Historic Fort Snelling
Gregory Page, Riverfront Development Corporation
Dennis Probst, Metropolitan Airports Commission
Dan Soler, Ramsey County Public Works Department
Scott Thompson, Metro Transit
John Tocho, Minnesota Department of Transportation
John Wirka, Saint Paul Parks Department

The Draft Study Report was delivered to the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and adopted for purposes of public review on August 22, 2000. An extended public comment period was set to end on October 20, 2000. The adoption of the draft study received significant media coverage and the Study staff arranged a series of meetings with community groups along with two public hearings held at locations within the corridor. Comments were aggressively solicited through media coverage, public presentations and the study website.

Presentations on the Draft Study Report were given and comment was taken from the following organizations and their members:

- Friday, August 18, 2000 - Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization at the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Office
- Tuesday, September 5, 2000 - Phalen Corridor Initiative Board Meeting at Norwest Bank
- Wednesday, September 6, 2000 - Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhood Association Board Meeting at 729 East 7th Street, Saint Paul
- Thursday, September 7, 2000 - Highland District Council Board Meeting at Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Parkway, Saint Paul
- Friday September 8, 2000 - Saint Paul Planning Commission at Saint Paul City Hall/ Ramsey County Courthouse, 15 West Kellogg Blvd, Saint Paul
- Monday, September 11, 2000 - Daytons Bluff District Council at 798 East 7th St., Saint Paul
- Wednesday, September 20, 2000 - Capital River Council Board Meeting at First National Bank Building Room N-110, 332 Minnesota Street, Saint Paul
- Wednesday, September 20, 2000 - East Side Area Business Association at Aires Precision Sheetmetal, 720 Olive Street, Williams Hill Industrial Park
- Thursday, September 28, 2000 - Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee at Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Offices
- Tuesday, October 10, 2000 - Payne Arcade Business Association at East Team Police Station 722 Payne Ave.
- Thursday, October 12, 2000 - Payne Phalen Community Council at 1014 Payne Avenue, St. Paul

Large group public meetings were held on October 11 and October 17 at the following locations:

Wednesday, October 11, 2000
West Seventh Community Center Gymnasium
265 Oneida Street
St. Paul, MN 55102
Open House/ Questions Answered
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Listening Session/ Public Comment
7:30 p.m. 9:00 p.m.

Tuesday, October 17, 2000
St. Lukes Lutheran Church
1807 Field Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55116
Open House/ Questions Answered
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Listening Session/ Public Comment
7:30 p.m. 9:00 p.m.

These meetings were publicized through advertising in community newspapers, publicity through local organizations, media placements in major newspapers, the study website and other community methods. All comments made at those meetings were transcribed.

Addendum 1

Catalog of Initial Meetings with Community Members to Frame Public Involvement Issues

Along with numerous informal informational meetings, representatives from the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study have met with and answered questions for the following individuals in the corridor. These meetings were carried out at the outset of the study to determine awareness of community opinion leaders and to seek counsel for ongoing public involvement efforts:

- November 24, 1998 – Ann Brisano, Riverview Economic Development Association
- November 25, 1999 – Anne Hunt, Neighborhood Energy Consortium
- December 8, 1998 – Nacho Diaz, Metropolitan Council
- December 8, 1998 – Brian Merchant, Highland Community Council
- December 31, 1999 – Meg Gravelle, Jewish Family Services
- January 4, 1999 – Commissioner Bennett, Ramsey County
- January 4, 1999 – Commissioner Susan Haigh, Ramsey County
- January 4, 1999 – Mark Moeller, R.F. Moeller Jewelers, St. Paul
- January 5, 1999 – Gail Martenson, Sibley Manor Social Worker
- January 7, 1999 – Julie Benick, Dayton's Bluff Community Council President
- January 8, 1999 – Rolf Middleton, MSP Companies
- January 11, 1999 – Councilmember Chris Coleman, St. Paul
- January 11, 1999 – Carl W. (Buzz) Cummins – St. Paul Transportation Management Organization
- January 11, 1999 – John Labosky, Capital City Partnership
- January 11, 1999 – Jim Smith, West Seventh Community Center
- January 12, 1999 – Laurel Severson, 3M Administrative Services
- January 13, 1999 – Ellen Biales, Summit Hill Association Executive Director
- January 13, 1999 – Bill Buth, BOMA
- January 13, 1999 – Eric Hare, Irvine Park Association
- January 13, 1999 – Richard Miller, Fort Road Federation Board
- January 14, 1999 – Lester Collins, Council on Black Minnesotans
- January 15, 1999 – A. Sheffer Lang, Center for Transportation Studies, University of Minnesota
- January 15, 1999 – Councilmember Kathy Lantry, St. Paul and Bob Connor, Council Aide
- January 18, 1999 – Carol Andrews, St. Paul Bicycle Advisory Committee
- January 18, 1999 – Art Leahy, Metro Transit General Manager
- January 18, 1999 – Paul Mohrbacher, Science Museum of Minnesota/Capitol River Council
- January 18, 1999 – Betty Moran, West 7th/Fort Road Federation
- January 19, 1999 – Sunny Floum, Vocational Improvement Program, Jewish Family Service
- January 19, 1999 – Peggy Lynch – Friends of the Parks

- January 19, 1999 – Penny Harris, Metropolitan State University Associate V.P. Of Public Affairs
- January 20, 1999 – Councilmember Michael Harris, St. Paul and Dan Smith, Legislative Aide
- January 21, 1999 – Roger Diestler, Sibley Manor Caretaker
- January 21, 1999 - Dan Galles, West End Business Association President
- January 25, 1999 - Shawn Bartsh, Highland District Council President
- January 25, 1999 – Lyle Wray, Citizens League Executive Director
- January 26, 1999 – Councilmember Dan Bostrom, St. Paul
- January 26, 1999 – Ed Johnson, Fort Road Federation Executive Director and Patrick O'Hare, Assistant
- January 26, 1999 – Jerry Trooien, JLT Group, St. Paul
- January 27, 1999 – Holly Crouse, West End Business Association
- January 27, 1999 – Sarah Pillow, Macalester Groveland Community Council
- January 27, 1999 – Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County
- January 28, 1999 - Councilmember Jay Benanav, St. Paul
- January 28, 1999 - Seiglinde Bier, Highland Community Council/Transportation Committee
- January 28, 1999 – Pastor Jack Drier, St. Lukes Lutheran Church, 1807 Field Ave., St. Paul
- February 10, 1999 – Commissioner Jan Wiessner, Ramsey County
- February 10, 1999 – Robert Wider, St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee

Addendum 2

Catalog of Public Meetings

- Thursday, March 25, 1999 - Riverview Corridor Transit Study Scoping Meeting at West Seventh Community Center Gymnasium, 265 Oneida Street, St. Paul
- Monday, June 7, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at Minnesota Brewing Company Rathskeller (In cooperation with the West End Business and Professional Association), 882 West Seventh Street, St. Paul
- Tuesday, June 8, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at St. Lukes Lutheran Church, 1807 Field Avenue, St. Paul
- Tuesday, June 8, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at Minnesota History Center Irvine Room, 345 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul
- Wednesday, June 9, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at Metropolitan State University Founders Hall L122, 700 East Seventh Street, St. Paul
- Wednesday, June 9, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at Galtier Plaza Seventh Floor Conference Room, 175 East Fifth Street, Saint Paul
- Monday, September 13, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at Metropolitan State University New Main/Great Hall, 700 East 7th Street, St. Paul
- Tuesday, September 14, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at West 7th Community Center Gymnasium, 265 Oneida Street, St. Paul
- Wednesday, September 15, 1999 - Station Area Public Meeting at Ramsey Room, Landmark Center, 75 West 5th Street, St. Paul

Community Organization Presentations/ Q&A Sessions/ Public Input Opportunities

Less formal public presentations have been delivered to the following groups throughout the course of the study. Study staff and consultants have sought out interested groups and individuals as venues for these presentations. The purpose of the presentations is to outline the objectives of the study, to provide updated information from the study and to continue gathering feedback from the community on their needs.

- March 18, 1999 - Highland Area Community Council Board Meeting
- March 23, 1999 - West 7th Community Council Annual Meeting
- April 21, 1999 - Highland Area Community Council Annual Meeting
Panel Participants:
Commissioner Rafael Ortega
Commissioner Tony Bennett
Councilmember Mike Harris
Councilmember Chris Coleman
- May 21, 1999 - St Paul Transportation Management Organization
- June 1, 1999 - St Paul Building Trades- Dick Anfang
- June 3, 1999 - Highland District Council Transportation Committee Chair, Paul Heinerscheid
- June 7, 1999 - Busway presentation at Metro Transit
- June 8, 1999 - West End Business and Professional Association
- June 16, 1999 - Minnesota Congressional Delegation staff
- July 8, 1999 - Lee Pao Xiong, Metropolitan Council

- July 13, 1999 - Capital River Council Land Use Committee
- July 13, 1999 - West Side Community Council Land Use Committee
- July 21, 1999 - Capital River Council Board of Directors
- July 26, 1999 - Highland Area Community Council Land Use Committee
- July 26, 1999 - Montreal Hi-Rise Resident Council
- July 27, 1999 - Summit Hill Association Traffic & Parking Committee
- July 28, 1999 - Sibley Manor Small Group Presentation
- July 29, 1999 - Meeting with Sen. Randy Kelly and staff
- July 30, 1999 - Saint Paul Planning Commission
- August 4, 1999 - West End Business Organization
- August 9, 1999 - Metro East Development Partnership Annual Meeting
- August 22, 1999 - Highland Area Community Council Transportation Subcommittee
- September 8, 1999 - Transit Options Open House- Bloomington City Hall
- September 10, 1999 - Brewery Area Small Group Meeting
- September 15, 1999 - Capital River Council Board of Directors
- September 16, 1999 - Riverview Economic Development Association
- September 24-28, 1999 - Rail-Volution Conference
- Representatives from:
Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
Saint Paul Transportation Management Association
Transit for Livable Communities
- October 5, 1999 - Phalen Corridor Initiative Board of Directors
- October 5-6, 1999 - Transit Primer Seminar for Highland Area Community Council
- October 14-16, 1999 - Presentation at Mayor's Design Forum, Saint Paul National Guard Armory
- October 15, 1999 - Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization
- October 25, 1999 - Dayton's Bluff Community Council/ Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhood Association
- October 28, 1999 - Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce Transportation Committee
- November 9, 1999 - Neighborhoods First (A Neighborhood Grassroots Organization)
- November 18, 1999 - Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization
- November 23, 1999 - Transit for Livable Communities
- January 7, 2000 - Metropolitan State University Administration
- February 14, 2000 - Pastor Walt Wietzke, St. Mark's Lutheran Church
- February 15, 2000 - Pastor Jack Dreier, St. Lukes Lutheran Church
- February 24, 2000 - Curt Milbern, East Side Area Business Association
- March 22, 2000 - East Side Area Business Association (ESABA) Board of Directors
- April 4, 2000 - Phalen Corridor Initiative (PCI) Board of Directors
- April 4, 2000 - Highland District Council Transportation Committee Special public meeting on West 7th Developments
- April 2, 2000 - St. Lukes Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting
- April 9, 2000 - St. Marks Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting

- April 10, 2000 - West Seventh Federation Annual Meeting
- May 8, 2000 - Dayton's Bluff District Council Meeting
- June 26, 2000 - Cami Zimmer, Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization
- October 23, 2000 - St. James Catholic Church small group meeting

Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study
Summary of Comments Received During Public Comment Period
August 22, 2000- October 20, 2000

Below is a summary of the public comments received by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority during the public comment period. All of the written comments received and verbatim transcripts of oral comments received are attached to this report.

The study received comments from three government bodies with jurisdiction over the Riverview Corridor Area, from staff of two government agencies, from nine private community agencies and organizations, four community councils/ neighborhood associations, and 170 individuals.

Comments from Government Bodies with Jurisdiction over Riverview Corridor

To date, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority has received notice that three governing bodies representing the citizens of Saint Paul have approved resolutions commenting on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

Saint Paul Planning Commission

The Saint Paul Planning Commission passed a resolution in support of a Bus Rapid Transit alternative based on Alternative 7 in the study. A description of the modified alternative is included in this report. The Saint Paul Planning Commission is a volunteer citizen body appointed by the Mayor to advise the Mayor and City Council on planning and land use issues within the city of Saint Paul. The Commission represents a variety of constituencies within the city of Saint Paul including residents, businesses, and landowners in the city.

Saint Paul City Council

The Saint Paul City Council unanimously approved the modified Bus Rapid Transit alternative supported by the Planning Commission with several conditions including the expressed need for broad community involvement in subsequent planning stages. A description of the alternative approved by the City Council is included in this report. The Saint Paul City Council is a 7 member elected body collectively representing the entire resident population of the City of Saint Paul.

Metropolitan Council

The two members of the Metropolitan Council who represent the City of Saint Paul (Lee Pao Xiong- District 13 and Fred Perez- District 14) sent a letter urging the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority to select a busway alternative and alignment within the Riverview Corridor. A copy of the letter is included in this report. The letter states that such a selection would place the Riverview Corridor as a top candidate for state and federal funding through the Metropolitan Council. The Metropolitan Council is appointed by the Governor as the Twin Cities' Regional Planning body.

Comments from Staff of Government Agencies

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority has received staff comments from two government agencies with jurisdiction over portions of the Riverview Corridor.

Minnesota Department of Transportation

The Minnesota Department of Transportation provided comments on the Riverview Corridor MIS. Their comments focused on four areas: impacts to West 7th Street, TH 5 and I35E; impacts on an existing and future Metro area transit network; impacts to effected freight railroads and shippers; and the process for which capital costs were arrived at for the build alternatives. In each of these areas, MnDOT expresses concerns about the study data and urges further study. MnDOT is the state agency charged with transportation and transit planning and road construction.

United States Department of the Interior- Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

Joanne Kyril, Superintendent of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area provided detailed comment on the MIS as it relates the MNRRA comprehensive management plan. The response notes that, while a transit investment in the corridor would have positive impact on the economic vitality of the area, the alternatives may limit public access to the river and have an adverse impact on natural, cultural and scenic resources. Concerns raised by the LRT alternatives include visual impacts of overhead wires near the river bluff and impacts on parkland caused by the need for a new bridge at Highway 5. They are concerned about impacts on wetlands if the Swede Hollow alignment is chosen. MNRRA would prefer that none of the options be constructed to disturb the river bluff and that any disturbance be mitigated with proper restoration techniques. They have similar concerns about any disturbance of the riverbank. In conclusion, MNRRA urges the RCRRA to choose an alternative that addresses the transportation needs of the corridor with the least impact on the resources of the Mississippi River.

Positions taken by Private Community Agencies and Organizations

Nine private community agencies representing a variety of constituencies have taken official positions on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study and provided them to the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority. Those positions are briefly described below and copies are included in this report.

East Side Area Business Association (ESABA)

The East Side Area Business Association passed a resolution supporting Alternative number 2, modest improvements to the existing bus systems in the corridor. ESABA represents 72 businesses located primarily on the eastern end of the Riverview Corridor.

Friends of Swede Hollow

Friends of Swede Hollow passed a resolution opposing the use of Swede Hollow Park or the Bruce Vento Recreational Trail as a mass transit corridor. Friends of Swede Hollow is a private not for profit organization of people with a common interest in enhancing and preserving Swede Hollow Park.

Gateway Interfaith Table for Affordable Housing (GIFT)

The Gateway Interfaith Table for Affordable Housing (GIFT) issued a statement supporting improved transit that preserves affordable housing. Specifically, they advocate for one for one replacement of housing lost to transit, relocation benefits for displaced residents and full preservation of the Sibley Manor affordable housing development. GIFT represents 14 faith communities in or near the corridor.

Phalen Corridor Initiative

The Phalen Corridor Initiative (PCI) passed a resolution asking that PCI continue to be involved in all further discussions of transit improvements in the Riverview Corridor in order to ensure that East Side interests are served by the alternative chosen. The Phalen Corridor Initiative is a public private partnership dedicated the economic development of Saint Paul's East Side neighborhoods.

St. Frances de Sales and St. James Catholic Churches

Fr. Dennis Dempsey, Pastor for the parishes of St. Frances de Sales and St. James in the West 7th Neighborhood sent a letter expressing the concerns raised by his parishioners. He indicated that the LRT alternatives would be unacceptable to his parishioners and suggested that an improved bus system as part of a regional system would serve the needs of the community.

Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce

The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce has issued a detailed resolution in support of a dedicated busway in the Riverview Corridor as one leg of an improved Metro-wide transit system. Their resolution also calls for replacement of any parking lost and a dedicated funding source for operations. The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce is the largest local business organization in Minnesota and represents 1700 businesses and professional associations mostly in the Saint Paul/ East Metro Region.

Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau issued a resolution in support of improved transit in the Riverview Corridor. Specifically, they indicate that the Riverview Corridor route is a critical link for commuters between Saint Paul and the rest of the Twin Cities Area. The Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau is a public private partnership with 364 member organizations representing approximately 20,000 employees.

Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization

The Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization issued a resolution in support of Bust Rapid Transit in the Riverview Corridor. The resolution indicates that BRT will provide residents within the corridor with greater access to key destinations within the corridor and the region. The Transportation Management Organization is a public/private partnership formed to promote and coordinate efficient and environmentally sound transportation networks to assure continued growth and prosperity for Saint Paul and the Eat Metro Area.

West End Business and Professional Association

The West End Business and Professional Association (WEBPA) issued a resolution in favor of transportation improvements within the Riverview Corridor. They state that development of the transportation corridor will serve as a catalyst to help West 7th take full advantage of its strategic position between downtown Saint Paul and Minneapolis Saint Paul International Airport. They further state that any parking lost must be replaced and access to turn lanes on and off West 7th Street be maintained. WEBPA represents nearly 80 businesses located between Downtown Saint Paul and the airport.

Positions taken by Saint Paul Community Councils

Saint Paul is served by a network of 17 community councils representing residents of the distinct neighborhoods within the city. Among other duties, these councils advise elected officials on planning and land use issues within their districts. Volunteer residents of the neighborhoods direct the Community Councils. The directors of three of Saint Paul's District Councils have taken positions on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft. Full copies of those positions are included in this report.

District 5 (Payne Phalen)

District 5 issued a resolution opposing any use of Swede Hollow Park for mass transit. Their resolution also calls for ample community review of any transit plans that would affect their jurisdiction before a final plan is adopted.

District 9 (West 7th/ Fort Road Federation)

District 9 issued a resolution stating that the Riverview Corridor MIS Draft Study does not meet any of its stated goals. The resolution opposes any regional transportation investments that do not specifically serve the West 7th neighborhood or that damage the neighborhood; supports Transportation System Management improvements on existing bus routes in the corridor; supports Bus Rapid Transit on Shepard Road; requests a three month extension of the public input process; and recommends that a community developed plan for River Bluff replace the bus maintenance plan proposed in the MIS Draft Report. The resolution further requests that all transit planning entities undertake a simulation test of the route approved by the City of Saint Paul.

District 15 (Highland Park)

District 15 issued a detailed resolution asking for an extension of the public comment period; asserting that it is unwise public policy to chose a transit solution based on available funding; supporting improvements to the metropolitan transit system; supporting the initial development of the Central Corridor; supporting improved bus service in the Riverview Corridor; concluding that the build alternatives described in the draft study will not solve transit problems in the Riverview Corridor; objecting to construction of a new river crossing for transit improvements; opposing transit alignments that have a harmful impact on natural resources specifically the River Bluff and Swede Hollow; expressing concern about any alternative that would remove on-street parking; and expressing concern about the removal of homes and businesses in the corridor. The resolution goes on to express specific concerns for the Highland area. They concluded that the MIS Draft study does not adequately describe the impacts on traffic of any of the build alternatives or who the anticipated users of the system will be. They express concern about the environmental amenities of the corridor, and ask for a full description of all impacts. Finally the resolution asks that all governmental bodies refrain from making any decisions in regard to the Riverview Corridor until they can address all concerns described, clearly identify the problems that will be solved by any solution, and specifically explain how the proposed solution solves the problem.

Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhood Association (USHNA)

The Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhoods Association (USHNA) represents the neighborhoods at the eastern end of the corridor including portions of Daytons Bluff, the Lower East Side, and the Swede Hollow area. They advocate for a two-phase approach eventually leading to light rail transit in the Riverview Corridor. They oppose Bus Rapid Transit because it does not appear to effectively address transportation issues in the area nor does it provide the opportunities for economic development that an investment in LRT would provide. They state clearly that no build is not an option. Specifically they advocate for Phase One development of Transportation Systems Management including a park and ride facility at Metropolitan State University and parking facilities at 3M. Phase Two would be development of a light rail system from the northeastern portion of Saint Paul to the Airport/ Mall of America complex.

Public Comment from Individual Citizens

The RCRRRA received 61 oral comments and written comments from 109 individuals in response to a broadly publicized solicitation for public comment on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study. Written comments were received between the Study's release on August 22, 2000 and October 27, 2000. Oral comments were taken at two public listening sessions and a public hearing before the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority. The written comments and transcripts of the oral comments are included in this report.

Comments from individuals indicated a wide diversity of views within the community in regard to the draft results of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study. While the comments from individuals show no consensus ideas coming from the community there are a number of themes that did emerge. We have attempted to summarize those themes in this report.

Any transit improvements in the Riverview Corridor should include improvements in pedestrian/ bicycle access- particularly on the Highway 5 Bridge.

The single issue that drew the most comments was the need to improve regional accessibility for bicycles and pedestrians. Sixty-one citizens submitted comments on this issue.

Specifically and overwhelmingly, citizens commenting on bicycle related issues spoke in favor of better access to the river crossing at Highway 5 and suggested that any transit improvements in the Riverview Corridor mitigate barriers to non-motorized traffic on the bridge. Other issues cited by citizens in this category are:

- Creating legal access to the terminal at Minneapolis Saint Paul international airport for bicycles.
- Using the opportunity provided by transit improvements in the corridor to improve bicycle access throughout the corridor.
- Making sure that transit improvements along West 7th do not reduce or eliminate bicycle access to West 7th Street.
- Assuring that transit improvements also improve access in the corridor for pedestrians and people with disabilities.

Beyond bicycle related issues, citizens commented on a variety of topics related to transit improvements in the Riverview Corridor and the alternatives considered in the study. While many people spoke specifically about the mode alternatives included in the study, most of the comments were directed at impacts of the modes studied. Below are summaries of the issues raised.

General Support for Improved Mass Transit

Many of the comments from individuals included general support for mass transit improvements throughout the region. Reasons for this support included the need to provide mobility for low-income people, to provide mobility options other than the automobile, and to promote housing and economic development in the city. While stating this support, many of the same commenting citizens said that they would not use transit because it cannot be made to serve their needs.

Comments on Transit improvements in general

A large number of the people who provided comment stressed that they believe mass transit is important to Saint Paul and the Twin Cities region. They spoke of the need for better non-automobile transportation alternatives between the cities and the suburbs. Among the needs they cited are:

- Completion of the transit triangle
- An easy way for commuters to get into and out of the corridor area
- Providing better mobility for low income residents of the corridor
- Increasing opportunities to get around in the city without cars

Several of the citizens who provided comment said that there is no need for transit improvement within the corridor. They cited underutilized bus routes in the corridor as a clear signal that there is little or no demand for additional transit between downtown Saint Paul and the airport/ Mall of America complex.

Concern that a transit corridor may divide the West 7th Neighborhood

Many individuals stated opposition to any of the build alternatives based on the perception that a fixed guideway transit system would create a barrier in the neighborhood. Comments from the West 7th neighborhood in particular cited loss of housing and damage to their neighborhood caused by the construction of Interstate 35E as their reason to oppose any further transportation investment in the area. Other points on this theme included the fear that a transit investment would mean the construction of massive park and ride lots in the heart of a residential neighborhood and more on street parking by non-residents.

The need to preserve housing in General

Once again citing the impacts on the West 7th Neighborhood by I-35E, many of the comments focused on the damage done to a neighborhood when large numbers of housing units are removed and their fear that any of the build options would do just that.

The need to preserve low income housing in particular

A number of commenting citizens focused on the need to preserve any low-income housing. Among the needs discussed were "one for one" replacement of any low income housing units and the need to preserve all units at the Sibley Manor Housing development.

The positive impact of improved transit in low-income communities

Several commenting citizens focused on the mobility difficulties that low-income residents face particularly in getting to jobs. Employers and low-income workers are not confident that the current transit system can get workers to jobs. Reliable and regular transit would provide low-income people with transportation options that they do not currently have.

Concerns about cost effectiveness of any of the transit improvement options

A large number of commenting citizens raised concerns about the costs of any transit improvements compared to projected benefits. Common themes included:

- Cost per new rider for light rail is too high
- Cost per new rider for Bus Rapid Transit is too high
- Any mobility problems in the corridor can be solved through comparatively inexpensive improvements in current bus system
- Current bus system is perceived to be underutilized therefore any new system will also be underutilized.

Concerns about the costs to the neighborhoods from inadequate investment in transit

Other commenting citizens spoke of the negative effects on the corridor if investments are not made to improve transit in the corridor. Among the costs discussed are missed opportunities for housing and economic development and problems caused by projected congestion.

Questions about who would be served by a transit investment in the Riverview Corridor

Comments expressed concern that any transit improvements between the East Side and the Mall of America would not serve the residents of corridor. Among the themes that emerged under this heading were:

- Many neighborhood residents object to their area providing transportation for suburbanites going to work or events downtown.
- The belief that a transit investment in the corridor is intended to serve only tourists and not residents of the corridor.
- The belief that any investment in the corridor would benefit the Mall of America to the detriment of Saint Paul.

Concern about future congestion if there is inadequate investment in transit

Commenting citizens spoke of their concern that failure to implement any of the build alternatives will cause Downtown, the West 7th Area and the new Gateway development to become unacceptably congested.

Concern about future congestion if the build alternatives are implemented

Several commenting citizens stated their belief that use of lanes on West 7th Street as dedicated transit routes will cause Downtown, the West 7th Area and the new Gateway development to become unacceptably congested.

Concern about the impacts on businesses in the Corridor

While organizations representing businesses in the corridor and several individual businesses indicated a need for significant transit improvements in the area, several business related issues were raised by individuals who commented. Many of the commenting citizens indicated their belief that any of the build options would cause a significant loss of parking that would damage businesses. One business organization leader echoed that concern but stated that it would not be an issue if parking loss is kept to a minimum. Other business people indicated their concern that any option that would take transit off of West 7th Street would reduce business traffic.

Concern about the inflexibility of build alternatives

Some of the commenting citizens expressed concern that the build alternatives become committed to a specific alignment and would not be able to respond to future changes in

the traffic market. They typically supported bus improvements that can be easily modified.

Concern about Environmental impacts on parks and natural resources

Several commenting citizens indicated their belief that transit should not be built on the RCRRA owned right of way in Swede Hollow Park and that no alternative should be considered that would limit access to or reduce parklands.

Concerns about Safety

Commenting citizens living near the Canadian Pacific Railroad Right of Way expressed concern about the safety of running either LRT or Bus Rapid Transit near their properties. Specifically they questioned the ability of Metro Transit to assure that children and pets would not be put in danger by frequent trains or busses. One commenting citizen expressed concern about potential derailments close to his home.

Concerns about Noise

Commenting citizens said that they fear that increased transit either in the form of LRT or increase bus operations, would increase noise in the neighborhood.

Support for Specific Alternatives

Each of the alternatives studied had advocates and detractors among the commenting citizens. Those who supported the build alternatives (LRT and Bus Rapid Transit) generally said they support them because they believe a fixed guideway system will do a better job of generating economic development, of reducing travel times throughout the system and of preventing some of the future congestion in the neighborhoods. Those who spoke against the build alternatives object to the costs per additional rider, the perceived disruption to residents and businesses, and to the notion that their neighborhood would be used only as a way to get between downtown and the Airport/Mall of America complex. There was also a great deal of comment about the perceived lack of need or demand for increased transit capacity in the corridor. Finally, several commenting citizens expressed concern that a fixed guideway system would increase traffic congestion in the corridor.

Nobody spoke specifically against Transportation Systems Management or no-build. Those who spoke in favor of no build or Transportation Systems Management cited a perceived lack of demand for increased transit capacity in the corridor, the perceived underutilization of the current bus system and the perceived comparative lack of disruption to the neighborhoods.

Suggested alternatives not included in the study

Acknowledging a need for some transit investment in the corridor, several of the commenting citizens offered alternatives that were not part of the Riverview Corridor MIS. They were:

- Express bus service between the East Side and the Airport/ Mall of America Complex along Shepard Road.
- Reversible traffic lanes on West 7th Street
- Construction of a vintage trolley system along West 7th Street
- Construction of a monorail
- Construction of a system using Personal Rapid Transit technology
- Construction of a subway system
- Redirecting any transit corridor up Smith Avenue and along Interstate 494
- Funding of a Jitney bus system along Shepard Road
- Construction of a busway along Interstate 35E
- Improving traffic flow by prohibiting semi-trailer trucks on West 7th Street
- Development of a water taxi or hovercraft system on the Mississippi River

Concern that a decision is being driven by state busway appropriation

Several citizens said that they believe that a busway is only being considered because of an appropriation for a busway from the Minnesota legislature. Some speakers said that the RCRRA must not let its decision be influenced simply by the availability of significant funds for a specific project. Some speakers said that, if RCRRA is to build a transitway using that money, it should consider different routes or assure that a transitway going through the Riverview Corridor is sensitive to the needs of the neighborhood.

Expressed problems with the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Process

Several commenting citizens indicated their dissatisfaction with the Major Investment Study Process. Specifically, there were several requests for an extension of the public comment period. Some commenting citizens indicated that they felt there was not enough opportunity for public involvement in the study process and that they were not well enough informed about the study. Commenting citizens also asked that any decisions be delayed to allow more alternatives to be studied.

Expressed issues with the accuracy of the study

Commenting citizens who disagreed with the findings of the study indicated that they felt many parts of the study are inaccurate or incomplete. Among the portions called into question by commenting citizens were the projected population and job numbers, the cost estimates and the projected ridership figures. Some commenting citizens asked for guarantees that the projections are accurate before they can support any investment.

Please note that a number of individuals provided written commentary and spoke at one or more of the public meetings. These individuals delivered essentially the same messages each time.

Section 1

Amended -
Oct. 18, 2000

RESOLUTION
CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

27

Presented By For Submission only - [Signature]
Referred To _____ Committee: _____ Date _____

WHEREAS, the City has received the *Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report* from the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, the RCRRA will select the Locally Preferred Alternative or strategy based on assessment of the data and public input after receiving comments from interested parties; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on September 22, 2000, held a public hearing on the *Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) Draft Report* at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard; and

WHEREAS, the *Transportation Policy Plan* chapter of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* calls for development of frequent, fast, limited-stop, high-level transit trunk line service (including dedicated busways and/or LRT) in six transit corridor "spines" that have high job concentrations, population density, transit dependency, and opportunity for redevelopment including the **Riverview Corridor** between downtown St. Paul and MSP International Airport (connecting to the Hiawatha Corridor at Fort Snelling/Airport) and the **Northeast Corridor** going northeast from downtown Saint Paul to Lafayette Park, Metro State University, 3M, Phalen Village, Hillcrest Center and Maplewood Mall; and

WHEREAS, the *Riverview Corridor MIS* includes both the Riverview Corridor and part of the Northeast Corridor identified in the *Transportation Policy Plan*; and

WHEREAS, Northeast Corridor trunk line transit service was the subject of detailed study in the *Saint Paul Northeast Area Transit/Land Use Restructuring Plan* in 1994 by RTB, MTC and City staff, and continues to be discussed in the Metropolitan Council's recent *Transit 2020 Master Plan*, which lists the corridor as one of the top two of four corridors in the metropolitan area for possible development of busways; and

WHEREAS, decisions on Riverview Corridor transit improvement alternatives could have significant long-range effects on transportation systems and land use patterns in Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, the *Land Use Plan* chapter of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* calls for focusing job and housing development efforts in the next 20 years in five corridors including the Phalen/Northeast Corridor and the Seventh Street/Riverview Corridor, where it calls for development of mixed-use urban villages including higher-density housing within a quarter mile of transit stops, and working with Ramsey County, the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit to improve public transit; and

WHEREAS, the Riverview Corridor and Northeast Corridor include a number of significant opportunities for higher density transit-oriented redevelopment and creation of urban villages around transit stations, most notably including 37 acres of vacant and under-used land at Shepard-Davern, the 63 acre former Koch-Mobil

40 tank farm site, the 25 acre Randolph Industrial Site at Randolph and Toronto, the North Quadrant and other
 41 urban villages being developed in downtown St. Paul, the growing Metro State University campus, the 24
 42 acre Hamm's Brewery site and Phalen Village; and

43
 44 WHEREAS, the City has completed a number of detailed plans for transit-oriented redevelopment of these
 45 areas, including the *Shepard Davern Gateway Small Area Plan*, the *Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan*, the
 46 *North Quadrant Precinct Plan*, the *North Quadrant Redevelopment Plan*, and the *Phalen Village Small Area*
 47 *Plan*; and

48
 49 WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on October 6, 2000, adopted the attached resolution recommending
 50 Busway as an appropriate transit improvement in the Riverview Corridor, and

51
 52 WHEREAS, the Planning Commission's recommendations are written in more detail in a Riverview Transit
 53 Corridor Issue Summary (October 6, 2000);

54
 55 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council recommends selection of
 56 Alternative 7 "BRT CPR Corridor" in the *Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report* as the
 57 Locally Preferred Alternative subject to the following modifications and conditions:

- 58
 59 1. Consider alternatives to BRT alignment on W. Seventh St. between the TH 5 bridge over the
 60 Mississippi River and the CPR right-of-way, and work with the City and neighborhood organizations to
 61 design transit improvements in this area to incorporate and complement recommendations in the
 62 *Shepard Davern Gateway Small Area Plan* and reinforce Gateway Project plans for this area; and
- 63
 64 2. BRT on the CPR right-of-way from about Alton St. to Toronto St., and then follow W. Seventh St.
 65 toward downtown St. Paul to mitigate the expense and residential impact of BRT on the portion of the
 66 CPR right-of-way from Toronto to Western (see attached map); and
- 67
 68 3. Busway on outside (right side rather than in the median) bus-only diamond lanes on W. Seventh St.
 69 from Toronto St. to Smith Ave., with possible bump-outs for bus stops and bump-ins for on-street
 70 parking, to mitigate potential impact on parking and property along Seventh St. (in order to stay in the
 71 current right-of-way as much as possible, variances from MSA standards should be sought); and
- 72
 73 4. In the United Hospital area, consider whether a one-way pair of bus lanes on Smith Ave. and W.
 74 Seventh St. would work better than leaving all busway traffic on Smith Ave.; and
- 75
 76 5. Busway on bus-only diamond lanes on Fifth and Sixth Streets in downtown St. Paul between Seventh
 77 St. and Broadway; and
- 78
 79 6. Busway on E. Fifth St. from Broadway to Kittson St. to avoid the high cost of developing busway
 80 diamond lanes on a very constrained and congested section of E. Seventh St. between Wacouta St. and
 81 Kittson St., where a busway might be more economically added later as part of major highway
 82 reconstruction; and
- 83
 84 7. In addition to the proposed Phase 1 stations identified in the MIS (Shepard-Davern, Crosby Lake,
 85 Randolph, Hospital, Washington, Cedar/Minnesota, Sibley, Lafayette, MSU, and Arcade), add stations
 86 identified in the MIS as "potential future stations" in the Madison/Rankin area, in the W. Seventh
 87 St./St. Clair area, and at the Cleveland Circle Transit Hub as Phase 1 stations, with all stations to be

- 88 strategically located and designed to enhance economic development as well as access to transit; and
 89
- 90 8. Give the City a significant and formal role in a participatory design process, with public input and
 91 review, to ensure that stations and other major features of Riverview Corridor transit improvements in
 92 St. Paul are designed to conform to an overall design theme reflecting St. Paul's historic character, and
 93 to be compatible with the street environment and adjacent buildings; and
 94
- 95 9. Allow regular and express route buses to share use of the bus-only diamond lanes; and
 96
- 97 10. At the west end, provide for an efficient BRT connection to the MSP airport and an efficient, user-
 98 friendly transit connection from the Riverview Corridor to the Mall of America; and
 99
- 100 11. From the east end of the Riverview Corridor busway, extend busway service northeast to Phalen
 101 Village and the Hillcrest Transit Hub, and possibly on to Maplewood Mall to provide improved transit
 102 service for commuters to downtown St. Paul and demonstrate the advantage of busways to allow buses
 103 to provide continuing seamless service beyond the busway; and
 104
- 105 12. Coordinate and incorporate local development of the Shepard-Davern Gateway Project, the Cleveland
 106 Circle Transit Hub, the new Arcade bridge and on-ramp to Phalen Blvd., and Phalen Blvd. on RCRRA-
 107 owned right-of-way between Arcade St. and Johnson Parkway with the Riverview Corridor transit
 108 improvements; and
 109

110 ALSO, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council supports the creation of a public/private
 111 partnership for the for the purpose of building transit ridership and supporting transit and transportation
 112 improvements in the Riverview Corridor; and

113 *** Insert AMENDMENT A (See next Page)**

114 FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that Saint Paul City Council approves this resolution as the City's official
 115 comment on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report, and is the City's recommendation
 116 on a Locally Preferred Alternative.

	Yeas	Nays	Absent
Benanav	✓		
Blakey	✓		
Bostrom	✓		
Coleman	✓		
Harris	✓		
Lantry	✓		
Reiter	✓		
	7	0	0

Requested by Department of:

Planning & Economic Development

By:

[Signature]

73

Form Approved by City Attorney

By:

[Signature] 10.13.00

Approved by Mayor for Submission to Council

By:

[Signature]

Adopted by Council: Date Oct. 18, 2000

Adoption Certified by Council Secretary

By:

[Signature]

Approved by Mayor: Date

Oct 23 2000

By:

[Signature]

* Amendment A

ALSO, BE IT RESOLVED, that the St. Paul City Council respectfully requests that:

1. No new river crossing in excess of improvements to existing crossings shall be constructed in order to accommodate transit improvements; and
2. No transit alignments shall be implemented that present a harmful environmental impact on the Mississippi River bluff area and the Swede Hollow area; and
3. No alternative will remove on-street parking needed by businesses or residents without adequate replacement. Those removals that do take place must be replaced by off-street parking in a pre-approved walking distance from the removals; and
4. No removal of business, homes, or multi-unit dwellings shall take place unless a replacement redevelopment plan from any of the responsible jurisdictions is in place; and
5. That an independent traffic and parking impact study of the station areas be implemented before final EIS approval; and
6. That no parkland be eliminated or mitigated; and
7. That electric transit vehicles be the sole allowable vehicles on all dedicated, off-street portions of the transit way; and
8. That an assessment of a bike lane allowance be included in the final EIS; and
9. That a noise assessment study be conducted and a sound abatement plan implemented in those areas of the transit alignment in the proximity of residential and multi-unit housing.

AND, Be it further resolved,

That the final land use plan, implementation schedule, financing by the City, and specific alignment be subject to approval by the Saint Paul City Council, after all applicable neighborhood groups are given an adequate comment period before final vote on the EIS and initiation of the project timetable.



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Norm Coleman, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-6565
Facsimile: 651-228-3314

Riverview Transit Corridor Issue Summary

Rationale for the Saint Paul Planning Commission's Recommendations
October 6, 2000

Summary of Planning Commission Recommendation

- Transit should be built in the Riverview Corridor because it is a key piece of the regional transportation strategy to cope with increasing traffic congestion, because it is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, and because it brings many benefits to city residents and businesses.
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the Riverview Corridor is a practical and workable transit strategy for next 20 years.
- The Planning Commission supports a combination of the alignments evaluated in the MIS.
- The CP Rail segment works better than going straight along W. Seventh Street because it by-passes the high traffic levels at the I-35E interchange with W. Seventh and because it causes fewer negative impacts on private property owners.
- On W. Seventh Street from Randolph into the downtown, the busway should be located in diamond lanes so that almost all of the existing on-street parking can be retained. To the extent on-street parking is lost, this impact will be mitigated by adding new parking facilities.
- Further analysis is needed to choose the best alignment in the Shepard-Davern area and in the United Hospital/Cleveland Circle Transit Hub area.
- Station area planning is needed in the next phase of study to coordinate the busway with development at many of the station areas. Local neighborhood concerns should be addressed in the station area plans.

Background and Planning Commission Role

After two years of study and work by a transit consultant, the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority (RCRRA) released the River Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) in August 2000. The MIS is a step toward eligibility for federal transit funding. The City is asked to submit its recommendation and comments to the RCRRA by October 20, 2000. The Mayor and City Council, in turn, asked the Saint Paul Planning Commission to develop a recommendation to them for City Council action on October 18th. The RCRRA will select the preferred alternative on November 14th.

The decision process became urgent when the state legislature in the 2000 session allocated \$44 million for a busway in the metro area. The leading contenders for the funds are the Riverview Corridor and a northwest corridor from Minneapolis to Anoka County. The Metropolitan Council will make a decision on how to spend the state funds before the end of the year. It is anticipated that the state funds would be matched by a greater amount of federal transit funds.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the MIS on September 22, 2000, but there was very little testimony by neighborhood and business organizations along the corridor, presumably because of the limited time at the end of the summer when the MIS document was available. The City Council will probably receive more public testimony. The Planning Commission toured the alternative alignments, attended meetings with interested organizations, and met for several hours with staff from City departments, the RCRRA, Metro Transit and Metro Council. The Commission's recommendation gives the Commission's best judgment on what is best for the whole city based on the Comprehensive Plan and on how to minimize the number of negative local impacts and mitigate remaining ones.

The Planning Commission had neither the time nor expertise to address cost-effectiveness questions; these are properly questions for the RCRRA and Metro Transit. The Commission was advised, however, that the modeling done for transit studies give conservative ridership projections. Future ridership is likely to be higher when public transportation is improved generally and when traffic gets worse.

Regional and Citywide Planning Context

1. The Planning Commission accepts as a premise that traffic congestion in the Twin Cities and on the Riverview Corridor will become much worse, as discussed in the MIS and regional transportation plans. Public policy and investments need to respond not only with road construction but also by improving bus service, creating transitways, and adjusting land use to complement public transportation.
2. Regional transportation plans call for a "central triangle of transitways" with radiating

spokes (Attachment A). The triangle interconnects downtown Minneapolis, downtown Saint Paul, and the Mall of America/MSP Airport. Other transitways radiate from the triangle. The Hiawatha side of triangle will be LRT. The City of Saint Paul would like the Central Corridor to be considered for the next LRT line because it has more employment, more households, and greater projected ridership than other transit corridors in the region. Due to cost, regions of our size find they can build about one LRT line per decade.

3. The Riverview Corridor is designated as a "primary transit express corridor" in the Comprehensive Plan's Transportation Chapter. Actually the MIS covers what is designated as the Riverview Corridor along W. Seventh Street and part of the Northeast Corridor, which runs out to the Maplewood Mall (Attachment B). The Transportation Chapter has three major strategies, one of which is "Travel Mode Choice" with "transit improvement" as the first objective. Upgrading public transportation on the Riverview Corridor is clearly supported in the city's Transportation Plan. The corridor does an excellent job of interconnecting a series of employment and activity centers and many residential areas from the East Side through the downtown and along W. Seventh to the Airport (MSP) and the Mall of America (MOA).
5. A Riverview Corridor transitway is also consistent with the Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. One of the specific purposes of the Land Use Plan is "to inter-relate land use and transportation to minimize traffic congestion and to reduce dependence on automobiles." Two of the four general strategies in the Land Use Plan are "A Growing, Vital City Center" and "Corridors for Growth." Both W. Seventh and the Phalen Corridor are designated as growth corridors (Attachment C) where series of major redevelopment opportunities lie near the proposed transitway (Phalen Village, Quadrille, Stroh's, Metro State, North Quadrant, downtown office core, Cleveland Circle Transit Hub, Upper Landing, ADM, Koch-Mobil, Quebecor, Shepard-Davern).

Transit Mode Preference for Busway

The Planning Commission recommends Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) for several reasons:

- Since funding is available now and several of the redevelopment sites listed above are still in design stages, the new land uses and site plans can be adjusted to be transit-oriented or at least as compatible as possible. If the City waits for another opportunity to build transit, most of these sites will have already been redeveloped and some may even become obstacles to a transitway.
- BRT offers the flexibility to mix exclusive busway lanes with diamond lanes; a "perfect" transit right-of-way is not essential.
- BRT has fewer local impacts than LRT because on-street parking and left-turn movements can be preserved in the diamond lane segments.

- If LRT will be funded for only one Saint Paul corridor in the next decade, the City Council has previously expressed its support for the Central Corridor.
- If BRT succeeds and increases ridership significantly above MIS projections, the alignment can be upgraded to LRT in the future. If a busway is not established now, it will be all the more difficult to create an LRT right-of-way in the future.

Busway Alignment Preferences

1. In the scoping phase before the MIS, Shepard Road was eliminated as an alignment because it would provide almost no service to Saint Paul neighborhoods. BRT or LRT stations should be near neighborhood commercial centers where as many people as possible live within a quarter-mile walk. Shepard Road has only two or three potential station locations that would serve even a small number of households or businesses. BRT is not intended as a by-pass express bus; that is already found on Shepard Road. Transitways are intended to provide mobility for Saint Paul people as the road system becomes increasingly congested.
2. Direct service to MSP is important; transferring at the airport from BRT to LRT to go to the Mall of America is acceptable to Saint Paul.
3. In the Shepard-Davern area more analysis should be done on the pros and cons of W. Seventh vs. Norfolk Ave. alignments. W. Seventh may be a better station location for neighborhood service, but widening the W. Seventh right-of-way may cause too much hardship.
4. The CP Rail alignment should be used from Alton Street to Toronto Avenue, providing a segment of exclusive busway that bypasses the high traffic volumes on W. Seventh to the west of the I-35E interchange. For this stretch, a busway on W. Seventh would require either a major widening of W. Seventh Street or else a new interchange at I-35E and Shepard Road so that traffic would shift to Shepard Road.
5. From Toronto to Smith the busway should operate in diamond lanes that preserve on-street parking lanes where they exist now and are critical to abutting homes and businesses. A small number of parking spaces would be lost for left-turn slots or bus stops. Local buses should also run in the diamond lanes.
6. Detailed analysis is needed for the United Hospitals-Cleveland Circle Transit Hub area. The hospital wants improved transit and needs to preserve access and pedestrian circulation. The City wants to open Smith Avenue through the Armstrong House site and ensure convenient pedestrian connections between the proposed transit hub/parking ramp and the busway.
7. The City supports the Fifth-Sixth Street pair through downtown.

8. East of the downtown core, the busway should use E. Fifth Street from Broadway to Kittson, going under the Lafayette Bridge and bypassing the Lafayette-E. Seventh intersection until that intersection is reconstructed in the future. The intersection is too congested to create diamond lanes. The Kittson connection, unfortunately, puts the station farther from Lafayette Park employment centers; thus, when the intersection is rebuilt in the future, it should be redesigned to accommodate the busway on E. Seventh Street itself.
9. On E. Seventh Street through Dayton's Bluff, an exclusive busway appears to be workable if there is an adequate parking replacement program.
10. The busway should turn north on Arcade Street, go over the bridge and then ramp down to the planned Phalen Blvd.
11. Even if busway lanes do not continue on Phalen Blvd., the bus routes should continue to Phalen Village and destinations farther out on the planned Northeast Transit Corridor.

Right-of-Way Issues

1. The Planning Commission thinks that more study is needed on whether to reconstruct ramps from the Highway 5 bridge to Shepard Road. For traffic diversion to succeed, new ramps may also need to connect I-35E to Shepard Road because so much of the MSP and Bloomington-bound traffic uses I-35E and W. Seventh.
2. Right-of-way width at Sibley Plaza and Sibley Manor may be a great obstacle to creating putting the busway and a station there, which is why the Norfolk Avenue alignment should also be considered.
3. Some additional right-of-way will be needed wherever the busway bridges over or tunnels under the CP railroad track.
4. The City wants to open Smith Avenue through the proposed Cleveland Circle Transit Hub, where the historic Armstrong House sits, and wants the busway to connect conveniently into the transit hub.
5. Access from the Arcade Street bridge to Phalen Blvd. is currently planned as a single, two-way loop at the northwest corner of the bridge. The loop should be designed to accommodate buses.
6. In the diamond lane segments, the busway can operate—retaining the on-street parking except at intersections with left turn slots or bus stops—within the existing rights-of-way. However, more right-of-way will be needed to build decent BRT stations.

7. If E. Seventh Street is built with exclusive busway lanes, widening of the right-of way will be necessary at least at certain points, and especially between Kittson and Mounds Blvd.

Local Land Use and Development Impacts

1. The Shepard-Davern Gateway Small Area Plan does not anticipate BRT as planned in the MIS. The Shepard-Davern Plan should be adjusted to accommodate the busway as a community asset. If Shepard-Davern Gateway Beautification Project needs some adjustments, the busway budget should provide an alternative that conforms to the spirit of the plan and has equivalent aesthetic quality.
2. The Quebecor plant occupies a prominent river bluff site and is currently vacant. It should become a target site for redevelopment, possible for residential use.
3. Like Shepard-Davern, the Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan may need minor revision to accommodate BRT. In particular, the Koch-Mobil site plan should be revised to be transit-oriented development. The busway on the CR rail corridor through this entire residential area needs to be carefully designed. The Brewery/Ran-View Plan supports improved public transit generally and anticipates that it will occur on W. Seventh.
4. Another need for station area planning is at the W. Seventh-Randolph-Toronto, where the busway switches from the CP rail alignment to W. Seventh.
5. Detailed planning is needed for the United-Children's Hospital area on Smith and may include one-way pairing of the busway using Smith and W. Seventh. The hospitals have expressed their readiness to participate. This area would include the proposed transit hub.
6. Metro State University wants to build a library on the north side of E. Seventh Street. The station plan should be coordinated with their campus planning.
7. With exclusive busway lanes on E. Seventh Street, there will be some left turn and access issues. These need to be resolved case by case in a more detailed level of planning.
8. The Arcade Street station should probably be a little north of E. Seventh Street where it can link to both 3M and the Stroh's redevelopment site. An additional future station more proximate to the Stroh's redevelopment site should be considered.

Bus Service Issues

1. The City is opposed to forced transfers from neighborhood bus lines onto the busway.
2. The City supports use of busway and diamond lanes by neighborhood bus lines as they head into and through downtown.

3. Local bus service should be preserved on E. and W. Seventh Streets.
4. The City agrees with the MIS statement that BRT buses should have priority at stop lights, that is, they can extend green lights until they cross. But they should not fully preempt stop lights the way emergency vehicles do. Preemption blocks out pedestrian crossing lights for a full cycle, making it too difficult for pedestrians to cross. Moreover, frequent preemption would throw whole signal sequencing patterns out of sync much of the time and disrupt traffic flow.

Attachments:

- Regional transitways map
- Citywide proposed transit corridors (Comp Plan)
- Maps of Planning Commission's preferred alignments
- Cross-section drawings of busway
- Corridor map of major development sites (Comp Plan)

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number 00-62
date 10-6-00

WHEREAS, the City has received the *Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report* from the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA) for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, the RCRRA will select the Locally Preferred Alternative or strategy based on assessment of the data and public input after receiving comments from interested parties; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission serves as an advisory body to the Mayor and City Council on municipal planning matters per Section 107.02 of the City Administrative Code; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, on September 22, 2000, held a public hearing on the *Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) Draft Report* at which all persons present were given an opportunity to be heard; and

WHEREAS, the *Transportation Policy Plan* chapter of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* calls for development of frequent, fast, limited-stop, high-level transit trunk line service (including dedicated busways and/or LRT) in six transit corridor "spines" that have high job concentrations, population density, transit dependency, and opportunity for redevelopment including the **Riverview Corridor** between downtown St. Paul and MSP International Airport (connecting to the Hiawatha Corridor at Fort Snelling/Airport) and the **Northeast Corridor** going northeast from downtown Saint Paul to Lafayette Park, Metro State University, 3M, Phalen Village, Hillcrest Center and Maplewood Mall; and

WHEREAS, the *Riverview Corridor MIS* includes both the Riverview Corridor and part of the Northeast Corridor identified in the *Transportation Policy Plan*; and

WHEREAS, Northeast Corridor trunk line transit service was the subject of detailed study in the *Saint Paul Northeast Area Transit/Land Use Restructuring Plan* in 1994 by RTB, MTC and City staff, and continues to be discussed in the Metropolitan Council's recent *Transit 2020 Master Plan*, which lists the corridor as one of the top two of four corridors in the metropolitan area for possible development of busways; and

WHEREAS, decisions on Riverview Corridor transit improvement alternatives could have significant long-range effects on transportation systems and land use patterns in Saint Paul; and

moved by Gordon
seconded by Kramer
in favor Unanimous
against _____

WHEREAS, the *Land Use Plan* chapter of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* calls for focusing job and housing development efforts in the next 20 years in five corridors including the Phalen/Northeast Corridor and the Seventh Street/Riverview Corridor, where it calls for development of mixed-use urban villages including higher-density housing within a quarter mile of transit stops, and working with Ramsey County, the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit to improve public transit; and

WHEREAS, the Riverview Corridor and Northeast Corridor include a number of significant opportunities for higher density transit-oriented redevelopment and creation of urban villages around transit stations, most notably including 37 acres of vacant and under-used land at Shepard-Davern, the 63 acre former Koch-Mobil tank farm site, the 25 acre Randolph Industrial Site at Randolph and Toronto, the North Quadrant and other urban villages being developed in downtown St. Paul, the growing Metro State University campus, the 24 acre Hamm's Brewery site and Phalen Village; and

WHEREAS, the City has completed a number of detailed plans for transit-oriented redevelopment of these areas, including the *Shepard Davern Gateway Small Area Plan*, the *Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan*, the *North Quadrant Precinct Plan*, the *North Quadrant Redevelopment Plan*, and the *Phalen Village Small Area Plan*; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission's recommendations are written in more detail in a Riverview Transit Corridor Issue Summary (October 6, 2000);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Planning Commission recommends selection of Alternative 7 "BRT CPR Corridor" in the *Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report* as the Locally Preferred Alternative subject to the following modifications and conditions:

1. Consider alternatives to BRT alignment on W. Seventh St. between the TH 5 bridge over the Mississippi River and the CPR right-of-way, and work with the City and neighborhood organizations to design transit improvements in this area to incorporate and complement recommendations in the *Shepard Davern Gateway Small Area Plan* and reinforce Gateway Project plans for this area; and
2. BRT on the CPR right-of-way from about Alton St. to Toronto St., and then follow W. Seventh St. toward downtown St. Paul to mitigate the expense and residential impact of BRT on the portion of the CPR right-of-way from Toronto to Western (see attached map); and
3. Busway on outside (right side rather than in the median) bus-only diamond lanes on W. Seventh St. from Toronto St. to Smith Ave., with possible bump-outs for bus stops and bump-ins for on-street parking, to mitigate potential impact on parking and property along Seventh St. (in order to stay in the current right-of-way as much as possible, variances from MSA standards should be sought); and
4. In the United Hospital area, consider whether a one-way pair of bus lanes on Smith Ave. and W. Seventh St. would work better than leaving all busway traffic on Smith Ave.; and

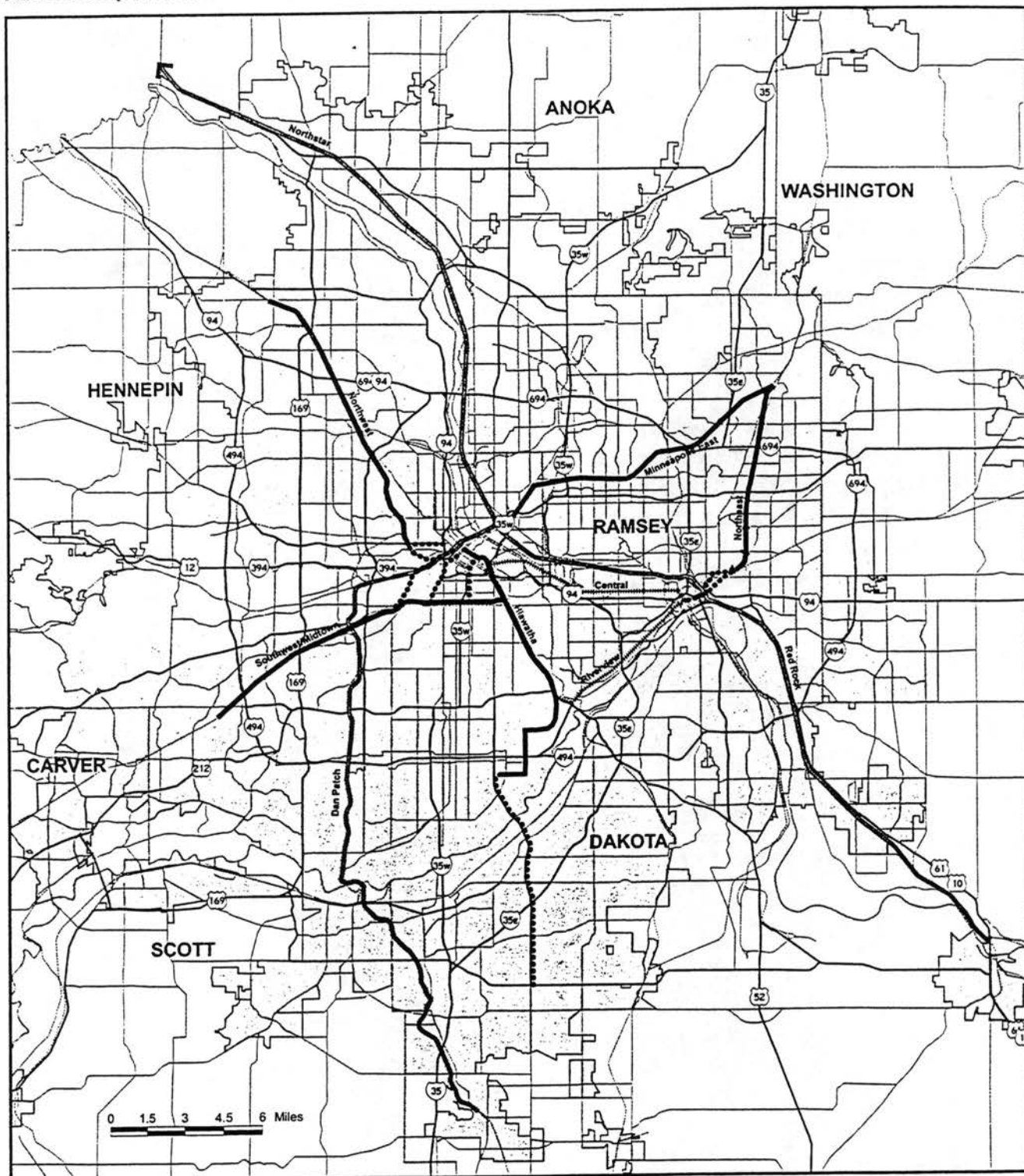
5. Busway on bus-only diamond lanes on Fifth and Sixth Streets in downtown St. Paul between Seventh St. and Broadway; and
6. Busway on E. Fifth St. from Broadway to Kittson St. to avoid the high cost of developing busway diamond lanes on a very constrained and congested section of E. Seventh St. between Wacouta St. and Kittson St., where a busway might be more economically added later as part of major highway reconstruction; and
7. In addition to the proposed Phase 1 stations identified in the MIS (Shepard-Davern, Crosby Lake, Randolph, Hospital, Washington, Cedar/Minnesota, Sibley, Lafayette, MSU, and Arcade), add stations identified in the MIS as "potential future stations" in the Madison/Rankin area, in the W. Seventh St./St. Clair area, and at the Cleveland Circle Transit Hub as Phase 1 stations, with all stations to be strategically located and designed to enhance economic development as well as access to transit; and
8. Give the City a significant and formal role in a participatory design process, with public input and review, to ensure that stations and other major features of Riverview Corridor transit improvements in St. Paul are designed to conform to an overall design theme reflecting St. Paul's historic character, and to be compatible with the street environment and adjacent buildings; and
9. Allow regular and express route buses to share use of the bus-only diamond lanes; and
10. At the west end, provide for an efficient BRT connection to the MSP airport and an efficient, user-friendly transit connection from the Riverview Corridor to the Mall of America; and
11. From the east end of the Riverview Corridor busway, extend busway service northeast to Phalen Village and the Hillcrest Transit Hub, and possibly on to Maplewood Mall to provide improved transit service for commuters to downtown St. Paul and demonstrate the advantage of busways to allow buses to provide continuing seamless service beyond the busway; and
12. Coordinate and incorporate local development of the Shepard-Davern Gateway Project, the Cleveland Circle Transit Hub, the new Arcade bridge and on-ramp to Phalen Blvd., and Phalen Blvd. on RCRRA-owned right-of-way between Arcade St. and Johnson Parkway with the Riverview Corridor transit improvements; and

ALSO, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission supports the creation of a public/private partnership for the for the purpose of building transit ridership and supporting transit and transportation improvements in the Riverview Corridor; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission transmits these recommendations to the Mayor and City Council for their consideration in reviewing and commenting on the *Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report*, and making their recommendation on a Locally Preferred Alternative.

Map 4. Transitways on Dedicated Rights-of-Way 2020 Plan

Twin Cities Metropolitan Area



2020 Plan



Busway

LRT Alternatives*

Downtown Busway
Connector Alternatives

Commuter Rail

Potential LRT Extension

* One of these two LRT Alternatives will be built by 2010. Bus transit improvements will be implemented in corridor not selected for LRT.

Roadways

2020 Principal Arterials

2020 Minor Arterials

Current Urban Service Area

Objective 6.4 Phalen Corridor

Land Use Plan
(4 pages)

The Phalen Corridor Initiative is a model for neighborhood revitalization work. It is a community partnership among residents, businesses, service agencies, and different levels of government. It is tying economic development, workforce development, human services, and housing rehabilitation together.

Policies:

6.4.1 The goals for physical development along the Phalen Corridor are:

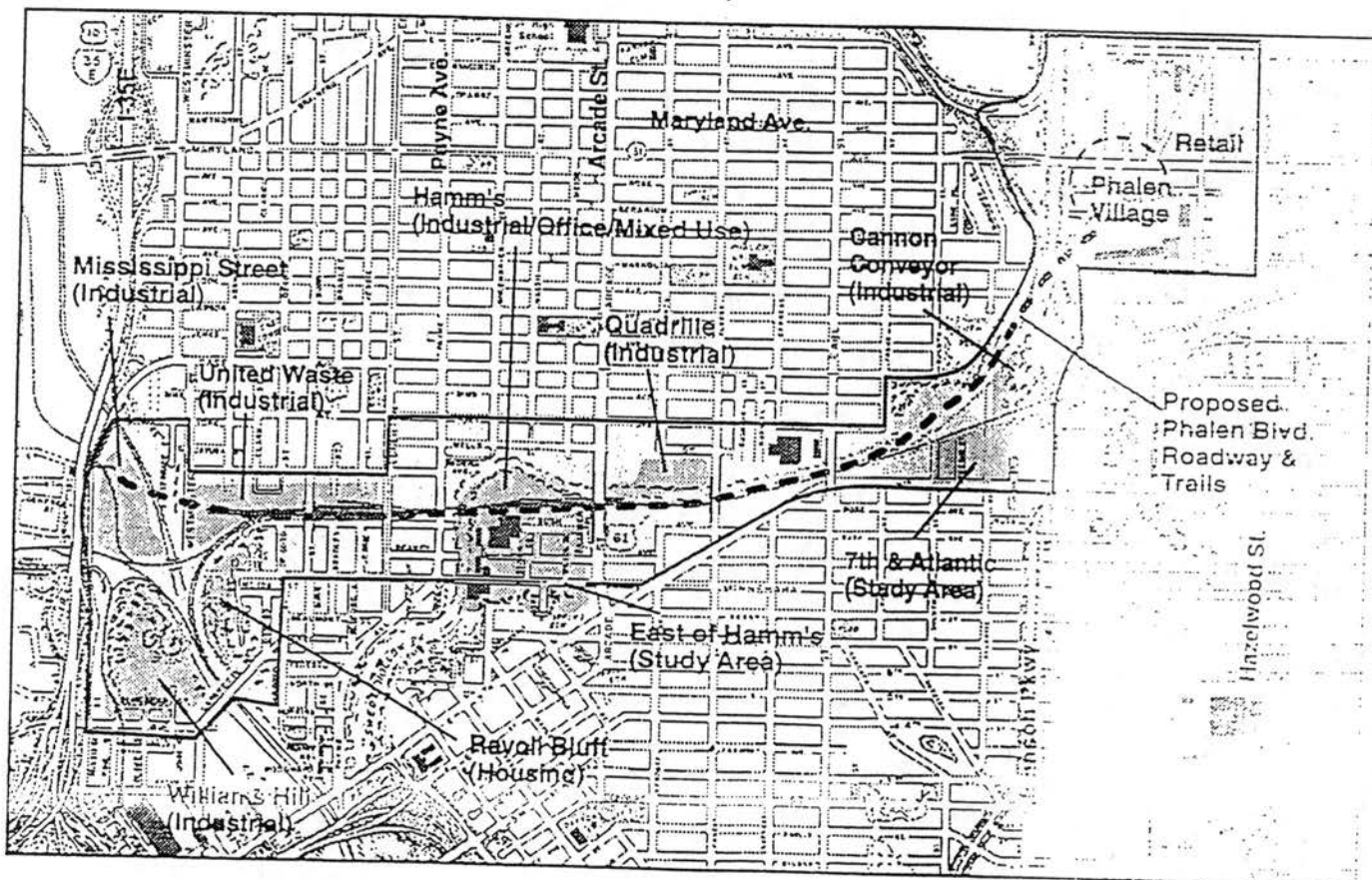
- To create a mix of new jobs (up to 2000)
- To increase the tax base
- To be economically sustainable
- To be integrated and compatible with the area's natural amenities and historic neighborhoods

6.4.2 The planned land uses along the Phalen Corridor are as shown in Figure Q. There are ten significant redevelopment sites along the corridor; the biggest ones are the Williams Hill Industrial Park, Hamm's Brewery, and Phalen Village.

6.4.3 The City and the Port Authority will continue to support and seek

The Phalen Corridor initiative is a model for neighborhood revitalization work.

Figure Q
Phalen Corridor
Development
Opportunities



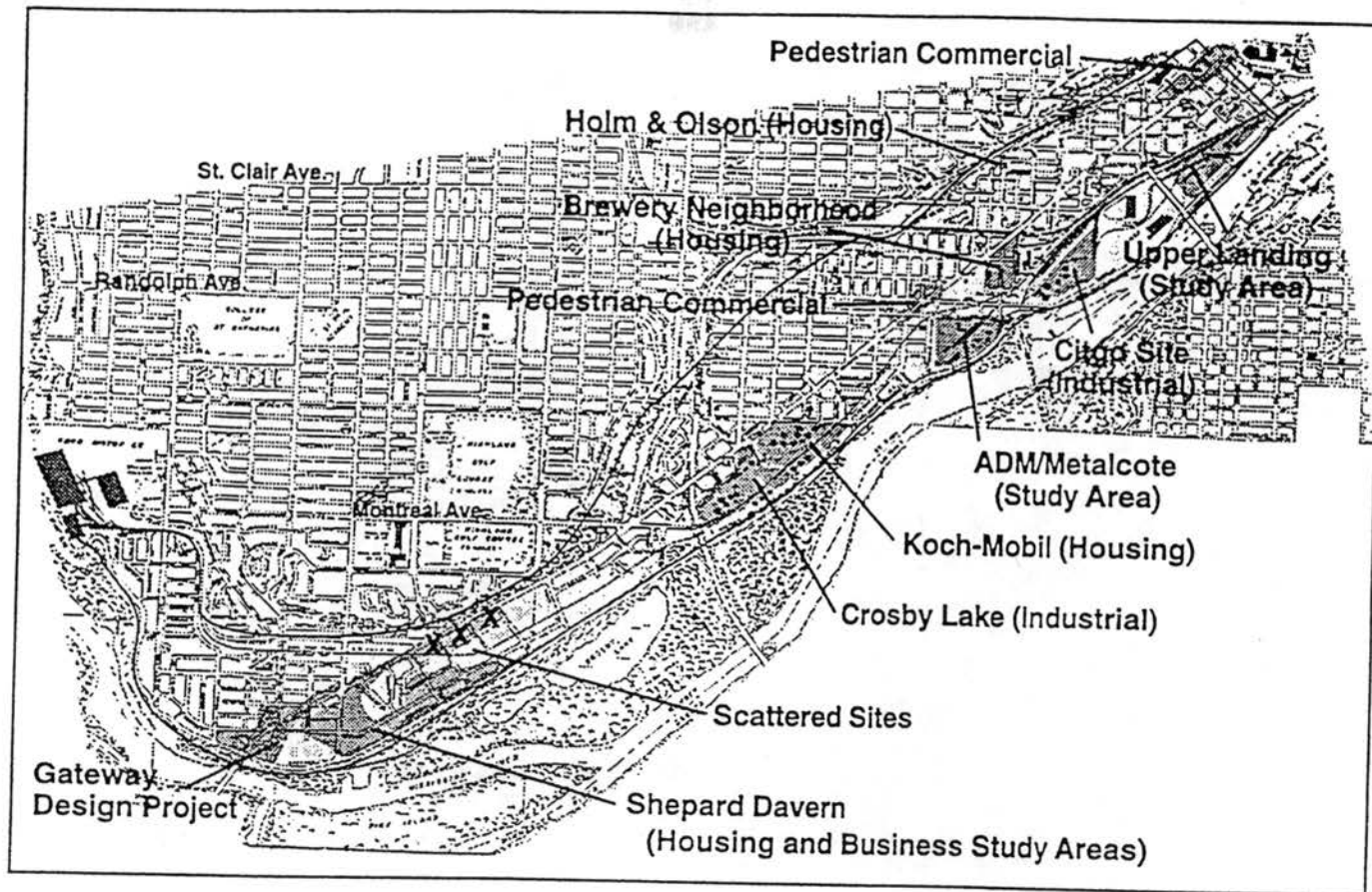
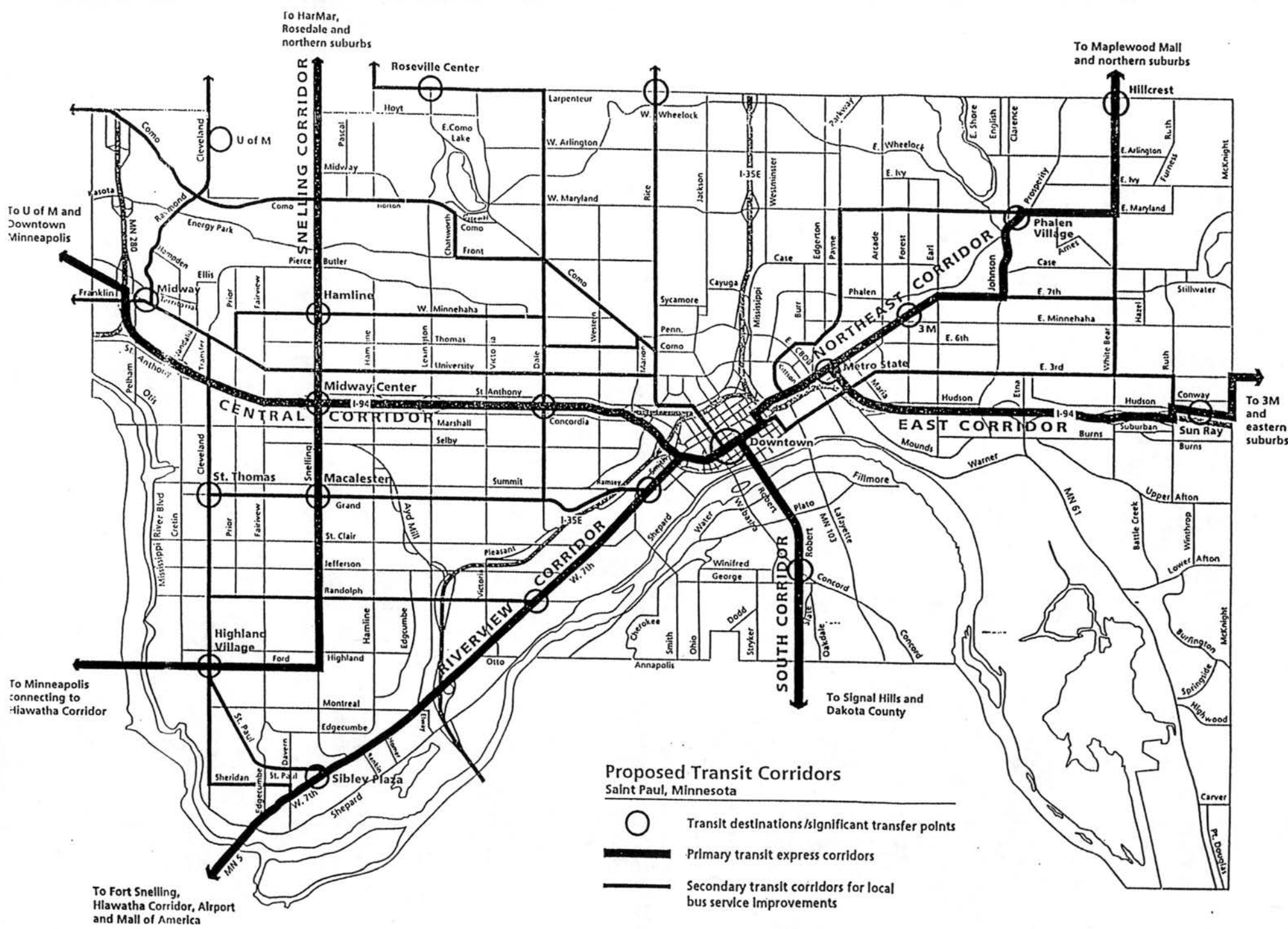


Figure R
West Seventh Corridor
Development
Opportunities

- 6.5.2 A primary goal of redevelopment planning for the Riverview Corridor is transit-oriented development. The mix of land uses, densities, and site plan arrangements should augment the ridership base and make riding public transit an attractive option. The City will join with Ramsey County in advocating public transportation improvements in the corridor.
- 6.5.3 Along West Seventh Corridor bluffs, development should take full advantage of the views and amenity of the river valley, while at the same time improving views from the river to the bluff lines and protecting the ecology of the river.
- 6.5.4 The southwest end of the corridor at the river is an important gateway to Saint Paul adjacent to the international airport. Landscaping and signage and improvement of adjacent development and pedestrian areas are among the improvements needed to change its character to that of an inviting urban neighborhood and business center and entrance to Saint Paul.
- 6.5.5 Any major transit developments within the Riverview corridor should be incorporated into the existing residential, commercial and environmental character of the corridor. In particular, physical changes should respect and complement natural amenities in the corridor, such as Crosby Park, Hidden Falls Park and the Mississippi River Boulevard Park and should avoid unnecessary intrusion.



**TYPICAL STREET SECTIONS
FOR
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION
ALTERNATE BRT 7**

The following is a brief description of eight (8) possible typical street sections that apply to various locations of the Planning Commission Resolution for Alternative BRT 7

Sections Page 1 - All the street sections on this page are designed for a speed limit of 35 MPH or less and an average daily traffic volume of less than 15,000 vehicles. The sections provide twenty-four (24) feet for a raised center median for exclusive bus use only, provide one (1) lane of through traffic in each direction, no on street parking and maintains a minimum of ten (10) feet of public boulevard space. These sections would apply to Arcade Street.

Section 1 - This is the basic section, does not allow adequate width to provide for local bus stops without blocking through vehicle movement.

Section 2 - This section widens the right of way by four (4) feet on either side of the street only where local bus stops are necessary.

Section 3 - This section widens the right of way by eighteen (18) feet to accommodate in street platform busway stations and left turn lanes.

Section 4 - This section widens the right of way by thirty-two (32) feet to accommodate in street platform busway stations, local bus stops at the curb and left turn lanes.

Sections Page 2 - All the street sections on this page are designed for a speed limit of 35 MPH or less and an average daily traffic volume of greater than 15,000 vehicles. The sections provide twenty-four (24) feet for a raised center median for exclusive bus use only, provide two (2) lanes of through traffic in each direction, no on street parking and maintains a minimum of ten (10) feet of public boulevard space. Local bus stops use the curb lane. These sections would apply to East Seventh Street from Arcade to Kittson and West Seventh Street from the C. P. Rail to the West City Limits.

Section 5 - Street section without busway stations and requires eighteen (18) feet additional right of way.

Section 6 - This section widens the right of way need by thirty-two (42) feet to accommodate in street platform busway stations and left turn lanes.

Sections Page 3 - All the street sections on this page are designed for a speed limit of 35 MPH or less and an average daily traffic volume of less than 15,000 vehicles. The sections provides painted diamond lanes for bus and right turning vehicles use only, provides one (1) lane of through traffic in each direction, on street parking and maintains a minimum of ten (10) feet of public boulevard space. Local bus stops use the curb lane. These sections would apply to West Seventh Street from Smith to about Randolph.

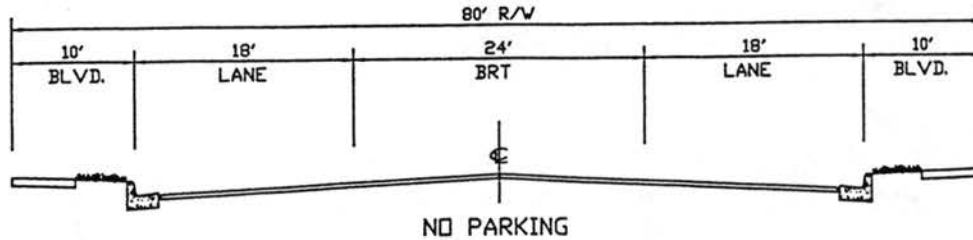
Section 7 - Does not allow for left turn lanes.

Section 8 - Where left turn lanes are required, parking would need to be removed.

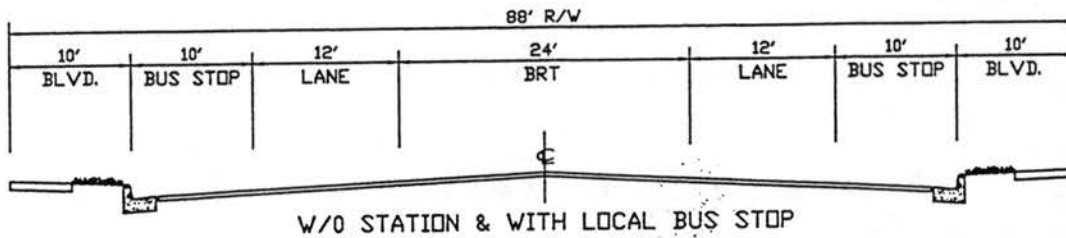
BRT ALTERNATIVES

TYPICAL 2-LANE SECTIONS

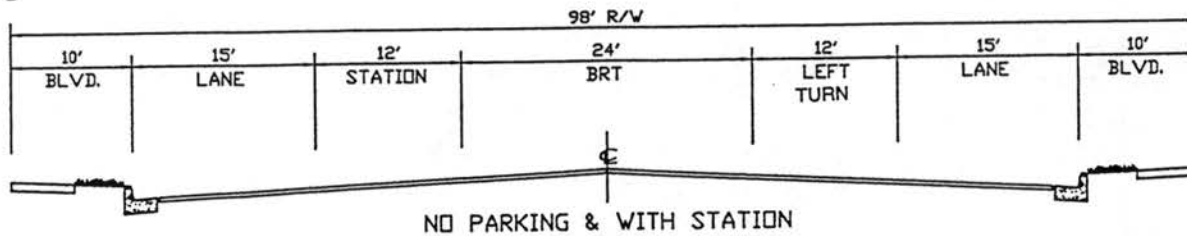
SECTION 1



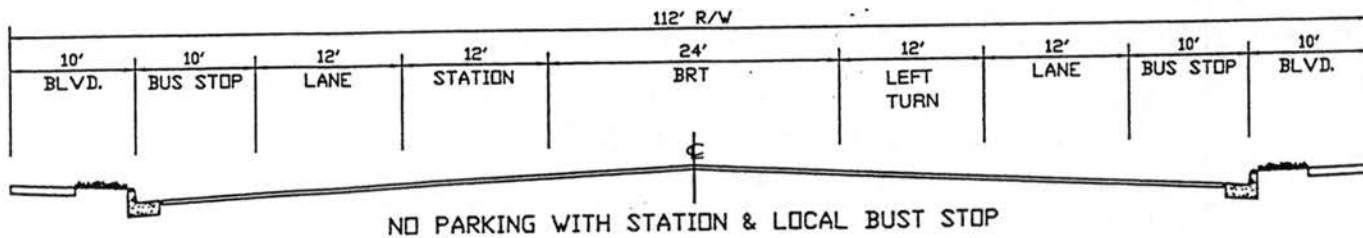
SECTION 2



SECTION 3



SECTION 4



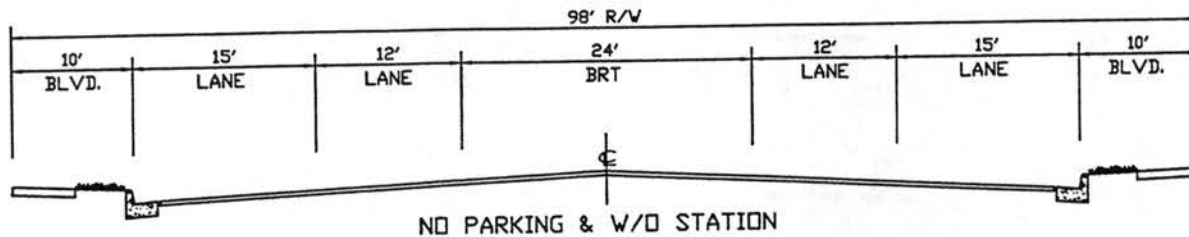
NOTES:

- * 10FT MINIMUM BOULEVARD WIDTH
- * DESIGN ADT 10,000-15,000 VPD
- * DESIGN SPEED LIMIT 30-35 MPH

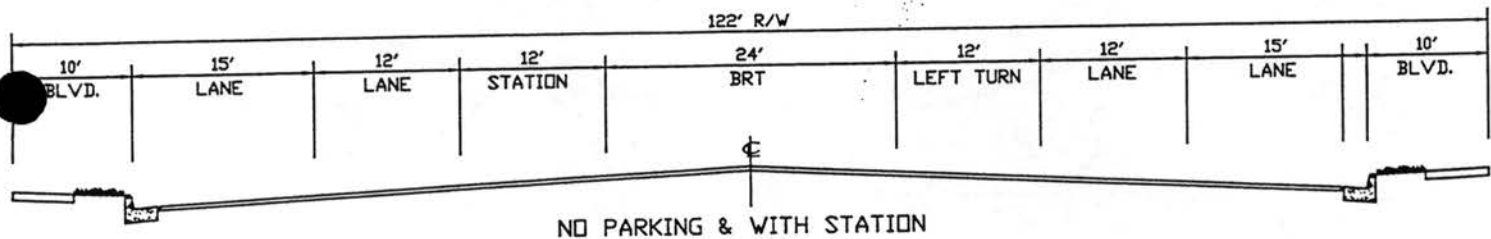
BRT ALTERNATIVES

TYPICAL 4-LANE SECTIONS

SECTION 5



SECTION 6



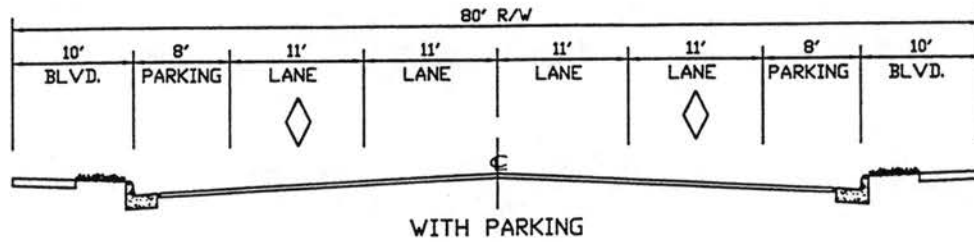
- NOTES:
- * 10FT MINIMUM BOULEVARD WIDTH
 - * DESIGN ADT >15,000 VPD
 - * DESIGN SPEED LIMIT 30-35 MPH
 - * LOCAL BUS SERVICE STOPS IN CURB LANE

BRT ALTERNATIVES

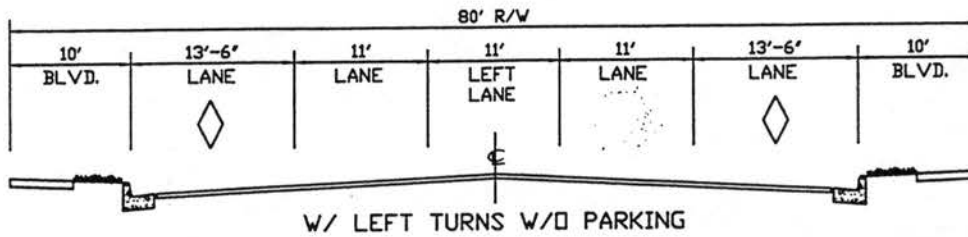
TYPICAL SECTIONS

DIAMOND LANE DESIGN

SECTION 7

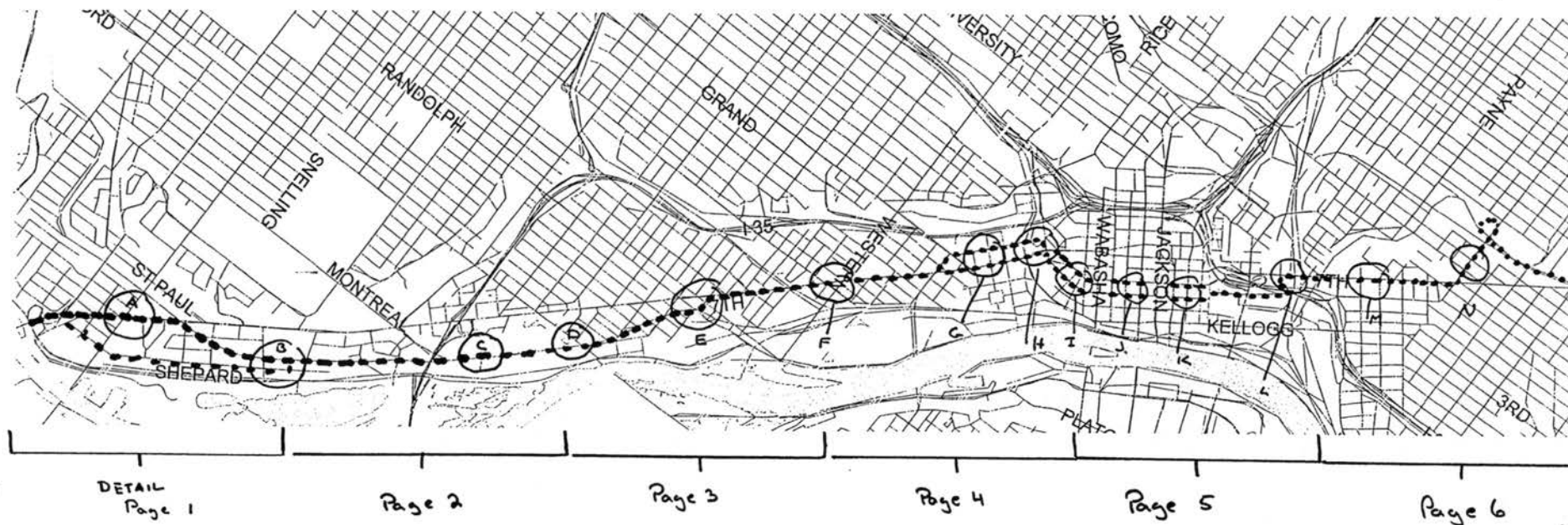


SECTION 8



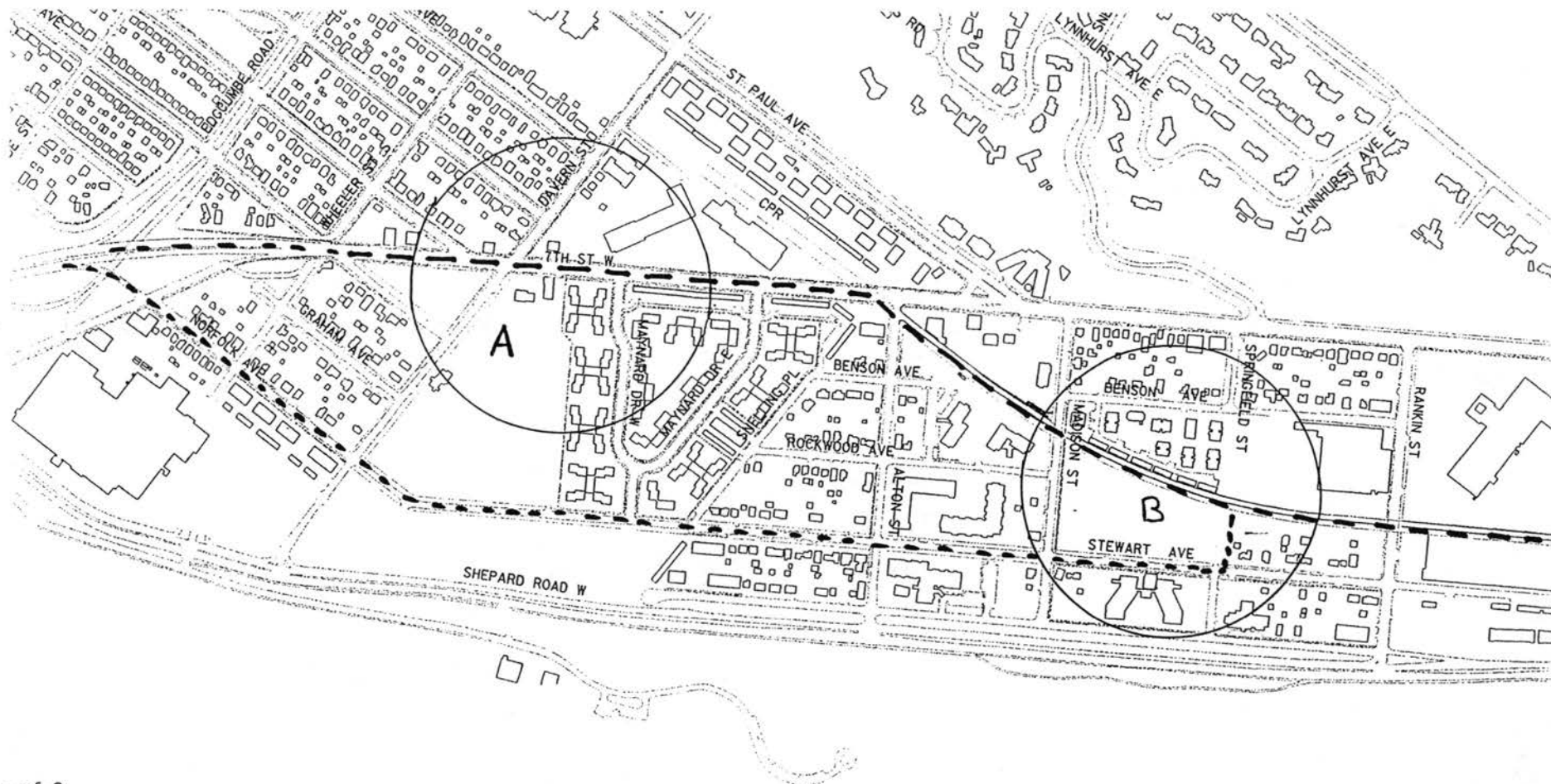
NOTES:

- * 10FT MINIMUM BOULEVARD WIDTH
- * DESIGN ADT >15,000 VPD
- * DESIGN SPEED LIMIT 30-35 MPH



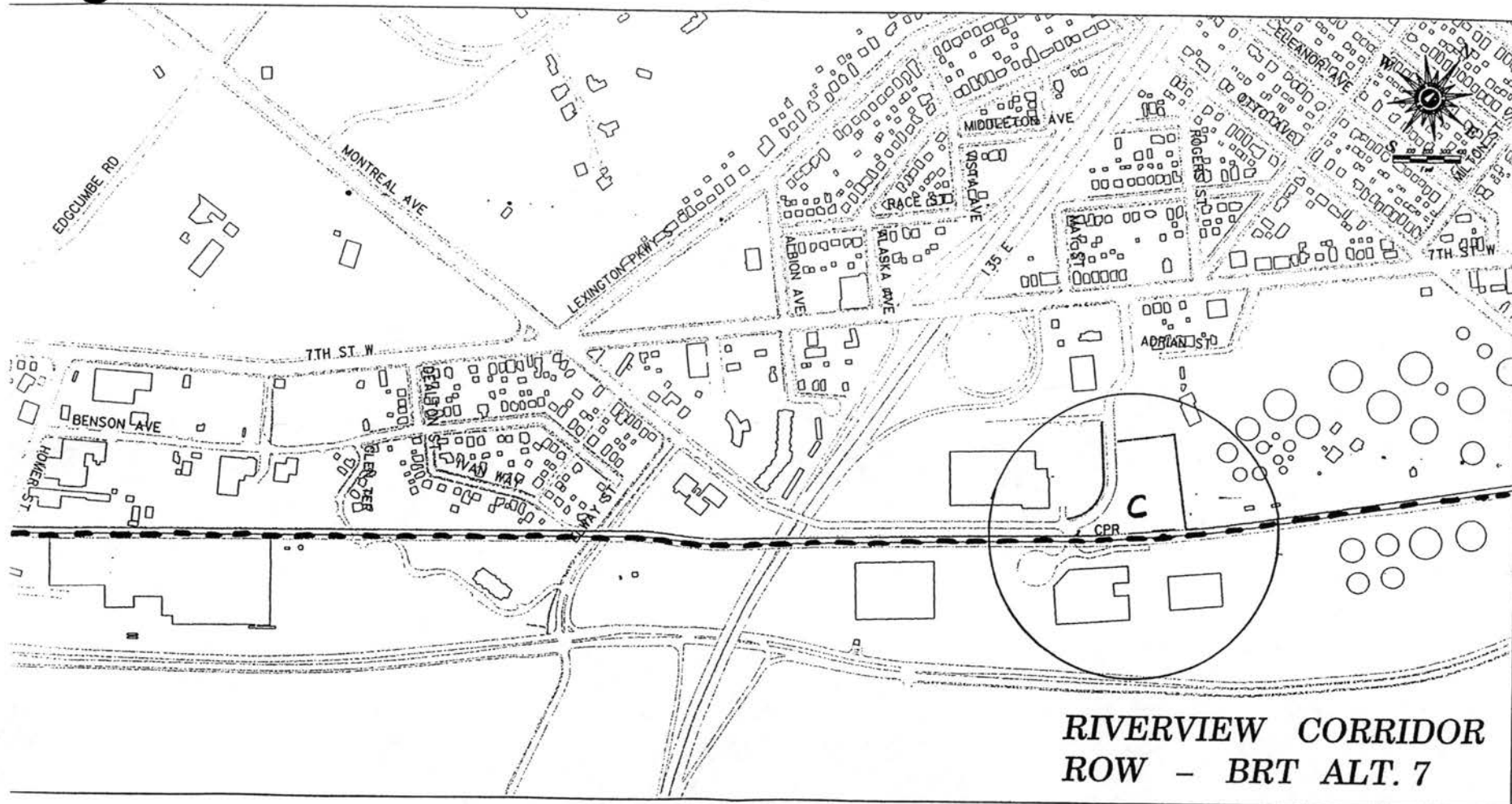
BRT 7 ALT.

WITH MODIFICATIONS



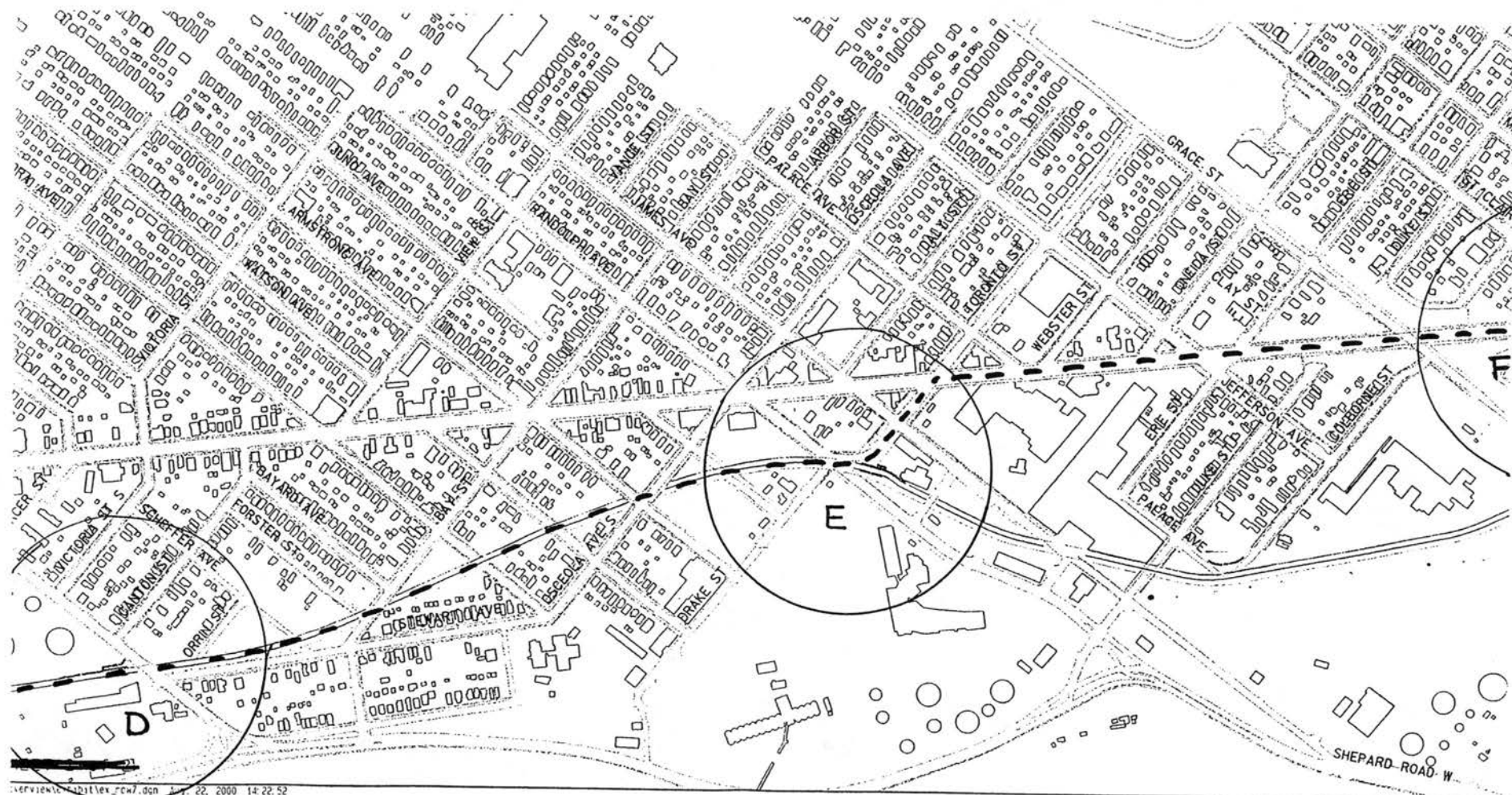
ditlex_rcw7.dgn Aug. 22, 2000 14:22:18

DETAIL
Page ①



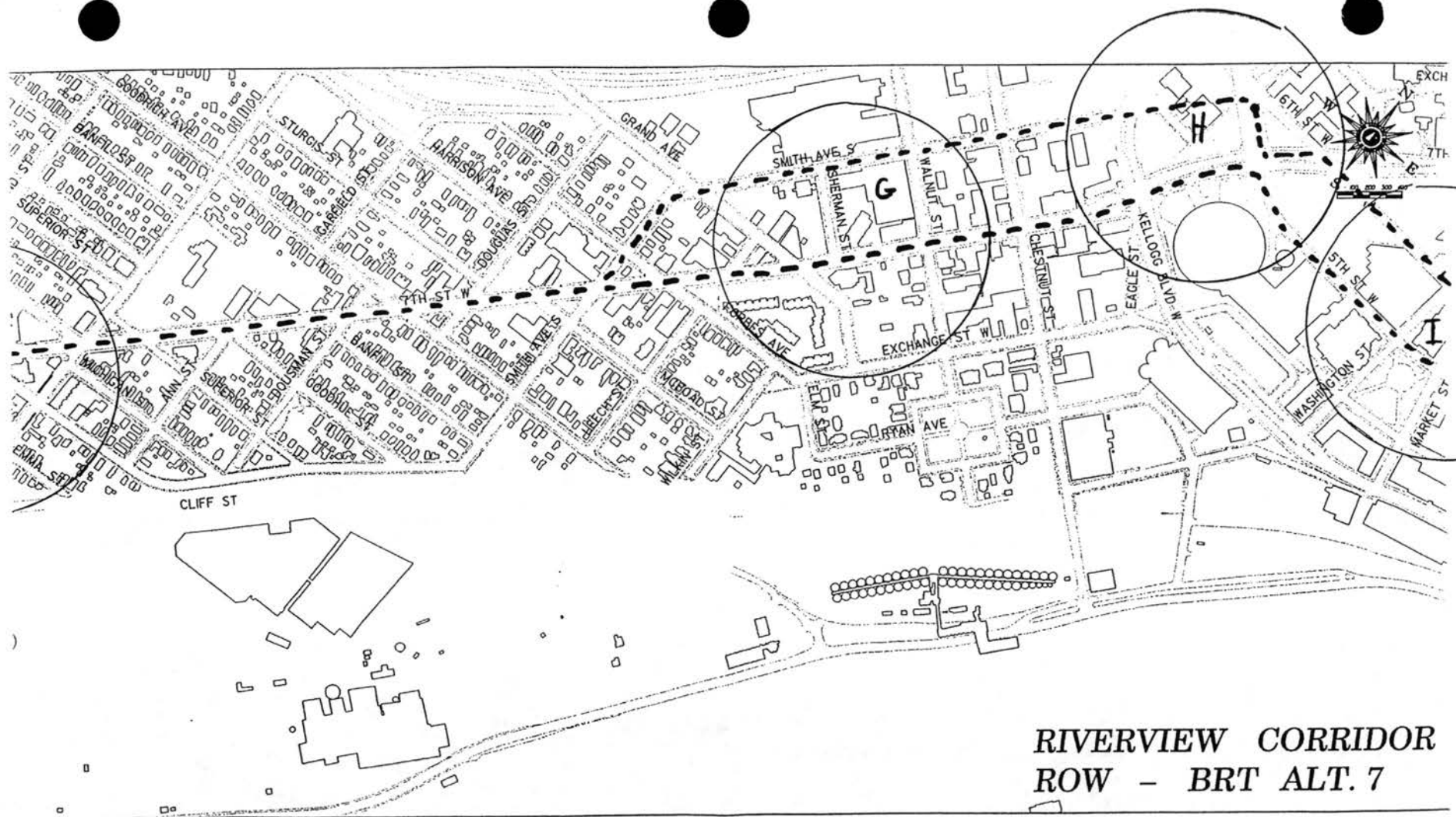
RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR
ROW - BRT ALT. 7

P. (2)



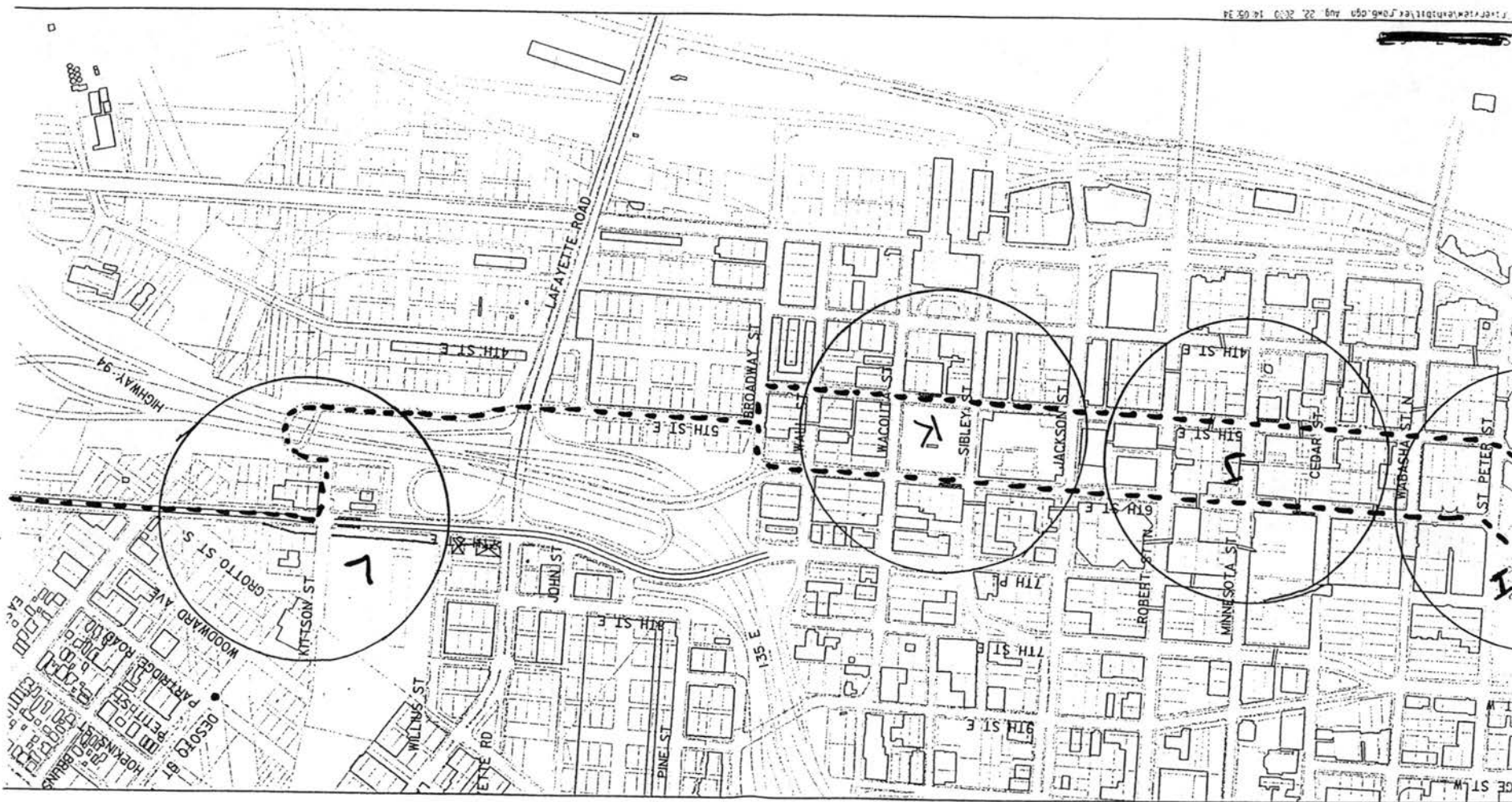
servicio: shillea_rdw.dgn 11/22/2000 14:22:52

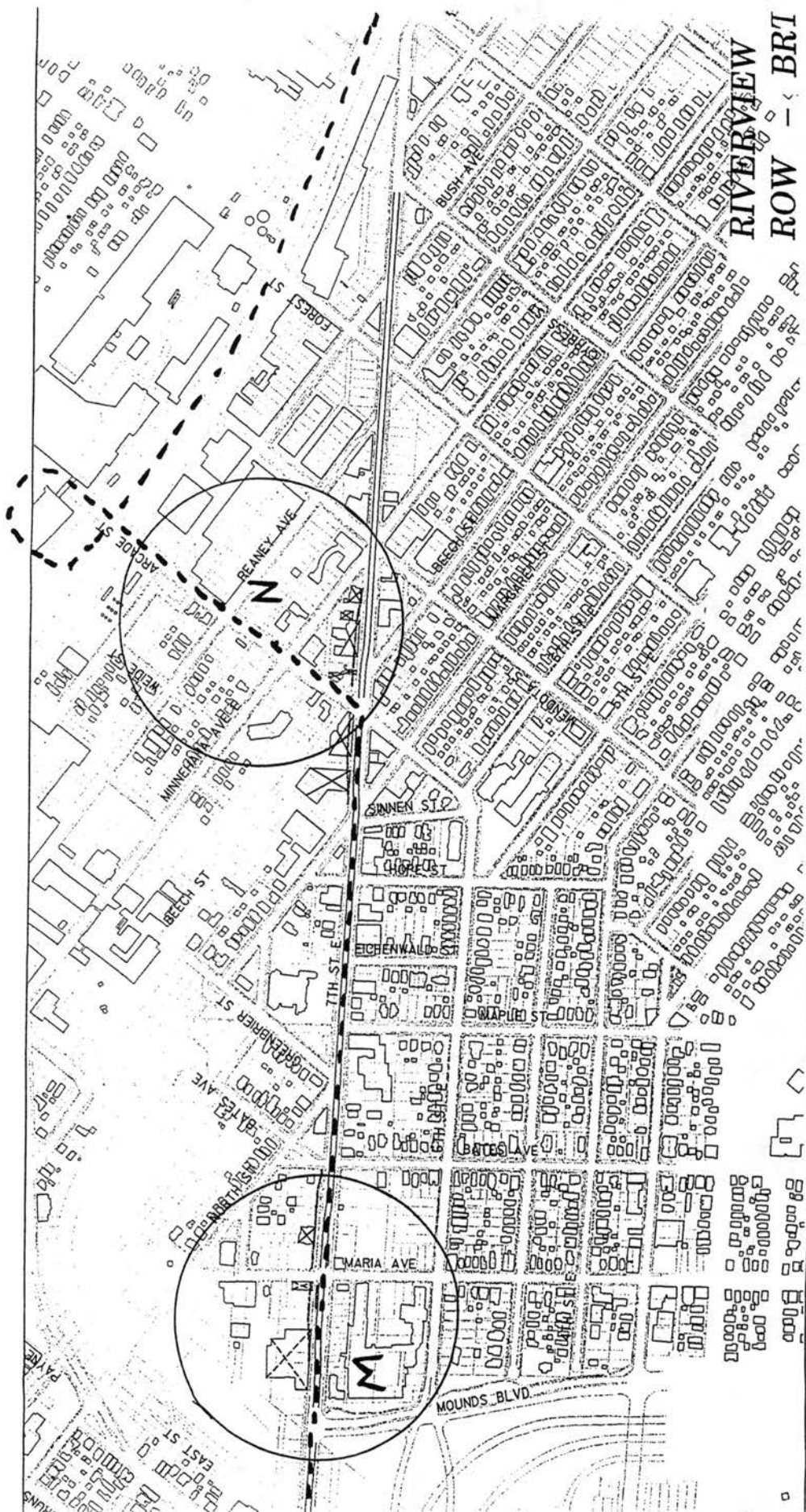
Page (3)



RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR
ROW - BRT ALT. 7

Page (4)







Metropolitan Council

Working for the Region, Planning for the Future

October 11, 2000

Rafael E. Ortega, Chair
Ramsey County Board
220 Courthouse
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN. 55102

Dear Chair Ortega,

Over the last few years, the Metropolitan Council, Ramsey County and other agencies have worked very hard at advancing the transit agenda in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. A balanced transportation system with vastly improved transit services is essential to meet the growing transportation challenges of this region. Better transit will help keep us mobile and economically competitive as growth continues. A stronger transit system will also support Smart Growth development strategies which in turn will foster more efficient use of land, lower public facility costs, improve air quality and protect open space and agricultural land. It is the Council goal to double transit system capacity by 2020 and to develop a network of dedicated transitways.

Cooperative efforts by the Council, the Regional Rail Authorities and others have produced many positive transit system outcomes over the past few years. Transit ridership has experienced an unprecedented 22 percent increase over the last four years in response to modest service improvements. Federal, state and local funds have been secured to build the first Light Rail Transit (LRT) line in this region along the Hiawatha Avenue corridor. Other corridor studies are being performed to determine the most appropriate technologies and alignments for the transitway network proposed by the Council.

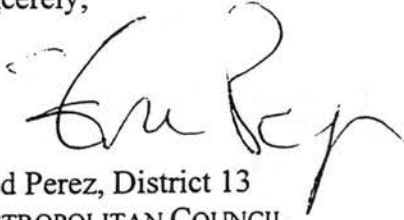
We are following with great interest the completion by Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority of the Major Investment Study (MIS) for the Riverview corridor. This is one of the corridors identified in the Council's Transit 2020 Master Plan. Moreover, its eligibility for federal funding in the TEA-21 bill and the level of technical analysis already completed make it an even stronger candidate for the \$50.3 million for the development of dedicated busyways.

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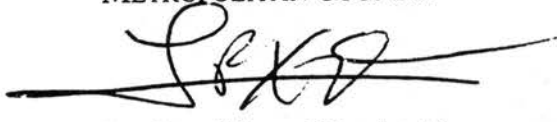
It is important to acknowledge, however, that the successful completion of the MIS process would greatly enhance the Riverview corridor position in the allocation of state funds for busway development by the Council. Many decisions will be made on the basis of the extensive public process currently underway which includes the City of St Paul, neighborhood and business organizations as well as city residents. Strong consensus regarding key issues will clearly strengthen Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority's ability to make a good decision by the middle of November. Furthermore, the selection of a busway as the preferred alternative, the identification of a viable alignment and service concept that could receive strong local support and the availability of local funds to match the state resources are essential elements to make it possible to implement a dedicated busway in this corridor.

We are looking forward to working with the Ramsey County Regional Rail, the City of St. Paul and its residents in order to continue making progress in the development and a network of transitways.

Sincerely,



Fred Perez, District 13
METROPOLITAN COUNCIL



Lee Pao Xiong, District 14
METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

FP:LPX:nd:ejm

Cc: Tony Bennet, Chair-RCRRA
✓Kathy Despiegelaere, Director -RCRRA

Section 2



MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office Passenger Rail Transit
MS 475, First Floor, Transportation Building
395 John Ireland Blvd.,
Saint Paul, MN 55155-1899
E-mail : mukhtar.thakur@dot.state.mn.us

Office Telephone: 651-287-8022
Office Fax: 651-215-0443

October 16, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report Comments

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) has reviewed the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report. Attached are Mn/DOT's comments based on the impacts this project will have on existing and future transportation investments in the region.

The Department's comments are based primarily in four areas of concern:

1. The impacts this project will have on West 7th Street, TH 5 and I-35E;
2. The impacts this project will have on the existing and future Metro area transit network;
3. The impacts this project will have to affected freight railroads and shippers; and
4. The process for which capital costs were arrived at for the build alternatives.

We request that the comments in this letter and its attachment be made a part of the official record and considered as the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority makes a decision on a locally preferred alternative.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, you may reach me at (651) 284-3993.

I look forward to working with you and your organization as the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study progresses.

Sincerely,

Mukhtar Thakur, P.E.
Director, Office of Passenger Rail Transit
Minnesota Department of Transportation

Attachment: Response to Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study

CC Margo LaBau, Mn/DOT Chief of Staff
Tim Worke, Mn/DOT Government Relations Director
Richard Stehr, Mn/DOT Metro Division Engineer
Randy Halvorson, Mn/DOT Program Delivery Group Director
Tim Yantos, Northstar Commuter Rail Corridor
Sandy Cullen, Red Rock Commuter Rail Corridor
Scott Peters, Dan Patch Commuter Rail Corridor

1. Impacts to West 7th Street, TH 5 and I-35E:

- The LRT and BRT alternatives remove a lane in each direction. Mn/DOT has a serious concern about the existing traffic on West 7th Street with ADT's approaching 40,000 vehicles west of I-35E on West 7th. Mn/DOT is concerned about the displacement of these vehicles. The MIS mentions improving the West 7th Street and Shepard Road interchanges and states that there is capacity available on Shepard Road. Placing the vehicles on Shepard Road does not resolve the issue that a high percentage of the traffic wants to go northbound I-35E and also the reverse move, southbound I-35E to westbound Shepard Road. These movements do not exist on Shepard and I-35E today.
- There are several places where a widened TH 5 bridge over the river is mentioned for the LRT alternatives. Our review concludes that widening the bridge is not possible. In addition, if LRT is the preferred alternative, the feasibility of constructing a new bridge given the environmental issues and the TH 5/Th 55 interchange would need to be assessed.
- There is no discussion as to how the local bus service would operate on West 7th Street under the build scenarios.
- There is no discussion on truck turning movements onto and off West 7th Street under the build scenarios.
- There is no typical section for the I-35E LRT option. Earlier sections showed the train on the shoulder of I-35E. This presents many safety, operational and maintenance issues that are not addressed. It is also possible the some may view using I-35E right-of-way as violating the federal court decision about expansion in the corridor.

2. Impacts the existing and future Metro area transit network:

- The concept of a Metro area transit network needs to be addressed. There is minimal discussion of the impacts of Hiawatha LRT, Northstar, Red Rock and Dan Patch commuter rail lines, the Central Corridor Major Investment Study and the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative. Mn/DOT's concern is the connectivity and compatibility issues of this project along with current and future investments in Ramsey County and in the region. Mn/DOT is committed to ensuring that all planned transit investments compliment each other, are consistent with the Metropolitan Council's *Master Transit 2020 Plan (2000)* and take advantage of multi-modal facilities.

3. Impacts to effected freight railroads and shippers:

- There is no mention of railroad and shipper involvement in the study findings. Mn/DOT has a serious concern regarding the identified capital and maintenance costs with the LRT and BRT options within the Canadian Pacific Railway right-of-way without railroad or shipper input. Mn/DOT strongly supports railroad and shipper input as the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study progresses.

4. The process for which capital costs were arrived at for the build alternatives:

- Mn/DOT is concerned with what we perceive to be low capital costs for the build alternatives. The Riverview Corridor will encounter issues related to relocation of utilities, upgrade/revisions to city/county roads and signal systems; construction impacts, right-of-way costs and inflationary pressures on costs. These factors should be considered in the capital costs estimates, and after reading this document, we remain unsure about their inclusion.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area
111 E. Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1256

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L8055 (MISS)-1

October 23, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere
665 Ramsey County Government Center
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report. As you know, portions of the project are within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA), a unit of the National Park System. We look forward to working with Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority to address issues regarding public transportation and traffic congestion facing the Riverview Corridor.

The Mississippi National River and Recreation Area was established by Congress in 1988 to protect and enhance the natural, cultural, scenic, recreational, and economic resources along a 72-mile stretch of the Mississippi River extending from the cities of Dayton and Ramsey to just south of Hastings. Our comments focus on the extent to which the project conforms to voluntary policies of the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the MNRRA. The CMP incorporates by reference state requirements of the Mississippi River Critical Area, shoreland and floodplain management programs. In addition, it outlines voluntary guidelines to further protect the Mississippi River and its valuable resources. Voluntary policies from the CMP that are relevant to the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study Draft Report are as follows:

- *CMP Policy 1, Page 16 - New development in the riverfront area should have a relationship to the river, a need for a river location, or the capability to enhance the river environment. General criteria for compatible riverfront uses include;*
 - Sustains economic vitality of riverfront improvements
 - Offers public access to and along the river
 - Maintains views of the river
 - Contributes to natural, cultural, or economic resource appreciation, protection, and enhancement
 - MNRRA CMP General Land Use and Protection Policies state that resource protection and sustainability will be the primary determining factor in case of a development conflict

From the information provided, it would appear that this project would have a positive impact on the economic viability of the Riverview Corridor. However, we have concerns that some of the options limit public access to the Mississippi River and that some of the alternatives could adversely impact the corridor's natural, cultural and scenic resources.

Specifically, the draft report mentions that the LRT alternatives could have direct impacts on Hidden Falls Park, the Mississippi River, and Fort Snelling State Park. It also states that the LRT alternatives requiring construction of a new bridge in Hidden Falls Park could have impacts on the environmentally sensitive wetlands and habitats along the Mississippi River.

The cultural resources of the area would also be impacted by the LRT alternatives. The report stated that all three LRT alternatives would impact archaeological resources of the area. Both the BRT and LRT alternatives would introduce visual impacts to the corridor. We urge you to weigh all of these impacts when deciding on the preferred alternative, in order to protect the corridor's river access and its unique resources.

- *CMP Policy 1, Page 17 - Projects must meet or exceed federal, state, or local environmental standards.* We would suggest that the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority work with our partners to ensure compatibility with federal, state, and local land use standards. The proposed alternatives should meet the requirements of the State Mississippi River Critical Area Program and the Mississippi River Critical Area Plan for the City of St. Paul. The City of St. Paul is currently in the process of updating this plan.
- *CMP Policy 11, Page 20 - If it becomes necessary to increase river crossing capacity, the order of preference will be first to expand the capacity of an existing bridge, second to add a parallel structure, and third to establish a new corridor. Development of a new crossing corridor will occur only when no feasible and prudent alternative (including the consideration for a greater reliance on intermodal transportation) exists and only if the crossing is included in approved regional transportation plans. This includes the Major Crossing Study prepared by the Metropolitan Council.*
- *CMP Policy 12, Page 20 - Protect existing wetlands and, where practical, restore degraded wetlands.* The draft report indicated that the LRT alternatives would potentially affect wetlands if the Swede Hollow option was selected. We would again encourage you to strongly consider these impacts when deciding upon the preferred alternative.
- *CMP Policy 2, Page 19 - Prohibit land disturbance along bluff face (slopes in excess of 12%). Preserve the bluff impact area (40 feet back from the bluff line) in a natural state or restore natural vegetation in order to screen development.* We would discourage any bluff face disturbance. However, if the preferred alternative involves any bluff disturbance, we suggest that the applicant work with resource agencies to ensure that proper restoration techniques are used to decrease the impacts.
- *CMP Policy 6, Page 20 - Encourage shoreline area preservation and restoration.* If the preferred alternative involves any shoreline disturbance, measures should be taken to minimize the impacts from construction. This can be accomplished by implementing best management practices to minimize erosion, and through the use of native plant materials to the maximum extent possible following construction to prevent further erosion and create a more natural habitat.

CMP Policy 14, Page 20 - Apply setback and height restrictions and encourage careful site design to maintain the ability to view the river from existing open space and developed areas. Avoid significantly obstructing the river views with development. More specific information on these standards is as follows:

- *Preserve the bluff impact area (40 feet back from the bluff line) in a natural state or restore natural vegetation in order to screen development. Provide additional setbacks in an additional 60-foot area*

(for structures over 30 feet tall outside downtown areas) for a total bluff preservation area of 100 feet from the bluff line (CMP Policy 2, Page 19).

- Reduce visual impacts and protect views of the river and from the river and its shoreline areas by establishing maximum building heights for the bluff line and riverfront preservation areas (CMP Policy 2, Page 19):

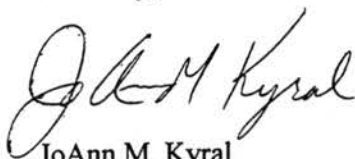
- 1. Within 100 feet of the bluff line-30 feet*
- 2. Within 200 feet of the river line-30 feet*
- 3. Within 300 feet of the river-45 feet*
- 4. Beyond the areas above-no restrictions except those in local zoning codes*

We are concerned that there would be visual impacts from bridges and overhead electric wires for the LRT options. We suggest that the Regional Railroad Authority coordinate with local authorities to ensure that these impacts are minimized through local and state setback and height restriction standards.

The study indicates that there is potential to enhance the Riverview Corridor by addressing public transportation and problems associated with transportation congestion in the area; however, there could be some negative impacts to the corridor. Therefore, it is our recommendation that the preferred option should be the option that has the least impact on the resources of the Mississippi River, while meeting transportation needs and goals.

Thank you again for giving us the chance to comment on this draft report. We would also appreciate the opportunity to be involved in the next steps of the process. If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact Daniel Ehrke at 651-290-3030, x235.

Sincerely,



JoAnn M. Kyril
Superintendent

cc: Sandy Fecht, MN DNR

Section 3



East Side Area Business Association

THE UNITED VOICE OF BUSINESS

506 Kenny Road • Saint Paul, MN 55101
(651) 772-6220 • Fax (651) 772-6262

October 18, 2000

Ms. Kathryn DeSpiegelaere
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Re: Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS)

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere;

Thank you for attending the September 20 meeting of the East Side Area Business Association. Your description of the Riverview Corridor study was a very useful piece of information for our businesses. At that meeting, the members who were in attendance passed the following motion:

Bernie Baumann moved that the East Side Area Business Association support option #2 (Transportation Systems Management, modest improvements to existing transit systems) as defined by the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority. After cautions from ESABA Executive Director Curt Milburn, Jill Smith of 3M, and a resident of the community Jim Steinworth to jump to a decision without considering other options. The motion was seconded by Gary Rheaune of Anchor Paper and a vote was placed on members in attendance of that meeting of ESABA. The motion carried 5-3.

The East Side Area Business Association is interested in promoting all options that could directly benefit employers and employees of the East Side. We hope to continue to be part of this important dialogue.

Sincerely,

Fred Koehler
President

East Side Area Business Association

A Strong Joint Venture of the Major East Side Corporations and Local Business Associations

64

Friends of Swede Hollow

October 17, 2000

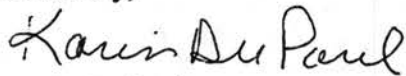
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-W
50 West Kellogg Blvd
Saint Paul MN 55102

Dear Kathy,

After much discussion at our September 21, 2000 monthly meeting the Friends of Swede Hollow a resolution was passed unanimously to oppose the use of Swede Hollow Park and the Bruce Vento Recreational Trail as a mass transit corridor.

If you need more information Call Karin at 776-0550.

Sincerely,



Karin DuPaul
Friends of Swede Hollow

GATEWAY INTER-FAITH TABLE (GIFT) FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

*Faith Communities
Working Together
To Solve the
Affordable Housing
Crisis*

Communities:

Agency for Metropolitan Stability
Edgumbe Presbyterian Church
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Holy Spirit Catholic Church
Jewish Community Action
Mt. Zion Temple
Nativity of Our Lord Catholic Church
St. Luke's Catholic Church
St. Luke Lutheran Church
St. Paul Area Council of Churches
St. Paul Ecumenical Alliance of
Congregations
St. Paul Jewish Community Center
St. Terese Catholic Church (Highland
Catholic Community)
Temple of Aaron

A project of:

Jewish Community Action
2375 University Ave West, Suite 150
St Paul, Minnesota 55114

CITforAH@hotmail.com

October 17, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
St Paul, MN 55102

Ms. Kathryn DeSpiegelaere:

Almost all of us can agree that improved public transit is a good thing. However, it is important to preserve the resources already in the Gateway-West Seventh community. The **Gateway Inter-Faith Table for Affordable Housing**, a project of Jewish Community Action and a coalition of churches and synagogues in our community, support improved transit in the Twin Cities and in this neighborhood, but not at the expense of affordable housing.

We are taking a position on the following issues:

- One-before-one replacement of any demolished housing in this neighborhood,
- Relocation benefits should be given to those displaced in the redevelopment, and
- The Sibley Manor community should be preserved.

We plan to bring several congregates to the October 17th meeting at St Luke Lutheran Church and look forward to speaking to the issues we list above. We also hope to be considered as a participant in all future community planning and development participatory processes.

Thank you for your time and attention to the linkages between affordable housing and public transit in this neighborhood.

Sincerely,



Vic Rosenthal
Executive Director
Jewish Community Action



Melissa Manderschied
Community Organizer
Jewish Community Action

I am a representative for GIFT (Gateway Inter-Faith Table) for affordable housing. GIFT is an inter-faith group of concerned citizens, from churches, synagogues and temples in the Highland Park area who are committed to solving the affordable housing crisis.

It is apparent from table ES.3 that implementation of almost any of the Alternatives, especially numbers 3 through 7, will mean the displacement of both businesses and housing.

The members of GIFT ask that, as part of the public record, the plan include a one - before - one replacement of any demolished housing in the neighborhood. That is, that even before any home is demolished, a home, preferably in the same neighborhood, and of comparable affordability be made available for occupancy by the owner/tenants (with the right of 1st refusal). The replacement unit needs to be available for occupancy before demolition of any home is begun.

For the GIFT membership,



Joseph J. Claus
998 Linwood Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105
October 17, 2000

Subj: **Fwd: Riverview Corridor public input**
Date: 10/17/00 12:15:30 PM Pacific Daylight Time
From: MURFI7720
To: kathym.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us

I am trying to get this letter to kathym DeSpiegelaere and it was returned to me. So here goes again maybe the second time will work.

Forwarded Message:

Subj: **Riverview Corridor public input**
Date: 10/17/00 12:08:28 PM Pacific Daylight Time
From: MURFI7720
To: kathym.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us

Adele Brown
Co-Chair GIFT
875 Osceola Ave.
St. Paul, Mn. 55105
murf7720@aol.com

10-17-2000

Kathym De Spiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
360 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102
Kathym.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us
Fax 651-266-2761

Ms. Kathym DeSpiegelaere:

I am really glad that our community is looking for ways to improve our public transportation. We all agree that improved public transit is a good thing. However it is important to preserve the resources that are already in our community.

The Gateway Interfaith Table for Affordable Housing (GIFT), a coalition of more than 10 churches and synagogues in our community support improved transit in the Twin Cities and in our neighborhood, but not at the expense of our affordable housing.

The west 7th community has grown stronger within the 20 years that I have lived in the highland, MacGroveland Community. We would like to make sure that any transit improvements do not cut right through this vital community and destroy it, like the rondo community when the highway split and destroyed this community.

The Sibley Manor must be preserved. This privately operated affordable apartment houses are a real community. Our synagogue helped settle a family of kosovo refugees into housing at the Sibley Manor and they love their new home. The clean affordable apartments with play grounds and good school near by allows the family to become active members of our community. If you run transit through this jewel in our community it will have permanent negative impact on our whole neighborhood.

GIFT is taking a position on the following issues:

- * One-before-one replacement of any demolished housing in our neighborhood. The housing crisis is especially tight in the highland area. Many of these residents will have strong ties to this area and should be able to stay. We need to develop new affordable alternatives for people who are displaced before we tear down their current homes.

- * Relocation benefits should be given to those displaced in the redevelopment. It is expensive to move and people living in affordable housing don't have a nest egg to fall back to when the times get tough.

* The Sibley Manor community should be preserved.

Thank You for your time and attention to the linkages between affordable housing and public transit in our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Adele Brown

Co-Chair Gateway Interfaith Table for Affordable Housing

Chair Tzedek Committee, Mount Zion Temple



EDGCUMBE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Cynthia L. Ray, Pastor
2149 Edgumbe Road
St. Paul, Minnesota 55116
Church (651) 698-8220

October 12, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul MN 55102
Kathryn.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us
Fax: 651-266-2761

Ms. Kathryn DeSpiegelaere:

Almost all of us can agree that improved public transit is a good thing. However, it is important to preserve the resources already in our community. The **Gateway Inter-Faith Table for Affordable Housing**, a coalition of more than 10 churches and synagogues in our community, support improved transit in the Twin Cities and in our neighborhood, but not at the expense of our affordable housing.

We are taking a position on the following issues:

- One-before-one replacement of any demolished housing in our neighborhood,
- Relocation benefits should be given to those displaced in the redevelopment, and
- The Sibley Manor community should be preserved.

We plan to bring several congregates to the October 17th meeting at St. Luke Lutheran Church and look forward to speaking to the issues we list above. We also hope to be considered as a participant in any further community planning and development participatory processes.

Thank you for your time and attention to the linkages between affordable housing and public transit in our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Cynthia L. Ray, Co-Chairperson
Gateway Inter-Faith Table for Affordable Housing

Phalen Corridor Initiative

A Community Building Partnership

506 Kenny Road, Saint Paul, MN 55101

PHALEN CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

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Patricia James, PED

PROJECT DIRECTOR

Art Milburn: 651-772-6220
Fax: 651-772-6262
Email: cmilburn@isd.net

October 19, 2000

Ms. Kathryn DeSpiegelaere
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Re: Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS)

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere;

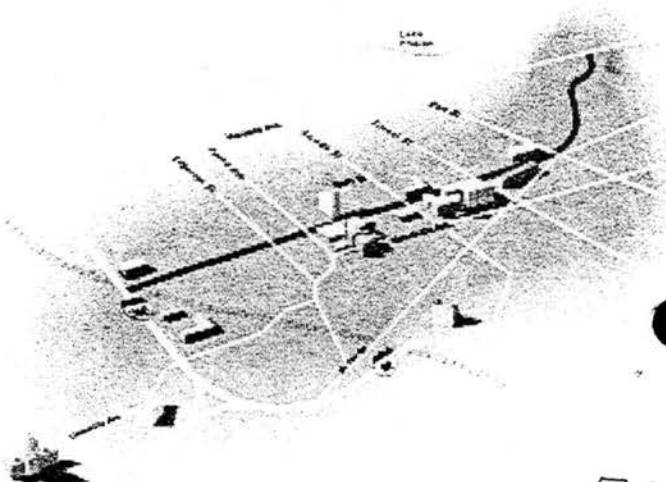
At the Phalen Corridor Initiative Steering Committee Meeting on October 3, 2000 the following motion was passed regarding the Riverview Corridor.

"The Phalen Corridor Initiative wishes to be involved in the discussions of the Riverview Corridor."

We understand that many of the options considered under the MIS will have impact on the transit operations of the East Side of Saint Paul. While we as an Initiative can not yet choose a preferred option, we are very interested in being involved in the process. We feel that our involvement will help ensure that East Side interests will be considered when determining transit development, including the connection to the future Phalen Boulevard.

Sincerely,


John Kempe
Chair



DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn

From: Dennis Dempsey [denmn@usfamily.net]
Sent: Friday, October 13, 2000 1:35 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: denmn

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey Co. Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey Co. Govt. Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul MN 55102
October 13, 2000

Dear Ms De Spiegelaere,

I am pastor of the parishes of St. Francis de Sales and St. James here in St. Paul. Both parish centers are within a few blocks of the intersection of Randolph and West 7th. I received the draft summary for the Riverview Corridor back in August and looked it over. My initial reaction was "Good plan!" I'm in favor of rapid mass transit. The plan looked good on paper completing the triangle with the Hiawatha and Central Corridors. What wasn't indicated in the draft, and what I (apparently along with the designers of the project) wasn't sufficiently attentive to, were the impact on the local community and the high cost to usage ratio.

I attended the meeting held at the West Seventh Community Center last Wednesday evening. During the week prior to the meeting, I began to hear from many parishioners about their concerns and the possible to probable negative impact the project would have on this neighborhood. With the opinions expressed at the meeting and in these past couple days since, it is clear to me that the project would have little positive effect and considerable negative impact on the local community.

1. Another St. Paul neighborhood would be broken up by yet another barrier, as limited crossing of West Seventh would effectively cut the area south of the avenue from that on the north.
2. Businesses would be negatively impacted from lack of street parking on West 7th. Those on the south side of the street, currently dependent on a clientele base of residents on the north side of the street, would be most affected. Their customers would have to drive over to Otto or Randolph, pass along West 7th, try to find parking, and return in the same round-a-bout manner. Many of those businessmen are members of the parish.

Even if a LRT system traveled from downtown St. Paul at 30 miles per hour down the middle of West 7th, it would not reach the airport as quickly as an express bus leaving downtown and passing by way of Shephard Road. It would seem to be a very logical approach. There are currently more than sufficient express buses that run the corridor between downtown and the airport with far more customer accessibility than what would be available under the proposed project.

Prior to coming to these two parishes in July of 1999, I worked for 5 1/2 years in South America where mass transit systems, particularly in big cities such as LaPaz (Bolivia), Lima (Peru), and Caracas (Venezuela), are far more heavily used and far more accessible to the populace. Even in smaller cities of Latin America, the number of people per square mile (population density) is far greater than here in the Twin Cities. Moreover, cars are extremely expensive and only a small percentage of the population had their own vehicle. People were accustomed to taking public transportation. Those factors are not present in the Twin Cities and will not be as long as the automobile is king and nearly every family has one or more vehicles.

The boundaries of these two parishes extends along West 7th from St. Clair to a bit west of Lexington. Nearly the entire populace of this area who have expressed any opinion are against the construction of the rail system or a special bus lane down West 7th.

If it would be helpful to those charged with making a decision on this project to hear the voice of the people more clearly, I am sure we could gather 1,000 to 2,000 signatures within a week. Please let me know if you would like such a petition. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Fr. Dennis Dempsey

Pastor, St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church

650 Palace Avenue

St. James Catholic Church

496 View

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TO: Kathryn DeSpiegelaere
Date: 10-24-2000
RE: list of people attending 10-23-2000 meeting

Thanks again for coming out, explaining the project and where it stands at this point, and responding to the questions of the people gathered for the meeting.



People attending the meeting were:

Fr. Denny Dempsey
650 Palace Avenue
St. Paul MN 55102
228-1169

Jeff Johnson
845 Lincoln Avenue
St. Paul MN 55102
224-7102

Bill Stahlmann
393 Arbor
St. Paul MN 55102
227-6419

Sue Nichols
1588 Middleton
St. Paul MN 55102
281-0928

Pat McCormick
1820 Ivan Way
St. Paul MN 55116
699-5370

John McCormick
1832 Ivan Way
St. Paul MN 55116
698-3076

Gene Ofstead
1852 Munster Avenue
St. Paul MN
698-3362

Transportation Management Organization

Riverview Corridor Position

Resolved, that the Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization (TMO) supports public investment in Bus Rapid Transit in the Riverview Corridor. This option best balances the critical need for improved transit within Saint Paul and the region with potential costs and funding sources.

Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority is nearing completion of a Major Investment Study to identify potential transportation improvements in the corridor running from Earl Street on the East Side to Minneapolis/Saint Paul International Airport and the Mall of America with a connection to the Hiawatha Transit Corridor. Several alternatives have been presented for consideration by the Ramsey County Board for further study. The Ramsey County Board will choose one locally preferred alternative for further study.

The Major Investment Study analysis concludes that congestion within the corridor will reach critical levels within twenty years if the population and business grow at projected rates. This will have severe negative impacts on accessibility to downtown, to the airport and to the residential and business developments currently operating within or planned along 7th Street.

Bus Rapid Transit (alternatives 6 and 7) would provide residents within the corridor greater access to their neighborhood, to downtown, to the airport and to points west and north. Specifically, Bus Rapid Transit would:

- Improve traffic flow by taking busses out of regular traffic on West 7th Street
- Give busses priority over other traffic at signalized intersections
- Reduce travel times within the corridor even in the face of increasing automobile congestion
- Offer commuters convenient access to all points in the corridor by operating every 7.5 minutes during peak hours

* * *

The Saint Paul Transportation Management Organization (TMO) is a private/public partnership dedicated to alternative forms of transportation. Our mission is to promote and coordinate efficient and environmentally sound transportation networks to assure the continued growth and prosperity of Saint Paul and the East Metro Area.

Our purpose is to provide commuter transportation information, education and services to employers, commuters and residents in the downtown area. Serving as a coordinating board, the Saint Paul TMO will use its public and private partners and their expertise, networks, and resources to engage downtown employers' support and active participation in the implementation of workplace commuter transportation programs to reduce congestion and make downtown more accessible.

To that end, the Saint Paul TMO supports and encourages those transportation projects and programs that reduce traffic congestion and offer commuters viable options to driving alone including transit, car/vanpooling, and bicycling.



SAINT PAUL AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

October 19, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere,

The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce represents nearly 1,700 area businesses and professional associations. On October 17, 2000, with the recommendation of the Transportation Committee the Chamber Board of Directors voted unanimously to support Bus Rapid Transit in the Riverview Corridor.

In a recent survey of our membership, the number one issue facing today's employers was workforce development, further qualified with the need to get employees to and from the workplace.

Development of the Riverview Corridor will not immediately solve the employer's problems, but instead will begin the development of the infrastructure toward overall transit development for Saint Paul and the region as a whole.

Though the position endorses the Riverview Corridor, we feel that enhanced transit development only begins on the Riverview Corridor, and is a critical link to overall development and linkage to the Central Corridor, Hiawatha LRT, Red Rock and Dan Patch Commuter Rail Lines and many others.

We urge you to embrace the work of past and current elected officials, and seize this extremely important opportunity to begin development of a better transit system in Saint Paul and the East Metro Area.

Attached you will find the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce position paper on the Riverview Corridor. Please review it and should you have any questions regarding the attached position, please call Matt Anfang at 651.265.2769.

Though the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce does not prescribe a specific alignment, we look forward to participating in the effort, every step of the way.

Sincerely,

Jeff Peterson
Director of Public Affairs

YOUR
BUSINESS
ADVOCATE

First National Bank Building, N-205

332 Minnesota Street

Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

Phone: 651.223.5000

Fax: 651.223.5119

www.saintpaulchamber.com



SAINT PAUL AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Riverview Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative

Issue:

- In 1998 the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority completed a Major Investment Study of the Riverview Corridor Transitway. The Major investment study established 7 (Seven) possible alternatives for transit along the Riverview Corridor, that includes: No-Build, Transit Management System, Dedicated Busway and Light Rail Transit, this study was released in August of 2000.

The Corridor is a 12.3 Miles long following the approximate path of East 7th Street at Earl Street, heads west generally following West 7th Street to the Minneapolis / Saint Paul International Airport, then ending at the Mall of America in Bloomington. Based on the report of the 7 possible alternatives the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority will choose a locally preferred alternative of the 7 alternatives.

The Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority will decide on a locally preferred alternative on November 14, 2000. Public comment is open until October 20, 2000. If anything other than light rail transit is selected, development authority will be turned over to the Metropolitan Transit Commission.

- The most recent Federal ISTEA-21 ; Federal Transportation Bill designates the Riverview Corridor as a Federally authorized transitway. No other proposed transitway in Ramsey County is currently authorized to receive matching Federal Funds for any transitway project.
- The 2000 State Legislature approved \$44 Million dollars to the Metropolitan Council to award to an applying community for the development of a Dedicated Bus Transitway.

Position

- The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce believes an effective, convenient, and safe public transit system with widespread and substantial ridership is essential to the long term viability and continued high quality of life in the East Metro area and of our competitiveness in the regional, national and world economies. We further believe that, in the future, a mix of public transit options will likely be required to satisfy the commuting needs of East Metro residents and employees. The Chamber supports transit options and investment in infrastructure for the future implementation of selected public transit modes.
- The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce supports selection of a dedicated rapid busway as the locally preferred alternative for the Riverview Corridor.

- The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce position does not specify a particular route or alignment but encourages the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority to select an alignment that:
 - maximizes ridership potential
 - minimizes disruptions to existing businesses in the corridor
 - expands opportunities for additional economic development in the corridor.
 - stays within current budget projections and funding awards
 - limits project enhancement to funding from non-local sources
- The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce supports the a Riverview Transit Corridor, only as part of an overall system that links the Riverview Corridor to the Hiawatha Line via a link with the corridor known as the Central Corridor, thus completing a "transit triangle."
- Final Design of the preferred corridor must accommodate current and projected capacity for automobile traffic. To the extent feasible, dedicated busway lanes should also accommodate, local routes to establish express service along the corridor, as well as allow, also to the extent feasible, other private and public transit operations consistent with the use of the dedicated lanes.
- In addition to supporting the Riverview Corridor, The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce endorses change of the current reliance on property taxes for transit funding. Transit funding through property taxes should be eliminated and replaced by other, preferably permanent and dedicated, sources.
- Owners that face loss of property for expansion of right of way must be properly compensated for their land, relocation and set-up at new locations.
- Any design alternative that includes Smith Avenue, (Between Grand Avenue and Kellogg Boulevard) carry restrictions on traffic that limit flow to Dedicated Bus Rapid Transit, and local traffic seeking ingress and egress, to and from parking ramps on Smith Avenue.
- Plans for replacement of any / all on / off street parking lost by the construction of the corridor must be in place and funding identified through non-local sources.
- Furthermore, the Chamber also requires adoption and adherence to the following principles before funding or bonding authority for the Riverview Corridor Dedicated Busway is finalized:
 - The funding source (capital and operational) be identified before any construction takes place.
 - The construction and operation of any transit mode must be open to the private sector for competitive bidding.
 - Infrastructure investment must be designed to accommodate future transit technologies.

Supporting Principles

- The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce believes that the Riverview Corridor Dedicated Busway will provide a necessary link between the airport and Saint Paul and other areas of the East Metro Area.
- As a beginning investment in multi-modal transit infrastructure begins, the Riverview Corridor Dedicated Busway will provide significant regional benefit to an overall regional transit system that includes "transit triangle", and other commuter rail lines currently known as, Red Rock Line, Dan Patch Line, North Star Line, and others within the entire 7 county metro area.



October 19, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere
Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC – West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Kathy:

The board of directors of the Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau voted today to unanimously support a resolution in favor of the transit route identified as the Riverview Corridor. The board's resolution supports the transportation corridor and continued study relating to final route, transit alternatives and funding options.

The mission of the Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau is to market Saint Paul to out-of-town visitors and to advocate for visitor needs in our community. The board considers the transportation corridor to be a vital link for Saint Paul visitors and business travelers who seek additional transportation options to/from the international airport. Advocating for efficient and available transportation for visitors is therefore part of our mission.

A copy of the resolution is attached. Please contact me for any additional assistance on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Getzke", written over a horizontal line.

Thomas G. Getzke, CMP
President and CEO

Cc Executive Committee



October 19, 2000

Resolution:

Resolved, that the Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau supports the initiative to create a transportation corridor serving the Ramsey County area. A transportation corridor is needed to facilitate improved and modern transit between neighborhoods, downtown, the airport, Mall of America and to points east and west.

A transportation corridor in Ramsey County is a critical link for commuters to other routes proposed for the greater Twin cities metro area.

Therefore, the Saint Paul Convention and Visitors Bureau supports the transit route identified as the Riverview Corridor and encourages continued study on final route, transit alternatives and funding options.



WEBPA

West End Business & Professional Association

"For Better Business"

10/24/00

To: Ramsey County Board of Commissioners

From: Dan Galles -President, West End Business and Professional Association

Re: Mass Transit in Riverview Corridor

Ramsey County Board Members:

This letter is to inform you of the West End Business and Professional Association's (WEBPA) position on mass transit development in the Riverview Corridor.

At its January 3, 2000 meeting, WEBPA voted to enthusiastically endorse plans to improve mass transit in the Riverview Corridor. Given the current economic conditions, planned economic development along the corridor, and the potential for further economic development along West 7th Street, we feel the area is ripe for transit improvements. Furthermore, we believe improved transit, whatever form it may take, will serve as a catalyst to help West 7th Street and the entire West End take full economic advantage of its strategic position between Downtown Saint Paul and the Airport/Mall of America complex. If, at the end of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study, the RCRRA decides to make no significant transit improvements along West 7th Street, we will miss a key opportunity to accelerate the redevelopment of the West End.

At the above referenced meeting, we also passed a resolution urging public officials and transit planners to view transit as a regional issue that impacts the entire Saint Paul east metro area.

However, we are concerned about a potential negative impact on West 7th Street and to its businesses, depending on how certain details of the plan are decided. For example, we are not in favor of taking away available parking (without replacing it) or possible turn restrictions that might make some of our businesses less accessible to patrons.

We look forward to working with you in the future on transit issues and improvements. If we can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at 651-698-1988.

Sincerely,

Dan Galles

President of the WEBPA

Section 4



D I S T R I C T F I V E P L A N N I N G C O U N C I L

Payne-Phalen

October 25, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

Our organization—the Payne-Phalen District Five Planning Council—is the neighborhood organization for a large portion of the East Side of St. Paul. Our mission is to improve our community, and so we are very interested in the plans of the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority regarding transit options for the River View Corridor—especially the portion of this corridor that will extend into our community.

After hearing a presentation from representatives of the RCRRA at a committee meeting on October 12th, our organization adopted the following resolution at our October board of directors meeting:

Resolution that if any of the proposed options for mass transit in the River View Corridor are pursued, that the Payne-Phalen District Five Planning Council shall be on record as

- 1) Being opposed to any proposal that would run mass transit through Swede Hollow and
- 2) Insisting that ample community review be allowed of the various mass-transit options for the River View Corridor that would affect our neighborhood—specifically options for mass transit along Arcade or Earl Streets or other streets in our neighborhood—before a final plan is adopted.

We look forward to hearing more about what options exist for mass-transit in St. Paul and how such mass transit will connect to our community.

If you have any questions or need more information, please do not hesitate to call our staff person, Bruce Sylvester, at our office at 774-5234.

Thank you.

On behalf of the Payne-Phalen Neighborhood,

Kristin Dawkins,
President, Payne-Phalen District Five Planning Council.

**Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116**

Preamble

WHEREAS the City of Saint Paul is now considering the draft of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) and the transit alternatives described therein; and

WHEREAS said alternatives will, if adopted, significantly affect the Highland area for years to come; and

WHEREAS the Highland District Council has received said draft, and reviewed the alternatives described therein; and

WHEREAS transit issues, including vehicular congestion and pedestrian safety, are significant issues for the businesses and residents of the Highland area;

WHEREAS the Highland District Council has, during the last three years, sponsored and otherwise participated in many hearings concerning transit options for the Riverview Corridor, including the Shepard-Davern Small Area planning process; and

WHEREAS for 25 years St. Paul's district councils have been a national model for citizen participation in civic affairs, by working with elected officials and other policymakers to identify the challenges facing our neighborhoods; by giving complete and due deliberation to proposed alternatives; and by recommending preferred solutions and relevant considerations; and

WHEREAS in that spirit, members of the Highland District Council, at the invitation of the Capitol River Council, on September 27, 2000, participated in a consensus-building meeting attended jointly by members of the four district councils that represent areas that would be directly affected by the transit alternatives described in the draft MIS: the Dayton's Bluff Community Council (District 4); the Capitol River Council (District 17); the West Seventh / Fort Road Federation (District 9); and the Highland District Council (District 15); and

WHEREAS members of the four district councils identified a number of positions shared commonly by those in attendance; and

WHEREAS the Highland District Council has, in addition, a number of concerns that are particular to the Highland area;

THEREFORE, we, the members of the board of the Highland District Council, do hereby approve the following resolution:

Section 1. Adoption of consensus among members from the affected districts.

The Highland District Council adopts the positions identified as consensus in the above-described meeting, as follows:

A. stating that the limited amount of time that has been allowed in which to comment on the draft MIS is onerous and counterproductive, and requesting that the October 20, 2000, deadline be extended to allow an adequate amount of time;

B. asserting that it is unwise public policy to choose a solution in order to "chase the money," to wit: the \$44 million that has been set aside for a metro area busway;

C. supporting sound improvements in the metropolitan transportation system;

D. contending that transit improvements in the Central Corridor between downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis should have first priority in the East Metro area;

E. supporting improved bus service in the Riverview Corridor;

F. concluding, based on the data contained in the draft MIS and discussions with policymakers, that the proposed "build" alternatives that follow a West Seventh Street alignment will not solve the problem of vehicular congestion and may, in fact, exacerbate it;

G. objecting to the building of a new river crossing in order to accommodate transit improvements;

H. opposing transit alignments that have a harmful environmental and aesthetic impact on the Mississippi River bluff area and the Swede Hollow area;

I. expressing deep concern about any alternatives that would remove on-street parking needed by businesses or residents, particularly in the West Seventh Street area; and

J. expressing deep concern about any alternatives that would require the

removal of businesses and homes along transit alignments.

Section 2. Enumeration of areas of particular concern to the Highland area.

The Highland District Council, in addition to adopting the consensus positions described above, also:

A. finds that the draft MIS does not, in our view, adequately determine or describe

1. the specific impact of any proposed alternative on traffic, especially traffic on West Seventh Street between the Mississippi River and Interstate 35E; Shepard Road; Davern Street; and surrounding residential streets; particularly that impact attributable to the removal of a lane of automobile traffic, given that traffic is already a major concern in the Highland area, and especially on the streets referenced above; or

2. who the anticipated users of the proposed alternatives will be; where the anticipated users will reside; or said users' anticipated embarkation or destination points; and

B. expresses concern with any proposed alternative that would require the removal of

1. housing, given the already critical shortage of housing in the Highland area;

2. local businesses;

3. on-street parking, either commercial or residential, in the affected area, given that many businesses, particularly those located along West Seventh Street, rely on on-street parking for their customers and employees; or

4. parkland; and

C. expresses concern with any proposed alternative that would alter the Mississippi River or the bluff above the river; Crosby Preserve; Hidden Falls Park; historic Fort Snelling; or the area commonly known as "the Snelling Bluff"; and

D. asks that policymakers more fully determine and describe

1. the specific impact of any proposed alternative on adjacent neighborhoods and the crossing over the Mississippi River to Fort Snelling; and

2. what, if any, changes would need to be made to existing streets; or additional streets; exit ramps; or what other infrastructure alterations would be required; and

E. asks that any adopted alternative be designed and implemented in conformity with the Shepard-Davern Small Area Plan and associated Zoning Overlay; and so as not to interfere with the Gateway Project, a project that has already been funded in the amount of \$2.5 million; or the Shepard Road-Mississippi River Overlook.

F. that no new or expanded River Crossing for any form of mass transit be created along the section of the Mississippi River from I-35 up stream to the Lake Street Bridge.

Section 3. Request that concerns be addressed.

The Highland District Council respectfully requests that the members of any governmental or quasi-governmental body making recommendations or outlining alternatives with respect to transit options in the Riverview/Corridor, or making decisions pertinent to the future of said transit options, including, but not limited to, the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority; the St. Paul City Council; the St. Paul Planning Commission; the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners; the Metropolitan Council; and the Minnesota Legislature:

A. withhold any decision before the above-described concerns are fully addressed; and,

B. before adopting any of the transit options outlined in the draft MIS, or any other long-term transit option that would significantly affect the Highland area, provide a brief summary, for the benefit of the district councils and the affected neighborhoods, that

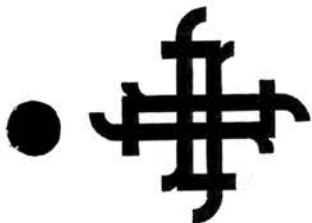
1. specifically identifies the problem that the proposed alternative purports to solve; and

2. specifically explains how the proposed alternative does so.

Section 4. Final enactment.

By voting to approve this resolution, the Highland District Council also confers on the Executive Committee the power of final enactment following the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority public hearing scheduled for the Highland area on Tuesday, October 17, 2000, and confers on the Executive Committee the power to amend the text before final enactment, in order to incorporate any new concerns that arise, or to remove any concerns that are addressed, prior to the end of said public hearing, with the understanding

that all meetings of the Executive Committee, including any meeting at which this resolution is discussed, are open to all members of the board.



West 7th/Fort Road Federation
974 West 7th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
(612) 298-5599

October 23, 2000

Commissioner Rafael Ortega
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
Ramsey County
Kellogg and Wabasha
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102

Dear Commissioner Ortega,

The following resolution pertaining to the Riverview Corridor MIS was passed by the Board of Directors of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation on October 9, 2000.

Whereas, we recognize that a high quality public transportation system is necessary for an efficient, attractive and socially just modern society, and

Whereas, the West 7th neighborhood has historically born a heavy burden of providing regional transportation facilities that damage and do not serve it, and

Whereas, the build alternatives of MIS propose only two transit stations in West 7th between Shepard/Davern and United Hospital's stops, and therefore do serve this neighborhood, and

Whereas, redevelopment opportunities in the West 7th part of this mostly built out corridor (Upper Landing, Island Station, Citgo, ADM, River Bluff, Quebecor, and Shepard/Davern) lie closer (or as close) to Shepard than West 7th, and therefore the 6A alternative of BRT in Shepard was inappropriately removed from MIS between 6/99 and 9/99, and

Whereas, all build proposals of MIS have substantial adverse parking, congestion, and vehicular access impacts to both residential and commercial communities in West 7th, and

Whereas, all evaluated build alternatives create or make worse barriers between northwesterly and southeasterly parts of the West 7th neighborhood, and

Whereas, the MIS fails to preclude the possibilities of forced transfers from existing local bus routes for the purpose of artificially inflating ridership numbers and thereby reducing local access to transit, and

Whereas, MIS replaces the River Bluff development plan enjoying near unanimous support which was developed over dozens of community meetings and thousands of hours of work, with an unsupportable high density plan including park and ride, and bus maintenance facilities which was drawn with no community input, and

Whereas, BRT in CPR would encourage 350 new two way riders per day at a cost of 130 million, or \$370,000 per new rider (LRT in CPR would cost over \$725,000 per new rider) and

Whereas, the public review process was flawed to the extent of precluding detailed public consideration and comment, therefore be it resolved,

- 1/ This board finds that the MIS fails in meeting all four listed goals vis-à-vis the West 7th neighborhood.
- 2/ We do and will continue to strongly oppose construction of additional regional transportation facilities that do not serve and seriously damage us.
- 3/ We strongly request that TSM improvements for existing routes 9, 10, and 14 be implemented on West 7th Street.
- 4/ We support TSM or diamond lane BRT in Shepard Road alignment.
- 5/ We request that the public input part of this process be extended three months after supporting information has been provided.
- 6/ We recommend that the community developed plan for River Bluff replace the high density plan with bus maintenance and park/ride facilities proposed in the MIS.

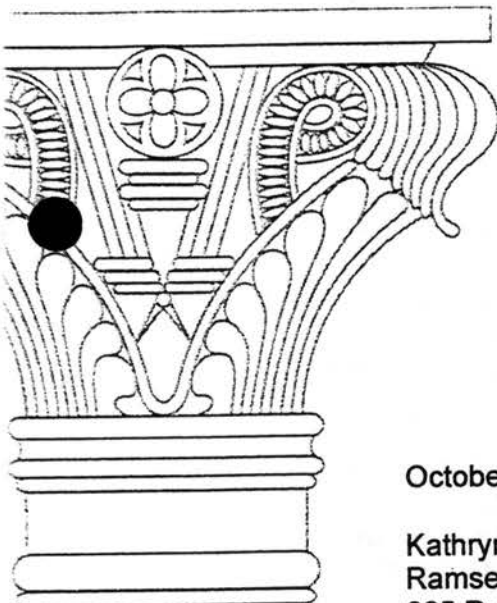
Furthermore, we recommend that the Metropolitan Council, MnDOT, city of Saint Paul, and Ramsey County undertake a simulation test of the route approved by the city of Saint Paul.

Sincerely,



Kurt Schwichtenberg, President

C: Ramsey County Commissioners



Upper
Swede
Hollow
Neighborhoods
Association

729 East Seventh Street
Saint Paul, MN 55106

email: USHNA@
uperswedehollow.org

Phone 651.771.2659
Fax 651.771.0734

October 27, 2000

Kathryn DeSpeigelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

For over a hundred years urban mass transit has been an important aspect of life in the East Seventh Street Corridor on Dayton's Bluff. The original streetcar system opened up this area for both residential and economic development. It added greatly to the quality of life of this urban neighborhood by providing quality, easy and affordable transit to downtown and other neighborhoods.

Today, the proposed Riverview Corridor has the potential to have a similar impact on our community.

When we look at the need for a more effective and comprehensive urban transit system we come to conclusion that to do nothing is not an option, if we are concerned about the quality of urban life, pollution, traffic and the social and economic development of our community.

Our review of the options outlined in the Riverview Corridor Study lead us to the conclusion that the best way to address transit in the corridor is to address the issue in two phases.

Phase 1 – Develop and Implement Transit Management System Improvements (Option 2) in the short term.

As a component of this Transit Management System we support the construction of a comprehensive Park-Ride Parking Ramp -Transit Station-Commercial complex at Metropolitan State University and parking ramp facilities at 3M.

Phase 2 – Develop and Build a Light Rail Transit (LTR) in the Riverview Corridor.

We support designating the corridor as a route for LTR, conducting further planning and securing funding for the project. We believe that the corridor must not end at Arcade or even Earl Street but be extended further to the northeast.

We vigorously oppose routing of any transit through Swede Hollow Park.

As to the **busway proposal**, we oppose it. We urge our County and City elected officials to reject the lure of seemingly easy money, as this option does not appear to effectively address transit needs nor add to the quality of life or the economic or social development of our community.

We believe that a two-phase approach in the Riverview Corridor can provide for significant improvements in local and neighborhood bus service in a relatively short period of time and provide a way for more easily linking our neighborhood to other areas of the metro area in the long run.

Sincerely,


Eugene Piccolo
President

Position adopted by the USHNA Executive Committee – October 2000.

Section 5

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 7:22 AM
To: 'Angela Anderson'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Transit improvement study St. Paul, West End

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Angela Anderson [SMTP:angela.anderson@dnr.state.mn.us]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 10:01 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Transit improvement study St. Paul, West End

Please consider redesigning the Highway 5 bike/ped access the Mississippi. the stairway at Fort Snelling is difficult to maneuver. By providing improved access people will be more inclined to bike to destinations.
Angela Anderson

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:37 AM
To: 'Tony Anthonisen'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 River Bridge Access

Thank you for your comments. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor public record

-----Original Message-----

From: Tony Anthonisen [SMTP:snocrvr@uswest.net]
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 12:26 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 River Bridge Access

To: Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

It has come to my attention that the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Federal Transit Administration are completing a study of potential transit improvements in St. Paul's West End, Homecroft, West Seventh, Downtown and Lower East Side neighborhoods. I am particularly concerned about the Highway 5 bridge located at the end of West Seventh as it crosses the river to head toward either south Minneapolis or the airport. I personally use this bridge many times each spring, summer and fall both on bicycle rides by myself and on rides with the Twin Cities Bicycling Club. Our club has just under 1000 members and about 700 organized rides each year. A number of our rides use the Highway 5 bridge. This bridge provides the only access for an extended distance to and from Fort Snelling, Fort Snelling State Park, the airport, and Post Road for bicycle riders who come from the St. Paul area immediately across the river.

While the bridge currently allows bicyclists to cross the river at this point, the approaches to the bridge are quite difficult to use. In fact, I find them to be relatively dangerous because of the steep stairs which are difficult to climb or descend with a bicycle. While adults have a moderate amount of difficulty, children face a real challenge and risk.

I highly encourage that the Highway 5 bridge connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling Park and its accesses be upgraded with an enhanced design for bicyclists/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. I believe the current stairs are barriers to safe access.

Thank you for considering my thoughts.

John "Tony" Anthonisen

Vice President, Twin Cities Bicycling Club
7440 Girard Ave. So.
Richfield, MN 55423

612-743-7555

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 9:48 AM
To: 'John'
Cc: Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 Bridge Improvement

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: John [SMTP:velostuf@uswest.net]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 8:13 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 Bridge Improvement

Attn:
Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms DeSpiegelaere,

Please consider a bike and wheelchair friendly transit improvement to the Hwy 5 bridge that crosses the river. As an able-bodied cyclist, I am able to carefully walk up and down the current steps, but more than once I have almost fallen- catastrophically!

For children, or less able-bodied people, this crossing is a real obstacle.

Thanks for your consideration.

John Barron
Minneapolis

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 10:49 AM
To: 'BIKECURL@aol.com'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Rick
Subject: RE: Redesign access: Bridge with stairs

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: BIKECURL@aol.com [SMTP:BIKECURL@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 5:28 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Redesign access: Bridge with stairs

Kathryn,

I had heard about the study being done on upgrading the pedestrian/bike path on the Hwy 5 bridge over the MN river.

I find myself crossing that bridge more often than I'd like to, especially since the next option to the north for crossing the river is near Minnehaha Park, which is under reconstruction.

The reason I hate crossing the bridge is because I'm usually wearing my cycling shoes which have metal cleats. This makes walking on the steel plated steps especially dangerous.

Thank you for your time.

Vincent Bernet

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 9:52 AM
To: 'Gina Berscheid'
Cc: Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Hwy 5-river crossing

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Gina Berscheid [SMTP:ginaberscheid@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 7:57 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5-river crossing

I am a cyclist and support changes that can be made to make the bike path off of river road to hwy 5 continous.

Get Your Private, Free E-mail from MSN Hotmail at <http://www.hotmail.com>.

Share information about yourself, create your own public profile at <http://profiles.msn.com>.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 8:27 AM
To: 'Bobby Berwin'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE:

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment records.

-----Original Message-----

From: Bobby Berwin [SMTP:rberwin@mercury.forestry.umn.edu]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 8:26 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject:

THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MANY PEOPLE WHO USE BICYCLES! PLEASE INCLUDE THIS IN THE PLANS:

The problem:

For years bicyclists have wished that they could just stay on their bike to get on and off the HWY 5 bridge to cross the river. But because of the original bike/ped access design, there is a series of stairs both on the East River Road/Shepard Road side and the Fort Snelling Park side. The stairs require bicyclists to get off their bike and maneuver it down to and then up from the section of the bridge (next to motor vehicle lanes) made for bicyclists/pedestrian use. Adult bicyclists can usually negotiate the stairs without falling; however, kids on bicycles and bicycles that are tandems, recumbants, or those with kid's trailers or trail-a-bikes attached find

that the stairs are a major barrier to use the bridge as a part of their route. And those using wheelchairs are ruled out as users altogether.

Importance of Hwy 5 river bridge for recreational and commuter bicyclists:

This bridges connects bicyclists to six major use areas-

1. East River Road leading right to Shepard Road to downtown St. Paul,
2. South entrance of Hidden Falls Park with trails leading right to Crosby Lake Park
3. Fort Snelling Park leading to
 - a. Post Road, around the edge of the airport, to Bloomington
 - b. Minnehaha Park leading to West River Road to downtown Mpls., and
 - c. Big Rivers Regional Trail via the Mendota Bridge crossing

The need:

The Hwy 5 bridge over the river connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and

Fort Snelling Park needs an upgraded, enhanced design for bicyclists/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. Current stairs are barriers to safe access.

Bobby Berwin
Assistant to Dean Al Sullivan
College of Natural Resources
2003 Upper Buford Circle
St. Paul, MN 55108

(612) 624-4250 phone
(612) 624-8701 fax
rberwin@cnr.umn.edu

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 9:50 AM
To: 'ttboyle@usinternet.com'
Cc: Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE: Improvements to bike/ped bridge along Highway 5

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

-----Original Message-----

From: Tim Boyle [SMTP:ttboyle@usinternet.com]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 8:22 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Improvements to bike/ped bridge along Highway 5

Attn:
Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Hello-

I am writing this note to express my support of the study being considered to provide easier and safer access to the pedestrian/bicycle walkway along the Highway 5 bridge, between St.Paul's 'East River Parkway' and the Fort Snelling area access.

Being a bicyclist that frequently uses this bridge I have often wondered if it would be possible to replace the stairs at both ends of the walkway with some sort of ramp to make the bridge access safer and easier.

I recently received an e-mail notification that a study regarding this project was being considered and think it would be well worth the effort.

The current design is pretty archaic, it provides bicycle 'rails' to put your bike in to 'guide' it while you push while climbing the stairs. More than once I have seen some accidents here as people tried to make this work. It also has no provision for wheelchair or handicap access, which is unfortunate as the walkway provides a beautiful vista over the Mississippi River which I think should be available to all.

Since the construction along Hiawatha Ave and on the west side of the airport began, I have used this area more than ever. I also use it frequently in the winter and with the steep stairs, there is no easy way to get

snow removal equipment down there so it tends to fill up with 'plow scree' that is pushed off of the highway making it nearly impassible at times. I think the addition of ramps has the potential to make this access safer and more accessible all during the year.

Please consider this project for bettering the cities bike/ped trail system for users like myself and the people I meet while crossing this bridge.

Thanks-

Sincerely,
Tim Boyle
3701 - East 47th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55406
<mailto:ttboyle@usinternet.com>

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 1:59 PM
To: 'HABII@aol.com'
Cc: Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE: Bicycle access between St. Paul, Mpls, and Dakota county

Thank you for your comments. They will become part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: HABII@aol.com [SMTP:HABII@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 1:43 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Bicycle access between St. Paul, Mpls, and Dakota county

Now that a new light rail or bus route along West 7th (Highway 5) is being considered, I wish you and your associates consider doing something for bicycle travel from St. Paul to the Fort Snelling area.

I live in Highland Park. I am 71 years old, and my bicycle is my principle reason to keep my body, particularly my heart, legs and knees, in workable order. It is becoming almost impossible, however, for me to cope with the stairs on the West side of the river.

I would appreciate it if you and your associates would find some way to eliminate the stairs and provide a useable way for people like myself to cross the Mississippi.

Thank you for considering this request.

Henry Brandtjen
651-690-2342

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:35 AM
To: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: FW: Hwy 5 bridge

-----Original Message-----
From: Gpbikeman@aol.com [SMTP:Gpbikeman@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 05, 2000 9:03 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 bridge

Ms. DeSpiegelaere-

We as concerned cyclists would like to see the pedestrian/bicycle bridge improved so that it is safer to negotiate for all users. Some form of walk way like the one next to the Cedar Ave bridge may be appropriate.

Thank you.

Dan Casebeer, Owner
Grand Performance
1938 Grand Ave
St Paul MN 55105
651.699.2640

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 3:15 PM
To: 'Julia Cuchna'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Highway 5 bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Julia Cuchna [SMTP:jcuchna@hotmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 10:13 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Highway 5 bridge

Kathryn,

I am writing in support of providing improved access for other, alternative transportation modes across this bridge. I am a bike commuter who uses this route as one option, and it is very difficult and unsafe to maneuver at any time, but especially in poor weather conditions. As one of the only routes, if not the only route, to cross this area, the value of this bridge as a transportation link is immeasurable, and should be provided for as the twin cities continues to realize a truly multi-modal transportation network.

Additionally, although I am currently able to navigate the stairs, etc as a pedestrian, at some point I may no longer be so fortunate, and I would expect that the needs of mobility challenged persons be provided for when an re-work is done on this bridge. At present, only the agile able bodied have any access to this area.

Please don't miss this opportunity. I hope to be at an open house to express this concern in person as well. Thank you.

Julia Cuchna
(651) 398-1067 cell
Minneapolis, MN

Get Your Private, Free E-mail from MSN Hotmail at <http://www.hotmail.com>.

Share information about yourself, create your own public profile at <http://profiles.msn.com>.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 3:11 PM
To: 'Carol Daly'; 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us';
Cc: 'stephen.osman@mnhs.org'; 'dan.breva@dnr.state.mn.us'; 'garys@qbp.com';
'pinkroom@aol.com'; 'dgrilley@mnptc.org'; 'jolson@lowsg.com'; 'ridge'; 'freier';
'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Bike Access/Highway 5

Thank you for your comments. I'll include them with the public comments for the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

-----Original Message-----

From: Carol Daly [SMTP:cdaly@cce.umn.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 9:25 AM
To: 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Cc: 'stephen.osman@mnhs.org'; 'dan.breva@dnr.state.mn.us'; 'garys@qbp.com'; 'pinkroom@aol.com'; 'dgrilley@mnptc.org';
'jolson@lowsg.com'; 'ridge'; 'freier'
Subject: Bike Access/Highway 5

Dear Kathryn,

I work with Elderhostel programs in Minnesota. (Elderhostel offers educational adventures for adults 55 and older, all over the world.) We have offered "Biking Elderhostels" in the past, and hope to do so in the future, using the future renovated Building #17 at Ft. Snelling as our base site.

For the record, I'm also a Board member of Hostelling International - Minnesota.

I say "ditto, ditto, ditto," regarding Jon Ridge's e-mail of October 10, wearing both of my hats, that of Director of the U of M's Elderhostel and as a Board Member of HI- MN.

Your plans to improve the Highway 5 bridge excite me too!

Thanks for your good work.

Carol Daly

(Please excuse the strange layout of this message. My computer seems to be making independent decisions this a.m.)

Carol Daly, Program Director
Enrichment Programs/Elderhostel/Compleat Scholar
360 Coffey Hall, U of M
St. Paul, MN 55108
phone: 612-624-4996
fax: 612-624-6210
e-mail: cdaly@cce.umn.edu

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 11:00 AM
To: 'Paul Dingels'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Redesign Hwy 5 Bridge...

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the public record for the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Dingels [SMTP:pdingels@learningbyte.com]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 3:36 PM
To: 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Subject: Redesign Hwy 5 Bridge...
Importance: High

Hi, the Hwy 5 bridge over the river connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling Park needs an upgraded, enhanced design for bicyclists/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. Current stairs are barriers to safe access.

Please ensure these concerns are addressed as you explore redesign plans.

Thx, Paul

Paul Dingels
LearningByte International
Project Management
612.543.3537 (Office)
612.546.6698 (fax)

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 2:21 PM
To: 'Bonny Donzella'
Cc: Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Hwy5 bridge

Thank you for your comments on the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study. They will be included as part of the public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Bonny Donzella [SMTP:donze001@tc.umn.edu]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 1:52 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy5 bridge

Ooh, I hear folks are looking at upgrading the stairs on the Hwy 5 bridge.
Great idea! Crossing those stairs is the hardest part of any ride.
thanks!

The need:

The Hwy 5 bridge over the river connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling Park needs an upgraded, enhanced design for bicyclists/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. Current stairs are barriers to safe access.

Study being completed now:

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Federal Transit Administration are completing a study of potential transit improvements in St. Paul's West End, Homecroft, West Seventh, Downtown and Lower East Side neighborhoods. The Highway 5 bridge is located at the end of West Seventh as it crosses the river to head toward either south Minneapolis or the airport.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 10:57 AM
To: 'Diane_Gates@allianzlife.com'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 bicycle/pedestrian access

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Diane_Gates@allianzlife.com [SMTP:Diane_Gates@allianzlife.com]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 5:39 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 bicycle/pedestrian access

Dear Kathryn,

I am an avid bicyclist who frequently rides along the river on both the Minneapolis and St. Paul sides. The current Hwy 5 pedestrian bridge which connects East River Road and Fort Snelling Park have stairs on either end of it. This is unsafe to a bicyclist who needs to walk down and up these stairs carrying a bike. This is a beautiful area of our city, but this unsafe access prevents me and many of my bicycling friends from utilizing and enjoying this area to its fullest.

I know there is a study currently underway that is looking at transit improvements in this area. I hope you will consider and make improvements so that commuters and recreational cyclists can safely cross the river and enjoy this area. A new ramp system in place of the stairs would be an excellent improvement.

Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Diane Gates
Minneapolis

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:36 AM
To: 'David Gepner'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: There's got to be a better way

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: David Gepner [SMTP:Gonebiking@prodigy.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 05, 2000 11:35 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: There's got to be a better way

RE transit improvements in St. Paul's West End, Homecroft, West Seventh, Downtown and Lower East Side neighborhoods.

Hopefully someone can come up with a more bike friendly way to cross the river from St. Paul to Ft Snelling on the Hwy #5 bridge.

David Gepner

Ted Davis

From: "DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn" <Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US>
To: "Robert Goldthwaite" <goldthwait@worldnet.att.net>;
 <Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US>
Cc: "Kristine Poelzer" <Pinkroom@aol.com>; "Haller, Nona" <Nona.Haller@Co.Ramsey.MN.US>;
 "Morris, Steve" <Steve.Morris@Co.Ramsey.MN.US>; <teddavis@mn.mediaone.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 3:15 PM
Subject: RE: Improved Bicycle and Pedestrian Access over the Highway 5 Bridge
 Thank you for your comments. I will include them in the Riverview Corridor
 Major Investment Study public comment record.

> —Original Message—

> From: Robert Goldthwaite [SMTP:goldthwait@worldnet.att.net]
 > Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 10:04 AM
 > To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
 > Cc: Kristine Poelzer
 > Subject: Improved Bicycle and Pedestrian Access over the Highway 5
 > Bridge
 >
 > As Kristine Poelzer pointed out in her e-mail of Oct 5, the current
 > walkway on the Highway 5 is limited to adult single rider cyclists. Most
 > recreational riders avoid this bridge and thus miss out on the connection
 > to Ft. Snelling State Park and to the other trails across the Mendotta
 > Bridge. As a St. Paul resident and dedicated cyclist, it has always given
 > me joy to see recreational riders and handicapped people using the paths
 > by the river. I'm originally from the Boston area and have lived all over
 > the country. The Twin Cities is the most bicycle friendly area in which
 > I've ever lived. The ease of access to friendly trails encourages users
 > not only to exercise and explore their environments, but to think of
 > biking and walking as alternatives to the automobile for the many short
 > trips we have to make.
 > I would like to see the east river path connect easily with Ft. Snelling
 > and the trails on the other side of the river. In addition, I think the
 > east river path should be improved down into Crosby Farms and also along
 > side Shepherd Rd. It's easy to envision a metropolitan greenway
 > encompassing the new developments in Minneapolis as well as the suburbs.
 > The cost of this improvement is small compared with the benefits of a
 > comprehensive urban greenway.
 >
 > Thank you for your consideration.
 >
 > Bob Goldthwaite

10/16/00

108

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 3:09 PM
To: 'Roy Hallanger'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 Mississippi bridge bike access

Thanks for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Roy Hallanger [SMTP:rhallang@mpls.k12.mn.us]
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 8:07 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 Mississippi bridge bike access

Dear Kathryn,

Thanks for taking the time to study the need for improved bike access on the Hwy 5 bridge. I am an avid biker who recently discovered this trail, and it's a very useful location. I have led several bike group rides from Minnehaha Falls, since it's a central location with many possibilities for bike rides. With improved access on Hwy 5 it would definitely open up recreational as well as commuting possibilities.

I usually ride a road bike which uses a pedal cleat system not well designed for walking. On concrete steps with metal framing as we have now on the Hwy 5 bridge, it's quite dangerous to climb or descend the steps when they are dry, while wearing shoes with cleats and carrying the bicycle.

Thanks again for your efforts!

-Roy Hallanger << File: Roy Hallanger.vcf >>

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 5:04 PM
To: 'kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 Bridge

Thank you for your comments. They'll be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us [SMTP:kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us]
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 11:52 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US; teddavis@mediaone.net
Subject: Re: Hwy 5 Bridge

Hi Kathy and Ted....

below are two emails.... the first is my reply to an email - that email appears last (ahhh, confusing?).

see you at the 10/17 meeting
----- Forwarded by Kristine L. Poelzer/AS/Hennepin on
10/12/2000 11:49 AM -----

Kristine L. Poelzer
10/12/2000 11:48 AM

To: "Allyson J. Hartle" <Hartlaj@locklaw.com>
cc:

Subject: Re: Hwy 5 Bridge (Document link: Kristine L. Poelzer)

Hi there..... thanks for sending me your email with some excellent points. While our points of view on the removal of the stairs and replace with a ramp are different from each other, I can appreciate your perspective. I hope you've sent in your comments to the Ramsey County Railroad Authority, but if you haven't I'll be sending it in as I've done with other comments I've received on this issue.

Minnesota does not rank particularly high in comparison to the other 49 states in using the federal dollars through TEA-21 for bicycle facility enhancements. Resources exist but they need to be requested. Any excess dollars not used for bicycle facility enhancements would then not be available or would go to meet requests for other transit modes such as motor vehicle transit. Looking into using these dollars for an enhancement that includes ramps on the Hwy 5 bridge would make it accessible to all bicyclists regardless of an individual's ease in bike handling as well as wheelchair users.

In the works already for a couple years is a collaboration with the Minnesota Historical Society, DNR, and MN Council of Hostelling International to remodel a Fort Snelling 'barracks' building into a 150+ bed international hostel. The building is a stone's throw from the historic fort. The number of users of the Hwy 5 bridge would be increased due to the likelihood that the hostel will have bike rental facilities to afford visitors the opportunity to ride the many paths in the park and along East and West River Roads. DNR is already looking at a redesign of the various paved and natural surface trails in the Ft Snelling park; especially to and from the Mendota bridge that right now takes bicyclists in front of the double doors into the old fort and the user-created single track dirt route.

Yes, the 35E bridge is in the works for adding bicycle/ped/wheelchair crossing and access. I believe the design is finished and it includes this much-fought-for enhancement. Also, in the works is a ramp from Big Rivers Regional Trail trailhead along the river to the Hwy 494 bridge bike/ped path

as well as a ramp from the Mendota bridge bike/ped path to the Big Rivers Regional trail: both these enhancements enables all bicyclists/peds/wheelchair users to not have to leave one path, get on or cross a road(s), to then continue on another path designed for their use.

Thanks again for taking the time to write.

"Allyson J. Hartle" <Hartlaj@locklaw.com> on 10/12/2000 10:30:13 AM

To: <kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us>
cc:

Subject: Hwy 5 Bridge

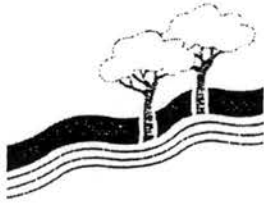
I live in Highland Park and am a member of St. Paul Bicycle Racing Club (grand Performance). I use the highway 5 crossing almost every time I ride. (3 to 5 times a week)

The current crossing is dangerous in part because of the deteriorating stairs and the temporary, inadequate barrier at the South end. Last fall I took pictures and contacted Kent Barmard, PR guy for the DOT's metro district.

I would not be supportive of a complete rebuild..with ramps. Less costly improvements could be made to make the stairs easier for people, including kids and tandems (I have both) to negotiate.

Why not ramp it? It would require a major facility upgrade at Fort Snelling. Currently, cyclists take this nice single (dirt) track path across the south end of the Fort Grounds to the mendota bridge. If you accomodate wheel chairs on the crossing, there should be adequate facilities at Fort Snelling. This would be extremely expensive.

There are limited resources. I think it would be more important to use the resources to upgrade the existing staris. Any additional resources should be used to create a ped/cycle crossing at 35E. (I understand this bridge will be upgraded in the near future...is this true?) Or why not use excess resources to reopen the toll bridge in St. Paul Park.



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

I would like to see improved access to the Hwy 5 bridge from either end for bicyclists. This would help meet 3 of the 4 goals for improvement - #1, 3, & 4. I would also like to see improved bicycling accessibility on W 7th St. to get into downtown. It is pretty dangerous to ride on W 7th St. Now.

Your Name

ANDREW HARTLE

Address

6332-17th AVE So

City

RICHFIELD

Zip code

55423

Phone

612-869-5915

E-mail

andrh@transition.com

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 2:54 PM
To: 'jeanh@creativeadvisers.com'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE:

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Jean Hurlbert [SMTP:jeanh@creativeadvisers.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 11:08 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject:

I have utilized the Hwy 5 Bridge to access Fort Snelling, Hidden Falls, Minnehaha and various other locations. Never once have I used it walking, it has all been via a bicycle. I have always felt the stairways are just plain unsafe for bikers. They are often times covered with sand and hard to maneuver. I have had the pleasure of introducing new cyclists to the sport of bicycling and when they are pushing their limits and get a little tired the Hwy 5 bridge crossing can be downright dangerous. As avid cyclists our bikes are light, people do not realize how heavy some of the children's bikes and lower cost bikes are. They are probably 3x heavier than the bicycle my 6'5" partner rides and a 10 year old is expected to carry it down these stairs and then up again on the other side. There has got to be a better answer. Finally, I have also experienced crossing the Hwy 5 Bridge with our tandem - any one with a video cam could experience this comedy - it is downright a pain in the butt.

I support a change in the Hwy 5 Bridge - it should be easier to use for walkers, cyclists and handicap.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 5:02 PM
To: 'THOMAS IBSEN'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Highway 5 Bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: THOMAS IBSEN [SMTP:ecoperson@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 9:49 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Highway 5 Bridge

Kathryn,

I am writing to advocate for the research of an easier access for bicycles and pedestrians across the Highway 5 bridge between Saint Paul and the Historic Fort Snelling Area. I, and many others, use this bridge frequently as I commute to downtown Saint Paul and explore the many trails that are accessed in this area. At present, the stairway to the main deck of the bridge is difficult to maneuver. With the recent talk of busways and reconstruction of the bridge, I want to ensure that efforts are made to improve bicycle, wheelchair and walking access to the bridge.

Thank you,

Thomas Ibsen
1314 Jefferson Ave
Saint Paul, MN 55105

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Share information about yourself, create your own public profile at <http://profiles.msn.com>.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 5:05 PM
To: 'craig ishman'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Transit improvements - Hwy 5 bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: craig ishman [SMTP:cviszman@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 12:04 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Transit improvements - Hwy 5 bridge

Kathryn,

I understand that a study being completed by The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Federal Transit Administration of potential transit improvements in St. Paul's West End, Homecroft, West Seventh, Downtown and Lower East Side neighborhoods.

The Hwy 5 bridge over the river connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling Park needs an upgraded, enhanced design for bicyclists/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. Current stairs are barriers to safe access.

Because of the original bike/ped access design, there is a series of stairs both on the East River Road/Shepard Road side and the Fort Snelling Park side. The stairs require bicyclists to get off their bike and maneuver it down to and then up from the section of the bridge (next to motor vehicle lanes) made for bicyclists/pedestrian use. Adult bicyclists can usually negotiate the stairs without falling; however, kids on bicycles and bicycles that are tandems, recumbants, or those with kid's trailers or trail-a-bikes attached find that the stairs are a major barrier to use the bridge as a part of their route. And those using wheelchairs are ruled out as users altogether.

Importance of Hwy 5 river bridge for recreational and commuter bicyclists:
This bridges connects bicyclists to six major use areas-

1. East River Road leading right to Shepard Road to downtown St. Paul,
2. South entrance of Hidden Falls Park with trails leading right to Crosby Lake Park
3. Fort Snelling Park leading to
 - a. Post Road, around the edge of the airport, to Bloomington
 - b. Minnehaha Park leading to West River Road to downtown Mpls., and
 - c. Big Rivers Regional Trail via the Mendota Bridge crossing

Please consider these thoughts in your study and thank you for taking the time to listen to bicyclists views.
Craig Ishman

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 1:02 PM
To: 'Michael Jackson'; Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Cc: Robert Works; James Dustrude; Kristie Billiar; Mark Fiers; Mark Lober; Mary Jackson; kurt.schroeder@pca.state.mn.us; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE: Bike /Ped Access - Riverview Corridor Busway Proposal

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Michael Jackson [SMTP:michael.jackson@dot.state.mn.us]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 10:51 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Cc: Robert Works; James Dustrude; Kristie Billiar; Mark Fiers; Mark Lober; Mary Jackson; kurt.schroeder@pca.state.mn.us
Subject: Bike /Ped Access - Riverview Corridor Busway Proposal

Ms. Kathryn DeSpiegelaere
Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

This is in response to an e-mail message inviting comment on the proposed Riverview Corridor transit proposal between downtown St. Paul and Bloomington. This is to request that this study consider the provision of bicycle and pedestrian access along the proposed exclusive transitway between the south end of the West 7th Street corridor and Bloomington. Such access could be provided by a facility design similar to that of the University of Minnesota transitway between the St. Paul and Minneapolis campuses.

It is my understanding that currently bicyclists and pedestrians cannot legally walk or bike to the main terminal of the Minneapolis/Saint Paul Airport. The provision of such access through the transitway proposal would give both airport employees and visitors additional ground travel options. The proposal would also create more direct bicycle access between Bloomington and St. Paul. It would benefit proponents of the busway by providing additional support from members of the nonmotorized transportation community.

Please feel free to contact me by e-mail or by telephone at (651) 296-9966 if there are questions regarding this request.

Michael Jackson
State Bicycle Coordinator
Minnesota Department of Transportation

24

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:40 AM
To: 'Johnson, Jeff'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public record

-----Original Message-----

From: Johnson, Jeff [SMTP:jjohnson@kavouras.com]
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 8:35 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 bridge

Hello,

I am a ride leader with the Twin Cities Bike Club. I use the Hwy 5 bridge frequently to cross the river and would greatly appreciate an improved crossing for bikes. The stairs as they exist now are dangerous to ascend/descend, especially for people that wear cleats on their shoes. This bridge is an important link for crossing the river in the south metro. The Ford bridge is extremely dangerous for bikes (I was nearly crushed by a semi on it last year). The 35E rebuild is years away leaving the High Bridge and Lake street as the two closest safe options.

The Hwy 5 bridge does get a lot of use, since I usually see someone on it whenever I cross.

I think that some kind of ramp could be build on both ends that gradually descended down to the level of the bridge.

Thanks for any support you could give to improving this bridge.

Jeff Johnson
Kavouras, A DTN Company
11400 Rupp Drive
Burnsville, MN 55337-1279
612-890-0609
www.kavouras.com

Weather info site: www.wx.com

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 11:01 AM
To: 'Phyllis Kahn'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE:

Thank you for your comments. They will be added to the public record for the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

-----Original Message-----

From: Phyllis Kahn [SMTP:rep.phyllis.kahn@house.leg.state.mn.us]
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 10:21 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject:

I would like to add my voice to those urging better bicycle and handicapped access to the Highway 5 bridge. As we are more concerned about highway congestion and environmental degradation bicycle commuting and recreation both become more important. I strongly support the MCB comments on this issue.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 9:41 AM
To: 'Klussendorf, Kurt'
Cc: Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE: Highway 5 bridge and Bicycle Access

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Klussendorf, Kurt [SMTP:Kurt.Klussendorf@WellsFargo.COM]
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 7:31 AM
To: 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Subject: Highway 5 bridge and Bicycle Access

If cost is reasonable, I'm certainly in favor of improved cyclist access to the Highway 5 bridge. As a cyclist and a tax payer, I understand the need for balance. The best time to do this stuff is in the design, or redesign if need be.

I cycle across that stretch about 15 times a year. Generally I'm riding my road bike, with cycling shoes. These shoes are not made for walking, and much less for climbing and descending stairs while carrying a bike. It's an unsafe exercise all around. Get rid of the stairs.

Thanks for your consideration.

Kurt Klussendorf
Wells Fargo Services Company
* kurt.klussendorf@wellsfargo.com
* (612) 667-7615

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 5:07 PM
To: 'Connie Koski'; 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Cc: Julie Talbott; Lenora Madigan; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Highway 5 River Bridge

Thanks for your comments. They'll be included in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Connie Koski [SMTP:Connie.Koski@state.mn.us]
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 4:46 PM
To: 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Cc: Julie Talbott; Lenora Madigan
Subject: Highway 5 River Bridge

I'm writing in my role as a Transportation Coordinator for State employees to ask for your support in re-designing the Highway 5 bridge to better accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians, and disabled commuters. I believe that a redesign of the bridge could facilitate an increase in the use of alternative transportation by commuters, which could lessen the traffic congestion in the affected neighborhoods.

Thank you for requesting our input!

Connie Koski
Transportation Coordinator
Department of Administration
Plant Management
117 University Avenue, Room 301
Saint Paul, MN. 55155

Telephone: 651.215.1895
Fax: 651.297.5158
E-Mail: connie.koski@state.mn.us

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 9:54 AM
To: 'Brian Kozicki'
Cc: Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE:

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Brian Kozicki [SMTP:ldubs@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 5:57 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject:

I totally agree. I have used the stairs/rails many times and it doesn't work to well. Please put me down for the vote. Thanks and hopefully we'll see improvement.

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Share information about yourself, create your own public profile at <http://profiles.msn.com>.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 2:52 PM
To: 'Lee, Sue'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 Bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Lee, Sue [SMTP:Sue.Lee@mts.com]
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 11:08 AM
To: 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Subject: Hwy 5 Bridge

Hello Kathryn,

I am a resident of Lilydale and a cyclist that uses the Hwy 5 bridge often to get to St Paul. It is very hard to walk up and down the steps to the bridge. Cyclists are usually wearing special cleated shoes that clip into the bike pedals. It is easy to slip on the steps. They are in ill repair and usually wet. I slipped down the stairway on the Fort Snelling side of the bridge last spring. I was lucky that I received no injuries.

Please take into account the cyclist and other pedestrians that use the bridge when planning for the future.

Thank You

Sue Lee

Board Member

St Paul Bicycle Racing Club

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 5:00 PM
To: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: FW: Work on Highway 5

-----Original Message-----

From: kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us [SMTP:kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us]
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 9:25 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: FW: Work on Highway 5

Kathryn.....
the last email below is from a cyclist who lives in the area.....
----- Forwarded by Kristine L. Poelzer/AS/Hennepin on
10/12/2000 09:22 AM -----

"Lee, Sue" <Sue.Lee@mts.com> on 10/12/2000 09:09:27 AM

To: "'Kristine Poelzer'" <Kristine.Poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us>
cc:

Subject: FW: Work on Highway 5

> -----
> From: HABI@aol.com
> Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 8:07 AM
> To: Lee, Sue
> Subject: Work on Highway 5
>
> Sue, the issue is not over providing bicycle access, it is over putting a
> lite rail or dedicated bus route along West 7th (#5) between downtown St.
> Paul, the airport, and the Mall. We do not want West 7th to become a
> major
> road with development, etc. I do not want it, since I live close to
> Davern.
> The developers are proposing a shopping mall, Cub Food plus a 16 or 32
> screen
> movie theater on the corner of a Davern and 7th. Our street traffic
would
> go
> through the roof. The complex will be built, despite the objections.
>
> No wanted in the area wanted the lite rail from downtown Mpls to the
> airport, but it is being built. The West 7th corridor will also be
built.
> It
> is only a matter of when. When it is, they will do probably due
something
>
> for bikes also, as they get money from the Federal Government to develop
> bicycle routes.
>

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2000 10:43 AM
To: 'Tim McNamara'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 bridge bike/ped access

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Tim McNamara [SMTP:timmcn@mr.net]
Sent: Saturday, October 14, 2000 7:32 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 bridge bike/ped access

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

I am writing in regard to the bike/pedestrian bridge on Hwy 5, between East River Road/Shepherd Road and Fort Snelling. Bike and pedestrian access to bridges is a significant issue in the Twin Cities, with long stretches of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers being uncrossable on foot or by bike at all. I use my bike preferentially over my car as much as possible, using it for commuting to work, errands and recreation. I ride between 5,000 and 6,000 miles per year and as such have become quite familiar with the conditions faced by cyclists in the Twin Cities area.

The current Hwy 5 bridge is a significant barrier to the use of bicycles and an absolute barrier to wheelchairs for crossing the river at this point, and the nearest suitable bridges are the High Bridge (about 3 miles away) and the Ford Parkway bridge (about 2 miles away). It is only possible, from the High Bridge, for cyclists or pedestrians to access Fort Snelling via the Mendota Bridge, and from the Ford Parkway bridge it is only possible to access Fort Snelling via the bike trail from Minnehaha Park. Unfortunately, that trail has been closed and/or poorly accessible for most of the year due to the Hwy 55 realignment. Indeed it is still poorly accessible due to the construction, as I found tonight when I tried to ride through that area.

I use the Hwy 5 bridge at least 100 times per year- carrying my bike down the stairs, riding across the bridge, carrying my bike up the stairs on the other side and continuing my journey. I do this because it is by far the most direct route to many of the places I am going to. I'm 41 years old, very fit and quite able to use the bridge as it exists. However, I have had to help older people carry their bikes, because they had gotten down onto the bridge and were unable to get their bikes up the stairs on the other end. I have seen people with partial disabilities have to turn around and go back the way they came because they couldn't carry their bikes down the stairs. I have seen people in wheelchairs stranded at the top of the stairs, unable to go further. The stairs are also a hazard from slipping while carrying your bike, since you don't have your hands free to catch yourself if you do slip. I even had to help one younger man who was quite able to ride his bike, but suffered from some sort of disability of one of his arms and was unable to push or carry his bike up the stairs except with great difficulty.

The need to make the bridge accessible to bicycles and wheelchairs by either elevating the walkway or by somehow installing ramps down to the existing walkway, is clear. The probably easier option, elevating the walkway, would have several benefits including raising pedestrians and other users above the traffic which would greatly reduce the noise and also the accumulation of debris such as sand from winter sanding/salting which remains on the walkway well into the summer, since there appears to be no maintenance whatsoever. Broken glass is also very common on the walkway and remains there for

months on end. In the winter and spring, snowplowing on Hwy 5 packs the walkway with snow, making passage dangerous or impossible.

Non-motorized forms of transportation including walking, cycling, wheelchairs, etc. continue receive short shrift in Minnesota transportation planning. When we are facing a massive cost-prohibitive escalation in new road construction to accommodate rising single-occupant car traffic, in the trillions of dollars over the next 20 years or so, it seems inconceivable to me that we would not do everything possible to eliminate barriers to the use of alternative modes of transportation. The bike trails that have been built in Minnesota are largely designed for recreational rather than practical use, and do not encourage the daily use of cycling for getting to work, running errands, etc. The 28th St. Greenway, once it is complete, will be the primary exception to this.

Given the access to federal ISTE/TEA-21 funding for exactly these sorts of projects, in large part due to the hard work of Mr. Oberstar, it is amazing to me that cyclists, pedestrians and wheelchair users continue to have to fight for even a fraction of the access that is already in place for drivers of cars. Simple things such as sweeping St. Paul's streets more than once or twice a year would do so much for promoting cycling. Adequate lighting, replacing storm sewer grates that can trap bicycle tires, making sure that sewer access covers are level with the street, repairing pot holes along the edge of the streets where cyclists are supposed to ride- these things are not difficult nor expensive, but they would eliminate many dangerous situations and make cycling a much more attractive option for many people. Riding a bike in Minneapolis or St. Paul is currently an exercise in dealing with a hostile environment- both the physical aspect of road quality and design and from the behavior of other road users.

I thank you for your attention to this matter, and strongly urge the development of safe and easy access to the Hwy 5 bridge by pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchairs. Another issue is the need to reopen or replace the toll bridge between Newport and Inver Grove Heights, as there is no bicycle access for crossing the river between Hastings and Robert Street in downtown St. Paul, since the toll bridge has closed.

Timothy C. McNamara, M.A., L.P.
2137 Temple Court
St. Paul MN 55104
651-644-5057

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 3:28 PM
To: 'kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us'; Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US;
teddavis@mediaone.net
Cc: motoman@winternet.com; sue.lee@mts.com; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 steps

Thanks. We will include his comments in the public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us [SMTP:kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us]
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 3:16 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US; teddavis@mediaone.net
Cc: motoman@winternet.com; sue.lee@mts.com
Subject: Hwy 5 steps

Kathryn and Ted.....
attached is an email from Larry Mackhe asked that his concerns be
forwarded to you for
inclusion as 'public comment'.

thanks,
Kristine

----- Forwarded by Kristine L. Poelzer/AS/Hennepin on
10/11/2000 03:13 PM -----

"Larry Mack" <motoman@winternet.com> on 10/10/2000 02:35:06 PM

To: <kristine.poelzer@co.hennepin.mn.us>
cc: "Sue. Lee@Mts. Com" <sue.lee@mts.com>

Subject: Hwy 5 steps

Kristine:

I read a copy of your e-mail regarding the steps for cyclists on hwy 5.

I totally agree that something should and must be done to make for an
easier
access for those who use that facility for either recreational, training or
commuting on their bikes. I also have to wonder if at present by having
those stairs that it is impossible for those who are impaired and have to
depend on wheelchairs to have access to the bridge as well? By doing away
with the steps and putting in a ramp you will make the bridge accessible to
everyone. By denying access for those who are on wheelchairs you may well
be violating Federal Law as well as a continuation of what appears to be a
dangerous hazard to others trying to negotiate those steps.

While I can not attend your meetings I would appreciate my thoughts on this
matter being conveyed to the proper individuals.

Best regards,

Larry Mack

alle Menchen werden Brüder

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:47 AM
To: 'Loren and Barbara Nelson'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Highway 5 Bridge and Bicycle accessibility

Thank you for your comments. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record+

-----Original Message-----

From: Loren and Barbara Nelson [SMTP:nelson@mtn.org]
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 12:57 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Highway 5 Bridge and Bicycle accessibility

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere,

As an avid cyclist, I have always found maneuvering my bike over the Highway 5 bridge connecting the East River Road and Shepard Road to the Fort Snelling area and its access to trails on that side of the river to be cumbersome and unsafe.

I strongly support upgrading that "crossing" and hope an easier access can be designed and incorporated in the area improvements being studied and proposed by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Federal Transit Administration.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Loren Nelson
20525 Manor Road
Excelsior, MN 55331
voice: (952)474-6788
fax: (952)470-6214
e-mail: nelson@mtn.org

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 8:24 AM
To: 'Tim and Erika Nelson'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: West 7th Street transit options

Thank you for your comments. They will become part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Tim and Erika Nelson [SMTP:timanderika@uswest.net]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 12:56 AM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: West 7th Street transit options

2174 James Ave.

St. Paul, MN 55105

Oct. 18, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere
Director, Ramsey Co. Regional Railroad Authority
605 Ramsey Co. Govt. Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102

Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

I am writing in follow up to my remarks at the public comment meeting Oct. 17 on the proposed transit changes along West 7th Street in St. Paul. I would hope that the RCRRA recommends that some changes be made to West 7th Street, for four reasons:

First, as I mentioned at the meeting, I am a year-round bicycle commuter, between my home and downtown St. Paul, and I regularly travel West 7th Street, between Kellogg and Randolph. The on-street parking and traffic volume on this stretch of road have made me increasingly fearful for my safety, and often forces me on to other routes.

I have tried the new Shepard Road route, which is nice, but requires me to climb the river bluff two additional times each day, from Shepard back up to West 7th Street. I don't think you'll find a lot of other bicyclists eager to add hills to their commute. And as I said in the meeting, the 35E Bikeway is so poorly maintained that it's almost unusable. For much of this summer, bushes had grown completely across the trail, and homeless people are constantly smashing liquor bottles on the pavement on the trail south of the Open School, and the glass is only cleaned up when I drive down there and sweep it up myself.

The trail also isn't plowed in the winter.

I would like to stay on West 7th Street, and hope that any transit changes on that route would made accommodations for bicycling. West 7th Street is the most direct route, and I think has the best potential to be fitted with tamper resistant bike racks, bike parking at transit stations, bike lanes on the transitway

Secondly, I would like to see improvements made to the Highway 5 bridge. It is fine for vehicular traffic, but the stairs to the pedestrian lane on either end are difficult to use in bike shoes, and all but insurmountable with a tandem bicycle, a bike loaded with luggage, a child in a trailer or with inline skates. And it's a shame it's such an obstacle, since Fort Snelling is a crucial connection to the bike paths along the river, to the Mendota Bridge and the bike facilities in Dakota County, and to the Hubert Humphrey terminal, where I have traveled by bike to catch a flight.

I think the design of a transitway across the bridge will be the only opportunity to make changes to the Highway 5 span.

Thirdly, I think a transitway could offer a crucial opportunity for cyclists like me to access other modes of public transport. If cyclists knew there were adequate parking facilities, reliable bus service that had racks

for bikes and connections to other facilities like the Hiawatha LRT line, it would encourage people to ride their bikes more often, even away from the transitway.

I believe a properly designed transitway would have ripples throughout the area, and help St. Paul move closer to the Federal Transit Administration's goal to diversify the transportation mix -- and a few small changes for bicyclists will give Ramsey County much more bang for its transit buck.

Lastly, I think the RCRRA has the opportunity (with support for a transitway) to demonstrate its commitment to alternative transportation. St. Paul is lagging seriously behind in bike infrastructure, as projects like the Cedar Lake Trail and the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis demonstrate. This is a chance of a lifetime for planners to fundamentally change the transportation picture in downtown St. Paul, and if transit doesn't include bicycles and pedestrians now, these opportunities will never come again.

I hope the RCRRA will second the St. Paul Planning Commission's recommendations, and ask the Metropolitan Council to move swiftly ahead on a West 7th Street transit option.

Thank you for your attention.
Tim Nelson



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

When the 7th St bridge over the river
and Shepard Rd/7th St intersection is reworked
it would be desirable to provide better
pedestrian/bicycle access across the river
from St. Paul to Fort Snelling and the airport.

Your Name Richard Newmark
Address 182 N Hazel
City ST PAUL MN 55119-4915
Zip code 55119-4915
Phone 651 735 4541
E-mail RANEWMARK@MN.MEDIAONE.NET

DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn

From: Casey O'Keefe [casey19@ix.netcom.com]
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2000 7:44 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 bridge bicycle access

Dear Kathryn,

I grew up in the Highland/Macalester Groveland area of St.Paul, and I also went to St.Thomas Acedamy. There were many occassions that I would bike to STA and would take the Hwy 5 bridge. It was always very inconveniant to haul my bike up and down the stairs on either side of the bridge, and then have to wind my way through the upper parts of Fort Snelling to reach the Mendota Heights bridge. I think it is about time that the State and the Cities started to take a real serious look at most of our river crossings. The mendaota Bridge crossing is much improved, but without an adequate junction between it and the Hwy 5 bridge much of St.Paul is being ignored. I am a tireless booster of St.Paul, and revel in it's renewed status in the state of minnesota. Making it easier for people to access all portions of the city is vital to its continued revitalization.

thank you for your consideration of this matter

Casey O'Keefe

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 10:52 AM
To: 'William O'Reilly'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Highway 5 access

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: William O'Reilly [SMTP:stoneage@mediaone.net]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 4:40 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Highway 5 access

The Hwy 5 bridge over the river connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling Park needs an upgraded, enhanced design for bicyclists/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. Current stairs are barriers to safe access. There is no way for a wheelchair or a bicycle trailer to access the present crossing. Thank you for your attention to this matter.
Bill O'Reilly

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 10:48 AM
To: 'Pawlak, Jil'
Cc: Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE: Bike Access Improvement to HWY 5 Bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Pawlak, Jil [SMTP:Jil.Pawlak@mpls.frb.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 10:39 AM
To: 'kathryn.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Subject: Bike Access Improvement to HWY 5 Bridge

I am a member of the Twin Cities Bicycling Club and would like you to know of my support for the need of the HWY 5 river bridge connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling Park to be improved for bicycles/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. This would provide a much safer access between 6 major use bike riding areas.

Please consider this improvement to provide safer access for more people to enjoy the area.

Thanks

Jil Pawlak



'To Promote the Acceptance and Use of Bicycling in Minnesota'

Kristine Poelzer ☿ Metro Area Citizen Representative ☿ 1870 Indian Place ☿ Arden Hills, MN ☿ 55112-7806

Elwyn Tinklenberg
COMMISSIONER

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DISTRICT 2

DISTRICT 3

DISTRICT 4

DISTRICT 6

DISTRICT 7

DISTRICT 8

AGENCY MEMBERS

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ADMINISTRATION

NATURAL RESOURCES

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DEPT. OF EDUCATION

POLLUTION CONTROL

DEPT. OF
TRANSPORTATION

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

October 13, 2000

fax: 651-266-2761

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere,

This letter is in regard to a study of potential transit improvements in St. Paul's West End, Homecroft, West Seventh, Downtown and Lower East Side neighborhoods being completed by The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Federal Transit Administration. I request consideration of the enhancement of transit access by bicyclists, inline skaters, and wheelchair users to the Highway 5 bridge that is located at the end of West Seventh as it crosses the river to head toward either south Minneapolis or the airport.

The Hwy 5 bridge over the river connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling State Park needs an upgraded, enhanced design for bicyclists/pedestrians access using ramps. Current stairs are barriers to safe access and provide no access currently to wheelchair users. The redesign and installation of ramps to access the HWY 5 bridge is in line with the Minnesota effort to comply with Federal transportation policy of increasing non-motorized transportation to at least 15 percent of all trips.

For years bicyclists have wished that they could just stay on their bike to get safely on and off the HWY 5 bridge to cross the river. But because of the original bike/pedestrian access design, there is a series of stairs both on the East River Road/Shepard Road side and the Fort Snelling State Park side. The stairs require bicyclists to get off their bike and maneuver it and themselves down to and then up from the section of the bridge (next to motor vehicle lanes) made for bicyclists/pedestrian use. Skilled adult bicyclists can usually negotiate the stairs without falling; however, kids on bicycles and bicycles that are tandems, recumbants, or those with kid's trailers or trail-a-bikes attached find that the stairs are a major barrier to use the bridge as a part of their route. And those using wheelchairs are ruled out as HWY 5 bridge users altogether.

The HWY 5 bridge has significant importance of a river crossing for recreational and commuter bicyclists as it connects bicyclists and other users to six major use areas and destinations:

1. East River Road leading right to Shepard Road to downtown St. Paul,

2. South entrance of Hidden Falls Park with facilities and trails leading right to trails through Crosby Lake Park and then connecting to the trails along the new Shepard Road to downtown St. Paul

3. Fort Snelling State Park facilities and trails leading to

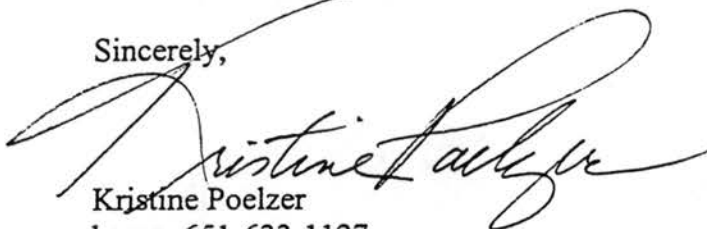
a. Post Road, around the edge of the airport, to Mall of America and Bloomington

b. Minneapolis' Minnehaha Park trails leading to West River Road trail to downtown Minneapolis, and

c. Big Rivers Regional Trail in Mendota via the Mendota Bridge bicycle/pedestrian/wheelchair river crossing leading to the Hwy 494 crossing and Eagan area as well as in the other direction to downtown St. Paul through Harriet Island.

All too often people forget the needs of those who travel in a non-motorized mode when it comes to considering transit improvements. Thank you for conducting this study of potential transit improvements in the St. Paul area. I appreciate the fact that you sought out and welcomed the input of bicyclists.

Sincerely,



Kristine Poelzer

home: 651-633-1127

email: pinkroom@aol.com

cc: Mark Fiers, MnDot – SBAC office

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 9:56 AM
To: 'Bob.P.Power@HealthPartners.Com'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Fort Snelling bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Bob.P.Power@HealthPartners.Com [SMTP:Bob.P.Power@HealthPartners.Com]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 4:31 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Fort Snelling bridge

Hello -

I am a regular user of the "bike path" on the Hwy 5 bridge. I was told you are collecting comments about transportation needs affecting the bridge.

Common sense tells me that the northern end of the bridge is the lesser problem and that the southern end is the greater one. So far, I have managed to ascend and descend the southern stairs several hundred times, but every time I do, I worry about catching a cleat on the rotting concrete-and-steel treads, or simply going tail-over-teakettle down into freeway traffic. The same "temporary" fencing, etc., has been in place there for many years, it seems.

It is time for a change. The Hwy 5 bridge is one of the reasons I do not bike to work, from Highland Park to a location just south of the airport.

Sincerely,

Robert P. Power
1695 Hillcrest Avenue
St Paul MN 55116-2150

rpowers1@uswest.net

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:38 AM
To: 'brichie'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 ped bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: brichie [SMTP:brichie@email.msn.com]
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 4:43 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 ped bridge

Hello,

I frequently use the stairs at the hwy 5 bridge. I find them very hard to navigate. Is there some way that they could be improved.

Thank You

Brian Richie

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 11, 2000 2:20 PM
To: Haller, Nona; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: FW: Bike Access/Hwy 5 /Take 2

-----Original Message-----

From: Jon Ridge [SMTP:jridge@hi-mn.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 3:52 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Bike Access/Hwy 5 /Take 2

Hi Kathryn...I have no spell check with my e-mail...I've made a few changes to my letter due to this problem. Please enter my corrected letter below into the public record. Sorry for this inconvenience...Best Wishes...Jon

X-Sender: hostel@mtn.org
Mime-Version: 1.0
Date: Tue, 10 Oct 2000 15:08:52 -0500
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us
From: Jon Ridge <jridge@hi-mn.org>
Subject: Bike Access/Hwy 5
Cc: stephen.osman@mnhs.org, dan.breva@dnr.state.mn.us, garys@qbp.com,
pinkroom@aol.com, dgrilley@mnptc.org, jolson@lowsg.com

Dear Kathryn,

I am writing to ask your support in improving the bicycle/pedestrian access on the Hwy 5 bridge. I understand you and Ramsey County are seeking public comment on the project as plans for bridge improvements get underway. I believe this bridge represents one of the best links to pedestrian and bicycle trail networks throughout our urban community and its current design impedes this use greatly.

Lately I've been spending quite a bit of time out at Historic Fort Snelling. I watch as bicyclist after bicyclist shoulder their transportation source and prepare for the climb up or descent down to access the bridge. Upon reaching Fort Snelling State Park, right at the Historic Fort grounds, these bicyclists now access a network of trails enviable to any urban area across the US.

Kathryn, I am the Executive Director of Hostelling International-Minnesota. Our organization is working to renovate Building #17, within steps of this bridge and across from the Historic Fort, into a 150-bed international youth hostel. When the renovation is complete, about 2003, we will be operating a 150-bed youth hostel and attracting about 20,000 annual overnight visitors to the site. We mostly will serve school and youth groups, scouts and sports programs, greater Minnesota families and budget-minded international travelers.

The Fort Snelling International Hostel site was chosen because of its access to the wonderful bicycle/pedestrian trail network at this location.

The Highway 5 pedestrian/bicycle bridge will become a major source of transportation for our very recreational minded and most notably non-motorized hostel users.

In addition, we plan to design the site as a rest stop for current users of the Historic Fort and State Park trail network. A coffee shop/convenience store along with bicycle rental will provide tremendous value-added services to the tourists and visitors attracted to this site, as well as our own community. Pedestrian/Bicycle use on this bridge will increase, and my hope is significantly, once our doors open.

As I write this note to you, asbestos and other environmental contaminants are being removed from the building and our architects are half way through design/development drawings. Exciting plans are being made with the Minnesota Historical Society to greatly improve this site and to attract additional recreational users to the location.

I am most excited to hear of your plans to improve the Hwy 5 bridge and I hope your awareness of our plans for the future, to bring increased walking and bicycle use to this area, will weigh heavily in your design upgrade. Please feel free to contact me for further information or if I can be of any service to your project.

Sincerely,

Jon Ridge
612/378-3773

Jon Ridge
Executive Director
Hostelling International-Minnesota AYH
125 SE Main St. #135
Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 378-3773

Our Mission: To help people of all ages gain a greater understanding of the world, locally and internationally, through educational programs, cultural connections, recreational activities, and positive hostelling experiences.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 10:51 AM
To: 'SCOTT ROBERTSON'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: transit study

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: SCOTT ROBERTSON [SMTP:SCOTT2@FAIRVIEW.ORG]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 6:03 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: transit study

Kathryn:

It's come to my attention that a study of potential transit improvements for St. Paul's West End and surrounding neighborhoods is being completed.

I frequently travel, by bike, across Hwy 5 from St. Paul to Ft. Snelling. I use this access to visit Ft. Snelling State Park, as well as to cross the Mendota Bridge to Mendota and Eagan.

It's my hope that future changes improvements to Hwy 5 don't compromise this access. In fact, the stairways used to access the ped/bike portion of the bridge are an impediment to many people who bike, and it would be great if this could be improved.

Thanks for listening!

Scott Robertson, Web Editor
Fairview Health Services
tel: 612.672.7766 -/- fax: 612.672.7755
fairview.org

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 11:03 AM
To: 'Ryan, Mike'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 problem

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Ryan, Mike [SMTP:Mike.Ryan@state.mn.us]
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 2:25 PM
To: 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Subject: Hwy 5 problem

Hi,
I am very interested and in support of a safe access to HWY 5 Mendota bridge. I am not just addressing the safety issues that are stated in the attached email but I am concerned about the welfare of a child or woman that would travel this route alone. There is no feeling of safety and I think it should be remedied. Thank you.

<<...OLE_Obj...>>

Department of Public Safety
Office of Technical Support Services
Michael Ryan
Electronic Government Services
444 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-5104

Fellow bicyclists, you can help get improved access to a local river bridge.

Just send an email or a fax of the need and support for the improvement. You can also attend "Open house listening sessions" - dates/times are listed below.

The problem:

For years bicyclists have wished that they could just stay on their bike to get on and off the HWY 5 bridge to cross the river. But because of the original bike/ped access design, there is a series of stairs both on the East River Road/Shepard Road side and the Fort Snelling Park side. The stairs require bicyclists to get off their bike and maneuver it down to and then up from the section of the bridge (next to motor vehicle lanes) made for bicyclists/pedestrian use. Adult bicyclists can usually negotiate the stairs without falling; however, kids on bicycles and bicycles that are tandems, recumbants, or those with kid's trailers or trail-a-bikes attached find that the stairs are a major barrier to use the bridge as a part of their route. And those using wheelchairs are ruled out as users altogether.

Importance of Hwy 5 river bridge for recreational and commuter bicyclists:
This bridge connects bicyclists to six major use areas-

1. East River Road leading right to Shepard Road to downtown St. Paul,
2. South entrance of Hidden Falls Park with trails leading right to Crosby Lake Park
3. Fort Snelling Park leading to
 - a. Post Road, around the edge of the airport, to Bloomington
 - b. Minnehaha Park leading to West River Road to downtown Mpls., and
 - c. Big Rivers Regional Trail via the Mendota Bridge crossing

The need:

The Hwy 5 bridge over the river connecting East River Road/Shepard Road and Fort Snelling Park needs an upgraded, enhanced design for bicyclists/peds/wheelchair access using ramps. Current stairs are barriers to safe access.

Study being completed now:

The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Federal Transit Administration are completing a study of potential transit improvements in St. Paul's West End, Homecroft, West Seventh, Downtown and Lower East Side neighborhoods. The Highway 5 bridge is located at the end of West Seventh as it crosses the river to head toward either south Minneapolis or the airport.

Comments need to be received:
No later than October 20, 2000.

Email or fax:

Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us
fax: 651-266-2761

Attn:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Two open houses to provide an opportunity for the public to learn about and comment on the results of the draft study. Public comments will become a part of the study report. Open House/Questions Answered: 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm.

Listening Session/Public Comment: 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm.

Wednesday, October 11, 2000
5:30 pm - 9:00 pm
West Seventh Community Center
265 Oneida Street
St. Paul, MN 55102

Tuesday, October 17, 2000
5:30 pm - 9:00 pm
St. Luke's Lutheran Church
1807 Field Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55116

Sent out by:

Kristine Poelzer
Metro Area Citizen Rep.
MN State Bicycle Advisory Committee
pinkroom@aol.com

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

October 6, 2000

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere,

I am writing to announce my support for modifying the Highway 5 bridge to better accommodate cyclists. The current access is practically hidden and very cumbersome with steps at either end of the bridge span. Following are the problems I have encountered:

1. I wear cycling shoes with protruding cleats. Carrying my bicycle up and down the stairs is dangerous.
2. The steps one must use to ascend and descend would never pass the building code. The treads are too short, not allowing enough space for a normal shoe. The risers are not too short, making it impossible to climb or descend without great care. The metal caps on the treads facilitate slipping. The concrete is crumbling.
3. It is very difficult for me to maneuver my tandem bicycle up and down the steps.
4. When I have my child cart it is almost impossible to traverse the stairs. I have to disconnect the bicycle from the cart and transport each up and down the unsafe stairs. If I have children in the cart, they have to get out and be moved separately.
5. Cycling with a 'shadow' or 'trail-a-bike' leads to problems similar to those encountered by a cart. The device attached to the bicycle has to be disconnected and carried separately.

In summary, the steps at either end of the pedestrian/bike bridge adjacent to Highway 5 make it inconvenient and dangerous. Even if the step design were to be maintained, the steps need to be reconstructed to meet the St Paul building code.

Cyclists have a need to cross to use Ft Snelling State Park, visit the fort, or to use the bicycle lane of the Mendota Bridge to access the Big Rivers Regional Trail. The Highway 5 bridge is a key point of access and is woefully inadequate. Perhaps at the time the bicycle/pedestrian bridge was constructed it represented the 'state-of-the-art.' Today it is no longer able to meet the needs of the population and needs to be reconstructed with a design that allows cyclists the ability to cross without encountering obstacles to remaining on the bicycle, and to be able to access the bridge with the variety of human-powered vehicles prevalent today: single bicycles, tandem bicycles, recumbent bicycles, recumbent tricycles; and to pull child carts, utility carts, and shadow bicycles.

Sincerely,



Steven R. Scholl, Ph.D.
PO Box 1762
St Paul, MN 55101

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 11:02 AM
To: 'www.riverviewcorridor.com@[209.0.238.2]'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

Thanks for your comments. They'll be added to the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public record. Call me at 651-266-2762 if you'd like to schedule a meeting speaker.

-----Original Message-----

From: www.riverviewcorridor.com@[209.0.238.2] [SMTP:www.riverviewcorridor.com@[209.0.238.2]]
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 9:58 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

Name: Kurt Christian Schroeder
Agency: St Paul Bicycle Advisory Board
Mailing Address: 2025 Nebraska
City: St Paul
Zipcode: 55119
Phone: 296-8593
FAX:

Interested in participating in meetings or workshops scheduled during the course of the study.

I belong to an organization would be interested in having a speaker on the Riverview MIS at one of the regularly scheduled meetings. Thoughts about the Goals and Objectives of the study: These goals are missing: 1) the lowering of travel times between the airport and downtown St Paul, and 2) development of improved bikeway connections along and to the corridor.

Those not worth studying: 2, 5, 6B. Travel times are increased with these alternatives.

OTHER alternatives: Yes! Consider a fixed-guideway busway on 35E or Shepard Road with 50-55mph maximum speeds. This could be done cheaply with a single reversible lane. Reverse direction buses could follow the existing 54 route or the Shepard Road shoulder.

Highest Priority: Fixed-guideway bus- then maybe 2

Lowest Priority: 1, 3, 5, 6B

Comments: We need an LRT or busway that can travel faster than existing autos, i.e. average better than 45 mph net travel speed. This means separating the dedicated lane more with a fixed guideway or dedicated LRT.

A parallel bikeway should be considered with neighborhood connections to reduce the need for park and ride facilities. Bike parking should be at all major stops.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 5:01 PM
To: 'JSnider@sjm.com'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: MCF - FW: thought you'd want to know....More on the Bridge

Thank you for your comments. They'll be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: JSnider@sjm.com [SMTP:JSnider@sjm.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 12, 2000 9:36 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: RE: MCF - FW: thought you'd want to know....More on the Bridge

Kathryn- I agree with making the hwy 5 bridge more accessible to wheelchairs, bikes, bladders, walkers, etc. but I also feel strongly that it must be done in the least obtrusive way to the local environment and aesthetic look of the area.

That bridge should never have been built through a historical landmark in the first place, but now that it's already there, we should try to make the most of it and get the most out of it.

I hope a minimally invasive ramp could be put in place to allow greater access to the environmentally friendly modes of transportation we should be trying to encourage.

Thank You,
Jason Snider
St. Paul Resident

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:42 AM
To: 'Mark Stewart'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Highway 5 bike crossing

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study p[ublic comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Stewart [SMTP:mark.stewart@medtronic.com]
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 5:55 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Highway 5 bike crossing

Kathryn,

I want to express my support for improvements to the highway 5 pedestrian/bicycle crossing which would allow bicycles or wheelchairs to cross without the need to traverse a series of steps. This bridge crosses to a very popular area near Ft Snelling that needs improved accessibility.

Thanks,
Mark Stewart

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 7:18 AM
To: 'Mary K Swanstrom'
Cc: Haller, Nona; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Improved access for wheelchairs, cyclists, pedestrians/ Hwy 5 Bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary K Swanstrom [SMTP:mamaloon@juno.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 10:06 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Improved access for wheelchairs, cyclists, pedestrians/ Hwy 5 Bridge

To Whom It May Concern,

Please be advised that it is of great importance to work toward the improvement of accessibility to the Hwy 5 Bridge. This pertains to pedestrians, young and old, those wheelchair - bound, also bicylists, single and tandem with or without children in tow!!! Why limit areas just because a road didn't get the improvements needed? Please help to make these areas accessible to EVERYONE !!!!!!! Sincerely, Mary K. Swanstrom

YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH FOR THE INTERNET!

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<http://dl.www.juno.com/get/tagj>.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, October 09, 2000 9:43 AM
To: 'Mark Tessmer'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Hwy 5 Bridge

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mark Tessmer [SMTP:MTESSMER@ngwmail.des.state.mn.us]
Sent: Friday, October 06, 2000 2:53 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Hwy 5 Bridge

I'm sending this because I think accommodations for bicyclists, handicapped and pedestrians is a crucial element if this bridge is going to be replaced or improved. Thank you for your time. --Mark L Tessmer

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 9:07 AM
To: 'Wilson, Neal'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Bike Routes

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Wilson, Neal [SMTP:neal.wilson@pca.state.mn.us]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 9:00 AM
To: 'Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Cc: Schroeder, Kurt
Subject: Bike Routes

Hello,

I live in the Mac-Groveland area of St. Paul and I commute to my work by bicycle almost every day. It is my contention that there should be at least one N-S and one E-W bicycle "freeways" across the metro. Moreover for those who live further out park and bike accesses at 7 miles and 5 miles from both downtowns would seem to make sense for those who can't bike more than those distances.

Section 6

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 4:29 AM
o: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: FW: the LRT and BRT

-----Original Message-----

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 4:28 AM
To: 'ROX4512@aol.com'
Subject: RE: the LRT and BRT

Thank you for your comments. They will become part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: ROX4512@aol.com [SMTP:ROX4512@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, October 02, 2000 8:06 PM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: the LRT and BRT

i would like to voice my opinion about this concept of having a light rail or bus rapid transit.....there are a lot of small children in this area and feel it would create a very dangerous situation for them, esp if they will be traveling faster than the trains go thru the neighborhood now....they do not go fast!!!!!! and for one to go whizzing by every 10 minutes would be a great inconvenience for those of us who have to cross the tracks to get to W 7th, but i feel the speed alone would be the greatest danger! there are areas by my home that you can't see around the bend to see if there is a train coming now!!! i frequently see children "walking" the rails, which is not safe even now with just the slow trains coming by....thank you for your time.....Roxanne Bauler 670 Watson



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

The need - do 600-700 riders justify
the negative personal & commercial impact.

The bus (dedicated) line is not cost effective.

Your Name

Sheila Brad

Address

2490 Edgumbe

City

Zip code

Phone

E-mail



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

The traffic congestion which will
be a result from the Riverview
Project will cause statistically
unacceptable levels of traffic
congestion and air pollution.
Each would negatively affect the
quality of life in Highland

Your Name Sheila + David Brub

Address 2490 Edgumbe

City St Paul

Zip code 55116

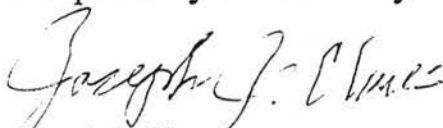
Phone 651-699-9956

E-mail _____

Public Comment on the Riverview Corridor

1. Following the Metro Council's suggestion, you developed the 7 alternative responses for the Corridor. It certainly seems that others have been either ignored or not considered. It seems to me that widening Interstate 35E to provide transit along that already existing corridor would be possible. Likewise, Shepard Road originally had promise and may even have been developed in anticipation of this very need. Let's get it back into the picture.
2. With reservation I can only support alternatives 1 and 2 as the present plan is given to us.
3. How about some out of the box thinking? What's the natural corridor from the airport to downtown? It's the river. Consider Hovercraft to taxi people from the airport to downtown and back. That way we don't continue to build monuments to the concrete and asphalt industries.
4. Just say NO! Don't make MONEY and SPEED your drugs of choice. Help us keep this community, these neighbors, this treasured part of St. Paul together, viable, and vital to the whole life of the area. Just say NO to the money and let some other communities tear themselves apart.
5. Please extend the period for public comment beyond the October 22nd date. Have more community wide meetings not only in this part of St. Paul, but everywhere along the corridor. Is there anyway the citizens could vote on this like they did for the stadium?

Respectfully submitted by



Joseph J. Claus
998 Linwood Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55105

Feb. 13, 2000

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2000 1:54 PM
To: 'Kristin Dawkins'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR NOT THROUGH SWEDE HOLLOW PARK

Thank you for your comments, Kristin. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Kristin Dawkins [SMTP:kdawkins@iatp.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2000 9:50 PM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR NOT THROUGH SWEDE HOLLOW PARK

Dear Kathryn DeSpiegelaere,

I am writing to urgently reinforce the message that Swede Hollow Park is NOT an appropriate route for any vehicular transportation other than bicycles along Vento Trail.

Since 1976, this park has been brought from a wasteland to the remarkable amenity it is today thanks to community-based efforts with support from the City, State, Federal Government and yes, with the support of the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority, too. We neighbors appreciate it greatly.

Please remove this option from your plan for the Riverview Corridor. Thank you!
Sincerely,

Kristin Dawkins
678 Preble Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-774-1864
612-870-3410

Fax

Name: Eckstam

Company:

Voice Number: 612-830-9677

Fax Number: 520-441-9250

8106 Highwood Dr #Y226

Bloomington, MN 55438

Date: Friday, September 01, 2000

Total Pages: 4

Subject: "Light Rail"

Name: DeSpiegelaere

Company: Ramsey Co RR Authority

Voice Number:

Fax Number: 9-651-266-2761

*Nona
Review
comment &
circulate.
KD*

Note: Some thoughts

What will Gov Ventura say?

eee

RamseyCol.txt

I am not an expert, but I am age 81 and old enough to know that mass movement of people is best by some type of RAIL. Witness the debacle of air transportation. Street Cars and Trains were the main mode of transportation. Of course they would not succeed, NOR will current plans for rail in Minneapolis succeed, if there is not an adequate transfer system network (run-off) over the city. Masses of people dropped off at a point need to hop on another form of transportation to get to their destination. I see none of that in current planning.

I was saddened with the demise of the mighty rail system this country had and said, then, that the country would regret not saving the rails. I cringe when I see rails for masses being converted to trails for a few. Now, as in eternity, errors are made and history repeats itself - because no one studies history any more!

I do encourage a rail system - the more the merrier. I have not seen anything on Monorail. But there was an article, I think, in the Star Tribune the other day - or Wall Street Journal - about Seattle, pointing out that Monorail is cheaper, more efficient, more quiet, chops up less real estate, offers fast and safer routes. The only disadvantage was that it might cut off some views from second floor windows - whoopee for safety! There is no cross traffic in a Monorail system! Only major intersections. Escalators and elevators are mandatory for the handicapped, as many seniors and many juniors are.

Please look at the Seattle and Disney World experiences to back up these claims. Please do not settle on a system until Monorail in these two cities has been thoroughly studied by the same rail commission members planning the Minneapolis system. I think that our Governor might agree on these points.

Thank you for listening.

Eugene E Eckstam, MD
8106 Highwood Dr
Bloomington MN 55438
952-830-9677
ecubed@mn.rr.com

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Greg Ekbohm
Day by Day Café
477 West Seventh St.
St. Paul MN 55102
651-227-0654

11/2/00

Kathryn Despeiegelaere
665 RCGW
Saint Paul MN 55102

Re: Riverview Corridor BRT Plan

Ms. Despeiegelaere

I am writing this letter to express my views about the proposed bus lane for the riverview corridor.

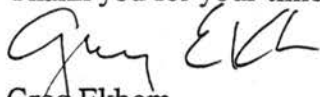
I am a strong proponent of mass transit, but I think it needs to be done in a way that will generate support and usage. This proposal seems to miss both of these points. All the community people that I have talked to have been against the proposal as suggested. The potential of using Shepard road was discarded early and I think it makes much more sense.

My business has been located in the West Seventh St. neighborhood for over twenty-five years and recently I have invested over two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to remodel and expand. I am now having much concern that this may have been a mistake if this proposal goes through.

My business will suffer if the part of the proposal that reduces West Seventh from two lanes in each direction to a single lane (in order to create a bus lane) is instituted. It currently is a difficult crossing to make on foot or in a car. If all the traffic that is currently in two lanes is forced into one, the available breaks in traffic will be reduced by at least fifty percent. It is difficult for me to imagine that all my current customers will put up with this additional problem if they could go somewhere else to eat with much better accessibility.

If this proposal is serious why not a trial shutdown of the future bus lane to see what the response would be. My feeling is that the traffic would be so onerous that this proposal would soon be discarded which would be much cheaper than changing the plan after all the money is spent.

Thank you for your time,


Greg Ekbohm



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

I AM AGAINST THE PROPOSALS SHOWN.

I HAVE BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR 25 YEARS
ON W 7TH

THE COMPROMISE PLAN CALLS FOR
NARROWING W 7TH FROM 4 LANES TO 2

IT IS CURRENTLY VERY DIFFICULT TO
CROSS W 7TH AND OFTEN NEED TO WAIT
A LONG TIME FOR A BREAK IN THE TRAFFIC

WITH A SINGLE LANE THE BREAKS IN TRAFFIC
WILL BE ALMOST NON EXISTANT. ^{MY} BUSINESS WOULD
BE SEVERELY IMPACTED, AS I BELIEVE
MANY PEOPLE WOULD NOT WANT TO TRY
NAVIGATE SUCH AN EXTREME DIFFICULTY

Your Name GREG EKBOM

Address DAY BY DAY CAFE

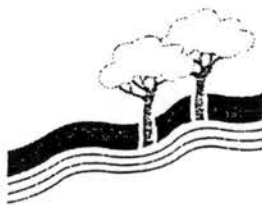
477 W 7TH

CITY ST. PAUL MN

Zip code

Phone 612 868 0299 651 227 0654

E-mail GEKBOM@SIHOPE.COM



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

My wife & I have just abandoned suburbia (Maltonedi) for the urban delight of Summit Ave. It is so pleasing to see the biking, walking and bus-riding that goes on instead of the car-only transport in the burbs. The planning for transit in the RC is essential civic virtue. We want to lend our voices to the need for a variety of alternatives to single-occupant cars, esp. those that are human powered. I view bus, either on streets or dedicated ways, as less costly and more flexible than lt. rail. I also favor initiatives to increase density with in already-built areas, including regulatory, tax-incentive and PR mechanisms.

Your Name

F.M. (Tim) FARRELL

Address

552 SUMMIT AV.

City

ST PAUL

Zip code

55102

Phone

651.291.0277

E-mail

FMFARRELL@ATT.NET



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

We have just moved from the suburbs to the city of St. Paul. We are excited about not needing a car for many activities. We are able to walk, bike or use a bus to get to most places in St. Paul. We were told many "improvements" are moving in. We are excited about more trails for non motorized use. We have been involved with the Gateway Trail since it began. It is exciting to see the number of people using the trail for pleasure & also for transportation into & out of the city. As trails are built, more & more people are using them. Building more systems that don't need autos is great, but very short sighted if bikes, wheel chairs & other non motorized users are not accommodated. According to surveys, the Gateway connects neighbors. Most (80%) are 10 miles or less from homes. It promotes a healthy life style & to have trails for people to use.

Your Name NOREEN FARRELL
Address 552 SUMMIT AVE
City ST. PAUL
Zip code 55102
Phone 651 291 0297
E-mail nfarrall@att.net

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 6:50 AM
To: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: FW: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

-----Original Message-----

From: www.riverviewcoridor.com@[209.0.238.2] [SMTP:www.riverviewcoridor.com@[209.0.238.2]]
Sent: Thursday, October 19, 2000 9:56 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

Name: Gary Fischbach
Agency: Taxpayer/resident
Mailing Address: 567 s. Saratoga st
City: St. paul
Zipcode: 55116
Phone: 651-690-9222
FAX:

Interested in participating in meetings or workshops scheduled during the course of the study.

Thoughts about the Goals and Objectives of the study: No spending enough time on improving current system. You seem headstrong on providing LRT.

Those not worth studying: LRT

1. Financial black hole
2. Operating costs still not defined
3. Cost Vs. Return Lowsey
4. Cost vs. increased ridership lowsey
5. People will never approve a new bridge over Hwy 5

OTHER alternatives:

Highest Priority: Beefing up our bus system with possibly some sort of dedicated bus line

Lowest Priority: LRT See above

Comments: We need to include a shortcut between 35E and Hwy5. This would take the congestion off 7th street and give it back to the residents of St. Paul.

Also, if the people who support light rail think its a cleaner form of transit don't know that our power companies can't build new powerplants so they burn diesel fuel to generate peak electricity. It will only get worse.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 5:30 AM
To: 'gaarder@eisner.decus.org'
Cc: Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; 'scott.thompson@metc.state.mn.us'
Subject: Riverview Corridor

Dear Mr. Gaarder:

Here are responses to your questions relating to the Riverview Corridor:

(1) Is the Comprehensive Light Rail Transit Plan for Ramsey County December 1989 still the base upon which planning is being done?

The Comprehensive Light Rail Transit Plan is one element. However there is more current work that is relevant. The Metropolitan Council's 2020 Transit Plan approved earlier this year is a more current basis for transit planning. You received a copy of the Executive Summary at last week's Riverview Corridor meeting at the Science Museum.

(2) What are the projected effects on traffic in the CBD with various alternatives?

I'll mail you that information.

(3) If 4th Street or 7th Street is used through the CBD, will the street be turned into a transit mall?

A transit mall in downtown is not the current plan.

(4) Given that the report assumes that Hiawatha LRT will be built, what is the actual length of new track to be laid?

Approximately 9 miles

(5) How many LRT vehicles will be purchased in order to provide the 7.5 minute rush hour service? What is the budgeted amount?

I will mail you this information.

(6) What bus routes would be changed into feeders for either LRT or BRT?

Metro Transit will attend the two public open houses on October 11 and 17 and will have this information at the open houses. I should point out that conceptual feeder bus plans can and are likely to be modified if the Riverview project progresses. There will be public input on feeder bus plans before changes are implemented.

(7) The 1989 plan says that the alignment along I-35E from Shepard Road to downtown St. Paul was not recommended for further study "due to a very narrow right of way, high construction costs, and potentially significant aesthetic impacts on adjacent neighborhoods." How has this changed?

Shepard Road is not recommended in the current Major Investment Study because of the lack of access from West Seventh, which is the more developed area. Transit ridership would therefore be less on a Shepard Road alignment than an alignment on or near West Seventh, for both bus and light rail alternatives.

(8) Does the LRT budget include the cost of an additional or expanded bridge at Highway 5? What is the expected cost?

Yes, the budget includes the cost of an additional or expanded bridge. The expected cost is approximately \$14 million in 2003 dollars.

(9) The report gives the number of daily trips for 7th Street and Shepard Road. What is the 2020 projection of those items?

Projected ADT for West Seventh Street, west of Smith is 15,000 vehicles per day in 2020. East of Lexington it is 36,800. West of Davern it is 41,000. For Shepard Road, West of Chestnut, it is 18,200.

(10) Will either LRT or BRT be entirely surface running?

Both are proposed to be primarily surface running for the section of the Riverview Corridor from the airport to the East Side of St. Paul. There is a bridge crossing at TH 5 for both alternatives. There are a few other grade separations proposed, depending upon the alignment, but generally they are both surface running. There is a tunnel for LRT proposed at the airport for the Hiawatha Corridor and if LRT is constructed for the Riverview Corridor, the tunnel would be

used for Riverview LRT.

(11) What is the turning radius for such places as the downtown routes like 4th Street?

There are design standards for bus and LRT that I don't have access to as I'm writing this e mail from home. Please call Steve Morris at 266-2764 and he can discuss this with you further.

(12) The report talks about using the bus only lanes in downtown. Are those bus only 24 hours a day now?

The bus only lanes in downtown St. Paul are enforced during the weekday peak period. However, cars can enter the "bus only" lanes during peak times in order to make a right turn.

(13) Are 300 foot stations still planned, even in downtown, where the blocks are only 350 feet?

Shorter stations can be planned now to accommodate two car LRT trains. Longer term, 300 foot stations will accommodate three car trains.

(14) The 1989 plan calls for cross overs every 2 to 3 miles and pocket tracks at 1/4, 1/2, 3/4 points of route and at potential connections/extensions. Is that true for this plan?

I'll need to get back to you on this issue.

(15) If Hiawatha is not built, what would be the increases in costs for the extra track, tunnel and maintenance facility?

Light rail transit in the Riverview Corridor is unlikely to be built as a stand alone line so those costs were not estimated for this project.

(16) What are the projections of reductions in air pollution and congestion due to building lrt/brt?

I will mail you this information.

Requests for additional documentation

(1) The current ridership counts and screenline counts for the bus routes involved. This is the type of information that Metro Transit made available for the recent restructuring effort.

(2) The projected counts, similar to item 1, for the TSM alternative. 2020 projections.

(3) The projected counts, similar to item 1, for the LRT and BRT alternatives. If any routes continue to exist.

(4) For the LRT and BRT alternatives, the projected ridership between each pair of stations.

(5) If RCRRRA will not release item 3, the projected boardings at each station for each of the alternatives..

(6) LRT/BRT peak hour, peak direction projections.

You have asked more detailed questions than I can answer without research, so I'm checking on what information is available. It is not a question of willingness to release information. It is that I'm not certain we have the level of detail that you've requested. I will mail you whatever exists that is pertinent.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 12:07 PM
To: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: FW: Riverview Corridor

-----Original Message-----

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 12:06 PM
To: 'Bruce Gaarder'
Subject: RE: Riverview Corridor

Here is some additional information that you requested, Bruce.



AM Peak Hour Transit
Boardings...



Daily Transit Boardings by
Sta...



020 Projected Volumes and
Lev...

-----Original Message-----

From: Bruce Gaarder [SMTP:GAARDER@Eisner.DECUS.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 12:22 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Re: Riverview Corridor

Kathy,

Thanks for the answers so far.

A couple of clarifications to my questions.

The question about 300 foot stations in downtown was more related to whether it is reasonable to have a 300 foot station in a 350 foot block, leaving only 50 feet around it. Visibility is one of the concerns.

The question about the I-35E alignment between Shepard Road and downtown was not intended to suggest a Shepard Road alignment, but rather to repeat what the earlier study said about using I-35E right of way for a guideway anywhere between downtown and Shepard Road. I can see how that might not have been clear in my question.

The question about surface running was prompted by speculation in the 1989 plan about tunnels near downtown. I do realize that the airport tunnel would be used by Irt.

I imagine that a Riverview Irt line would use the proposed shop and yards for Hiawatha. Would there be a need for an additional storage location for Riverview trains?

I do realize that some data might not have been developed yet.

Someone asked me since our meeting what the cost of the MIS was. I said that I didn't know and would ask if you had a general cost figure.

Thanks
Bruce Gaarder

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 11:52 AM
To: 'Bruce Gaarder'
Cc: Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Riverview Corridor

Dear Bruce:

In previous LRT work for the Central Corridor, it was determined reasonable to have 300 foot stations for LRT in downtown St. Paul.

We are not proposing to use 35E roadway as a location for LRT or busway in current Riverview work. However, there is one alignment variation that could use some of the right of way adjacent to 35E.

No tunnels are proposed for LRT or BRT in downtown St. Paul in current work.

If LRT is implemented in the Riverview Corridor, there is proposed to be a light maintenance shop near Otto and the Canadian Pacific Railroad right of way. This would be for washing vehicles and storing spare vehicles. The primary maintenance and storage facility for LRT vehicles for Riverview would be the Hiawatha Corridor LRT maintenance facility.

It is assumed that the BRT alternatives will use the existing bus storage and maintenance yards.

The consultant cost for Parson Brinckerhoff for preparation of the Major Investment Study, including coordination with agencies, graphic materials presentations, newsletters, web site development and community meetings, is \$1.15 million.

In answer to your previous question about LRT vehicles, there are 10 budgeted at \$31.5 million in 2003 dollars in the LRT cost estimate.

Kathy

-----Original Message-----

From: Bruce Gaarder [SMTP:GAARDER@Eisner.DECUS.org]
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 12:22 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Re: Riverview Corridor

Kathy,

Thanks for the answers so far.

A couple of clarifications to my questions.

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Thanks
Bruce Gaarder

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 10, 2000 10:09 AM
To: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn; 'gaarder@eisner.decus.org'
Cc: Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; 'scott.thompson@metc.state.mn.us'
Subject: RE: Riverview Corridor

Dear Mr. Gaarder: Here are responses to the remaining questions:

(11) Turning radius --- I gave you an incorrect phone number. Steve Morris can be reached at 651-266-2784, not 2764 as I previously typed.

(14) The exact locations for crossovers and pocket tracks is identified at a subsequent phase of study, if that is undertaken. Generally they are spaced to allow service to continue at a reasonable level in the event that a track is unavailable for use for a period of time.

(16) Air pollution and traffic congestion changes --- The regional model estimates no significant change in air pollutant emissions as a result of any of the alternatives. BRT 7, along the CP Rail right of way, ranks the best for both AM and PM traffic congestion.

(1) We have requested the most recent ridership information from Metro Transit. They are just beginning the sector study for this area.

2, 3 and 4 Modeling is not very accurate at the route level of detail and therefore this information is not included in the study.

(6) Estimates for peak hour/peak direction ridership are 900-1000 for the LRT alternatives and 800 to 850 for the BRT alternatives.

-----Original Message-----

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 03, 2000 5:30 AM
To: 'gaarder@eisner.decus.org'
Cc: Morris, Steve; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; 'scott.thompson@metc.state.mn.us'
Subject: Riverview Corridor

Dear Mr. Gaarder:

Here are responses to your questions relating to the Riverview Corridor:

(1) Is the Comprehensive Light Rail Transit Plan for Ramsey County December 1989 still the base upon which planning is being done?

The Comprehensive Light Rail Transit Plan is one element. However there is more current work that is relevant. The Metropolitan Council's 2020 Transit Plan approved earlier this year is a more current basis for transit planning. You received a copy of the Executive Summary at last week's Riverview Corridor meeting at the Science Museum.

(2) What are the projected effects on traffic in the CBD with various alternatives?

I'll mail you that information.

(3) If 4th Street or 7th Street is used through the CBD, will the street be turned into a transit mall?

A transit mall in downtown is not the current plan.

(4) Given that the report assumes that Hiawatha LRT will be built, what is the actual length of new track to be laid?

Approximately 9 miles

(5) How many LRT vehicles will be purchased in order to provide the 7.5 minute rush hour service? What is the budgeted amount?

I will mail you this information.

(6) What bus routes would be changed into feeders for either LRT or BRT?

Metro Transit will attend the two public open houses on October 11 and 17 and will have this information at the open

houses. I should point out that conceptual feeder bus plans can and are likely to be modified if the Riverview project progresses. There will be public input on feeder bus plans before changes are implemented.

(7) The 1989 plan says that the alignment along I-35E from Shepard Road to downtown St. Paul was not recommended for further study "due to a very narrow right of way, high construction costs, and potentially significant aesthetic impacts on adjacent neighborhoods." How has this changed?

Shepard Road is not recommended in the current Major Investment Study because of the lack of access from West Seventh, which is the more developed area. Transit ridership would therefore be less on a Shepard Road alignment than an alignment on or near West Seventh, for both bus and light rail alternatives.

(8) Does the LRT budget include the cost of an additional or expanded bridge at Highway 5? What is the expected cost?

Yes, the budget includes the cost of an additional or expanded bridge. The expected cost is approximately \$14 million in 2003 dollars.

(9) The report gives the number of daily trips for 7th Street and Shepard Road. What is the 2020 projection of those items?

Projected ADT for West Seventh Street, west of Smith is 15,000 vehicles per day in 2020. East of Lexington it is 36,800. West of Davern it is 41,000. For Shepard Road, West of Chestnut, it is 18,200.

(10) Will either LRT or BRT be entirely surface running?

Both are proposed to be primarily surface running for the section of the Riverview Corridor from the airport to the East Side of St. Paul. There is a bridge crossing at TH 5 for both alternatives. There are a few other grade separations proposed, depending upon the alignment, but generally they are both surface running. There is a tunnel for LRT proposed at the airport for the Hiawatha Corridor and if LRT is constructed for the Riverview Corridor, the tunnel would be used for Riverview LRT.

(11) What is the turning radius for such places as the downtown routes like 4th Street?

There are design standards for bus and LRT that I don't have access to as I'm writing this e mail from home. Please call Steve Morris at 266-2764 and he can discuss this with you further.

(12) The report talks about using the bus only lanes in downtown. Are those bus only 24 hours a day now?

The bus only lanes in downtown St. Paul are enforced during the weekday peak period. However, cars can enter the "bus only" lanes during peak times in order to make a right turn.

(13) Are 300 foot stations still planned, even in downtown, where the blocks are only 350 feet?

Shorter stations can be planned now to accommodate two car LRT trains. Longer term, 300 foot stations will accommodate three car trains.

(14) The 1989 plan calls for cross overs every 2 to 3 miles and pocket tracks at 1/4, 1/2, 3/4 points of route and at potential connections/extensions. Is that true for this plan?

I'll need to get back to you on this issue.

(15) If Hiawatha is not built, what would be the increases in costs for the extra track, tunnel and maintenance facility?

Light rail transit in the Riverview Corridor is unlikely to be built as a stand alone line so those costs were not estimated for this project.

(16) What are the projections of reductions in air pollution and congestion due to building lrt/brt?

I will mail you this information.

Requests for additional documentation

(1) The current ridership counts and screenline counts for the bus routes involved. This is the type of information that Metro Transit made available for the recent restructuring effort.

(2) The projected counts, similar to item 1, for the TSM alternative. 2020 projections.

(3) The projected counts, similar to item 1, for the LRT and BRT alternatives. If any routes continue to exist.

(4) For the LRT and BRT alternatives, the projected ridership between each pair of stations.

(5) If RCRRRA will not release item 3, the projected boardings at each station for each of the alternatives..

(6) LRT/BRT peak hour, peak direction projections.

You have asked more detailed questions than I can answer without research, so I'm checking on what information is available. It is not a question of willingness to release information. It is that I'm not certain we have the level of detail that you've requested. I will mail you whatever exists that is pertinent.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 11:17 AM
To: 'Bruce Gaarder'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Comments on Riverview Corridor MIS

Thank you for your comments, Bruce. They will become part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Bruce Gaarder [SMTP:GAARDER@Eisner.DECUS.org]
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 12:14 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US; gaarder@Eisner.DECUS.org
Subject: Comments on Riverview Corridor MIS

Public Riview Comments on the Riverview Corridor MIS Report

10/20/2000

CONCLUSION

Do not build lrt or brt or a busway. Spend money on improving regular bus service with either the no-build or TSM options.

This was rushed through and the RCRRA did not honor the two month comment period stated in the report, limiting comment to six weeks.

THE REPORT IS FLAWED

- 1) Prepared with more than \$1 million property tax dollars, this study has lots of errors and seems slanted towards the busway option, which was the only one that might get financed. The consultants have been intimately involved with the lrt dreams of Minneapolis and should not have made the errors.
- 2) The study says that lrt will take 17 minutes to go from the airport to the Megamall, while the bus will take 9. Since the lrt would run on the same tracks and with the same frequency, the Minneapolis trains will hit the Saint Paul trains because Minneapolis trains only take 9 minutes.
- 3) The report promises time travel since the bus would arrive at the Megamall 2 1/2 minutes before it got to the airport.
- 4) The study projected buying only ten train cars, while the minimum required to run the proposed 50 minute schedule would be 16.
- 5) Table 4.2 reports that the difference in unlinked trips per day for the no-build option is -500 compared to the no-build option. Obviously, that figure should be 0.
- 6) The report states that travel time from Earl to the CBD is 13.4 minutes and the travel time from the CBD to the airport is 23.5, for a total of 36.9 while it states that the time from Earl to the CBD is 33.1 minutes. That's a difference of almost 4 minutes.

THE REPORT IS BASED ON INCORRECT ASSUMPTIONS AND DATA

- 1) There is no reason to believe that the number of trips in the region will continue to grow in the same pattern as in the past 20-40 years.
- 2) The study talks about the transit-dependent. Metro Transit doesn't focus on them now, it wants to attract people out of cars. Here, 25% of the riders earn less than \$20,000 and 21% earn \$60,000 or more. That's because there is 2.6 times as much service during peak hours as during the rest of the day. Only two out of the thirty largest transit agencies exceed that and only 7 exceed 2.0. In San Antonio, where voters this year were smart enough to reject a new tax to build lrt, 50% of the riders earn less than

\$10,000 and only 8% earn \$40,000 or more. Those are 1994 figures, but it's clear that they really serve those who are transit-dependent. Of course, that transit agency now wants to raise fares and cut routes.

3) A federal study has estimated that telecommuting eliminates more work trips than the total number of transit trips in the country each year, by rail, bus, or ferry.

4) A UC Davis researcher who wanted to show how we would be better off if travel was priced according to the social costs of making that trip, including pollution, accidents, noise, congestion, oil use, free parking, subsidies, etc., did a study. He concluded: "Contrary to expectations, the use of pricing to "level the playing field" will induce people to shift from transit to autos, because presently the field is tilted in favor of public transit."

5) A University of Minnesota report released this summer said: "The size of the internal costs of transportation suggests that households and firms derive tremendous benefits from travel because they willingly pay a tremendous amount for travel." The internal costs are those paid by the person travelling are about 84% of the cost per person, governmental costs (including the cost of operating transit), are about 9%, and costs not paid by the traveller or government, like noise and pollution are 7%.

6) How can you build a guideway at the intersection of I-494 and 24th Avenue? There is no room for that.

7) It is unlikely that Lrt could be operated on the shared Hiawatha lrt segment with 3.75 minute headways. Please list any cities in the US where this is routine practice.

8) The 1990 travel behavior inventory reports less than 1% of all regional trips were made between Saint Paul and Hennepin county and less than 2% were between Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

9) There is little increased development around transit stations.

10) The Lrt option budget of \$14 million for an additional or expanded highway 5 bridge is far too low.

11) The peak hour peak direction brt projection of 800-850 implies 100-107 riders for each of eight buses per hour. This is highly unlikely.

THE REPORT CONTRADICTS OTHER MET COUNCIL PLANNING DATA AND REPORTS

1) The Met council's Transit 2020 Master Plan (issued less than a year ago) states that two busways (one on Riverview) would be operated for \$14 million per year in 2010 dollars, while the Riverview Corridor MIS gives the cost of operating only that one as \$10 million in 2003 dollars. Assuming the same 7% inflation as the Hiawatha line uses to justify its bloated costs, that would be \$16 million per year in 2010 dollars, 14% over the supposed cost to run two busways.

2) Note that the Riverview study assumed that the 2020 plan would be adopted and that the result of doubling the number of buses, building two LRT lines, two busways, and two commuter rail lines would be only a 40% increase in the number of daily trips while the area's population and employment increase substantially.

3) The study predicts population growth along the corridor of 39,000 in 20 years. The Met Council web site predicts growth of 20,000 growth for all of Saint Paul in that period. There is no residential base along the route on the other side of the river. Where are the others coming from?

4) It predicts employment growth of 36,000 in the same time frame. The Met Council predicts 16,000 for all of Saint Paul and 5,000 for the airport. They must believe that the Megamall will grow by more than 15,000 jobs.

MINISCULE TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS AT A GREAT COST

- 1) The study states that there will no significant change in air pollution as a result of any of the alternatives. That's because it won't really reduce the number of cars or congestion along the route. In fact, congestion and pollution will increase due to reducing the number of lanes for cars and trucks on the street.
- 2) There are projected to be only 700 "new riders" a day in twenty years. That's really only 350 round trips. A new rider is someone who didn't make a particular trip before on transit. It could be a former car-pooler, someone who formerly drove a car for the trip, or it could be someone who never made the trip before. Only former drivers reduce traffic.
- 3) If you assume all 350 give up driving their car and make their first trip in one of two hours in the morning, that's 175 cars an hour over the twelve mile length. That means 7 or 8 cars per minute spread out over each mile in each lane. You wouldn't notice the difference unless they were all stopped at the same stop light, and most likely not even then. That's out of daily traffic levels on 7th of as much as 40,000 per day, so it would be less than 2% of all cars.
- 4) The projected number of vehicles on West Seventh is only 10% to 15% above current traffic.
- 5) The study claims that there will be fewer buses on 7th. Let's see, there will be eight buses per hour on this busway at rush hour in each direction. They don't carry any more passengers than other buses in service here. You will need lots of feeder buses to move the people to the busway stops because they are often located too far apart for walking. For example, if you are at Deaton and 7th, it's about a mile to either of the adjoining stops. If you are at Watson and 7th, you are about 1/2 mile away. If you want to go from Watson to Deaton on 7th, the busway does nothing for you, you need to walk or have local service. So where's the noticeable reduction in buses on 7th? One bus every 7 1/2 minutes? All that walking will improve your cardiovascular fitness.
- 6) Neither lrt or brt yield even a 3 mph speed increase over TSM, after spending all of that money.
- 7) The loss of two lanes of traffic on West Seventh is not an option.

SUPPORT FOR BUSWAYS WHERE THEY MAKE SENSE

- 1) Busways are a good idea, much better than lrt. The El Monte busway/HOV project (one lane each way, along the I-10 freeway) cost 1/5 as much per mile to build and carries four times as many people as the Blue Line lrt on a route half as long.
- 2) Busways range from bus-only separate guideways to busway/HOV combinations (either separate or part of the main road to contraflow lanes to diamond lanes. Ottawa runs a 19 mile busway system, carrying 200,000 trips per day. That's about 80% of what Metro Transit carries. There is a one lane contraflow bus lane in downtown LA that carries 200 buses per hour on its ten block length. The bus-only lane in the Lincoln Tunnel into New York carries 35,000 trips per hour at peak times. Busways don't necessarily imply brt.

OPPOSITION TO LRT IN THE TWIN CITIES

Lrt solves the problems of the 1960's with the technology of the 1890's in the year 2000. Cities where rail transit would make sense had rail by 1970.

Bruce Gaarder
1711 Highland Pkwy
Saint Paul MN 55116

I conclude with a diatribe from Thomas A. Rubin, controller-treasurer of the Southern California Rapid Transit District, 1989-1993 (that includes Los Angeles).

Date: Tue May 16, 2000 12:15pm

You have put your finger on what is one of the chief arguments for rail. I will represent it as a syllogism:

If we do nothing, things will get worse.

Building rail is doing something.

Therefore, we should build rail.

This is one of the classic flawed syllogisms, technically know as "denying the antecedent." To illustrate the problem by example, consider the following:

If I had all the time in the world, I could convince you to do it.

I don't have that much time.

Therefore, let's do it.

This is the type of thing that mothers warn their daughters about.

In order for rail to be justified, it is not sufficient to conclude that, if nothing is done, things will get worse. In fact, that fact alone is not even a necessary condition, let alone a sufficient one. The necessary condition is that rail must show that it can MAKE THINGS BETTER than they would be if rail were not built.

However, that is still not enough. The sufficient conditions include:

(1) Rail must show that it can make things better in a more productive/cost-effective/other criteria measurement than available alternatives. (2) The financial, technical, legal, and political capacity to implement the rail program must exist. (3) Implementation of rail (or whatever) must not harm other components of the transportation infrastructure and other key elements of urban life, or demonstrate conclusively that the benefits of implementing the project significantly outweigh the disadvantages, with full consideration of applicable risk factors.

There is another aspect that must also be considered, that of risk. Compared to almost every other surface transportation alternative, rail is extremely risky, particularly in the all-important financial sense.

To illustrate the limits, let us consider the relative degrees of risk of expanding bus service vs. a new rail line. The financial costs of bus are extremely minor compared to rail. Bus can be increased incrementally, by, for example, a dozen or so buses a year for a smaller urbanized area, or perhaps a hundred or two for larger ones. If the bus expansion program is not successful, then it can be modified fairly easy, slowed, or even terminated. With rail, there is absolute commitment to a minimum operatable segment of at least several miles of length -- and, as rail proponents will constantly tell you, you can't really tell if it is working until you complete a substantial segment of the whole rail system. Until there are hundreds of millions of dollars in the ground and the first segment, or segments, are actually in operation, there is not the slightest idea of how well that rail will work.

With a bus expansion, the risks of being wrong are slight. If the bus service expansion does not work in one area, the buses can be shifted to other areas, or other types of service. Try that with a rail line. If the agency has expanded bus service and the ridership increase does not match expectations, then, if it continues to operate the service, the worst that can happen is that the operating costs for a few buses is absorbed for some period of time. If the agency decides to cut back on service, then it can probably get most of its money back for the purchase

of the buses by selling them to another transit agency. Even if there are no takers, then it generally can just park the buses for a few years and then reactivate them to use as replacements for old buses that were to be retired. Large buses have a 12-year useful life. The Federal useful lives of rail components range from 25 years (vehicles) to 40 (most of the actual fixed operating assets) to 100 (land). Try disassembling a rail line and seeing what you can get for it. Even the rail cars will be very difficult to get rid of, as has been recently proven by an agency that tried and couldn't get a single offer.

If you build rail and it doesn't work -- and there is a very long list of failed rail programs that I assume that I don't have to bother with here (details available upon request) -- the agency is pretty well stuck for decades. If it has taken Federal funds, which most have, then it has to make a decision between continuing to operate the failed rail system for decades or repaying what is generally at least tens of millions, and generally hundreds of millions, back to the Feds. No agency can afford to pay back these funds and I don't know of one that has, not even New York and famous 2nd Ave Subway, which was "on hold" for construction for decades.

While it is possible to have overruns on bus projects, such overruns are generally not all that big. After all, we've been operating buses for years, their characteristics are pretty well known, and there are not a whole lot of unknown unknowns ("unk-unk's") out there. The big risk is generally that the new bus service will not carry as many riders as planned, so the financial risk is that farebox revenue will be less than expected. Not a big deal.

Now consider rail projects. Would you like a list of rail projects with 25% cost overruns on far, FAR larger initial cost projections? How about a list of 50% overruns? 100%? 200%? And, I swear to God, I have documented one project where the final cost was well over EIGHT TIMES the original cost projection.

Let us make no mistake. Implementing major transit expansion programs is an INVESTMENT, an investment of public funds, with the agency Board and the funding partners as the trustees for the parties-at-interest, namely, the taxpayers, residents, and transportation systems users. In the "real world" of investments, there is a very clear way of making investment decisions between potential investments with different risk factors -- you correct by adjusting the discount rate. Take a look at 30-year Treasury Bonds, which (until a few weeks ago) were the standard for comparison of risks. (Because the Feds are not running a surplus, they are not doing as much long-term borrowing as they were just a few years ago. Because there are not enough new 30-year Fed bonds to use for comparisons, the new standard, for certain purposes such as the Wall Street Journal time series, is 10-year notes.) Specifically, while there is no investment that is absolutely without risk, Federal government debt is considered about as risk-free as you can get and, therefore, carries the lowest interest rate (OK, Muni debt has a lower rate, but that is because there is no Fed income tax on it). Now, compare what the interest rate is on a 30-year Federal government bond and the highest rated, most risk free, private sector issuer. You will generally see that the Fed bonds carry a lower interest rate, which saves a few basis points on the interest rate. Most bus expansion plans would, by the criteria I've spelled out above, would be fairly low risk - a few AAA, more AA, some As, not a whole lot sub-investment grade.

To complete this comparison, most rail projects would be classified as what is politely referred to as "high-yield" and what is more popularly known as "junk bonds."

In other words, in my opinion (BSBA, MBA, CPA, CMA, CMC, CIA, CGFM, CFM, 25 years as a partner in one of the largest CPA firms in the world, CFO of one of the largest transit agencies in the world, and many years as an independent consultant), most rail projects should be rated as having far higher risk factors than most bus projects and, therefore, should have a far higher discount rate. The Feds lowered the discount rate from 10% to 7% several years ago and haven't messed with it since. The problem is, ALL projects carry the same discount rate, which is implicitly assuming that all projects carry equal risk, which is obviously not correct.

One of the first things that new medical students are taught is, "First, do no harm." It can easily be shown that some rail projects have actually been harmful to their communities because the huge investments in rail have required that bus service be considerably reduced, let alone not expanded to meet the expanding needs of the real riders.

By the way, while we are still on rail, let us consider one fact: There is no known case in the U.S. where construction and operation of a rail line has resulted in any significant and lasting improvement in traffic congestion or air quality. The percentage of trips that can be handled on rail is so minor that such significant improvements are totally impossible, even if the promises of rail proponents are actually met. In almost every single case I have looked at, the mode split for the proposed rail line is far less than the population growth percentage over the planning/design/construction period (well, I did find a few UZA's that were looking at rail that were shrinking in population).

OK, I've spent a lot of time talking about why your question is flawed, that "Well, if not rail, then what" is a flawed frame of reference for considering surface transportation improvements. Now, after one more brief pause, I will attempt to respond to it.

Before we decide that that things are so terrible that huge corrective actions are required, consider: Everyone complains about traffic conditions, but how many people stop driving? Some do, but, in virtually every city, every year, we see a major increase in drivers. If people are willing to put up with sprawl, then why are we so upset with it?

What really happens is, when the daily commute to work gets too bad for individuals, they change their travel patterns. They move closer to their jobs, take jobs closer to their homes, change both, their employer moves to the suburbs where employees have easier auto access, they start working out of their homes, they change their commute hours, and any of dozens of other changes. I recently updated a time series that was originated by Peter Gordon at USC for home-to-work commute times in greater Los Angeles. As most people are aware, LA has some terrible traffic conditions (FACT: Greater LA is the most densely populated UZA in the US, over one-third denser than Greater New York. FACT: Greater LA has the second-LOWEST miles of road per capita of the 64 U.S. UZA's over 500,000 population) and average commuter travel speeds have been consistently falling for years. HOWEVER, from 1967 to 1995, the average home-to-work commute time went up ONE MINUTE. I have surveys every few years in-between and the commuter time doesn't vary by more than a few minutes. (I have been informed, although I have not researched this myself, that the average commuter time in urban areas has been very consistent at 25 minutes since Roman times.)

Now, what can we do to make things better? First, there are no silver bullets. There is no "one big thing" that will solve all the problems. There are a whole lot of little things that will each make things somewhat better for some number of people. In some cases, these can reduce commuter and other travel times, but what they more often do is add capacity to the existing transportation infrastructure. As noted above, the big changes are those that individuals make for them selves.

You know the list, so I don't have to go into detail. It includes, but is not limited to: carpools, vanpools, HOV lanes, expanded bus systems, lower transit fares, unconventional transit service customized for hard-to-serve areas (in other words, suburb-to-suburb commuters), timed-transfer bus systems, club buses, employer-subsidized transit programs, cash out of employer parking costs, tax-free employer tax subsidies, etc. etc.

What is the biggest problem? Trying to educate the public, and particularly political decision-makers, of the nature of the problem. When you have long-term transportation decisions being made by politicians that have to run for office every two to four years, the types of problems that result from their decisions should not be surprising.

Have fun. Thanks for the question. I feel much better now.

Tom Rubin

Busway references

Rubber Tire Transit: A Viable Alternative to Rail
www.rppi.org/transportation/ps230.html

Bus Rapid Transit - Metro Detroit's Affordable Option?
members.aol.com/_ht_a/motranzit/page12.html

BRT Reference Guide
brt.volpe.gov/guide/busway.html

In Germany, Auto-Free Enclave Hits Bump in Road (May 9, 2000)
www.latimes.com/news/nation/20000509/t000043667.html

Report of Public Transit's "Record" Ridership is Questionable
www.heritage.org/library/execmemo/em676.html

Anti-"Sprawl" Policy: Congested Thinking and Dense Logic
www.cei.org/OnPointReader.asp?ID=805

Invited Testimony Before the Oregon House Light Rail Task Force
www.cascadepolicy.org/transit/testify.htm

The Future of Mass Transit in the United States: Can We Get There From Here?
www.tppf.org/veritas/individual_articles/future.pdf

www.rppi.org (policy studies and papers on surface transportation)

www.i2i.org (transportation policy research area)

www.gt-wa.com/RTA (Seattle transit issues)

www.publicpurpose.com (all types of transportation and demographic info)

These are just a few sources.

John R. Gilkeson
1933 Laurel Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 644-8049

October 20, 2000

Ms. Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Submitted by email to: kathryn.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us

RE: Comments on Riverview Corridor (corrected)

Dear Ms. DeSpeigelaere:

I urge you to extend the comment period for at least 30 and preferably 90 days on this plan and project. A project with such magnitude, cost, and short and long-range impacts deserves extensive discussion and debate. A typical EIS process may take several years, and this is of the same magnitude. It appears that a decision is imminent, and there are many unresolved technical, financial, and policy questions that remain.

I strongly oppose the construction of a busway in the Riverview Corridor. It is an inappropriate and wasteful use of public monies and land for the following reasons:

- It duplicates existing roadway infrastructure that can be adapted to improved bus service at much lower (i.e., minimal) cost. This existing infrastructure is Shepard Road (recently reconstructed), West 7th Street/Fort Road, Interstate 35E between downtown St. Paul and West 7th, and the extensive highway rights-of-way west of the river. Duplication of existing infrastructure is wasteful and inefficient.
- There is already a high level of existing bus service in this corridor which could be restructured and supplemented with local, limited stop, and express routes on the infrastructure mentioned above, for much lower cost. (See Table 1 for a summary of existing weekday bus service in the corridor.)
- The increased transit ridership projected for the proposed busway options is insignificant and certainly not deserving of this expenditure.
- Busways do not have the speed, capacity, or ride comfort level to attract significant new transit riders.
- Busways provide very little in terms of spurring redevelopment and/or strengthening existing neighborhoods and business districts, since bus service is seen as potentially transient and not a fixed long term infrastructure investment like rail. (When Highway 61 was rebuilt south of

St. Paul in the late 1980's, it included significant bus amenities which were used for only a short period of time before service was significantly curtailed.)

- Most importantly, one must question the "objectivity" and level of analysis in the current study, because a busway option has NEVER been chosen as a preferred alternative in ANY corridor study in the Twin Cities over the past 25+ years. The busway option did not even survive the scoping process in the Hiawatha Corridor EIS process that began around 1976 - 1978. Busways were a distant second choice in the Metropolitan Council/MNDOT Citizen Advisory Council processes studying the University Avenue and Southwest Corridors during approximately 1982-1985. Busways are and should be a distant second to LRT because total capital and operating costs are much higher in the long run, beyond 20 years.

People are arguing for the busway because it has lower cost than LRT and will disrupt the community less. In the long run, LRT will cost much less, have much higher ridership, and if properly designed and built, will be a major capital asset to the neighborhood and the region.

We should not be asking what is cheapest and least disruptive, but what is the most cost-effective long term investment in transit and in our city as a place to live and work and enjoy the beauty of the river corridors in the study area. What are the design and performance criteria and requirements that we can set out in advance to ensure that we are achieving those goals?

I believe that if we do that, we have only one short term and only one long term choice. The short term choice is improving the existing bus service that operates on existing infrastructure. The long term choice is engaging neighborhoods and communities in a long term planning process that integrates the transit infrastructure discussion with everything else in a community and establishes criteria something like the following, for making that long term choice:

Objectives for Riverview Corridor Communities and transit:

- High level of transit service in the Riverview Corridor area for residents, businesses, intermediate points, and endpoints of DT St. Paul and Fort Snelling/airport/megamall.
- Minimum 10 minute service, 7 days per week, 5 am to 1 am, with more frequent peak hour service. Terminal to terminal travel time: less than 35 minutes (current route 54 travel time)
- Maximize use of existing road and rail rights-of-way and capacity
- No busway in the rail corridor – use rail corridors for rail
- Maintain rail service to Ford Plant terminal and intermediate customers
- Expand and restructure existing transit service as initial step
- Minimize capital investment in new roads or road capacity
- No right of way acquisition – work within existing rights of way
- No boulevard trees cut down
- No residential or business displacement
- No new river crossings
- All growth and new trips in corridor accommodated with transit, not with private or single-occupant vehicles (includes no new parking facilities or net parking capacity increase)

If LRT is the long-term choice that emerges from this kind of process, and I believe that it would be, then that is what should be built. We should not spend money building a busway while saying that we can build LRT later, since that means we are spending money twice, and paying much more for LRT later, rather than spending money once and getting a better deal now. We all know that LRT is not going to be built later if we spend a bundle on a busway now. It will just become clearer to people that we wasted our money and that such an argument is a way of ensuring that it is never built.

And, I would urge the county to give very serious consideration to operating rail in the existing public right of way of West 7th Street as one or more of the following:

- LRT in a dedicated right of way for rail on one side or in the center
- LRT in a dedicated center right of way that is also open to buses, bicycles, taxis, and emergency vehicles (Spadina Avenue in Toronto is an excellent example of this)
- A streetcar in a mixed traffic four lane (do the math, a 100 foot vehicle in 5 minute service at 30 mph takes up less than 1 percent of one lane)

In such a study, the right of way widths should be significantly reduced from what the current study called for. These are unnecessarily and unrealistically wide and create huge negative impacts in the community. It's a good way to create opposition to rail in the 7th Street right of way. Go to Toronto and see how they operate streetcars and LRT in many different configurations and road widths. They all work well.

If funding is a concern, consider that the Regional Railroad's taxing authority is for the purpose of acquiring rail right-of-way and operating or contracting for the operation of passenger and freight rail service. The Elwell Law authorizes the use of certain tax monies for the construction and operation of street railways and other transit. You don't need to build a busway just because you can use highway trust fund monies for it.

I have been following transportation and transit planning in the Twin Cities since the late 1970's, when the communities in the Highway 12/394 corridor strongly disputed the LRT cost figures developed by the Metropolitan Council and provided documentation that capital and operating costs were much lower and ridership much higher than projected. It has become clear to me over the past few years while working on transportation projects in St. Paul that in this city (and apparently the county), "transit" or "public transportation" means building a wide four lane road that someone might operate some buses on. Let's change that.

Sincerely,

John R. Gilkeson

Table 1. Existing Weekday Riverview Corridor transit service and description:
(It would be useful to develop a map with color-coded level of service to identify needs for improvement in frequency and routing.)

Route # and description	Weekday service frequency	Number of buses per weekday
Route 49 Local: DT St. Paul, West Seventh to St. Clair to Cretin, Highland Park terminal	30-60 minute service.	24-26 buses per day each direction.
Route 14 Local: DT St. Paul, West Seventh to Randolph, Cleveland to Highland Park terminal	15-30 minute service.	37 buses per day each direction.
Route 9 Local: DT St. Paul, West Seventh to St. Paul/Cleveland, Highland Park Terminal; GSA/VA terminal	12-30 minute service on common portion, 20-60 minute service on separate portions.	25 buses per day to/from HP; 27 buses per day to/from GSA/VA.
Route 4 Local: Snelling Avenue to Highland Park and St. Paul Avenue to West Seventh and: a. airport b. megamall	a. WB to Airport, 30-60 minute service, mostly 30; EB to airport, 30-60 minute service, mostly 60. b. Megamall, 25-60 minute service.	a. WB, 24 buses to airport EB, 19 buses to airport. b. 35 buses to/from megamall.
Route 54 Limited Stop: DT St. Paul 35E Parkway to West Seventh, Sibley Plaza, airport and megamall	30 minute service.	35-38 buses per day each direction 7 days per week.
Total daily buses each direction:	--	~185 buses per weekday each direction, serving one or both ends of Riverview Corridor

Existing routes for bus transit:

- West Seventh Street/STH 5: DT St. Paul to airport and megamall
- Shepard Road: DT St. Paul to STH 5 to airport and megamall
- 35E Parkway: DT St. Paul to West Seventh Street or Shepard Road

Existing routes for rail transit:

- West Seventh Street/STH 5; center or on one side; median available west of STH 55
- CP Rail corridor to approximately Sibley Plaza (maintain service to Ford Plant and intermediate customers)
- 35E Parkway median to West Seventh or Shepard
- Shepard Road

End of comments.

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, September 20, 2000 10:01 AM
To: 'avigdor@usfamily.net'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Vap, Alicia; Morris, Steve
Subject: Riverview Corridor

Dear Mr. Grossman:

You asked questions about the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) may or may not be required, depending upon the option selected and the impacts of that option.

Who requires an EIS? If federal funding is used, and depending upon the impacts, the sponsoring federal agency may require an EIS. For transportation projects, the sponsoring federal agency could be the Federal Highway Administration or the Federal Transit Administration. Sometimes both. The state also has environmental requirements, and a state level EIS could be required if a federal one is not.

There is a concern about losing affordable housing, if an alternative is selected that has impacts on housing. The City of St. Paul could seek to replace the housing, but that decision is in the future. The impacts cited in the MIS are not certain and will depend upon a specific design to be developed.

The preferred alternative to be selected by Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority will be communicated to the Chair of the Metropolitan Council, Ted Mondale.

Please contact me if you have additional questions.

Kathy DeSpiegelaere
651-266-2762



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

We are in favor of anything which will support our community without
being detrimental to the area businesses and community.

7th street community has long been known as a close and supportive community.

We hope nothing will change that.

As an area business (with a history of 80+ years), our concern is any changes
which could occur within or around our block. Currently we have access to
on street parking around our block. Our main chapel has an archway which goes
right out to the street. When we leave the chapel with a casket, we use and
block the on-street parking immediately in front of and around our block. This

is necessary to transport the casket to the waiting hearse, and also gives us needed room
for the family cars which follow behind the funeral cars.

I hope this comment will help you to understand how important the existing
roadway is to the future of our business. If you have any questions, please
call me at Kessler & Maguire. Thank-you, Coleen Haugen, Manager

Your Name KESSLER & MAGUIRE FUNERAL HOME

Address 640 West 7th Street

City Saint Paul, Minnesota

Zip code 55102

Phone (651) 224-2341

E-mail _____

KESSLER MAGUIRE FUNERAL HOME
640 WEST 7TH STREET
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102
(651) 224-2341



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

OUR PREFERENCE IS TO USE 2.7TH
BRT ALT. 6. OUR SECOND CHOICE IS
THE "PLANNING COMMISSION" COMPROMISE.
IF THE "COMPROMISE" IS CHOSEN, IT IS
IMPORTANT TO US THAT AESTHETICALLY PLEASING
VISUAL AND SOUND BARRIERS BE ERECTED.

Your Name

MARTY & KELLY HICKS

Address

2223 STEWART AVE.

City

ST. PAUL, MN

Zip code

55116

Phone

651 699 0083

E-mail

MARTY@KELLY-AND-MARTY.COM

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Sunday, October 22, 2000 5:59 AM
To: 'Mathews Hollinshead'; DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Cc: Thoman, Barb; 'tedddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Riverview comments

Thanks, Mat, for your comments. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor Public Comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mathews Hollinshead [SMTP:mlhpd@bitstream.net]
Sent: Friday, October 20, 2000 4:33 PM
To: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Cc: Thoman, Barb
Subject: Riverview comments

I served on the St. Paul/Ramsey County Transit Vision Task Force from September 1998 through February 1999, and had input to its recommendations, as a representative of University UNITED, a coalition of business groups and neighborhood groups along St. Paul's University Avenue.

I currently serve as the Transportation Task Force Chair for the University Avenue Corridor Initiative (UACI), a partnership dedicated to improving the image and the future of University Avenue.

Neither UACI nor University UNITED have positions on the Riverview Corridor, so these comments are my own.

I do believe that action taken based on the Riverview Corridor Study will impact both the University Avenue (Central) Corridor and the region.

As the Transit Vision Task Force recommendations reflected 18 months ago, the human, economic and natural geography of the Twin Cities suggests a core circulator triangle as the cornerstone of our future regional transit system, Riverview as one leg.

Trip counts in the area will be updated with the completion of the next Travel Behavior Inventory, perhaps next year sometime. The total current and projected volume by all modes, if substantially channeled to transit, I believe could justify a major transit investment in the Riverview Corridor, but only if it included several conditions:

- o completion of Hiawatha and the Central Corridor as light rail lines forming two legs of the circulator triangle;

- o aggressive management and promotion, with buy-in from corridor communities, of the mix and density of development and land use along the Riverview Corridor;

- o aggressive management and promotion of the mix and density of development at major destinations and generators of the corridor, including both ends;

- o parking capacity limitations in downtown St. Paul, the airport and other major destinations and generators;

- o a comprehensive policy of encouraging walking and biking in the Riverview Corridor and throughout the Twin Cities Metro with actions and investments that calm traffic; provide safe, fast and convenient walking and biking environments and routes; discourage driving and especially SOV driving; and integrate walking and biking with transit in a seamless transportation system that serves as an attractive and viable option to driving.

- o protection of the Mississippi River Valley as a prime amenity along the corridor;

o a reliable schedule for implementation of enhanced bus feeder service to the Riverview Corridor;

o implementation of the components of a region-wide transit system stage by stage so as to provide predictability for the future of the Riverview Corridor;

o increase and dedication of state operational funding of Metro Transit; and

o a plan for eventual integration of Riverview with Hiawatha and Central Corridor lines as to mode, to make the circulator seamless the hassle free.

o travel demand management to discourage driving.

Riverview should not be built in isolation, or without detailed plans for the future..

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mat Hollinshead
1728 Hague Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-645-4267

October 19, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey Co. Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West, 50 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

Re: Riverview Corridor transit project

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

Thank you for this opportunity as well as the other evening to be informed of this planning process. I listened the other evening, read the info, and have this response.

We live in a neighborhood where everyone knows and watches out for one another - white, Latino, Asian American, and African American. Generations of families have lived here - children and grandchildren occupy homes of their elders. Woods border our southern side and we enjoy wild life including birds, rabbits, deer, racoon, and opossum. The slow-moving train to the Ford Plant is something we have learned to peacefully live with and even enjoy.

Our neighborhood is like a small town and that is the beauty of St. Paul! Those of us lucky enough to have discovered such a neighborhood that is also affordable want to STAY HERE! But we are sad, confused and angry to discover planners do not view us as a viable, important neighborhood but rather a place for a "high speed busway". We are small with very little economic power when compared to interests like those "downtown, the airport, and the Mall of America". We are simply considered "fast passage" to those "important" places.

We understand and believe mass transit is important and vital but we question the stewardship of elected officials when we see the following:

- * thousands of cars/day turning west off 35E onto West 7th. No south bound exit was made off 35E onto Shepherd Road. Why did "planners" fail to anticipate this horrible clog on West 7th between 35E & Hwy. 5?

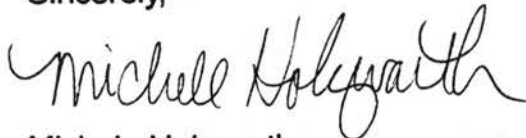
- * empty buses on West 7th. What is currently being done to shift the car mentality to a mass transit mentality? The whole metro suffers because of this.

- * Shepherd Road going unused. Our family uses Shepherd Road often and it is rare to see much traffic. Its an excellent, fast and efficient roadway. Why isn't it being used?

Shepherd Road and West 7th Street have historically been travel routes between downtown and Ft. Snelling. People buying homes and owning businesses along those routes the past 50 years have known that. However, those of us who bought homes between these routes chose a community off the beaten path. The rapid busway threatens our homes and neighborhood.

Please be a good steward of the public's money and do not rush to spend money simply because it is available. Building a completely new route, without knowing how it will be utilized, and destroying neighborhoods in the process is the kind of behavior that taxpayers and voters have come to expect. We are cynical and mistrustful of elected officials. Surprise us in this instance and be good stewards of our resources. Consider ways of solving the problems that exist on West 7th and Shepherd Road.

Sincerely,



Michele Holzwarth
1838 Ivan Way, St. Paul, Minnesota 55116
Telephone 651-699-8762

cc. St. Paul Mayor Norm Coleman
St. Paul City Councilmember Chris Coleman

Saint Paul Subway

Presented To:

Karthryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
655 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN. 55102

By: James A. Huot Jr., PE
Lifetime resident City of Saint Paul
750 Forster St.
Saint Paul, MN. 55102
October 17, 2000

Introduction

I propose that a subway be considered for the River Corridor as the best alternative for the mass transit alignment between downtown Saint Paul, the Airport, and the Mall of America. This could be accomplished with limited detrimental affects on the environment, disruption to the surface during construction, and *most importantly* disruption within the community and the great quality of life as it exists today in the City of Saint Paul. This will preserve the connections people make with their neighbors and local businesses which is vital to what Norm Coleman would say "that's what is great about Saint Paul". He would know, because he was born in the city with the most famous subway of them all, built in the early 1900's.

I was an engineer for Charles Nelson and Associates and I worked on numerous underground design and construction projects. Some of these projects were the Saint Paul sewer separation projects, Saint Paul Utility repairs (NSP, QWEST, and City of Saint Paul Water), and LRT tunnel alignments through Minneapolis and the Midway Corridor. I have been involved in various sandstone tunnel projects from design phase to final construction.

I think it is a gross oversight that a subway for the Riverview Corridor is not included as an alternative in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study August 2000. I would like to propose that a subway be studied as a feasible alternative for the Riverview Corridor, a necessary link to the airport and crucial for the economical development of the neighborhood and the continued growth prosperity for downtown St. Paul.

Advantages

- Minnesota's changing weather will not affect the operation of the subway
- No noise or speed restrictions which may cause delays between stations
- Limited environmental impact
- No disruption of traffic flow or commuter traffic
- Support economic and housing revitalization of the corridor
- Provide the most effective and efficient public transportation
- Security will only be needed at stations
- Limited land acquisition requirements
- Limited loss of street parking
- Temperature underground is constant and will require minimal temperature control at stations or along route.
- Limited problems associated with snow or ice
- Geological conditions are ideal for easy large tunnel construction

Geological Conditions

All along the Riverview Corridor we know much about the geological strata, which is very conducive to underground construction. There are several outcrops, natural and manmade caverns, existing sewer chambers, and abandon unlined sewer tunnels. Examples include: Smith St. Deraeration Chamber, Schmidt Caves, all the abandoned combined sewer tunnels, Summit Brewery outcrop, Davern and Stewart Tunnels, Watergate Marina outcrops and 45' high unlined caverns near watergate marina, Hidden falls outcrop near Hwy 5.

Under downtown St. Paul the Limestone is 29' thick and decreases to an average of 17' thick along a potential alignment heading toward the airport. Underlying the limestone is a rock formation, St. Peter Sandstone that is very conducive to underground construction.

Construction Considerations

Use the experience from past and present tunneling projects to use in the construction of this tunnel and connection to the airport (currently under construction).

Conclusion

I recently traveled to Rome and Paris and witnessed where enormous traffic problems were solved with different forms of public transportation. The most timeless solution is a subway. Let's try to fix a 2025 problem today with 2000 money and a 2025 solution. All great cities have a subway and a St. Paul subway would contribute to making Saint Paul an even greater city.

Resume

Engineer, Owner

A-1 Hydraulics 1995 - Present

Engineer

CNA Engineers 1990-1995

Projects:

- Downtown MPLS. LRT Study 1989 - 1990 Peer review
- LRT Midway Corridor Study 1990
- Smith Deraeration Chamber 1989 - 1990
- Davern Tunnel and Deraeration Chambers 1991-1993
- Stewart Tunnel and Deraeration Chamber Phase B 1994.
- 7th and Cedar Project Design 1994.
- 35E Tunnel near University Ave.
- Quest, NSP and St. Paul Water Utility Tunnel Rehabilitation 1995.

Graduate University of Minnesota, Bachelor of Science in Geo Engineering, 1990.

P.E. #24083, Minnesota

October 20, 2000
36 Norbert Place
St. Paul, Mn, 55116

Kathryn De Spiegelaere, Dirsctor
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
St. Paul, Mn, 55102

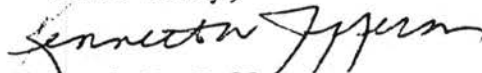
Dear Ms. De Spiegelaere;

There is one alternative suggestion to handling traffic on the Riverview corridor that has not been presented: The use of one-way traffic lanes that dominate the West Seventh Routes. By adjusting the lanes to the higher use direction, the route can handle much increased traffic. This has been in use in San Francisco for years and it has proven its worth many times. I know from personal experience, having been in The SF area many times to visit my daughter and son who live and work in the metro area and have to drive the throughways each day to work.

This is a possible solution that can be tested readily at little cost so I believe it should be considered. Thank you very much.

Thank you,

Yours truly,


Kenneth W. Jefferson

DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn

From: www.riverviewcorridor.com@[209.0.238.2]
Sent: Monday, October 16, 2000 2:21 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

Name: Dawn Kelly
Agency:
Mailing Address: 1130 Montreal Avenue
City: Saint Paul
Zipcode: 55116
Phone: 651-698-1550
FAX:

Interested in participating in meetings or workshops scheduled during the course of the study.

I belong to an organization would be interested in having a speaker on the Riverview MIS at one of the regularly scheduled meetings. Thoughts about the Goals and Objectives of the study: If we really need to improve our system more options should be studied.

Those not worth studying: If it is determined that we need rail or express bus then don't throw in a no build. Let's deal with what is going to happen. Do we have to build?

OTHER alternatives: Sheperd Road.

Vintage trolley cars.

Improve bus service we have now.

Staying within the \$ amount we already have.

Highest Priority: Impact on the neighborhood involved. Sure everyone will pay monetarily but the neighborhoods ripped up will pay the more in increased traffic etc. Therefore the area involved should have the highest consideration. I'm not saying don't build I'm saying do it responsibly. It is not responsible to rip apart several residential areas when we have 7th and Sheperd Rd. I know the rail line runs through it already but your talking about 4 very low speed trains a day verse a minimum of 48 high speed buses or trains a day. What will that do to the residential areas. You might as well pull them out now.

Lowest Priority: Political strageties. If ultimately we're going to need light rail to be competitive then do it now. It's not going to get cheaper. Just put it in responsibly.

Comments: Some opinion on the Riverview Corridor Transit project.

How the few will pay to benefit the many&

If we do need and decide to install a traffic system to lighten congestion and make transportation better in St. Paul then it should be chosen with the view that it should have the least adverse effect on the neighborhood housing it. The committee that would give us this system should be making this one of their top priorities. In terms of the greater good, we all will end up paying monetarily for a traffic solution that we may not even decide on, but to the neighborhood it is going to run through the price will be the highest.

To put the bus or light rail lane in on the railroad corridor not only will be expensive but it goes directly through the Seventh Street neighborhoods. Not our main through fare but through people's back and front yards. Yes we're aware we have the trains now but at minimum we're talking about adding traffic (buses or trains) up to 48 a day. That's 2 an hour and I believe they are suggesting even more than that. This system cuts directly between Shepherd Road and Seventh Street. What it cuts through is several small residential neighborhoods. What about existing businesses? Are the Seventh Street businesses going to benefit from a bus or rail system several blocks from them? How can the residence survive on either side of the railroad corridor with that amount of traffic cutting up our neighborhood?

Should a bus or rail line move onto Seventh? Not the Seventh street alternatives suggested by the committee. Take Seventh down to one lane either way? Have a bus lane down the middle? How can these things be seriously considered? They are irresponsible and dangerous. Just because we have a rail or bus system where do they think Seventh Street car and pedestrian traffic is are going to go?

At the listening meeting Wed Oct. 11 we were given an 8th option. One that is still not available on the Riverview Corridor website. One that combines the worst of both strategies. It would split the bus lane between Seventh Street and the railroad corridor. Leaving us with the same major problems of both plans.

Can we move it down to Shepherd, where there is construction in process anyway? We have it ripped up now why not put a bus lane there or make it ready for light rail. It makes sense in terms of moving some of the traffic off Seventh but

leaving the parking and lanes we need to negotiate our neighborhood and conduct business.

If really need to improve our transit through the West Seventh Street area let's see it done responsibly and not make Seventh another Rhondo like causality.

Thank You
Dawn Kelly
1130 Montreal Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55116
651-698-1550

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2000 1:52 PM
To: Haller, Nona
Subject: FW: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

-----Original Message-----

From: www.riverviewcoridor.com@[209.0.238.2] [SMTP:www.riverviewcoridor.com@[209.0.238.2]]
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2000 11:55 AM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

Name: Dawn Kelly
Agency:
Mailing Address: 1130 Montreal
City: Saint Paul
Zipcode: 55116
Phone:
FAX:

Thoughts about the Goals and Objectives of the study:

Those not worth studying:

OTHER alternatives:

Highest Priority:

Lowest Priority:

Comments: I attended the listen meeting last in regard to the Riverview Corridor. What a disappointment. I talked with a council person, a business owner - who claimed to have had breakfast with Ortega, and a representative from the mayor's office. All who claimed that the bus lane will go in under the Alt 7 plan. Only to be assured by Ortega at the meetings end that this is still in progress and no decisions have been made. Is the fix in? These same men reiterated after the meeting that we will be getting the bus option etc.. Is this how business is being conducted in your administration? Is our neighborhood going to be ripped apart and transportation choices rammed down our throats by a commission who does not even live in the area. Are we supposed to be pacified by sham listening meetings? Shame on all of you if this is the case. Our area is more than open to transportation issues as demonstrated by attendance to these poorly advertised meetings. We are willing to help pay for it if it is viable, we are willing to help plan and hopefully even use it. But not these options that completely disregard pedestrian traffic, bikes, trolley systems or even subways. We have offered very valid input and it seems to me that it is a sham that will end up costing us our neighborhoods and our homes in the process. Thank you



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

I am a resident. I realize even "no action" will impact me. I would prefer to see development that will enhance my relationship with the city/region. My house at 937 Otto would be one of the most affected as it is at the corner of Otto & West Seventh. Recognizing that the city needs to grow & serve many constituents, I would advocate the city's compromise plan utilizing the C.P. rail line as long as it is done tastefully, attractively and most of all affordably - both in terms of cost of the project and cost to existing residents.

Your Name

Terry Kolars

Kolars

Address

937 OTTO Ave.

City

ST. PAUL, MN

Zip code

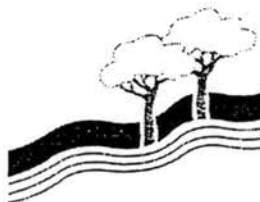
55102

Phone

651-292-9154

E-mail

TKOLARS@earthlink.net



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

I'm 100% opposal to the "Build" alternatives
3-7 as written currently - for all of the
reasons now on public record from the open
house I attended 10/11/2000 at the West
7th Community center. The "Build" alternatives
3-7 call for massive expenditures, per capita,
for the few riders gained per the Riverview
Corridor Major Investment studies own projections.
I'm 100% in favor of Alternative 2, i.e. significant
improvement of our current bus system.

Your Name	Lee Korthof
Address	197 W Isabel St
City	St Paul, MN
Zip code	55107
Phone	651 224-3167
E-mail	



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

I do not support dedicated bus way. I do support upgraded bus service which would include more frequent bus service - ~~perhaps~~ perhaps smaller buses that run frequently. Increased ridership can be accomplished in various ways - reduced fares, more frequent buses, better vehicles etc.

Dedicated bus way affects the W 7th neighborhood adversely while taking people away from St Paul to Bloomington - maybe a shot in the arm for Bloomington but a death threat to W 7th.

Your Name

Debbie KORTHOFF-STRAND

Address

197 W Isabel St

City

ST Paul

Zip code

55107

Phone

224-3167

E-mail

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2000 1:53 PM
To: 'Leif Masrud'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona; Morris, Steve
Subject: RE: Riverview Corridor NOT through Swede Hollow...

Thank you for your comments. They will be considered as part of the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Leif Masrud [SMTP:masr0006@tc.umn.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2000 11:22 PM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Riverview Corridor NOT through Swede Hollow...

Dear Kathryn DeSpiegelaere,

I am writing as a concerned community member about the Swede Hollow option for the Riverview Corridor. I am a University of Minnesota student who has spent countless hours working towards what this park is today; efforts that began even before I was born. I would hate to see the gem of the East Side be destroyed to make way for something that could be placed elsewhere. As I cannot attend the hearing on Friday, I intend this message to speak for me. Please remove the Swede Hollow option from your plan for the Riverview Corridor. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Leif Masrud
210 Delaware St. SE Rm#E456
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-301-4777



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

✓ NO BUILD - Absolutely

✓ Subsidize Bus Fares

✓ Vintage Trolley

Your Name T. McCormick

Address 1820 Ivan Way

City St. Paul

Zip code 55116

Phone 651-699-5370

E-mail Teresa.McCormick@SPRS.org

Aug. 27, 08 ✓

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelare,

For what it's worth:

I believe light rail would
be a big waste of money.

An augmented bus system
would serve the Twin Cities
far better + would cost much less.

WAIT - until better traffic control
systems which would prevent
accidents & allow people to use
smaller, lighter cars - wait
until they are available + then
put our money into them.

Don't build a dinosaur - a light
rail system within sufficient →

access, insufficient
parking.

Thank you,
Ann E Mullaney

Ann Mullaney
1733 Hampshire Ave
St. Paul, MN 55116
651 696-0240

✓
To Kathryn DeSpiegare

Dear Mrs. DeSpiegare,

I have just read the Sunday August 27th article in the Minneapolis Star and Tribune titled "St. Paul Asks: Light Rail or Busway?" Seven scenarios for the Riverview corridor were mentioned in this article - 3 Light Rail, 2 busway, One "no build", and one improved bus service on w. seventh.

I am highly disappointed that Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) was not looked at (at least seriously) in this study. The article quotes Tony Bennett, chairman of the rail authority, stating "A lot of people did not think we were looking at all the alternatives, but this report should put that issue to rest". I'm sorry, but Mr. Bennett is wrong. This study did not look at the alternative of PRT and this issue is not at rest.

If you are not familiar with Personal Rapid Transit here is a brief description. PRT consists of small, 3 person lightweight vehicles on a single elevated guideway. Stations are separate from the main guideway, allowing vehicles to pass other stations. It is completely computer automated. PRT provides a 24 hr, non-stop, express service with little or no waiting for a vehicle. Most importantly, since it composes of lightweight vehicle and guideways it is far cheaper than Light Rail and busways.

Some good websites on PRT are:

www.cprt.org
www.taxi2000.com
www.skyloop.com

Unfortunately, I will out of town during all of the public hearing on public transit in the Riverview Corridor, but I hope PRT gets a fair voice and is seriously looked at as a transportation option in this area.

Please feel free to contact me via email, mail or phone.

Thank You,

Marcus Nielson
2111 13th ave. s. #3
Minneapolis, Mn
55404
(612)874-6469
orangevening@hotmail.com

XD 8/28/00

DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn

From: EricandJo@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, September 09, 2000 7:11 AM
To: Kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Light rail in St. Paul

Dear Ms. Despiegelaere,

As a citizen and resident of a St. Paul suburb and former resident of St. Paul, I strongly support a light rail system that would connect not only Minneapolis with the airport, but also St. Paul with Minneapolis and the airport. Perhaps this can be done in conjunction with the proposed public transportation on Grand Avenue, because unconnected mass transit lines tend not to be used. I would support using existing rights of way such as the train line that roughly parallels I-94 because they are less expensive to use and do not require dispossessing land-owners.

I recently returned to the Twin Cities from the Dallas area where an extensive light rail system was/is being created. It was wonderful to board a train in North Dallas and ride, relatively fast and totally hassle-free to the zoo which was in the far southeast part of town. The easier it is to reach a museum, zoo, theater, arena, or other facility, the more people will avail themselves of it. Please consider working with other localities and municipalities to connect the entire metropolitan area with fast, clean, inexpensive public transportation. It will bind us together more as a community, keep our air cleaner, and encourage increased tourism.

JoAnn W. Pasternack
1854 Walsh Lane
Mendota Heights, MN 55118

OCTOBER 20, 2000

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY
SUITE 665 RCGC WEST
50 WEST KELLOGG BOULEVARD
ST PAUL, MN. 55102

YOU WILL HAVE TO PARDON THE LATENESS OF THESE COMMENTS. OUR FAX MACHINE WAS OUT OF ORDER.

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY CONCERN ABOUT THE PROPOSED EXPRESS BUS LANE TO BE CONSTRUCTED ON WEST 7TH STREET. I AM THE CORPORATE SECRETARY OF SOCIETY ST. VINCENT de PAUL. THE SOCIETY OWNS AND OPERATES A THRIFT STORE AT 461 WEST SEVENTH STREET. THIS IS AN EFFICIENTLY RUN, ATTRACTIVE, OPERATION WHICH OFFERS QUALITY GOODS FOR PUBLIC SALE AND PROVIDES VOUCHERS FOR MERCHANDISE FOR NEEDY PEOPLE IN DISTRESS.

I PERSONALLY AM A CENTRAL CITY RESIDENT, OF MINNEAPOLIS, AND HAVE BEEN IN BUSINESS FOR THE PAST 23 YEARS IN CENTRAL CITY MINNEAPOLIS AND HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MY AREA INTERESTS FOR OVER 35 YEARS. I PERSONALLY KNOW THE EFFECTS THAT DEVELOPMENT HAS ON OLD ESTABLISHED COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

I WANT THE COMMISSION MEMBERS TO GIVE VERY THOUGHTFUL AND CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO ESTABLISH THIS PROJECT ALONG WEST SEVENTH STREET. WHAT IS PARTICULARLY OF INTEREST IS THE REMOVAL OF CURBSIDE ONSTREET PARKING ALONG THE STREET. THERE ARE MANY, MANY, LONG ESTABLISHED BUSINESSES ALONG WEST SEVENTH STREET THAT DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO OFFSTREET PARKING BECAUSE THE AREA WAS DEVELOPED LONG PRIOR TO THE CURRENT USE BY THE PUBLIC OF THE AUTO AS PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION. I QUESTION IF MANY WILL SURVIVE WITHOUT THE CONVENIENCE OF ONSTREET PARKING FOR THEIR CUSTOMERS.

PERSONALLY I AM A STRONG SUPPORTER OF AN EFFICIENT MASS TRANSIT SYSTEM FOR THE ENTIRE METRO AREA. THERE MUST BE AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONSTRUCTING ANY MORE FREEWAYS. MY MAIN CONCERN HERE IS THAT IF A PROFESSIONAL IMPACT STUDY HAS BEEN MADE REGARDING THE EFFECT OF THIS PROJECT UPON THIS LONG ESTABLISHED AREA.

I HAVE SERVED ON GROUPS THAT HAD SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS TO BE MADE ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS. I KNOW THE RECOMMENDATION

THAT YOU ARE CHARGED TO MAKE. DO NOT MAKE HASTY DECISIONS WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE LONG TERM EFFECTS OF YOUR DECISIONS. MANY PEOPLE WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE EFFECTS OF YOUR DECISIONS BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE.

MY OPINION IS THIS PROJECT SHOULD NOT BE LOCATED ALONG WEST SEVENTH STREET. THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BE HANDLED BY THIS OLDER NEIGHBORHOOD.

RICHARD J. PITHEON
3728 13TH AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MN. 55407

612-825-3927 HOME
612-827-5646 DAYS

CC ST. VINCENT de PAUL
MAYOR COLEMAN

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2000 3:54 PM
To: 'RPutman@aol.com'; kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: St. Paul's Riverview Corridor transit options

Thank you for your comments. They will become part of the Riverview Corridor public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: RPutman@aol.com [SMTP:RPutman@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2000 10:11 AM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: St. Paul's Riverview Corridor transit options

Hi Kathryn,

Starting way back in 1970 when I was a resident of St. Anthony Village, MN I was impressed with the concept of personal rapid transit (PRT). The more I studied urban transit options the more sense PRT made ... EXCEPT that back then three decades ago hardware technology was not cost economic. For example, computer power was very bulky and expensive back then. As you know, that status has now improved to an almost unbelievable extent.

I believe that if you and your associates take an open-minded look at where PRT stands today you'll also conclude that it is an exciting, money-saving, CUSTOMER SATISFYING breakthrough answer to urban transportation needs. Below are two outstanding PRT web sites. I invite you to explore them.

SkyTran PRT System Taxi 2000

Rich Putman



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by October 20th to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

Not interested in Light Rail on W 7th.
Do not want the noise & traffic.

Your Name

J. Rabending Rabending

Address

601 Palace Ave

City

St Paul

Zip code

55102

Phone

651-291-8993

E-mail

dragnldy@waste.org

RJR

Robert J. Reardon, Jr.
14554 Bloomfield Place ~ Rosemount, MN 55068
Email rreardon@pclink.com

August 26, 2000

To: Kathryn Despiegelaer

Subject: Commuter Rail

Kathy, here are my two cents, also the email address which was in the paper does not work (at least for me it didn't.)

Here are some thoughts on commuter rail

~ Light rail is way way too spendy and not worth the money

~ Commuter rail is the way to go. You have an abundant amount of existing railroad tracks all throughout the 7 county metro area and numerous prime area's for park and rides on the RR r-o-w. Commuter rail is the answer for relieving traffic congestion in the seven county metro area. This is the cheapest, the track and everything is in place, you don't have to spend 2 million dollars to lay new track per mile like you do for Light rail. Look at a map of the twin cities and you will see all the railroad tracks that go everywhere in the 7 county metro area - it's all there but no one wants to look or go with commuter rail. It works in Chicago/Milw, CA, and numerous other states, commuter rail will work here if politicians would just consider it and get the hell off this high buck tax payer wasting light rail train.

XD 8/28/00

Michael Schumann
541 Dayton Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55102
651/208-3791
mike@traditions-ltd.com

October 18, 2000

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
665 Ramsey County Government Center West
50 West Kellog Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms DeSpiegelaere:

I would like to oppose the construction of a dedicated busway in the Riverview Corridor for the following reasons:

1. Lack of Need

Dedicated busways are justifiable in those areas where bus traffic is impeded by traffic congestion. This is not currently a problem in the Riverview Corridor, nor is it likely to become one in the foreseeable future.

This is demonstrated by the fact that current schedules for the existing bus routes running on West 7th Street show no significant change in transit times between rush hour and non-rush hour operation.

Virtually all of the transit time improvements potentially available with a dedicated busway result from a reduction in the number of stops, not any increase in vehicle speeds. The same result can be obtained by adding express bus service with limited stops on West 7th Street.

2. Significant Improvements Can Be Made to the Existing Bus Service at Minimal Cost.

The existing bus service in the Riverview Corridor can be significantly improved at minimal cost. Opticon systems can be deployed on buses to provide transit priority at traffic lights and to help traffic flow smoothly.

In addition, transit times can be significantly reduced by stopping local buses at every other block and adding express bus service as needed. This has a secondary benefit of significantly reducing fuel consumption, and reducing bus operating and maintenance costs.

3. Alternative, Non-dedicated Routes are Available at Minimal Cost

In the event that traffic congestion increases on West 7th Street, express bus services could be provided between downtown, the airport, and the Mall of America via Shepard Road, which is significantly underutilized. The bulk of Shepard Road is currently posted with 50 MPH Speed Limits, which would provide essentially identical headway vs a dedicated busway.

4. Projected Increases in Transit Ridership on a Dedicated Busway are Minimal, Resulting in Virtually No Reduction in Automobile Traffic

The Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study indicates that the projected increase in ridership provided by a dedicated busway is 600 new riders. This would imply, that at most, there would be a reduction in vehicular traffic on West 7th Street of 600 vehicles per day. Given that current traffic levels on West 7th Street exceed 30,000 vehicles per day, the impact of a dedicated busway system would be virtually unmeasurable.

5. Cost of the Proposed Busway is Completely Uneconomical

The projected cost of the proposed busway is between \$80 and \$100 Million. This works out to about \$150,000 in construction costs per new rider! This is the equivalent of buying each new rider a house or condo next to their place of employment.

Annual operating costs of the proposed busway are projected at \$10 Million per year above the cost of operating the current bus system in the Riverview Corridor. This works out to over \$16,000 per new rider per year. And this doesn't even include interest or amortization of the Capital Costs! An alternative would be to purchase a new automobile for each new rider each year!!!

6. Construction of the Proposed Busway will Cause Significant Traffic Congestion on West 7th Street.

The construction of the proposed busway is being justified by projected traffic congestion in the year 2020. By running the proposed busway on West 7th Street from downtown to Randolph Street, using up two existing lanes of traffic, the traffic carrying capacity of West 7th Street at rush hour will be reduced by 50%. The net result will be that the gridlock projected for 2020 will instead be artificially created 20 years early.

7. Construction of the Proposed Busway will Cause Significant Economic Harm to the City of St. Paul

The construction of the busway on West 7th Street will result in the loss of significant on-street parking. This will have a dramatic negative impact on businesses located along West 7th Street.

In addition, the widening of the right of way at bus stops will potentially result in the demolition of existing buildings along West 7th Street. This will not only result in significant recurring losses in property tax revenues, but also reduce overall economic activity in the neighborhood, with resulting losses of sales tax revenues, and further reducing the economic vitality of the area.

8. Significant City Wide Reductions in Bus Fares Would Be Much Less Expensive than the Proposed Busway and Result In Dramatic Ridership Increases

If the \$10 Million operating cost of the projected busway were used to subsidize bus fares instead, the MTC could institute a city wide 25 cent zone. This would dramatically improve the cost benefit of transit, and result in very significant city wide ridership increases, with a corresponding decrease in traffic volumes throughout St. Paul.

Transit ridership is very price elastic. For low income people working at minimum wage jobs, a \$3.00 per day round trip fare is a very significant burden. For professionals taking an express bus to work downtown, a \$4.00 per day round trip fare is not sufficiently attractive vs the cost of parking to overcome the inconveniences of not using a car. Reducing the round trip fare to \$0.50 per day provides a dramatic incentive for both categories of users to switch to mass transit.

9. Construction of a Vintage Trolley System, as an Alternative to the Proposed Busway, Would Be Much More Effective in Drawing New Riders, While Providing Significant Economic Development Benefits

For the \$100 Million construction costs of the proposed busway, the City of St. Paul could construct an authentic vintage trolley system from the Mall of America and the Airport, all the way to Lowertown, including a connecting line down Grand Avenue to St. Thomas College.

While the economics of such a vintage trolley system would not necessarily be any more attractive than a bus system, the impact on the City of St. Paul, from a tourism perspective, would be dramatic. A very large number of out of town visitors would find it simply irresistible to hop on the trolley after a day of shopping at the Mall of America, and would find themselves in St. Paul for an evening of dining or entertainment.

Such a system would be FUN!!! It would be much more effective than buses in attracting casual transit users. Taking your spouse to dinner on the trolley would be a part of a romantic evening in the city. The same couple would never even dream of taking a bus.

Along the same vein, a family living in Bloomington, taking their kids to a Wild game, would enthusiastically park their car at the Mall of America and take the trolley as part of the day's outing. This would never happen with a bus based system.

What has become very apparent over the last few weeks, is that the Riverview Corridor busway is a solution looking for a problem. The overriding issue is an attempt, by the City of St. Paul and Ramsey County, to spend the \$44 Million earmarked for this project by the State Legislature before some other community gets the money.

As a taxpayer, I find this process as revolting as it is absurd. Transit has been chronically under funded in the Twin Cities. Now that some money has become available, rather than spend it wisely in those parts of the metro that need the improvements most, we are moving ahead full steam on burning the money on an absolute boondoggle.

I strongly suggest that if we are unable to put this money to good constructive use, that the City and County pass and let some other community, with more pressing needs, take advantage of this opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Michael Schumann', with a stylized, flowing script.

Michael Schumann

Rec'd 9/15/00 ✓

Riverview Corridor
Major Investment Study
Comment Form

Your comments are important. If you have suggestions, please take a moment to complete the following. You may leave the form with today's speakers, fax it to 651 266-2761, or mail it to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

(1) Projection for increased traffic allows for no "park and ride"

parking. This necessarily assumes that all increased ridership
will come from residents who live close enough to walk--which has
no basis in fact-- or that the riders will be deposited and picked
up by another household member, which would enormously increase
Daven traffic, depreciating one of the highest-value residential
areas in St. Paul. (2) Any LRT or busway along 7th will destroy many
local businesses and create monumental traffic jams. (3) Riders
are projected to furnish only about 30% of the income needed to cover
operating costs. A 70% public subsidy is just outrageous.

Optional:

Name M/M Henry Snyder

Address 2170 Lower St. Dennis Rd

City St. Paul

State/ZIP MN 55116

e-mail hiboot@aol.com

✓

Riverview Corridor
Major Investment Study
Comment Form

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Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

I think that light rail is a waste
of money. Please do not spend
my hard-earned tax dollars on this.

I do think that the current bus
system could use improvement. Mainly,
make it easier to understand and use.

Thank you for your time

Optional:

Name Juli Snyder

Address 733 E 5th St.

City St. Paul

State/ZIP MN, 55106

e-mail juli199@gateway.net

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, October 24, 2000 9:35 AM
To: 'William G Stahlmann'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Morris, Steve; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Riverview Corridor

Thanks for your comments, Bill and for meeting with us yesterday. They will be included in the Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: William G Stahlmann [SMTP:stahl001@maroon.tc.umn.edu]
Sent: Monday, October 23, 2000 10:09 PM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US; rafael.e.ortega@Co.Ramsey.MN.US; chris.coleman@ci.stpaul.mn.us
Subject: Riverview Corridor

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere,

I am a member of the West 7th community. My family and my wife's family have roots that reach back before Minnesota became a state. I enjoy our oldest neighborhood and have a vision for its future that I believe meets your goals. I want to share this vision with you as you consider your recommendations to the Ramsey County Commissioners and eventually to the Metropolitan Council.

I would like to see West 7th Street alive with commerce and residential interests living side by side, much like we see on Grand Avenue, only better. An attractive transit system that would include light rail, cars, bicycles, and pedestrians inhabiting our neighborhood and providing access to the airport, the Mall of America, Downtown St. Paul, and Metropolitan University. This is the perfect opportunity for a Transit system that works for, yet provides access through our historic neighborhood. Please consider the following for the future of West 7th Street:

- A. Single lane vehicular traffic in each direction
- B. Bike lanes
- C. Parking
- D. Alternative semi and drive through traffic
- E. Future light rail

A single lane street, with on street parking and bike lanes, much like Summit Avenue, would offer a calming effect for the neighborhood, attracting residential and small business interests. The bike lanes would also provide a commuting option for a third of the population in the area that can not afford a car. I believe the width of west 7th could accommodate this plan and busses (or light rail in the future) could share the lane with cars.

This plan would encourage drive through traffic to use either 35E or Shepard road, each of which is designed for this purpose. Finding alternative routes for semi trailer and by pass traffic would be difficult and costly but not beyond realistic possibilities. I suggest that you look at designing 494 to funnel traffic to Shepard Road or 35E and not West 7th. I would also recommend that traffic engineers focus on designing a plan that would divert semi traffic from the Midway area to the south via an appropriate roadway that is designed for such a purpose, one that does not include West 7th. The Ford plant could be approached to partner in finding alternative options for their operations.

I encourage you to expend your energies in exploring these options. I cant help but believe that there would be many cost benefits for this plan as opposed to CP line plan. The CP line seems costly in dollars and public relations for the sole purpose of providing a Transit way that may pick up a few minutes of time between the airport and downtown St. Paul. I would encourage you to look to the future and build from within and not at the expense of the neighborhood.

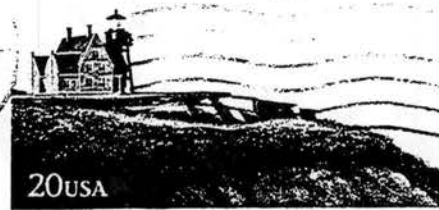
We would then be able to offer West 7th as a future attraction for those wishing to settle in and prosper in an old charming neighborhood yet offer the option of efficient transit to major twin city attractions.

Sincerely,

William G. Stahlmann
393 Arbor St.
St. Paul, Mn. 55102
651-227-6419

Mrs. M. Thurstin
714 Concord St
Saint Paul, MN 55107

2000



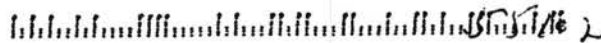
Kathryn Le Sprengers

Ramsey Co. Reg. Railroad Center West

56 W. Kellogg

St Paul MN

55102-4164



Dear Kathryn De Spiegel 2000

Feb. 3 - 2000

I don't know too much about the light
rail. I doubt it it would help people on
west side of St. Paul. St. Paul Press Feb. 7, 2000

I myself am a Bus Person. The roads
are already there.

What people here against buses I
don't understand. If you can't drive
and the price of gas is really increasing
people here are really need buses

Thank you

Sincerely

Jim Johnson

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2000 5:44 PM
To: 'MARY JO TIERNEY'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: riverview cord

Thank you for your comments. They will be included as part of the Riverview public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: MARY JO TIERNEY [SMTP:ASLMT@email.msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2000 8:15 PM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: riverview cord

Hi Kathryn,

I am a resident on Watson Ave off of W7 th St. I live next to the CPR railroad tracks. My family has lived here for 17 yrs. We are extremely opposed to LRT or BRT running along side these tracks. The trains run 5 or 6 times per day at speeds of 5 to 10 mph. LRT or BRT would run every 10 minutes!

This is unacceptable! I am concerned for my children and the safety of any other pedestrians or motorists in this area. I am also concerned about the effect on our property values, the increased noise levels, and the overall deterioration of this neighborhood. I plan to attend the meeting on Oct 11. I also intend to inform as many of my neighbors as possible.

Please consider our side of this. Improving the transportation for people to get to the Mall of America is one thing but don't bring it through our neighborhood.

I am in favor of improving to bus line along W7th ST or possibly including LRT on W7thST. More details need to follow.

I also do not believe you are getting this information out to the public as well as you could. I fear that many of my neighbors will say they have had no information shared with them.

How do you intend to get the opinions of the people involved?

Mary JO Tierney
703 Watson Ave
St Paul Mn 55102
651-222-3608
email alslmit@msn.com <<mailto:alslmit@msn.com>>

9-13-00



Riverview Corridor
MAJOR INVESTMENT STUDY

Your comments are important. Please take a moment to complete the following, then leave the form with today's speakers; or mail it to be received by *October 20th* to:

Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

What comments do you have about the Riverview Corridor transit project?

Attached

Your Name

Rich Tuomi

Address

1838 IVAN WAY

City

St. Paul

Zip code

55116

Phone

612-325-2156

E-mail

rich@simplyfishing.com

10/18/2000

Ms. Kathryn DeSpiegelaere, Director
Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority
Suite 665 RCGC-West
50 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul, MN 55102

RE: Comments regarding the Riverview Corridor Transit Project

Dear Ms. DeSpiegelaere:

I am a resident of in the corridor just off West 7th Street. Although I must admit I do not ride the bus very often, I have observed the buses on 7th street and I seldom see more than a couple of people on the bus at most times. In other words, our current bus system is not being used. Why do we think that adding more public transit is going to raise the level of usage ?

At the meeting last night, I was told that the LRT alternatives were no longer even being considered because of costs and funding - I say good. Just because the federal government has funds available does not mean we should add local monies and throw it at projects that do not serve the public. From the Investment study it seems that spending \$370-404 million plus \$13-14 annual operation & maintenance costs to gain a few thousands riders over the no build option is spending money extremely foolishly. We could give free bus ridership on our current system and accomplish more usage at much less cost. I'm glad it is off the table.

Being a longtime resident of the twin cities, I have seen an ever increasing growth in the suburbs. I'm sure we are not going to stop this trend. We need to deal with that longer commute issue instead. We need express routes in order to get that ridership.

And I also believe that Shepard road it the best alternative for transportation from downtown areas to the airport or Mall of America using Shepard Road with few or nonstop routes to reduce the ride time, and increase incentive.

As for West 7th, I love seeing the revitalization happening, and it is. From your Investment Study I read that the greatest benefit in economic revitalization comes with using the 7th street corridor as opposed to the CPR corridor when considering bus transit. The businesses always have been located and continue to grow on 7th Street. Also add that your study indicates the BRT on CPR alternative will cost \$45 million more than a BRT on 7th Street and have no better usage of the system. In other words - \$45 million wasted dollars. Admittedly parking issues need to be resolved.

continued

We now look at alternative 2 - spending \$10 million on the existing system, plus 1.4 million additional annual maintenance to gain what ? 2000 daily rides ? Again does that solve the usage problem. The answer has to be - a very high cost for slight increase.

If we can't use the \$45 million dollars wisely available from the federal government, then we should let a community who can use it wisely take advantage of it.

As for St. Paul, I am in favor of Alternative 1 or at best maybe improvements of Alternative 2 and using any monies available to campaign better usage of the system. Does that mean lower rates, or other incentives to ride public transportation ? I do not know. But to me it seems the best use of the public tax dollars (our dollars) to find a way to increase rider usage of our current system. The real battle lies in fighting private industry - the worlds biggest automotive industry dependent on selling us cars !

Use our money wisely and work on increasing ridership. Don't spend millions on something that won't be used. Any day go to West 7th Street and clock the bus usage throughout the day - we are not near capacity.

Before the \$45 million was available from the federal government this was not a consideration. Why should it become a need just because "someone else" is going to pay a portion of the cost ?



Rich Tuomi
1838 Ivan Way
St. Paul, MN 55116
phone: 612-325-2156

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2000 3:50 PM
To: 'Peter Vickerman'
Cc: 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'; Haller, Nona
Subject: RE: Riverview corridor

Thank you for your Riverview Corridor comment. It will become part of the public record.

-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Vickerman [SMTP:petervick@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, September 28, 2000 8:30 AM
To: kathryn.despiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Riverview corridor

St. Paul should consider Personal Rapid Transit for the Riverview Corridor.

Get Your Private, Free E-mail from MSN Hotmail at <http://www.hotmail.com>.

Share information about yourself, create your own public profile at
<http://profiles.msn.com>.

Oct 11, 2008

Re: Major rebuild of West 7th

Dear Sirs,

My husband and I have been residents of the West 7th neighborhood for 26 years.

We own a home at 324 Webster, another house at 306 Oneida, and a business property (with an apartment rental above) at 526 W. 7th.

For 20 years we've served the community by selling and repairing scooters and wheelchairs.

For the last 7 years we've owned and operated ACS Mobility Inc. - The Scooter Store - at 526 W. 7th.

Your plan to rebuild W. 7th, and allow no parking on the street - and limited turns off the street, will put us out of business. Our customers are mostly elderly, all are disabled, and none have the ability to ambulate more than a very short distance.

All of the businesses on West 7th, and the driving and parking of all of the residents, will be adversely affected.

To disrupt this entire neighborhood for the sake of running light rail to the Mall, is unjust and unjustified. It will lead to more congestion, and falling property values.

We strongly oppose this proposition.

Anna & Robert Vigliotti 651-224-6245/224

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2000 5:41 PM
To: Haller, Nona; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: FW: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

please file with public comments for Riverview. I responded by e mail already.

-----Original Message-----

From: www.riverviewcoridor.com@[209.0.238.2] [SMTP:www.riverviewcoridor.com@[209.0.238.2]]
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2000 2:36 PM
To: Kathryn.DeSpiegelaere@Co.Ramsey.MN.US
Subject: Riverview Major Investment Study Public Comment

Name: Val Vinnik
Agency:
Mailing Address: 2014 Worcester Ave.
City: St. Paul
Zipcode: 55116
Phone: 651-698-8731
FAX:

Interested in participating in meetings or workshops scheduled during the course of the study.

Thoughts about the Goals and Objectives of the study: The Study is a timely (if not a bit late) attempt to identify and provide alternative solutions to the problem that promises to be very acute in the next 2 decades. It should be an important part of the strategic development plan defining not just a local (St. Paul) transportation issue but the citywide development including the Mississippi riverfront.

Those not worth studying: The study and the proposed alternatives are fairly good described in the document, and provide a good understanding of possible transportation routs. The analysis is detailed enough to understand the options and form the opinion.

OTHER alternatives: The BRT alternative utilizing Shepard Rd, and the PMT option that is more economical to build, has less environmental impact, and could be self sufficient in terms of maintenance cost.

Highest Priority: The BRT alternative utilizing Shepard Rd, and BRT "CPR corridor" combined with "TSM Alternative"

Lowest Priority: LRT "West 7th Street"

Comments: All the LRT alternatives have less sense in the Riverview Corridor due to the the extremely high capital cost, highest maintenance cost and biggest environmental impact. The LRT options look more promising for the remote suburbs connection to the city-based hubs in the Riverview/Central/Minneapolis triangle

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2000 4:45 PM
To: Haller, Nona
Subject: FW: val

-----Original Message-----

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2000 9:54 AM
To: Vinnik, Val
Subject: RE: val

We have two public open houses scheduled for questions and answers — one is October 11 5:30 to 7:30 PM at West Seventh Community Center. The second is October 17 5:30 to 7:30 PM at St. Luke's Lutheran Church.

-----Original Message-----

From: Vinnik, Val
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2000 7:26 AM
To: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Subject: RE: val

I know how extremely busy you are, and do not want to impose. I used our Intranet site to submit my comments, and I will try to attend one of the public hearings. Kris gave me the brochure describing the alternatives, so I have the general idea about the entire project. I have several questions that were not answered to my satisfaction in the Study:

1. Why the alternative BRT or LRT options along the Shepard Road were rejected?
2. Why the PMT option was not even mentioned anywhere?
3. At what intersection of W. 7th the BRT or LRT alternatives using CPR (the railroad) would turn to cross the river?

Thank you.

Val Vinnik
Ramsey County
Senior Information Center Analyst
(651) 266-3428
val.vinnik@co.ramsey.mn.us

-----Original Message-----

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Tuesday, September 19, 2000 4:41 AM
To: Vinnik, Val
Subject: FW: val

Dear Val: I would like to talk with you. Unfortunately, my schedule this week is jammed. Which is why I'm responding at this unusual time. Next week?-----Original Message-----

From: Longhenry, Kris
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2000 12:16 PM
To: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Subject: val

Val Vinnik would like to know if you would have a little time to chat with him about the Riverview Corridor. He lives near it and has some questions about the study. 266-3428

Haller, Nona

From: DeSpiegelaere, Kathryn
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2000 3:04 PM
To: 'zimme053@tc.umn.edu'; 'kathryn.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Cc: Jay Benanav (E-mail); 'susan.m.haigh@co.ramsey.mn.us'; Haller, Nona; 'teddavis@mn.mediaone.net'
Subject: RE: RiverView Corridor Options

Thank you for your comments. They will become part of the Riverview Corridor public comment record.

-----Original Message-----

From: catherine zimmer [SMTP:zimme053@tc.umn.edu]
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2000 2:58 PM
To: 'kathryn.despiegelaere@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Cc: Jay Benanav (E-mail); 'susan.m.haigh@co.ramsey.mn.us'
Subject: RiverView Corridor Options

Dear Ms. Despiegelaere,
I would like to comment on the proposed transitway. Reviewing the options suggested in the Wed., Sept. 13, '00 issue of the Villager, I believe the busway along the CP line should be the preferred alternative.

Light rail (LRT) has not yet proven itself. While light rail has been approved and bids are being accepted, we are not certain that citizens will change their commuting habits and opt to commute by LRT. According to the proposed options, building a LRT line would cost at least three times as much as the busway. It would cost almost 1.5 times as much to operate and would only be 3 minutes shorter than the bus. While I don't know how the projections for ridership were devised, as stated previously, I am not yet convinced that commuters will switch.

I am an avid mass commuter/bicyclist. I am very concerned about air pollution, the MPCA's Air Toxics report is quite alarming. I am very interested in getting improved mass transit in our region. However, I believe our money would be better spent on improved buses, bus schedules and Natural Gas powered buses. The infrastructure for this system is, for the most part already in place. A prudent approach to moving forward with improved mass transit would be to improve our current system using current/and or modifiable infrastructure. In the event, LRT proves feasible, it would seem that we could amend the River Corridor CP/busway to LRT at a future time.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,
Catherine Zimmer
1790 Hague Ave
St. Paul, MN 55104

Section 7

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR LISTENING SESSION

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2000

7:30 O'CLOCK P.M.

WEST SEVENTH COMMUNITY CENTER

265 ONEIDA STREET

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Wednesday Evening,
October 11, 2000,
7:30 o'clock p.m.

Whereupon, the following proceedings were had:

EUGENE PICCOLO: There's some chairs up
at the front for people looking for chairs.

Good evening. We'd like to thank you
for taking time out of your busy day to attend
this evening; the first of two listening sessions
on the Riverview Corridor.

This is a listening session, which
means that the people here from the county will
be listening. It is not a question and answer
session, but truly a listening session and if you
wish to speak, we ask you sign up. There is a
sheet at the table. Right now we have about 25
people who have requested to speak, so we will
have some limitations on time so we can allow
everybody to speak.

Before we begin, I would like to
introduce myself. I'm Eugene Piccolo. I'm a
resident of St. Paul, the Dayton's Bluff
neighborhood and involved in the community over
there. I am involved in our community council

1 and neighbor association. This particular issue
2 does affect our neighborhood, also. I am here
3 tonight as a facilitator, not as a spokesman for
4 any particular position or for our community
5 council or anything else. My work is as a
6 consultant in terms of education, workforce
7 policy issues and so forth. So, I am not
8 involved, say, in terms of this issue other than
9 a resident and a member of St. Paul's community
10 itself

11 We do have some rules for tonight, some
12 very simple rules. We ask you to sign up if you
13 wish to speak. We ask you to come to one of the
14 two microphones and to state your name and
15 address and if you are representing a group as an
16 official spokesperson, please identify that. If
17 you are just speaking on behalf of yourself,
18 please do that. We will set a time limit of
19 about two minutes tonight because we have about
20 25 people that wish to speak. So, my role will
21 be to ask you to stay to that time limit. If we
22 have time after everybody that has requested to
23 speak initially, we will open it up again for
24 people who wish to speak again.

25 There is also an opportunity to write

1 down any comments and submit them in writing.
2 There is a form at the table that you can do
3 that.

4 And, again, we remind you that there is
5 another one of these listening sessions next
6 Tuesday evening, October 17th. So, it's another
7 opportunity if there are other things you wish to
8 comment on or speak to and you don't have the
9 opportunity to say everybody tonight; there's
10 another opportunity.

11 These two listening sessions are in
12 preparation of a public hearing the county board
13 will hold on October 24th.

14 Listening officially here as our panel
15 of people is two of our County Commissioners,
16 chairman of the county board Rafael Ortega and
17 chair of the Railroad Authority Committee,
18 Commissioner Tony Bennett. Also here is Fred
19 Perez from the Metropolitan Council Transit
20 Commission and Kathy DeSpiegelaere who is the
21 head of the rail authority office for the county.
22 Also in the audience we have two other County
23 Commissioners, Commissioner Haigh and
24 Commissioner Wiessner and also Representative
25 Paymar from the Highland area.

1 So, all of them are here to listen to
2 what you have to say. Again, we thank you for
3 coming out. We know we're competing with a lot
4 of other community events and some historic
5 events such as hockey going on down the street.
6 And this is truly unique; we have two politicians
7 here tonight who are going to sit and listen for
8 an hour and a half. They're not going to be
9 yelling at each other like you might see on the
10 debate tonight or talking at each other or
11 talking around each other. They're going to
12 listen. So, that's kind of a first thing, too.

13 We appreciate you coming out and
14 let's begin and we'll just go in the order of
15 people who signed up to speak.

16 Tony Shertler? Is he here?

17 Michael Jackson?

18 MICHAEL JACKSON: Hi. Good evening
19 and thank you very much.

20 My name is Michael Jackson. I am --
21 My address is 395 John Ireland Boulevard,
22 Mail Station 315, St. Paul 55155.

23 I am speaking for the Minnesota
24 Department of Transportation's Sustainable
25 Transportation Initiatives Unit. I am a member

1 of that unit and serve as the state's bicycle
2 coordinator.

3 I would like to request that the
4 Riverview Corridor study look at the inclusion of
5 pedestrian and bicycle access along the corridor
6 connecting West St. Paul -- the West Seventh
7 Street corridor to the airport, Fort Snelling and
8 Bloomington.

9 Currently there is no legal access for
10 bicyclists to the main terminal of the airport.
11 That affects not only travelers who would like to
12 travel -- bring their bikes by plane, but also
13 airport employees.

14 The inclusion of this corridor could
15 present an opportunity to remedy that by
16 including bicycle and pedestrian access not only
17 if you do build a separate right of way, but also
18 to include pedestrian/bicycle access on either
19 the buses or light rail trains there.

20 And also, I would ask that in your
21 illustrations that room be made to show how
22 pedestrian access or bicycle access could be
23 accommodated. There are examples, such as the
24 transitway, the busway between the two campuses
25 of the University of Minnesota in this area that

1 do accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access
2 along with the transitway.

3 This would gain this proposal a group
4 of new allies and that would be the bicycle
5 community.

6 Finally, this would be consistent with
7 goal one in the executive summary that reads,
8 improve access and mobility in the corridor in
9 the region. The inclusion of facilities for
10 non-motorized transportation would make this
11 investment even more valuable.

12 Thank you very much.

13 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

14 Just one thing I forgot to mention is
15 we do have a court reporter stenographer here to
16 take down your comments, so they will become part
17 of public record and testimony for the public
18 hearing that will be held later this month.

19 What I would do is when you have about
20 a minute left, I'll hold up my sheet of paper and
21 that will be your signal to move on.

22 The next person that's asked to speak
23 is Paul Chramelsa.

24 PAUL CHRAMELSA: Paul Chramelsa, the
25 owner of the Sibley Bike Depot or Bicycle Transit

1 Station in Downtown St. Paul.

2 I'm here just in case Michael was at
3 the hockey game. I'm just here to highly urge
4 due consideration be given to bicycle and
5 pedestrian facilities along the corridor. As we
6 now know, the level of bicycle and pedestrian
7 access in the city has become an indicator
8 species of the livability of a community, and to
9 date St. Paul has not come up to the plate
10 regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities in
11 their communities.

12 Federal transportation policy is to
13 increase bicycle and pedestrian use to at least
14 15 percent of all trips. We have a long way to
15 go. Best estimates would give us about one-half
16 to one percent bike/car trips into and around the
17 city. This represents an incredible opportunity
18 along this corridor to do so. And I just hope
19 that we can at least try to meet those federal
20 goals.

21 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

22 The next person, Dr. Lynn Woodward.

23 DR. LYNN WOODWARD: Lynn Woodward,
24 Grand and Lexington. I have a PhD in feasibility
25 analysis and I've read all of your feasibility

1 analysis and nowhere does it say it's viable or
2 feasible in it to do 85 to a hundred and ten
3 million dollars for this project.

4 What I am advocating is a better bus
5 system. We can do these things right now and go
6 ahead with them right now.

7 For you people up here who want to
8 waste a hundred million dollars, what have you
9 done in this corridor in the last 18 months for
10 improving transit, improving the bus? Have you
11 added a bus shelter? Have you put a better bus
12 on it? Have you put in a low floor bus? Have
13 you increased the speed of the bus?

14 By the way, I take 54 to airport. I
15 get on at Xcel Arena and I make it in usually 14
16 to 16 minutes during rush hour. It goes from the
17 Excel Arena down the ramp on 35, it goes 45 miles
18 per hour, everyone passes it, and it gets on
19 Seventh Street to the post office, Sibley Plaza
20 and then goes to the airport in 14 to 16 minutes
21 and I think I have got 50 things you could do on
22 that route and get it under 10 minutes for a
23 nominal amount of money.

24 How fast could you get these busses
25 going on your busway to get to the airport and

1 the Mall of America?

2 This is completely ridiculous. I've
3 laid out the 15 principals of a better bus system
4 and it would include right now, besides improving
5 the existing busses that are on here, adding a
6 limited stop bus that would stop at all the
7 crossing streets and the major -- like the
8 grocery stores and the places where most people
9 get on a bus; just stopping about every half mile
10 or mile along Seventh Street. Add a limited stop
11 bus, give it a traffic light override button and
12 you will add nicer --

13 All we need is the \$5,000 bus shelters.
14 We don't need the 1.4 million dollar bus shelters
15 that you build with light rail. Just a \$5,000
16 bus shelter. Maybe with a light, maybe with the
17 radiant heat. That's all we need and also add on
18 Shepard Road what's called a fixed corridor
19 jitney. It's an eight passenger with two
20 wheelchair spots. A little bus that can go along
21 between Shepard Road and Seventh Avenue and pick
22 up people at their door along the whole corridor
23 to the Mall of America to the airport, and to the
24 Lowertown and into downtown.

25 It picks up three to five people. Once

1 he picks those up, he races downtown, drops them
2 off, goes back and picks up another three.
3 That's a fixed corridor jitney. You haven't even
4 authorized that yet.

5 We could do a lot of things on this
6 route to improve bus transportation and transit
7 now and you haven't done anything and all you
8 want is to spend a hundred million dollars.

9 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

10 Mary Rickey?

11 MARY RICKEY: I'm Mary Rickey. I'm a
12 property owner at 501 Drake Street.

13 Just looking at how this -- the
14 rerouting of the bus corridor onto the railroad
15 right of way has me deeply disturbed because I
16 feel it is turning -- the bus transit system is
17 turning its back on the businesses on West
18 Seventh as well as creating a real muck up of the
19 neighborhood that is in between West Seventh and
20 the river. That is an extremely quiet
21 neighborhood. People are working hard to upgrade
22 it and keep it stable and having this railway
23 right of way and bus lane will completely -- you
24 know, it will add more traffic, it will add more
25 confusion and it will --

1 You know, personally at the
2 intersection of Drake and Randolph where our
3 business is, there is an incredible amount of
4 traffic right there already. We have the big
5 semis moving into the Ford loading dock and the
6 grain elevators. We have the railway. We have
7 people coming up from Shepard Road.

8 Putting a bus transit station and an
9 enlarged bus right of way would add to that
10 confusion.

11 Thank you.

12 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

13 Bruce Gaarder?

14 BRUCE GAARDER. I am Bruce Gaarder. I
15 live at 1711 Highland.

16 Firstly, I'll rephrase the St. Paul
17 Planning Commission resolution. It's urgent that
18 we waste this money before some other city in the
19 area gets to spend it.

20 My position is that we don't build BRT
21 or LRT in this area, we improve transit. LTR
22 solves problems of the sixties with technology of
23 the eighteen-nineties in the year 2000. Busways
24 can be a good idea and much better than LRT.

25 Ottawa runs a 19 mile busway system and

1 carries 200,000 trips a day. That's 80 percent
2 of what the Metro Transit does for the whole
3 region. There's a one lane contra flow bus lane
4 in downtown LA that carries 200 buses per hour on
5 its 10 block lane through downtown. The bus only
6 lane in the Lincoln Tunnel in New York carries
7 35,00 trips per hour at peak times.

8 The study is full of errors for it's
9 one million dollar cost. Maybe that's because
10 the wanted to make the bus look better than LRT.

11 It says it will take 17 minutes to go
12 from the airport to the megamall on the same
13 tracks as the Hiawatha Line will take. The bus
14 will take nine minutes to make that trip. Funny
15 thing, the Hiawatha Line is going to do that trip
16 in nine minutes. That means that it'd run into
17 the back end of the St. Paul train.

18 It also projected buying 10 train cars,
19 but in that 50 minute schedule you'd need 16
20 train cars to make it work. It says there won't
21 be any significant change in air pollution as a
22 result of any alternative and that is because
23 it's not going to reduce the number of cars or
24 congestion significantly along the route.
25 There's going to be 700 new riders a day 20 years

1 from now. That's really 350 round trips a day.

2 A new rider is somebody who didn't make
3 that particular trip before on transit. They
4 could have been car pooling, could have been
5 driving, they could have not even been making
6 that trip. Only former drivers reduce the
7 traffic.

8 If you assume that all 350 in the
9 morning rush hour do it during the two hours of
10 rush hour, that means there's 75 cars per hour
11 along the entire 12 miles, which works out to
12 about 15 cars per minute over each mile. You'll
13 never know they weren't there if they weren't
14 there.

15 There will be fewer buses on Seventh,
16 it says, but there will be feeder buses which
17 means there'll still be a lot of buses on
18 Seventh; you're just moving eight buses per hour
19 in each direction over to the bus lane. And you
20 will need those feeders you've got as much as --
21 Say you're going from Watson to Dealton, you
22 don't even use the busway. It's a mile and a
23 half walk. So, you'll be fitter because your
24 cardiovascular system will be better.

25 It also predicts twice as much

1 population growth as the Met Council predicts for
2 the whole City of St. Paul.

3 And the transit dependent people it
4 talks about, 25 percent of people who ride Metro
5 Transit earn less than 20 grand, 21 percent earn
6 more than 60. In Houston it's 40 percent earn
7 less than 10,000 and they have transit dependent.

8 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

9 John Birrenbach?

10 JOHN BIRRENBACH: Yeah, my name's John
11 Birrenbach. I live at 757 Randolph Avenue. I
12 own two downtown businesses.

13 The main problem I see here with what
14 you're proposing is that you're not proposing an
15 express route that takes people expressly from
16 downtown St. Paul out to the airport and out to
17 the Mall of America. What you've got here is a
18 fancy system of running things right down through
19 heart of one of our most vital neighborhoods in
20 the City of St. Paul.

21 It seems to me that it would make a
22 whole lot more sense for, if you're going to have
23 an expressway that's going to the Mall of America
24 and to the airport specifically, that that
25 expressway go down Shepard Road which is already

1 designed to handle that amount of traffic and at
2 those kind of speeds. If anybody knows, you can
3 take the road from Shepard down to the airport
4 and be there in less than 10 minutes from
5 downtown St. Paul.

6 Those buses could easily come up
7 Shepard Road, go up past the hotel, make a circle
8 through downtown St. Paul, stopping at the hotels
9 which are the only places that are going to be
10 riding on the busses anyways, if you can get
11 anyone to even ride on the busses to the airport
12 with there luggage, go right back down Kellogg
13 and get back onto Shepard Road, take Shepard Road
14 straight down to the airport, drop everybody off
15 and make another stop at the Mall of America,
16 pick people up and come right straight back into
17 downtown St. Paul.

18 This would alleviate the problem of
19 people needing a ride to and from the airport,
20 which frankly I don't think there is a problem.
21 Anybody that lives in the neighborhood is not
22 going to ride this bus to the airport or they
23 already would be riding the buses to the airport.
24 I'm not going to stand out on the curb in the
25 middle of wintertime when I'm waiting for an

1 airplane and wait for the bus to come by or wait
2 for the LRT or schedule my way around the LRT.

3 The only people that are going to
4 schedule their way around this bus system are
5 those that are staying in the hotels in downtown
6 St. Paul and they want to save themselves a
7 little bit of cab fare and they will know that
8 the bus will be in front of the Radisson at 10:00
9 a.m. and 10:30 and 11:00 a.m. They will know
10 what the schedule is, it will easily accommodate
11 them, but you're not looking at that.

12 Let's test the system by running it
13 through like I've talked about. A loop
14 through downtown St. Paul to the hotels which are
15 going to be the primary users of this system, run
16 it right down Shepard Road out to the airport.
17 If it works, we can add more buses to it, we can
18 add more schedules to it. It won't impact the
19 neighborhood. We won't have to do anything else
20 except buy a few buses, which are a whole lot
21 cheaper than a complete LRT system, like you're
22 talking about here.

23 Thank you.

24 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

25 Again, if you wish to speak, please

1 sign up. You may think of things you want to say
2 as people are speaking, so please do take the
3 opportunity.

4 Next is Henry Snyder.

5 HENRY SNYDER: My name is Henry Snyder.
6 I live at 2170 Lower St. Dennis in the Highland
7 Park neighborhood. I'll take less than 30
8 seconds probably, because what I wanted to say
9 has mostly been said already and there's no need
10 to repeat it.

11 I think just to summarize, I think that
12 most of our public officials are focusing on the
13 wrong aspect. They're focusing on feasibility.
14 I think --

15 I'm an engineer myself and I think
16 engineering is good enough today that if we
17 decide we want to spend a hundred and 20 million
18 dollars to build a skyway, we can do that. The
19 problem is not feasibility, the problem is
20 necessity. I have yet to see a study that I
21 could believe in which says there is any
22 necessity for our doing this. The only real
23 necessity is our local folks want to get the 30
24 million or 40 million dollars that the state
25 legislature says we can have.

1 I think before this goes any further,
2 what we ought to have is a study which
3 demonstrates that there's a real need for
4 transportation along the Riverview Corridor.
5 Where there is a need is between downtown St.
6 Paul and downtown Minneapolis and nobody's
7 talking about that.

8 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

9 Dan Kueny?

10 DAN KUENY: My name's Dan Kueny and I
11 live 909 Bayard here in St. Paul. My
12 neighborhood is West Seventh and we are a
13 neighborhood, and we have seen our neighborhood
14 change over the years and there are probably many
15 people here who remember when West Seventh was
16 the main drag from downtown St. Paul to Fort
17 Snelling with the trolley, but I doubt anybody
18 here has to be reminded how various groups tore a
19 perfectly good trolley system out of the Twin
20 Cities. But now we have buses in their place.

21 The back to our neighborhood has
22 already been cut to provide a highway for
23 suburbanites to come in from the south suburbs.
24 Our neighborhood has worked hard to come back
25 from the scar of 35E, but our neighborhood

1 doesn't want to be like Georgetown in Washington,
2 D.C., which missed out on their underground Metro
3 system.

4 So, I think we should look at this much
5 more carefully I think this is way too early to
6 be discussing any options.

7 Thank you.

8 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

9 Laurel Severson?

10 LAUREL SEVERSON: You need to
11 accommodate those of us who are a little shorter
12 in stature.

13 I'm Laurel Severson and I live at 376
14 St. Clair Avenue. I have been a resident in this
15 neighborhood for about 20 years and expect to
16 probably go another 50.

17 We have seen a tremendous change within
18 this neighborhood and I like using the word
19 neighborhood. It has increased in viability.
20 We've seen a lot of very, very nice kinds of
21 things as the community comes together. This
22 Community Center is one of the big reasons for
23 pulling neighbors together. So is the West
24 Seventh Federation and many of the small
25 businesses.

1 Part of what makes a community is
2 allowing people to get together and what that
3 means is if you start putting racetracks right
4 through the middle of everything, that tends to
5 be very, very divisive.

6 We have Shepard Road, we have the West
7 Seventh Street and we also have highway 35E.
8 Each one of those runs basically parallel and
9 chops neighbor from neighbor from getting
10 together.

11 To look at this fourth chart which
12 seems to be the proposed area to increase
13 significantly traffic along West Seventh seems to
14 me to be blasting another very large divisive
15 severing kind of thing right through the heart of
16 this residential and business area. I would
17 certainly concur with some of the other speakers
18 that Shepard Road is probably a much wiser and
19 smarter choice. It gives visitors a view of the
20 Twin Cities, it moves people rapidly and it gets
21 them from where they want to be to where they are
22 originating from. In other words, from the
23 downtown to the airport and the mall area.

24 If I look at my own small group of
25 neighbors and I think of maybe a hundred or so of

1 families, I don't know any of those who are
2 currently working out at either the airport or
3 the mall. That doesn't say that they might not
4 get jobs, but I also look at what has happened in
5 small towns around not only the state but around
6 the nation. The minute you take a major freeway
7 and blast it through a very small town, those
8 folks are not really stopping to do business with
9 the businesses, they are just simply getting from
10 one end of the town through to the other without
11 doing any stopping. If this is the major intent,
12 then let's not put them right through the middle
13 of our specific living neighborhood. Let's keep
14 those neighborhoods livable.

15 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

16 Lindsey Sander?

17 LINDSEY SANDER: Good evening. My name
18 is Lindsey Sander and I live at 291 West Seventh
19 Street.

20 I am here tonight because all of us
21 have looked at these plans. What's interesting
22 to me is you've never asked our input of what we
23 wanted or what we need in this community. And I
24 think that we are all in agreement that we want
25 to see our communities flourish and we want to

1 see our businesses do well and that we want to
2 improve and create jobs and that we want to
3 improve our traffic situation, but you've never
4 asked us what we need or want.

5 There are some very basic things that
6 we can do on the Seventh Street corridor to
7 improve our traffic conditions that won't cost a
8 dime. For example, how about keep the semis that
9 have been forced off of 35E off of Seventh
10 Street? Do you know how much room that would
11 open on our streets? It's amazing to see the
12 hundreds and hundreds of semis that come through
13 Seventh Street on a daily basis. Create an HOV
14 lane for buses.

15 We're not against buses. Just create
16 them so they can help get people in during
17 commuter hours and out after work and let our
18 regular cars, so that we're not forced out of our
19 cars, during regular traffic hours. There is
20 nothing against buses or that -- We just don't
21 want to shut down our streets to force everyone
22 into mass transit because it's not going to
23 happen and it won't work.

24 Okay?

25 When I was talking earlier, there was a

1 planner by the name of Scott Thompson and he said
2 that by improving the one plan back here for
3 about a million and a half dollars, that we could
4 add a few bus routes, okay and improve service
5 and basically solve our problem without spending
6 85 million dollars. Okay? If that's the truth
7 and -- Or even for five million dollars, why
8 aren't we looking at that solution? Bigger isn't
9 always better. Okay?

10 It doesn't mean -- Just because we
11 spend 85 million dollars, it doesn't mean our
12 system's going to improve any or that our traffic
13 problems are going to improve any or that you're
14 going to move any more people. Why don't we
15 start with basics and start moving from something
16 that we know that works and add little by little,
17 not rush to grab the pot of money allocated by
18 the legislature.

19 This gentleman here -- Well, he's gone
20 now, but he was very correct. Everyone, when
21 the money gets allocated, jumps at the
22 opportunity and it happens time and time again.
23 We need to stop it. It's our taxpayer dollars.
24 Why don't we work smart on behalf of us.

25 So, I guess I'm just asking you to

1 reach out to us and ask us, because very honestly
2 November 7th is right around the corner and you
3 might not be up for election this year, but
4 you're up for election in future years. Work
5 with us to improve our communities. We're the
6 ones living in them, we're the ones paying the
7 tax dollars for it. It's our money. Ask us what
8 we want, don't tell us that these are our options
9 and we have to choose from what we're going to
10 get.

11 It's the other way around. You work
12 for us.

13 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

14 Becky Yust.

15 BECKY YUST: Yust, Y-u-s-t. And I live
16 at 256 Goodrich and my husband owns a business at
17 476 West Seventh and I am against this transit
18 proposal.

19 I just wanted to indicate that this
20 neighborhood has been assaulted by transit for 40
21 years. Starting with 35E -- The widening of West
22 Seventh probably 90 years ago began it, but 35E
23 was the real coalescing event that happened in
24 this neighborhood around transit. Then Shepard
25 Road. We had to fight that from, again, a total

1 assault on our neighborhood for years because of
2 vague plans and ideas of the state Department of
3 Transportation that it would improve everything
4 for everyone. No, it wouldn't. That, what is on
5 Shepard Road now, is a compromise. It's still
6 not the ideal.

7 And so with 12 lanes of traffic as
8 Laurel said through our neighborhood -- a 12 lane
9 freeway between 35E, West Seventh and Shepard
10 Road, tell me why we need more dedicated transit
11 to get from one end on the other.

12 Another piece of this and I think
13 there's a bigger vision problem here before we
14 start arguing merits of one plan or another, but
15 one thing disturbs me a lot; because when it's
16 convenient for an argument one direction, it's
17 always, well the neighborhood doesn't know
18 better, but then that same argument is used in
19 the opposite way and the case in point was when
20 we had to again fight this state, not the county,
21 but the Department of Transportation on the High
22 Bridge replacement. The state wanted to do four
23 lanes. It took a federal amendment to make sure
24 we got the kind of bridge that was sensitive to
25 the neighborhood needs.

1 That was one thing Senator Durenburger
2 did for this neighborhood. One of the issues was
3 the state wanted to make it four lanes. Well, we
4 didn't want four lanes on Smith Avenue because,
5 again as has been said, it would divide the
6 neighborhood; kids have to cross that to catch
7 school buses. And so the High Bridge ended up
8 being a two lane road.

9 What is this plan, taking four lanes of
10 traffic on West Seventh, two lanes in each
11 direction, and them becoming one lane in each
12 direction? That does not make sense to me. I
13 can't imagine what's going to happen at Randolph
14 in terms of the backup of traffic and people are
15 going to abandon this neighborhood because of
16 that.

17 I have a more personal note. I do have
18 children who ride their bike all over this
19 neighborhood and actually take the bus all over
20 the city. If they have to cross West Seventh
21 with one lane dedicated for the bus and the other
22 lane dedicated -- and we live right between Smith
23 and St. Clair, so they don't walk all the way to
24 Smith or St. Clair to cross where there's a
25 light. They have to cross in the middle and

1 there's a crosswalk, as though people stop. They
2 don't. And I fear for the safety of my kids to
3 go play with their friends on the other side or
4 get to the other street to go visit Cooper's
5 Store to buy chocolate chips for cookies, which
6 they do.

7 Finally, because I think so many good
8 arguments have already been said, I really take
9 offense at one of the planning commission members
10 and I think he's here tonight, that referred to
11 this great transit plan as the Twin Cities
12 getting to have their own petri dish experiment.
13 You know, a transit system doesn't exist in
14 isolation. It exists because of people and it
15 exists in neighbors and people live in those
16 neighborhoods, and I don't appreciate and doubt
17 that my neighbors appreciate being treated like
18 lab rats. So, I would just hope that the board
19 takes caution with moving ahead with this plan.

20 I appreciated Lindsey's comments about
21 the running after the money and that -- and so
22 many ideas that could be done for far fewer
23 millions of dollars that are really our tax
24 dollars. The problem is that money is attached
25 to terms and somebody's big idea and you don't

1 get big dollars for what's considered a small
2 efficient idea and that is where the problem
3 begins.

4 Thank you.

5 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

6 I remind you, if you wish to speak, you
7 can sign up at the back table there.

8 Carol Foth?

9 CAROL FOTH: Well, I'll do my best.

10 Thank you.

11 My name is Carol Foth, F-o-t-h. I
12 live at 106 Leech Street and I've lived in the
13 neighborhood for about 13 years.

14 After spending some time walking around
15 the room and looking at all the displays, and
16 listening to what people have had to say, I sat
17 here and kind of wrote a cost benefit of this
18 whole plan for our neighborhood, and on the cost
19 side I came up with four items.

20 The first one is one that people have
21 already mentioned, the further cutting up of this
22 neighborhood.

23 The second cost to our neighborhood is
24 what this bus route or any of these plans will do
25 to the businesses along West Seventh.

1 . The third one is, when I listen to the
2 gentleman talk about the buses, basically those
3 of us who live in the neighborhood and wish to
4 ride the buses will have our service cut back
5 because the Number 9 bus is the only bus that's
6 not going to stop only at the designated bus
7 shelters, which will exist maybe every half to
8 three-quarters of a mile and that's folks. And
9 given the nature of this neighborhood with
10 streets going off in all different directions, a
11 mile in this neighborhood is quite a bit longer
12 than a half mile is in other neighborhoods.

13 The forth item is basically we will be
14 shutting down the main street in our neighborhood
15 full time to accommodate buses that are going to
16 run in and out of the city at rush hour and I
17 don't know about you, but I've ridden some of
18 those buses and I live close enough to downtown
19 that the buses that I get on in the morning ought
20 to be pretty full. I can always find a seat.
21 This is in rush hour. This is maybe a mile from
22 downtown.

23 Well, on the other side -- I've given
24 my costs. I have one benefit.

25 A faster way in and out of the city

1 through my neighborhood for people who don't live
2 in my neighborhood, don't know my neighborhood
3 and probably don't really care about my
4 neighborhood.

5 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

6 Pat -- I'm sorry.

7 PAT MEHIGAN: My name is Pat Mehigan.
8 I know I have horrible printing. I live at 106
9 Leach Street.

10 Everybody has been very excellent.
11 Some of the things that I can second is how
12 painful the divisiveness in this neighborhood
13 gets when we find ourselves in the position where
14 there is money on the table from federal, state,
15 whatever agency you call it, and that becomes the
16 end goal and then we get into a position where we
17 start fighting with one another just to save some
18 of our sanity and our little piece of the
19 neighborhood. I think over the years, between
20 35E, Shepard Road, we have been put in the
21 position of very seductively saying, fight among
22 yourselves, we'll do what we want to do.

23 We'll pick neighbors versus businesses,
24 we'll pick one side of Smith versus the other
25 side of Smith, one side of Seventh from the other

1 side of Seventh. We have had planning people
2 come to us on every single proposal for 35E, for
3 how the High Bridge was designed, how Shepard
4 Road was done, with promises that we know were
5 not filled. We came up with alternatives to
6 continue making this place livable that were
7 small, efficient and not costly. And we're
8 ignored because the state regulations say this,
9 the federal regulations say that and all of a
10 sudden we find ourselves, because we accepted
11 this particular dollar, we get all these other
12 threads attached to it.

13 I work downtown and I watch the Mall of
14 America bus downtown every day go out to the Mall
15 of America. And if there are 12 people on that
16 bus during rush hour, that is a lot, and they're
17 not coming from downtown, they're coming from
18 other transit points and that transit point can
19 be anywhere else.

20 If I take the bus and I'm in walking
21 distance from downtown, and my buses are never
22 crowded. I really need to emphasize how painful
23 it is when we're put in the position when
24 somebody says, think outside the box, when all I
25 keep thinking is slicing up the pie smaller and

1 smaller and we have to kind of keep it together.
2 This is not thinking out of the box.

3 Let's have them think out of the box.
4 All I see with all of these plans is a hammer and
5 hammers work real fine with certain problems, but
6 we don't need multi-million dollar hammers.
7 We've got lots of other tools on the box to
8 increase livability to enhance our neighbors.

9 EUGENE PICCOLO: thank you.

10 Julene Maruska?

11 JULENE MARUSKA: My name's Julene
12 Maruska. I live at 917 Juno Avenue. I also work
13 in the West End. I'm proud to say I've spent my
14 whole life in the West End. I'm proud to say I
15 grew up below the hill.

16 I manage a business that has been in
17 St. Paul for a hundred years, 40 years on West
18 Seventh and I am afraid that we will have to
19 close our doors if this goes through.

20 Since last Wednesday we collected names
21 on a petition, almost 300 names, and of those
22 people you would be surprised how many of them
23 are from outside the neighborhood. So many
24 people come into the neighborhood to shop, to
25 eat, to spend time. They're not going to do that

1 any more because they're in their cars and if
2 their cars are hard to park, hard to travel, hard
3 to cross the street, just a pain, they're not
4 going to make us a destination any more.

5 And buses; I can't tell you the numbers
6 of times my employees are late because they can't
7 catch the buses. The buses are not there, the
8 buses are late, the buses are early. We need
9 better bus service, not a 50 million dollar
10 boondoggle. Let's have the best bus service
11 there is for the people who live here.

12 Having traveled, having had the luxury
13 of traveling in foreign countries and using
14 public transportation 'cuz I travel cheap, that
15 is the way to go. Public transportation. I rode
16 the same buses the people in China rode, I rode
17 the same buses the people in Italy and England
18 rode and they weren't special tourist buses to
19 take me from attraction to attraction. If the
20 bus service is good enough for the citizens, if
21 it's great for the citizens, the tourists are
22 going to ride it, too.

23 We don't need to transfer people from
24 the mall to downtown. Don't turn West Seventh
25 into a freeway so people stop shopping there.

1 I look at all the transformation that
2 has occurred along West Seventh from the Xcel
3 Arena. Thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of
4 thousands of dollars spent remodeling businesses
5 to draw in people. Those people are not going to
6 come if they can't park, if they can't get across
7 the street, if there's this major thing running
8 down the street blocking the way. I see those
9 owners struggling.

10 Just because they want to give us 50
11 million dollars. Turn it down.

12 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

13 Mary Jo Tierney?

14 MARY JO TIERNEY: Hi. My name's Mary
15 Jo Tierney. I live at 703 Watson Avenue. I live
16 in that quite little neighborhood between West
17 Seventh Street and the river, Shepard Road, and I
18 live right next door to where those railroad
19 tracks run through about five or six times every
20 24 hours, going about 10 or 12 miles per hour.
21 I think everyone that lives in that little quiet
22 neighborhood knows that we came in there knowing
23 they were going to be there and we've learned to
24 live with all that.

25 But we have to remember that the CRP

1 can't be an option either because they will run
2 more than 220 times a day, going at speeds of up
3 to maybe 30 miles per hour.

4 I can't see what that'd do for our
5 property values. The noise level, the traffic
6 the safety. Every one of those blocks has an
7 alley access on both ends. I'm concerned about
8 all the pedestrians. Also, I've been told the
9 only way to get into that part of the
10 neighborhood will be at Randolph or Otto. We
11 won't be able to turn left or into the
12 neighborhood at all those cross streets.

13 So, I have to make sure that everyone
14 knows we're still very opposed to running it
15 along the CRP, too.

16 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

17 Again, if you wish to speak, please
18 sign up.

19 Larry Kasella?

20 LARRY KASELLA: Good evening. My
21 name's Larry Kasella. I live at 730 South
22 Chatsworth. I was born and raised in the West
23 Seventh Street Area as was my mother born and
24 raised in the West Seventh Street area, as was my
25 grandfather who came from Chechoslovakia ended up

1 down on Canton Street. At that time it was
2 called Goose Shit Alley. Excuse the French.

3 So, I go back a long time and I also
4 have three children who are adults, now, and own
5 homes in this area. I retired two and a half
6 years ago from the City of St. Paul. I love West
7 Seventh Street. My son and I just opened up a
8 business on 966 West Seventh a year and a half
9 ago called Best Pawn. This is right at Seventh
10 and Toronto. I've got my life savings into that
11 business right now.

12 If you take parking away, you just
13 threw away my life savings.

14 We don't need a corridor running from
15 downtown St. Paul or from the hockey arena out to
16 the Mall of America or to the airport. This is
17 our neighborhood, not a corridor, but our
18 neighborhood. We want people to come here and
19 enjoy it, not just to drive through and look out
20 the window and say, oh, I wonder what the hell
21 that is. We just don't need this. I can't see
22 spending that kind of money.

23 Remember, money isn't everything, but
24 people are and we are the people of West Seventh
25 Street. Thank you.

1 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

2 Mike Schumann?

3 MICHAEL SCHUMANN: My name is Michael
4 Schumann and I live at 541 Dayton Avenue.

5 How many of you have taken a hard look
6 at the feasibility study and the table E S.3?

7 Let me review it briefly for those of
8 you that have not.

9 These are the numbers, by the way, that
10 have been generated by the people that support
11 this project. Okay?

12 Number of new riders attracted by
13 building a dedicated bus lane. 600 new riders.

14 So, extrapolate that. Best case
15 scenario, you're going to end up with 600 less
16 cars per day, okay, on a street that probably
17 carries 20, 30,000 cars a day. We're talking
18 mouse nuts here. Okay?

19 Let's jump to the bottom. Annual
20 operating cost. Okay. Operating costs only, not
21 including any amortization of the capital costs.
22 10 million dollars a year.

23 What does that translate into per new
24 rider. \$16,000 per year per new rider.

25 Why aren't we buying these people a new

1 car every year? Okay?

2 Another question. What else can we do
3 with the 10 million dollars if we didn't spend it
4 on operating costs? Well, for starters instead
5 of charging everybody a dollar fifty to take the
6 bus, we could pay every single rider a dollar
7 fifty to take the bus.

8 Now, if we change the economics in that
9 way, what would happen to transit ridership
10 compared to a dedicated busway? You'd see one
11 hell of a lot more than 600 new riders.

12 What could we do with a hundred million
13 dollars or 85 million dollars that this busway is
14 going to cost? We could build a vintage trolley
15 system all the way from the Mall of America, all
16 the way to Lowertown to Union Station, plus all
17 the way from downtown to Grand Avenue to St.
18 Thomas and run 1910 vintage streetcars, restored,
19 every 10 minutes, okay, and be on the map just
20 like New Orleans or San Francisco.

21 So, if we have a political
22 establishment that is absolutely hell bent on
23 spending 44 million dollars that is a give from
24 heaven, you know, let's spend it on something
25 that at least will be fun. I mean, it won't be

1 something that will get us new riders, but at
2 least it will be fun.

3 Now, the last thing is, 44 million
4 dollars coming -- raining down from heaven sounds
5 like great benefits for the city, but look what
6 they're going to do? They want to solve the
7 traffic problem in 2020. Well, the reality is
8 that they're going to run this thing down the
9 middle of Seventh Street from downtown to the
10 airport and they're going to take up half the
11 street. They're going to create the traffic
12 problem they are projecting for 2020 and they're
13 going to have it 20 years early, in 2003.

14 So, what you need to do is get on the
15 horn, call the mayor's office, call your council
16 members, call Ramsey County, call the legislature
17 and put a stop to this complete boondoggle.

18 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

19 Greg Eckbom?

20 GREG ECKBOM: My name's Greg Eckbom and
21 I have the Day By Day Cafe on West Seventh.

22 We have all experienced these two lane
23 West Seventh Streets when they did the sewer
24 bypass. They took the two middle lanes. And
25 when it snowed and the drifts are on the side of

1 the road, it becomes two lanes. And I sit in my
2 restaurant which is at least a mile from downtown
3 and the cars are stopped in the street going
4 town.

5 And this is what we're going to do.

6 Why don't we just close West Seventh
7 Street next week to two lanes, see how people
8 like it. It's not going to work. We'd save a
9 lot of trouble, we'd save a lot of time building
10 diamond lanes. Just put barricades across the
11 road, put a sign up that says this is going to be
12 what the new -- this section of West Seventh will
13 be two lanes. Save a lot of money, costs very
14 little.

15 And they told me it's me going to be
16 easier to cross the street, putting twice as much
17 traffic into -- you know, double the traffic in
18 one lane. Right now, it's often five to ten
19 minutes to wait for a gap in traffic to get
20 across the street. All the gaps will be gone
21 when it's all one lane and they'll all be
22 irritated. So, they're not going to slow down
23 for crosswalks any more than they do now.

24 I am a booster of mass transit. I
25 think it's a good idea, but I just don't think

1 this particular way works. I don't know.
2 Unfortunately they gave up on Shepard Road as a
3 plan. There's no Shepard Road mass transit
4 picture here because it was ruled out from the
5 beginning, but it seems like that should be an
6 option. If we're going to discuss this we should
7 have that possibility as one of our options and
8 maybe it doesn't work, but we didn't get to see
9 it. Thanks.

10 EUGENE PICCOLO: Therese Lauer Goddard?

11 THERESE LAUER GODDARD: Therese Lauer
12 Goddard, 443 Harper Street, a few blocks from
13 here.

14 As Greg said, I'm very concerned about
15 the businesses on West Seventh. I did own a
16 business when I moved away from here, but I was
17 born and raised here. I am very concerned about
18 the school kids and my neighbors and you get a
19 bird's eye view, an airplane view of these broad
20 sweeps and these plans are very broad sweeps and
21 it's too fast. The final decision on November
22 14, when you have these broad sweeps and to trust
23 people to fill in -- There's so many times when
24 people -- you know, you want to trust people, but
25 we're all tired of dealing with the real thing

1 down here with the ethanol plant that was
2 supposed to be a great thing and we're having
3 little troubles already here.

4 And with the traffic down West Seventh,
5 as Greg mentioned, I can't imagine. I don't know
6 if you want to herd people, why you'd put them
7 down a neighborhood street. If they were
8 stopping along the way it would make sense to me,
9 it'd help the businesses in the neighborhood, but
10 to get people with very limited stops to stop for
11 left-hand turns --

12 I would like to know. I mean,
13 if Shepard Road is not an option, I thought I
14 might come and ask somebody why it isn't when I
15 came here, but as this is just a listening, we
16 don't have information either. But please
17 remember that we have a neighborhood, it's a
18 wonderful neighborhood, people -- It's coming
19 back. People are moving back here, until
20 recently and we want not to have --

21 I don't know, I'm not very eloquent,
22 but the broad sweeps. We need some more details.
23 It's too fast of a timeframe. Thank you.

24 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

25 Carol Mollner?

1 CAROL MOLLNER: I'm Carol Mollner at
2 1808 Princeton Avenue. I was born and raised in
3 the West Seventh neighborhood. I now live in the
4 Mac Grove neighborhood but I spend a lot of time
5 on West Seventh because all my family are here
6 and many friends.

7 I'm absolutely totally opposed to the
8 plans that I've seen. I think it's another step
9 to destroying a neighborhood that has had to
10 struggle to come back from what happened when 35E
11 was built and all of the homes and all of my
12 friends lost their homes and moved away. To
13 think of using West Seventh Street in this manner
14 to bring people from downtown to the airport
15 makes no sense for me. It's a drive through.
16 It's not anything based on trying to develop this
17 neighborhood.

18 And I don't think that the decision has
19 to be made as soon as it seems like we're being
20 pushed into believing a decision has to be made.
21 We could say to the legislature, the
22 commissioners could say to the legislature, we
23 need to hold on this money, we need to get the
24 involvement of people in the neighborhood to find
25 out what might work, what kind of transportation

1 improvements would be helpful to this
2 neighborhood to the businesses, to the families
3 to protect the children that cross the streets of
4 West Seventh all the time and are going to be
5 endangered with something like this going
6 through. I think there are many solutions that
7 could be done that people have talked about
8 already.

9 As a kid, I used to ride the bus to the
10 Metropolitan Stadium. You know, The bus came
11 down West Seventh Street. It looked like a city
12 bus that had a little flag and you waved when you
13 wanted it to stop. It was a very simple thing
14 that could be done if you need that kind of
15 transportation by bus to get to the airport, but
16 as a lot of people have said, it's not going to
17 be the people from this neighborhood who will be
18 lugging their luggage over to West Seventh Street
19 to get on the bus to ride out to the airport,
20 it's going to be people downtown in hotels. So,
21 if you have to do something, use Shepard Road,
22 but before you do anything take the time to
23 really ask and listen to what people in the
24 neighborhood have to say and you might come up
25 with a plan that will be much better.

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EUGENE PICCOLO: Becca Hine?

PER SCHLICKENBERG(PH): Hi, I'm Becca Hine. Actually, I'm Per Schlickenberg. Becca's another board member of the federation board, I'm the President of the West Seventh Federation and I'd like to convey to you guys what we've arrived at to this point and also other board members having talked -- There's been a lot of meetings in the last two weeks.

Here's what we've got so far.

We pretty much agree that transit should be mass transit, LRT, busways where appropriate, have a role to play in reducing congestion and making the city more livable.

However, this study is seriously, seriously, seriously flawed from the beginning. It sets out to justify its own conclusions and goes merrily about it

What they're trying to do is justify this magic triangle of Central Corridor, Hiawatha, and Riverview. We can't have a hub and spoke system. That favors downtown too much. So, it's got to be this spiderweb, it's got to be a triangle. There's nothing that justifies this

1 line in this corridor, except to make the magic
2 triangle. It has nothing to do with us.

3 The project does not serve this
4 community. God knows who it serves, but it does
5 not serve us.

6 Any of the build proposals in this
7 thing, whether they're in the railroad corridor
8 or on Seventh, whether LRT or busways, have
9 serious impacts on this neighborhood.

10 Limiting left turns on Seventh Street.
11 That pushes traffic back into -- commercial
12 traffic back into the neighbors.

13 Eliminating parking on West Seventh
14 Street. What happens to those businesses whose
15 buildings were there before there were parking
16 requirements. They're just gone.

17 Traffic congestion in this neighbor is
18 increased by this. Traffic congestion is not
19 mitigated by this thing, traffic congestion in
20 this neighborhood is increased for the benefit of
21 God knows who. It's not us.

22 If there's some transit option that was
23 designed to serve this community, it would be in
24 highway 35E. It would go from downtown to County
25 Road 42 and Cedar. All kinds of people drive

1 back and forth on 35E, Shepard, Seventh, every
2 day coming from down there, plugging up our
3 streets, turning our neighborhoods into a parking
4 lot. If this thing were designed to serve us as
5 --

6 I know, I'll skip some of this.

7 Existing bus service is not optimized.

8 For the cost of this busway plan that
9 the planning commission signed off on here the
10 other day, 700 riders, figuring 350 riders riding
11 two directions. That's a half a million a rider.
12 A half million dollars a rider to build this.

13 We should be able to do amazing things
14 with a half million dollars a rider.

15 But we understand, we understand that
16 the fix is in on this. Senator Randy Kelly has
17 said, you know, it's going to be this busway, we
18 have this 44 million and this match money from
19 the feds, so that's 88. We have got to spend
20 this money. We've got to get it into metro or
21 we'll be a cloned Omaha. So, run it through
22 Seventh Street. Okay.

23 If the fix is in and it's going to be a
24 busway and it's going to be in this corridor, put
25 it in Shepard Road. Put it where the

1 opportunities are. There's vacant land in upper
2 landing, the Port Authority thing behind NSP.
3 Island Station. The ADM site up there and the
4 car loading facility. That is empty land.
5 Riverbluff will be coming along. The printing
6 place, Webecor or whatever it is. Those are all
7 empty. If you want to stimulate development, why
8 not put the thing where the development
9 opportunities are? Why run it through a built
10 neighborhood?

11 There are a lot more opinions than that
12 on our board. That's all we have agreed on so
13 far. We'll be in touch. Thank you.

14 EUGENE PICCOLO: I believe the next
15 person is Dan or Don Galles.

16 DAN GALLES: Good evening, my name's
17 Dan Galles and my business is at 1810 West
18 Seventh Street and I live at 1810 Rome Avenue in
19 Highland Park. Tonight I'm here in my capacity
20 as President of the West End Business and
21 Professional Association.

22 In early February, our board and
23 general membership enthusiastically endorsed the
24 Riverview Corridor for transit. I want to
25 explain a few things about that to clarify where

1 our group is at.

2 We are concerned, we understand and we
3 see the big transit picture for the Twin Cities.
4 We feel that there is a system that's going to be
5 built and this metropolitan area and it is
6 absolutely vital that St. Paul participates

7 We agreed on that.

8 We're concerned about what it's going
9 to do to the residential and the businesses
10 and what alignment you use. We've concerned
11 about off street parking or on street parking the
12 loss of on street parking. We're concerned about
13 the congestion and we're concerned about the loss
14 of the traffic lanes, people's accessibility both
15 vehicular and pedestrian and we don't have a
16 preferred route.

17 If the route is on West Seventh Street,
18 it's absolutely critical to both my membership
19 and to the people that live in this neighborhood
20 that we address the issues and I don't think
21 there are any additional issues that I can
22 discuss that have not been discussed tonight
23 already. If it's on Shepard Road, take a look at
24 what the issues are. If it's on the CP Rail,
25 let's take a good look at what the issues are.

1 What we are concerned about is that we know some
2 people are going to be affected, but let's see that
3 those people are compensated adequately and that
4 this system does the least amount of damage to
5 this community as possible.

6 That's it. Thank you.

7 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

8 Sue Nichols?

9 SUE NICHOLS: Sue Nichols. I'm on 1596
10 Middleton. My husband and I have purchased and
11 re-habbed four homes in West Seventh area in the
12 last eight years or so. All of those -- Three
13 that we rented out now would be, I think,
14 considered by the city affordable housing. And
15 we've done a nice job fixing them up, trying to
16 improve our neighborhood. We are not from the
17 West Seventh neighborhood, but we have found a
18 great community here and have decided to stay
19 because of the community and some of the
20 benefits. For example, being able to get on our
21 bikes or rollerblades and get on the path along
22 the river and go down to the Children's Museum on
23 a beautiful fall day. It makes it nice to live
24 in the neighborhood.

25 Also, we own a business that used to be

1 based in the area. We needed to expand, we
2 needed more space, and partially because of some
3 of the things that happened in the ethanol plant
4 and light rail, we moved it to Roseville. We
5 would like to have it in the West Seventh area,
6 but right now we're not. We're holding off to
7 see what happens because of property values.
8 Also, because of property values, we are not
9 purchasing any more properties. We looked at
10 property in West Seventh where we would have done
11 commercial down below and affordable housing up
12 above, but again we're not willing to invest
13 anymore in this neighborhood until we see if it's
14 worthwhile.

15 And I don't know if you're saving any
16 money by not doing the light rail, I don't know
17 if it would take too much, but you could use it
18 to take out the ramp meters.

19 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

20 Mary Zanmiller.

21 MARY ZANMILLER: I'm Mary Zanmiller.

22 I live at 951 Watson Avenue, West Seventh
23 neighborhood. I've lived here for 25 years.

24 And the wonderful thing about the West
25 Seventh neighborhood are the people and the

1 geography. You go out to any intersection and
2 you can look out and you can see the river bluffs
3 up down the West Seventh. It's an amenity, an
4 amenity. We don't need Rondo revised in West
5 Seventh. It is an amenity that nowhere else in
6 Ramsey County do we have.

7 When I was a young child I moved to my
8 great great uncle's farm in Rosemount. It's been
9 in my family for almost a hundred years. My mom
10 still lives there. She raised us 12 kids, but
11 she's still there. And you know what she got a
12 few years ago in this smart growth? She got a
13 \$55,000 sidewalk down one of her fields so that
14 this little development of people that moved into
15 a farm could feel connected to a village and have
16 front porches and feel part of a community. And
17 they talked to the developer. They had to have a
18 sidewalk to connect them to the village of
19 Rosemont.

20 Well, let's wake up. This smart growth
21 is easy growth. We have those amenities right
22 here in West Seventh. A beautiful river bluff,
23 houses with porches, community of people. Don't
24 destroy this community with your easy growth.
25 Not smart growth, easy growth. Go to a community

1 of people that struggle not to be disempowered by
2 a 35E and an ethanol plant. You know, save this
3 community.

4 If you have to have LRT and I believe
5 in mass transit, how about Hudson to downtown St.
6 Paul. How much traffic. Right along 94. Hudson
7 into downtown St. Paul. Or how about out to one
8 of the cross streets, 494, Lafayette Bridge,
9 whatever, but not down this neighborhood. We're
10 not going to use it. We can walk downtown.

11 Why do we need to go out to the Mall of
12 America, why do we have to keep making decisions
13 to subsidize Simon DeBartelo and that family.
14 You know, we just keep pouring the money into
15 Simon DeBartelo. Let's save this community.
16 Let's have hard growth. Hard growth, not easy
17 growth.

18 And think about who is going to be left
19 here if you go ahead with this decision. What is
20 that community of learners in this school going
21 to be like. It's going to be kids that parents
22 can't get out, 'cuz the rest of them will go. If
23 you think it's hard to educate kids in the public
24 schools in this community now, just think what
25 you'll create if you make it so who would want to

1 live here..

2 No build, no build.

3 EUGENE PICCOLO: Ken McCormick?

4 KEN MC CORMICK: I'm Ken McCormick. I
5 didn't come prepared to speak, although an idea
6 occurred to me as I listened to the other
7 speakers. Part of this is re-telling and part of
8 it hopefully for you. A little bit out of the
9 box that hasn't been mentioned yet.

10 I will start by saying it's really neat
11 to finally be older than the politicians and have
12 more gray hair, so you can say, yeah, we've been
13 there too, we've done that. Our neighborhood's
14 worked against and for and we ended up with 35E,
15 worked against and for and we ended up with
16 Shepard Road and the High Bridge and things like
17 that. So, we have been there. We have worked
18 with compromise.

19 I think that you have heard the points
20 today, this afternoon, this evening, that the
21 dollars don't work out, the money doesn't work
22 out. The numbers don't work for the people being
23 brought in.

24 I also don't know what the restrictions
25 on Shepard Road and mass transit is. I worked as

1 a signatory for the neighborhood on a couple of
2 issues for Shepard Road and the only thing I
3 remember is we were trying to reduce the lanes of
4 concrete going back and forth. What has been
5 talked about tonight with bus transit and mass
6 transit, bus route transportation, I don't think
7 anybody here would have any problems saying,
8 every time --

9 Start a bus route at the Mall of
10 America, at the airport or at the distant
11 suburbs, Burnsville or whatever and start it
12 coming all the way down 35E, Shepard Road and
13 when it gets full, start another bus and run
14 that, too, until it gets full. Every time a bus
15 with 44 people comes down that road, that's 44
16 less cars on the road. We'd be okay with more
17 buses and less cars on the road.

18 Now that accidentally will save you a
19 lot of money and one of the things we have heard,
20 tonight, an accidental occurrence of
21 opportunistic money is that almost killed us with
22 Shepard Road because all the labor unions were
23 against us. They wanted to build big, build
24 heavy because it was jobs for them. This is very
25 serious and I respect it because there's a lot of

1 labor people that work and live in St. Paul and
2 the West Seventh area.

3 So, please do what the first gentleman
4 said, spend 85 million dollars on real good bike
5 paths. All the way. Spend the money, but don't
6 do it on the roads.

7 EUGENE PICCOLO: If there's anybody
8 else that wishes to speak, if you'd please sign
9 up.

10 Garry Kopp?

11 GARRY KOPP: My name is Garry Kopp. I
12 live at 601 Palace Avenue. Unlike many of you
13 who have been here for years, I moved here five
14 years ago. People ask me, would you move back to
15 Minneapolis. Only if they take me in a coffin.
16 I love the neighborhood. My partner loves it.
17 We have a child. We really like it because there
18 are four schools within six miles that we want
19 her to go to. We have to decide in a couple
20 years.

21 My problem with this is when we got
22 here we had the brewery project which kind of
23 snuck through fast and there were some problems
24 with. There's the ethanol plant that snuck
25 through fast and there were some problems with,

1 like breathing occasionally. I am kind of
2 worried about this one because it's kind of
3 sneaking up fast and what are we getting told
4 this time.

5 Can we wait and make a good plan. I
6 want light rail in the cities. I work at the
7 airport and I'd love to be able to take an
8 efficient light rail or bus from near my house to
9 work, but let's plan it so it doesn't do too much
10 damage. I can't say no damage, but let's
11 minimize it, okay.

12 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

13 Jeff Johnson?

14 JEFF JOHNSON: I'm Jeff Johnson. I've
15 lived in the neighborhood for about almost 20
16 years and I own a pharmacy on the south side of
17 West Seventh Street and one of my concerns is not
18 only the increased traffic, the lack of parking
19 which is very vital to our business, but I think
20 it's also going to separate the community.

21 What's happening is we're on the south
22 side and I only wish my business was on the north
23 side because it will make it more convenient for
24 people to take their business up to Grand Avenue
25 or to Highland Park than have to cross West

1 Seventh Street to come to my business.

2 So, I think that's going to be another
3 vital problem for any business on the south side.
4 Thank you.

5 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

6 Again, is there anyone else who wishes
7 to speak that has not signed up?

8 Would you state your name and address
9 and then please sign up on the sheet?

10 NICK THOMPSON: My name's Nick Thompson
11 and I live at 270 Goodrich Avenue.

12 A lot of my concerns have been talked
13 about today, but I wanted to restate them. I'm
14 concerned that when I ask serious issues about
15 traffic impact that we get answers that, we'll
16 deal with them once we pick an alternative.
17 Issues like when they want to reduce the lanes
18 from four to two, where do all those cars go? We
19 have a much higher impact of people trapped in
20 cars to benefit 700 bus riders. Other things
21 like eliminating left turns. That means you're
22 going to increase a lot of traffic on side
23 streets, which is a serious safety issue for
24 pedestrians and children.

25 Now that I have a two year old, it's a

1 major concern of mine.

2 I'm all in favor of the goal of
3 increasing transit ridership, but I don't think
4 other real serious alternatives have been
5 considered here, such as reducing the cost of the
6 bus ride to increase ridership or actually having
7 free bus ridership or just making the current
8 service better.

9 The city council approved the planning
10 board's alternative. They said they wanted to
11 use CP Rail because of the impact on West Seventh
12 in that one section, but they're still putting
13 the alternative back on West Seventh, especially
14 past my house and the businesses there and why
15 isn't the impact as great there as it was in the
16 CP Rail. I also am concerned that the Shepard
17 Road alternative was not considered. I think
18 that is the best choice to spur development
19 because that is where the open areas are to
20 increase transit friendly development and also to
21 provide the fastest route, if that is our goal,
22 from downtown to the airport.

23 And back to addressing the issues. I
24 think they will have a major negative impact on
25 the businesses in the neighborhood because I

1 think they will probably reduce on street
2 parking. I think the businesses are starting to
3 really do well and that helps our neighborhoods.

4 Thank you.

5 EUGENE PICCOLO: So, if we can just
6 kind of recap what we heard tonight, we heard at
7 the beginning support for making sure whatever is
8 built, if anything is built, that bike and
9 pedestrian -- We heard concerns about rerouting,
10 taking off West Seventh of rail right of way
11 crossing. We heard about -- major concerns
12 repeated over and over again about the quality of
13 life in the neighborhood and the fabric of the
14 neighborhood and how any system that is built
15 might cut again into the fabric of the
16 neighborhood, such as has occurred in the history
17 of this neighborhood.

18 We've heard of the issue of parking, of
19 left turn lanes. We heard about that people have
20 not had promises kept in the past. Concerns
21 about the speed of the process, the decision
22 making process. Concern about not being involved
23 in the process. Concern about whether or not
24 this is really meeting a need versus trying to
25 chase money. We heard that people are not

1 getting answers to their questions. We heard
2 that -- pedestrian safety. We heard impact on
3 other streets in the neighborhood has not been
4 considered. We heard about the facts that the
5 option for Shepard Road does not seem to be an
6 option. And we heard people raise the issue of
7 what is the issue that is really trying to be
8 solved here.

9 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE VOICE: I would
10 like to see a show of hands and record it in the
11 record of how many people here support a no build
12 option versus how many people would like to see
13 something constructed.

14 EUGENE PICCOLO: We certainly could do
15 that.

16 Can we have a show of hands of those in
17 favor of a no build option?

18 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE VOICE: Looks
19 unanimous.

20 EUGENE PICCOLO: Let the record show
21 that the vast majority, probably 90 percent or
22 more of hands.

23 How many people favor one of the build
24 options?

25 Just a couple of hands. Okay.

1 First, to conclude, I want to thank you
2 for coming, again and for being respectful to
3 each other, to the time and to the process for
4 tonight.

5 Before we end, I do want to ask
6 Commissioner Ortega who is chair of the Board of
7 County Commissioners to make a short comment.

8 RAFAEL ORTEGA: First of all, I wanted
9 to say thank you all for coming this evening.

10 The reason we put this together and we
11 have another one next week, I believe and we have
12 a public hearing by the entire board, is to get
13 this kind of input and for us to reflect on
14 everything that's been said, today and to look at
15 how we're going to move ahead.

16 I mean, I've heard everything you said
17 tonight and I wrote everything down and I will
18 sit down and process this.

19 I think there might be middle ground
20 here. We can improve transit. I surely would
21 like to see transit improve, I think we need it
22 for the neighborhoods, but I do hear your
23 concerns with West Seventh. I share the same
24 concerns with West Seventh, quite frankly and we
25 are debating those and looking at what are the

1 alternatives to West Seventh; are there any
2 alternatives to West Seventh, and those are the
3 type of issues we're also grappling with on the
4 board.

5 So, all I want to say is that as far as
6 the Ramsey County Board, we are going through a
7 process and this is part of the process and I
8 know many of you history with other events that
9 have taken place in this neighborhood, I wasn't
10 here 40 years ago when these things took place.
11 I understand from folks talking to me about the
12 history. I don't want to add to that, but I
13 certainly do want to improve the transit if I
14 can. The hope in all this is to make our transit
15 system better, not to destroy neighborhoods.

16 And so this is just part of a process
17 and I don't know what I can tell you, but let me
18 tell you that we are grappling with this on the
19 board and we are looking for ways to make this a
20 viable project. This is not a done deal where
21 we're going to say we're going to do this on West
22 Seventh.

23 Again, Commissioner Bennett and I
24 have been in meetings with Met Council and with
25 the state, with Senator Kelly for the last two

1 months on a weekly basis, with the mayor --
2 literally on a weekly basis for the last four or
3 five weeks grappling with this.

4 There is not consensus between what
5 some of the commissioners feel with the city --
6 how the city is looking at it and how the Met
7 Council is looking at it and so we're really
8 trying to come together and see if we can come up
9 with an alternative that really works and
10 improves transit. This is part of that process.

11 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE VOICE: No build.

12 RAFAEL ORTEGA: Excuse me?

13 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE VOICE: No build.

14 RAFAEL ORTEGA: We heard that.

15 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE VOICE: No, you're
16 saying for this process to go forward.

17 RAFAEL ORTEGA: No, no. I'm looking at
18 a way that we could improve transit. It might
19 mean better bus shelters, improved buses,
20 improved signaling. All of that comes under this
21 project and the reality is that we haven't had
22 improvement in bus and transit system because
23 there hasn't been an increase in the budget for
24 buses for a decade. We're just beginning to make
25 those inroads, now.

1 This happens to be a pot of money where
2 we can try and see how we could best utilize
3 those dollars. We heard your concerns and we are
4 now taking this back. This is part of the
5 process.

6 And I can guarantee you that
7 Commissioner Bennett and I have been grappling
8 with the very issues you have brought up. We
9 agree with you.

10 So, all I'm saying is is that I thank
11 you for being here tonight, I want you to
12 participate in the other two public hearings.

13 We've heard about all the issues,
14 whether it's extending the time or so forth.
15 These are all legitimate issues and we're trying
16 to address those and trying to see how we can
17 come up with a plan that maybe you could bless.
18 Maybe it's just improve the current bus service,
19 build better shelters.

20 I don't know. I don't want to promise
21 anything. I'm just saying we heard you and we
22 are going to try and address those issues and
23 we've been in the process of addressing these
24 issues in the last two, months. It gets very
25 complicated because there's three government

1 entities involved. We don't have sole
2 responsibility at the county level and it is
3 being divided between the Met Council, the county
4 and the DOT.

5 So, again, I just want to thank you for
6 being here and we will sit down and we'll deal
7 with this and we want to communication with you
8 again and we'll have more public hearings and I
9 want you to show up for those public hearings.

10 I'm not here to debate on any given
11 issues. That will take all night. I'm here to
12 listen and to see how we can make something work.

13 Thank you.

14 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you again for
15 coming tonight. The staff for the various
16 agencies are still here to answer any questions
17 for a few minutes.

18 (Whereupon the proceedings were
19 concluded.)
20
21
22
23
24
25

1
2 STATE OF MINNESOTA)

3 COUNTY OF HENNEPIN)
4

5 I, Glenn H. Anderson, a Notary Public in and for
6 the County of Hennepin, State of Minnesota, do hereby
7 certify that the foregoing proceedings were had in my
8 presence on Wednesday, October 11, 2000, at the West
9 Seventh Community Center, 265 Oneida Street, St. Paul,
10 Minnesota.

11 I certify that said proceedings were taken in
12 Stenograph and afterwards transcribed into typewriting
13 under my direction; and that the foregoing is a true
14 and correct transcript of said proceedings.

15 I further certify that I am not related to any of
16 the parties before-named and that I am not interested
17 in this matter directly or indirectly.

18 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and
19 seal this 18th day of October, 2000.

20
21
22 
23 Glenn H. Anderson, Notary Public
24 Hennepin County, Minnesota
25 My Commission expires 1/31/2005

RAMSEY COUNTY REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY

RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR LISTENING SESSION

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2000

7:30 O'CLOCK P.M.

ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH

1807 FIELD AVENUE

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Tuesday evening,
October 17, 2000,
7:30 o'clock p.m.,

Whereupon, the following proceedings were had:

EUGENE PICCOLO: I want to thank you
for coming this evening, for taking time out of
your daily routine to participate in this
listening session on the Riverview Corridor.

My name is Eugene Piccolo. I'm a
resident of Dayton's Bluff and member of the
Dayton's Bluff Community Council and of the Upper
Sweet Hollow Neighborhood Association. I've been
involved in a lot of issues, housing, code
enforcement, transportation, economic development
in our neighborhood. Tonight my role is as a
facilitator, not as somebody taking any active
position on any issues.

Before we begin the listening session,
what I'd like to do is lay out the ground rules
for this evening.

First of all, we ask you to sign up to
speak. There are sign-up sheets at the back
table. If you wish to speak, we ask you to sign

1 up first. We will call people in the order they
2 sign up. When you do come up to the microphone,
3 we ask you to speak in it, to state your name and
4 address. If you're speaking on behalf of an
5 organization, please indicate that. If you have
6 spoke at last week's session, we ask you to
7 indicate that, also. What we're going to try to
8 do is make sure we have time for everybody to
9 speak.

10 We will set a limit of about two
11 minutes for each speaker and about 30 seconds
12 before the end of your time I will kind of wave
13 the yellow sheets, so you get the signal to kind
14 of wrap up your remarks.

15 We also have an opportunity to present
16 written comments. There is white sheets at the
17 back if you wish to give written comments in the
18 process. In fact, this Friday October 20th, is
19 the deadline for any comments on the process

20 Next week on the 24th of the October
21 from 10:00 until noon there will be a public
22 hearing on the issue of the Riverview Corridor
23 held by the Rail Authority of Ramsey County and
24 then on November 14th, the Rail Authority will
25 meet to make a decision.

1 Tonight all comments will be recorded.
2 We have a court reporter because everything here
3 tonight will be part of the public record on the
4 Riverview Corridor. We also have interpreters if
5 so needed in both Russian and Spanish and please
6 indicate if you are in need of that.

7 Our listeners tonight are the Chairman
8 of the Board of Ramsey County Commissioners,
9 Commissioner Raphael Ortega, the Chairman of the
10 Rail Authority, Commissioner Tony Bennett and the
11 Director of the Ramsey County rail Authority,
12 Kathy DeSpiegelaere.

13 Tonight is a listening session and so
14 it is a different kind of approach. Normally
15 there is a debate between public officials and so
16 forth and we are missing that on the great debate
17 tonight, the third debate, but we're going to
18 have for an hour and a half two of our public
19 officials sitting and listening without speaking.
20 So, it is an opportunity for you to make your
21 points clear.

22 Before we begin taking the actual
23 comments from everyone, in the last couple weeks
24 there has been a great deal of activity on this
25 issue. As you know, the major impact study

1 indicated there are four options. One is no
2 build. Second is an improvement of management of
3 the transit system. The third was to build a
4 busway and the forth, light rail.

5 In the last couple weeks the St. Paul
6 Planning Commission has met and discussed the
7 issue and today the mayor announced the
8 administration's position with regard to the
9 Riverview Corridor. So, we're going to take a
10 couple minutes to ask Tony Shertler from the
11 Planning and Economic Development Department to
12 give a brief update of what has occurred in terms
13 of the Planning Commission and also the mayor's
14 announcement.

15 I do want to recognize that we do have
16 other public officials in the room. Councilman
17 Harris and Representative Paymar are here and I'm
18 not sure if there is any other county
19 commissioners here tonight.

20 So, we thank them for participating
21 tonight, also.

22 Tony?

23 TONY SHERTLER: My name is Tony
24 Shertler. I'm with the city's Department of
25 Planning and Economic development, and the city

1 like anybody else in this process is really a
2 commenting entity to the Ramsey County Regional
3 Rail Authority. However, the city's say in this
4 matters. The Metropolitan Council is looking for
5 the locally preferred alternative and the city
6 council and mayor are important partners in
7 determining what that locally preferred
8 alternative is. The Ramsey County Rail Authority
9 is the entity that finally decides what modes or
10 routes would be selected and the Metropolitan
11 Council bus company is the entity that controls
12 the funding, depending on what alternative they
13 would be building. They build the transit system
14 for the metropolitan area.

15 In brief, what the Planning Commission
16 has done and the city did originally was said, we
17 care about three facets of this project. We're
18 the zoning authority for the City of St. Paul, so
19 we do the land use, we do the redevelopment
20 efforts that are occurring there. We are the
21 development authority, so we have a lot of
22 investment in this area potentially, the
23 Shepard/Davern, the entertainment district
24 downtown, the Metro State Library, 3M.

25 And we care about the right of way. We

1 own and manage the streets and the right of way
2 is the commodity that's scarce. The right of way
3 --

4 Everybody uses the right of way to
5 drive, drive buses on or park cars on. That's
6 the scarce commodity here and our public works
7 people are very concerned about introducing
8 things to that right of way.

9 Finally, generally, for the growth of
10 the city, the support of the employment commuter
11 growth for our downtown and for the businesses
12 along this corridor and for residents is clearly
13 an important feature for us and those are
14 generally the areas the city is stepping in to
15 comment on.

16 The city in the past and for several
17 years has supported transit improvements as most
18 major metropolitan areas have. We're at the
19 legislature each year looking for funding for
20 transit. We also have strong issues about
21 widening the roads, Ayd Mill Road, I-35E, Shepard
22 Road overpass. These are all issues that elected
23 officials are very aware of. So, these --

24 The city also has a comprehensive plan.
25 We have a chapter in our comprehensive plan that

1 talks about transit improvements. This corridor
2 is one of the corridors that they say should have
3 transit improvements, i.e., high speed express
4 type transit that moves through the region,
5 pass-through region, from the northeast all the
6 way down to the southwest.

7 So, these are where the city's
8 naturally going to comment.

9 The Planning Commission also is aware
10 that when you introduce a fixed guideway system
11 that -- the demands of sort of a speed transit is
12 going to have a local impact. It's physically
13 impossible not to introduce something that takes
14 up space in the right of way and priority to not
15 have an impact.

16 There were four alternatives or several
17 alternatives laid out in the MIS and the Planning
18 Commission said, okay, we've got a plan. We
19 advocate for transit. What is the alternative
20 for an expressway fast dedicated product that is
21 acceptable to the Planning Commission.

22 Let me explain sort of how we attacked
23 the four issues.

24 No build is fairly obvious. We know
25 what happens. The growth's occurring and you

1 don't do anything to address it.

2 TSM is really upgrading the existing
3 system. It's fairly invisible, but you see new
4 shelters, more buses and it's upgrading the
5 existing system. It's generally an improvement
6 in the existing bus service.

7 LRT is very invasive. It's on tracks
8 and you don't move off the tracks and it needs a
9 dedicated guideway all the through.

10 A busway is by definition a flexible
11 product and I think Councilmember Harris had the
12 best description of it; Chutes and Ladders. It's
13 on rubber. It can turn. If something changes
14 you can go a different route. But it's looking
15 for the same thing which is dedicated, speed,
16 ridership. And what they're looking for ideally
17 is the thing traveling through all the way
18 dedicated is the best for it as to compromise,
19 it's reducing its headway, its predictability in
20 mixed traffic. So, you start to compromise what
21 that product is.

22 So, the Planning Commission, very
23 sensitive to what the local issues are, looked at
24 the alternatives that were presented and they
25 noticed some impacts that our public works staff

1 put up on the table right away.

2 One is because they have to be
3 dedicated all the way down Seventh Street you're
4 going to lose parking and we know the commercial
5 establishments on Seventh Street, closer to
6 downtown particularly, but all along Seventh
7 Street are very concerned about losing the
8 parking.

9 The second issue is that some of the
10 routes look like they're going to impact directly
11 residential property. There's some concern about
12 impact to residential property.

13 So, the Planning Commission took those
14 alternatives that were presented and tried to
15 come to a compromise that met their comprehensive
16 vision on what they want do for transit with the
17 least amount of local impact and it is not a
18 hundred percent solution to everyone. There is a
19 local impact and you can't escape it.

20 There is another alternative which will
21 have no local impact, which is -- I shouldn't say
22 no local impact because there is a growth
23 scenario that is going to occur and things are
24 going to slow down, but it has a reduced
25 immediate local impact and TSM obviously is

1 hybrid.

2 The Planning Commission alternative is
3 to stay on West Seventh street and there is some
4 cross-sections up there that show what that will
5 mean. When you come across the Highway 5 bridge,
6 you're on Seventh Street and you're dedicated.
7 That means the right of way has to get wider
8 where the thing comes through by 18 feet and
9 where there is a station it has to get wider by
10 42 feet. That's give or take two feet, but
11 essentially you have a station that you're going
12 to insert in that area and it's going to impact
13 outside the 80 foot existing right of way.

14 The next place the thing goes is on the
15 Canadian Pacific Rail right of way. And the plan
16 is the Canadian Pacific Railroad has 50 feet of
17 right of way. The track slides over to 24, 25
18 feet and the busway operates in the other 25 feet
19 and so the only property owner directly impacted
20 is the railroad. There is impact, drive-by
21 impacts on adjacent property owners.

22 It goes down the CP line to Toronto,
23 where it comes back up on West Seventh and the
24 compromise here for the bus company's headway is
25 it's speed, it's dedicated bus system, is they're

1 willing to go to diamond lanes so they don't lose
2 the commercial parking, the on-street parking
3 from Toronto in to Smith Street where the
4 hospital is and then it's in mixed traffic. It
5 essentially drives by Cossetta's, drives by the
6 hospital and gets onto the existing downtown box,
7 which is Fifth Street, Sixth Street, through
8 downtown, out East Seventh Street where now it's
9 dedicated again so it's filling up right of way
10 and through Metro State where there's a stop and
11 out to 3M.

12 That satisfies --

13 Again, a busway is a flexible product.
14 We wanted to know what's the least invasive
15 acceptable busway to the bus company. What can
16 you guys accept that is the least invasive.

17 They like this alternative and I'll let
18 the bus company speak to it directly, but I
19 believe they like this alternative because the CP
20 line gives them dedicated headway that they can
21 make speeds as they can bypass the traffic which
22 is significant on West Seventh until they get to
23 Toronto and they can compromise to the diamond
24 lanes from Toronto in, they can compromise the
25 unpredictability in a line of paint where cars

1 can go in and cars can go out, they can parallel
2 park. There's a breakdown and a share of the
3 same right of way.

4 So, they're willing to do that because
5 they make the headways on CP.

6 Another alternative that is not
7 recommended by the Planning Commission, but could
8 address some of the issues would be you create an
9 on-ramp for the traffic, get cars off of West
10 Seventh and you have more right of way to deal
11 with the busway. You take the cars off, put them
12 on Shepard, but you've got to get them back on
13 35E, because the traffic counts between 35E
14 Highway 5 are nearly double what they are between
15 35E and downtown. Everybody takes the shortcut
16 to the airport, they cut over to the Mall of
17 America. You can't solve the problem by just
18 doing it on Highway 5, you've got to put them
19 back on over here.

20 The other consequence of that is you
21 may be able to put the busway on Seventh Street,
22 but now they don't have the CP line's dedicated
23 speeds. They're compromising headway on Seventh,
24 which means they need more dedicated all the way
25 down Seventh to get predictability, which mean

1 you sacrifice on-street parking.

2 That is generally what the alternatives
3 on a busway are, the impacts of the alternatives
4 on busway are. This is a general document at
5 this stage. They have to go back and do more
6 detailed engineering, they have to decide where
7 stations will be, they have to do land use
8 planning around some of these things. There are
9 a lot of details that aren't know, but we know
10 generally, within 90 percent certainty, this
11 thing will gobble up right of way space and need
12 -- it needs its dedication.

13 LRT is an alternative here. The Met
14 Council -- ^{Nacho} Natso Diaz came to our Planning
15 Commission about a month ago. I don't believe
16 the Met Council sees that they're going to be
17 able to build a whole lot of LRT capacity in the
18 short order. If you want to select LRT you are
19 talking about an improvement that's out several
20 years. It's not on the horizon immediately,
21 though it's a legitimate alternative.

22 The Planning Commission found that if
23 there was funding available for a busway, it get
24 dedication, gets riders; that we should that
25 advantage to get that improvement in here as soon

1 as we can.

2 The other alternative, TSM, is a
3 legitimate alternative. We don't believe, the
4 Planning Commission, doesn't believe that that
5 accounts for the growth.

6 That's generally where we are. The
7 mayor has said today that he's very motivated to
8 try and make sure we're part of the regional
9 transit system and I think --

10 One last caution. The way -- You have
11 to understand that this is only one leg of a
12 multi-corridor system. This line actually
13 eventually extends out to White Bear Lake.
14 Twenty-five percent of the downtown employment is
15 in White Bear Lake. There's a lot of people who
16 are concerned about making sure that there is an
17 attractive alternative to the automobile to serve
18 commuter traffic.

19 That's it. Thank you.

20 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you, Tony, for
21 giving us an update on what the Planning
22 Commission has done.

23 We're going to begin the listening
24 session. Again, if you wish to speak and you
25 have not signed up, please do so at the back.

1 Joe Claus.

2 Please, again, speak into the
3 microphone and state your name and address and if
4 you are speaking on behalf of an organization,
5 please identify that.

6 JOE CLAUS: My name is Joe Claus. I
7 live at 99⁴Linwood. I am a representative of
8 GIFT, which is Gateway Interfaith Table for
9 Affordable housing.

10 GIFT is an interfaith group of
11 concerned citizens from churches, synagogues and
12 temples in the Highland Park area who are
13 committed to solving the affordable housing
14 crisis. It's apparent from Table ES-3 which is
15 on Page ES-8 in this Riverview Corridor book,
16 which is what we had to work with originally,
17 that almost any of the alternatives, especially
18 Numbers 3 through 7 will mean the displacement of
19 both businesses and housing.

20 The members of GIFT ask that as part of
21 the public record, the plan include a one before
22 one replacement of any demolished housing in the
23 neighborhood. That is, that even before any home
24 is demolished, a home, preferably in the same
25 neighborhood and of comparably affordability be

1 made available for occupancy by the owner or
2 tenants. If course, with the right of first
3 refusal. That is, the replacement unit needs to
4 be available for occupancy before demolition of
5 any home is begun.

6 Thank you.

7 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

8 Hugh Gitlin?

9 HUGH GITLIN: My name is --

10 EUGENE PICCOLO: We're going to ask
11 everyone to speak as loud as you can. The system
12 is inept.

13 HUGH GITLIN: My name's Hugh Gitlin. I
14 live at 1360 St. Paul Avenue and I'm also with
15 the Gateway Interfaith Table for Affordable
16 Housing.

17 One thing that we are also concerned
18 with is neighbors. Any alternative should keep
19 any neighborhood in tact. Therefor^e it should be
20 using existing corridors and right of way and no
21 new corridors or right of way should be built.
22 It's very important that neighborhoods, no matter
23 where they are, be preserved and the green space
24 in those neighborhoods be preserved.

25 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

1 Kristine Poelzer?

2 KRISTINE POELZER: My name is Kristine
3 Poelzer. It's P-o-e-l-z-e-r. Kristine with a K.
4 My address is 1870 Indian Place, Arden Hills,
5 Minnesota. I am here as a metro area citizen
6 representative of the state Bicycle Advisory
7 Committee. I'm a citizen volunteer. I'm not in
8 a paid position. I'm speaking here tonight to
9 let you know that all ^otwo often people forget the
10 needs of those who travel in a non-motorized mode
11 when it comes to considering transit
12 improvements.

13 I want to thank you for conducting^x this
14 study of potential transit improvements in the
15 St. Paul area and I particularly appreciate the
16 fact that you sought out and welcomed the input
17 of bicyclists. I think it's important to note
18 that when you look at the various pieces that
19 have been written up here in the study plan, that
20 there is very little if nothing in regard to
21 trails for bicyclists or allowances for
22 bicyclists to use these new transit improvements,
23 and I would like for you to take that into
24 account, that something needs to be done along
25 this new corridor as you take a look, if you

1 choose to go with something other than a no build
2 option.

3 I think it's important to note
4 particularly -- My concern is is that the Highway
5 5 bridge over the the river connecting East River
6 Road and Shepard Road and Fort Snelling State
7 Park needs an upgraded enhanced design for
8 bicyclists and pedestrians access, using ramps.
9 Currently the stairs are barriers to save access
10 and provide no access currently for wheelchair
11 users.

12 The redesign and installation of the
13 ramps to access the Highway 5 bridge would be in
14 line with Minnesota effort that would follow the
15 federal effort with a policy of increasing
16 non-motorized transportation to at least 15
17 percent of all trips.

18 I think it's important to note as well
19 that when you allow or encourage bicyclists as a
20 part of transit, that they bring no additional
21 noise pollution and no additional air pollution.

22 I think that bicycling as a commuter
23 may not be an option for everyone, but for those
24 people who chose that option, they are indeed
25 enhancing the welfare of the community as a

1 whole.

2 It's also important to note that the
3 bicycle map and commuter guide that is published
4 for bicyclists in the five county metro area is
5 something that is being reviewed and currently
6 the Highway 5 bridge because of the poor access
7 that it provides is listed as poor. We would
8 like to get access to this bridge enhanced so
9 that we could list it as something regularly
10 usable by bicyclists.

11 Thank you very much for your time.

12 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

13 We're going to ask you to come over
14 here and use the microphone. You have to pick it
15 up and hold it because that's the only one that
16 seems to be working.

17 John Reinhardt.

18 JOHN REINHARDT: I'm John Reinhardt and
19 I live by the Hiawatha Avenue Light Rail Plan and
20 I've read about your project concerns, which are
21 pretty much the same as on Hiawatha Avenue.

22 The Hiawatha Light Rail Plan is in the
23 final design, but the operating plan is yet to be
24 told to the public. There is many outstanding
25 questions about parking, preemption of the cross

1 traffic, noise, horn or whistles at all the
2 crossings and bus reroute plans to feed light
3 rail that includes 76 buses per hour at 46th
4 Street.

5 The environmental law clearly mandates
6 that these issues be addressed, but they haven't
7 been addressed to date.

8 We have been in contact with MnDot, Met
9 Council, the City of Minneapolis, and although
10 it's all mandated by law, they refuse to address
11 these issues.

12 The people are concerned about this
13 projects affects on their neighborhood.
14 Environmental review is available by petition
15 from the Environmental Quality Board. This
16 review would require a scientific analysis of all
17 options and provide for public input on all
18 aspects of this or any project that St. Paul
19 chooses to build.

20 This project really coincides
21 completely with the Hiawatha line. They all
22 inter-related, they all go together and so our
23 concerns are your concerns and if we're not
24 getting answers on these final plans, there is no
25 way they can have answers for your people that

1 are just beginning.

2 Thank you very much.

3 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

4 Bruce Goordner?

5 MR. GOORDNER: Ted said I had to wait
6 for whoever wishes to speak because I spoke last
7 time.

8 EUGENE PICCOLO: John Carlson?

9 JOHN CARLSON: Yes, my name is John
10 Carlson. I'm a resident of 1740 Norfolk. I've
11 grown up in the Highland area, I've lived in
12 downtown St. Paul for over a year at a time, too.

13 My question here is is what we're
14 looking at is a dedicated light rail or dedicated
15 busway. I hope something like that does happen.

16 When I lived in downtown, I worked out
17 by the Mall of America and it took me 45 minutes
18 to get there. My wife currently still works at
19 the same place, it still takes her over 20
20 minutes to get there and that's by taking Route
21 54.

22 Route 54 has plenty of traffic on it
23 both during the day and at night.

24 What I'm am looking at here is my
25 future hopes are I hope this is what you guys are

1 envisioning is a way to get into downtown St.
2 Paul as fast as possible. By doing this, which I
3 think you should do or my suggestion would be
4 would be to put as few stops along as possible.
5 We already have buses that stop on every single
6 block. Maybe have a couple of transit stations
7 and have your buses go through the blocks that
8 stop at blocks, pick people off and drop them off
9 at your transit station.

10 That's all I have to say.

11 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

12 Andrew Koebrick?

13 ANDREW KOEBRICK: Koebrick.

14 264 Oneida Street, St. Paul.

15 First of all, I'm excited about better
16 transit in the area. I'm not a driver, myself.
17 I pretty much rely on the bike to get around,
18 year around, and realize that I get older my
19 knees probably aren't going to be holding out and
20 sooner or later I'm going to be on this bus even
21 though I don't like it now.

22 Even at this point I do take the bus on
23 occasion. I just came back Saturday from the
24 airport on the bus line. Worked just fine as it
25 is, but I do have a couple concerns.

1 One, if you get rid of the parking and
2 put in the diamond lane, what happens to the
3 biking on West Seventh Street? I haven't seen
4 that addressed in the least in any of the
5 studies. Secondly, if you're running high speed
6 vehicles that are burning gasoline as opposed to
7 electric or a natural guess, what are the fume
8 impacts going to be, exhaust impacts for a person
9 biking on West Seventh Street, which is already
10 pretty hazardous for the rider.

11 And, secondly, as we are talking about
12 building more light rail, I think it's ironic
13 that the city is still incentivizing the private
14 automobile by building parking ramps in downtown
15 St. Paul, trying to get more traffic coming in.
16 I think if we are going to be trying to get folks
17 onto transit we ought to also start limiting the
18 subsidization of the automobile by building
19 parking ramps downtown.

20 And finally, I have grave concerns over
21 the public input process for this whole
22 procedure. I stumbled by chance into the first
23 MIS study two years and so I was on the mailing
24 list for this. I had been trying to keep up with
25 it, regularly checking into the web sight for

1 this, trying to go to the public meetings and yet
2 by the time that they sent out notice for these
3 public meetings, half of them had already gone
4 by, most of them up in the Dayton's Bluff area.
5 I checked the web site on September 9th of this
6 year and the most recent meetings they had listed
7 were from September of last year. So, they were
8 literally a year behind.

9 That's just unacceptable. We've got to
10 get people aware of what's going on with this,
11 get them involved or your going to fact problems
12 afterwards with people challenging the process.

13 I'm reminded of a Mark Twain quote,
14 "Never attribute to malice what can be explained
15 through incompetence." And I hope that that's
16 what's going on; that you guys aren't trying to
17 just steamroll this process through, but I do
18 have doubts.

19 I was talking to one of my neighbors
20 today who owns a business on West Seventh Street
21 and he noted that last week the public comment
22 meeting at the Oneida Community Center was the
23 day the Wild opened and so every single business
24 owner on West Seventh was at their establishment
25 and could not come down.

1 I'm hoping, again, that that's
2 coincidence, but I hope for your guys' sake that
3 you open up the process a little bit more, just
4 so this thing can go through smoothly because I
5 want to ride the bus.

6 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

7 Steve Scholl?

8 STEVE SCHOLL: Madam Chairman,
9 Commissioners, I appreciate your having this
10 public forum tonight.

11 My name is Steve School. I live on St.
12 Paul Avenue. I've lived in Highland since 1984.
13 I ride a bicycle and I'm elaborating on the
14 letter that I sent.

15 My comments deal with the access to the
16 Highway 5 bridge. Having the bridge is very --
17 helps me a lot. You can get across the river,
18 you don't have to go all the way down to
19 Minnehaha Falls, you don't have to go back up to
20 St. Paul. So, it's an ideal place to cross the
21 river, especially if you live in this area.

22 The problem as to do with the steps.
23 As I said, I have been here since 1984. The
24 concrete steps have metal on the front of them.
25 The rise and the tread of these steps -- I don't

1 think it passes the St. Paul building code. And
2 they're very difficult to walk on and with metal
3 on the steps it makes it very easy to slip and
4 hurt yourself.

5 There's a little channel that's been
6 attached to the steps to put the tires of your
7 bicycle on. It's made for, I guess, an adult who
8 can manipulate a bicycle up and down these steps
9 and not for a child, definitely not a wheelchair.
10 Today you have carts, you have joggers with
11 carts, you have shadow bicycles that attach to an
12 existing bicycle, you have tandems, all sorts of
13 different configurations. People with small
14 children, small children trying to use the steps.
15 These steps don't allow for that.

16 Just imagine a bicycle with a child
17 cart. You have to detach the child cart, then
18 you have to decide what am I going to take first
19 and who am I going to leave behind. Should I
20 leave the baby behind in the cart, should I take
21 the baby down first and then go get the bicycle.
22 It's very difficult to access this bridge.

23 The other thing is that the city can't
24 get over to clean the bridge during the
25 wintertime because the machinery doesn't go up

1 and down the steps.

2 As long as there is being money spent
3 to improve roadways for transportation access, I
4 am suggesting that the access to this bridge be
5 made so that you can ride or push or whatever it
6 is on a ramp rather than on the stairs.

7 Thank you.

8 EUGENE PICCOLO: Thank you.

9 Barb Thoman?

10 BARB THOMAN: My name is Barb Thoman.
11 I work for Transit for Livable Communities,
12 which is an organization located at 624 Selby
13 Avenue. We're a non-profit group that advocates
14 for a greater emphasis on transit use, biking and
15 walking in the metro area and development
16 patterns that reduce the need to drive. We have
17 members throughout the region, including the
18 Highland neighborhood and including the West
19 Seventh neighborhood.

20 This region and our St. Paul
21 neighborhoods can expect a growth in jobs, in
22 housing and in traffic over the course of the
23 next 20 years and that increase in vehicle
24 traffic will have a continuing negative impact on
25 air quality, public health and the livability of