



Midtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

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Prepared by the
SRF Consulting Group Team for





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List of Acronyms

AA	Alternatives Analysis
CLUES	Comunidades Latina Unidos en Servicio
HCRRA	Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority
PAC	Policy Advisory Committee
PMT	Project Management Team
CAC	Community Advisory Committee
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee

1. Introduction

Metro Transit, in partnership with Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis, has initiated an alternatives analysis (AA) to identify possible transitway improvements in the Midtown Corridor. The purpose of the AA is to identify and analyze the benefits, costs, and impacts associated with various transit alternatives in the Midtown Corridor. This information will help us understand how a transitway can improve transit service and increase ridership, while also encouraging local sustainable development within an established urban environment.



Stakeholder Engagement Plan

An important component of the AA is outreach to and involvement of stakeholders along the corridor. To document and purposefully engage stakeholders, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed. The purpose of this plan is to document the tasks related to stakeholder engagement that will be undertaken by the consultant team during the preparation of the (AA) for the Midtown Corridor.

1.1 Goals

The goals of the Midtown Corridor AA Stakeholder Engagement Plan are to:

- Ensure that information is made available to the public and other agencies through the duration of project studies, and that the information is timely, clear and comprehensive.
- Actively recruit parties – including local governments and metropolitan, regional, state, federal agencies, as well as the general public who may become interested in the AA and subsequent transit project(s).
- Ensure that all interested parties—including local governments and metropolitan, regional, state, and federal agencies, as well as the general public—have an opportunity to participate in an open exchange of views throughout the AA.
- Meet or exceed federal and state requirements for stakeholder participation.
- Manage expectations by providing consistent clarity on the decision-making process and the federal funding process requirements.
- Help stakeholders to understand the project objectives, assumptions, alternatives, costs and benefits.
- Build support for the project and, ultimately, a consensus on a locally preferred alternative (LPA) among residents, businesses, local agencies and key stakeholders.

- Involve population groups that have traditionally been under-represented in public policy projects and discussions.
- Increase understanding among residents, businesses and agencies of the Midtown Corridor is an important part of the regional transit system.
- Build relationships and trust through open and clear communication, constructive participation, and respect for all opinions, values and positions throughout the AA process.

1.2 Principles of Effective Stakeholder Engagement

Successful stakeholder engagement is about building trust, understanding, and consensus. Successful public participation is necessary to reach a broad consensus on public infrastructure investments. This requires a process that is characterized by technical competence, honesty and integrity, and good listening. These principles will create the framework within which public participation will occur for the Midtown Corridor AA. This will require:

- Early and continuous participation of stakeholders
- Reasonable availability of technical and other project information
- Collaborative input on alternative transit improvements for the corridor and the criteria against which they will be measured and evaluated
- Open access to the decision-making process
- Proactive efforts to engage the public in the process, particularly those groups that are often underrepresented in public policy processes

1.3 Committee Structure and Decision-Making Process

Three committees will provide input and direction for the Midtown AA, which is led by Metro Transit and rest of the project management team (PMT):

- Policy advisory committee (PAC)
- Technical advisory committee (TAC)
- Community advisory committee (CAC)

The make-up, roles and responsibilities of each of these committees is described below. The overall decision-making process is shown in Figure 1. The TAC, CAC, and PMT will inform the PAC, which will in turn pass along the LPA recommendation to the Metropolitan Council. Final decision-making authority rests with the Metropolitan Council.

Policy Advisory Committee

The policy advisory committee (PAC) consists of policymakers, elected and appointed officials from the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis and other key partner agencies and organizations. The PAC will participate in the overall direction and guidance of the study process, will discuss project alternatives and will make the final locally preferred alternative (LPA) recommendation to the Metropolitan Council. The PAC will meet at least quarterly for the duration of the AA and more

frequently if needed to address specific issues or concerns. The PMT will provide meeting agendas and materials in advance, and will provide a meeting summary to record the discussion.

PAC Members

- Gary Cunningham Metropolitan Council, **PAC Chair**
- Adam Duinick Metropolitan Council, **PAC Vice Chair**
- Gary Schiff City of Minneapolis - City Council
- Robert Lillgren City of Minneapolis - City Council
- Peter Wagenius City of Minneapolis - Mayor's Office
- Peter McLaughlin Hennepin County - Board of Commissioners
- Gail Dorfman Hennepin County - Board of Commissioners
- Dave Burrill Lake Street Council
- Ronald Lezama Latino Economic Development Center
- Janet Olson Midtown Community Works Partnership
- Adam Juul Midtown Community Works Partnership
- John DeWitt Midtown Greenway Coalition
- Andrew Rankin Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Kenya McKnight Transportation Advisory Board

Technical Advisory Committee

The technical advisory committee (TAC) is made up of staff representatives from the partner agencies including Metropolitan Council, Metro Transit, Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, MnDOT and other appropriate public agencies. The purpose of the TAC is to provide technical input to the project and assist in the resolution of technical issues in their field. They will not “vote” on the LPA, but will provide guidance to the PAC on which alternative is the most technically feasible. The TAC will meet at least bi-monthly for the duration of the AA and more frequently if needed to address specific issues or concerns. The PMT will provide meeting agendas and materials in advance, and will provide a meeting summary to record the discussion.

TAC Members

- Anna Flintoft City of Minneapolis - Public Works
- Simon Blenski City of Minneapolis - Public Works
- Paul Mogush City of Minneapolis - Community Planning & Economic Development
- Dean Michalko Hennepin County - Housing, Community Works, & Transit
- Adele Hall Hennepin County - Housing, Community Works, & Transit
- Tom Johnson Hennepin County - Transportation
- Jonathan Ehrlich Metropolitan Council
- Lisa Johnson Metro Transit - Bus Operations
- Maurice Roers Metro Transit - Engineering & Facilities
- John Humphrey Metro Transit - Rail Operations

- John Dillery Metro Transit - Service Development
- Michael Mechtenberg Metro Transit - BRT/Small Starts Project Office, **Project Manager**
- Jim Alexander Metro Transit - Southwest LRT
- Kha Vue MnDOT

Project Management Team

The project management team (PMT) will consist of select staff members from Metro Transit, the Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis. These individuals will be actively involved in the day-to-day management of the AA. The PMT will be the vehicle for facilitating coordination among the partner agencies, the Consultant team, the FTA and the other project committees. The PMT will be responsible for oversight of all technical work as well as the project schedule and staff recommendations to the TAC and PAC. The PMT will meet at least monthly for the duration of the AA. The consultant team will staff meetings, prepare meeting agendas in coordination with Metro Transit staff, prepare meeting materials, and prepare meeting summaries.

PMT Members

- Michael Mechtenberg Metro Transit
- Jonathan Ehrlich Metropolitan Council
- Charles Carlson Metro Transit
- Dean Michalko Hennepin County - Housing, Community Works, & Transit
- Anna Flintoft City of Minneapolis - Public Works
- Joe Kern SRF Consulting Group
- Mona Elabbady SRF Consulting Group
- Charleen Zimmer Zan Associates
- Joy Miciano Zan Associates

Community Advisory Committee

The community advisory committee (CAC) will be made up of representatives from key stakeholder groups in the corridor including neighborhood organizations, business organizations, non-profit groups, institutions and major employers (see Section 2 below). The CAC will be a forum for education, exchange of ideas, and direct input into the AA process. The CAC will discuss project alternatives, identify issues and concerns, review potential benefits and costs of the alternatives, review goals and objectives, and make recommendations to the PAC. The CAC will meet at least quarterly for the duration of the AA. The CAC will also assist the project team in building partnerships and sharing information with the constituents they represent and with the general public.

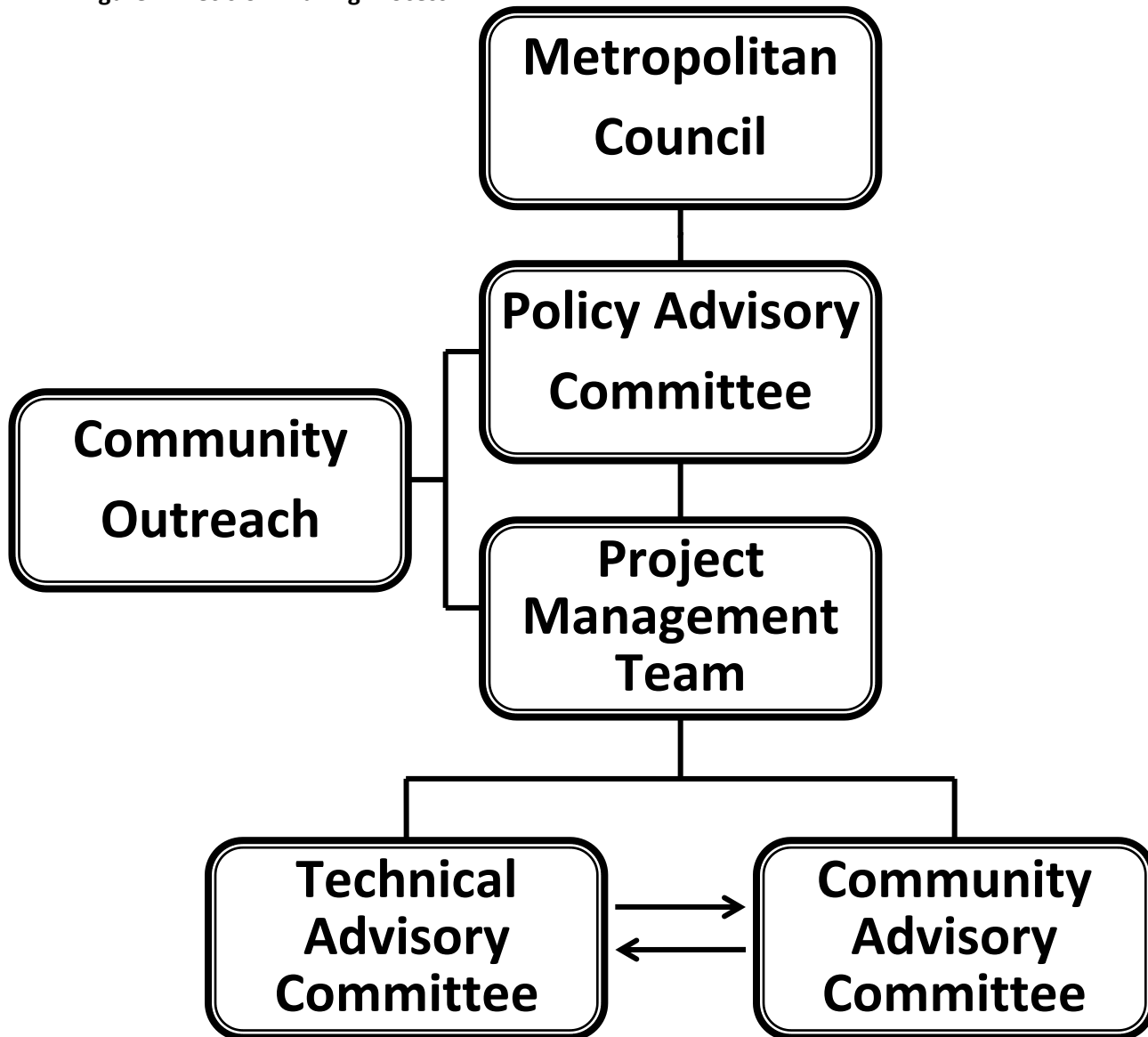
CAC Members

Recruitment of CAC Members is in progress.

1.4 Coordination with Partner Agencies

Coordination with partner agencies will occur primarily through the PAC, TAC and PMT. All partner agencies will be represented on these committees, which will meet periodically throughout the duration of the Midtown Corridor AA. Additional meetings will be held with individual agencies as needed to discuss and resolve issues as they arise.

Figure 1: Decision-Making Process



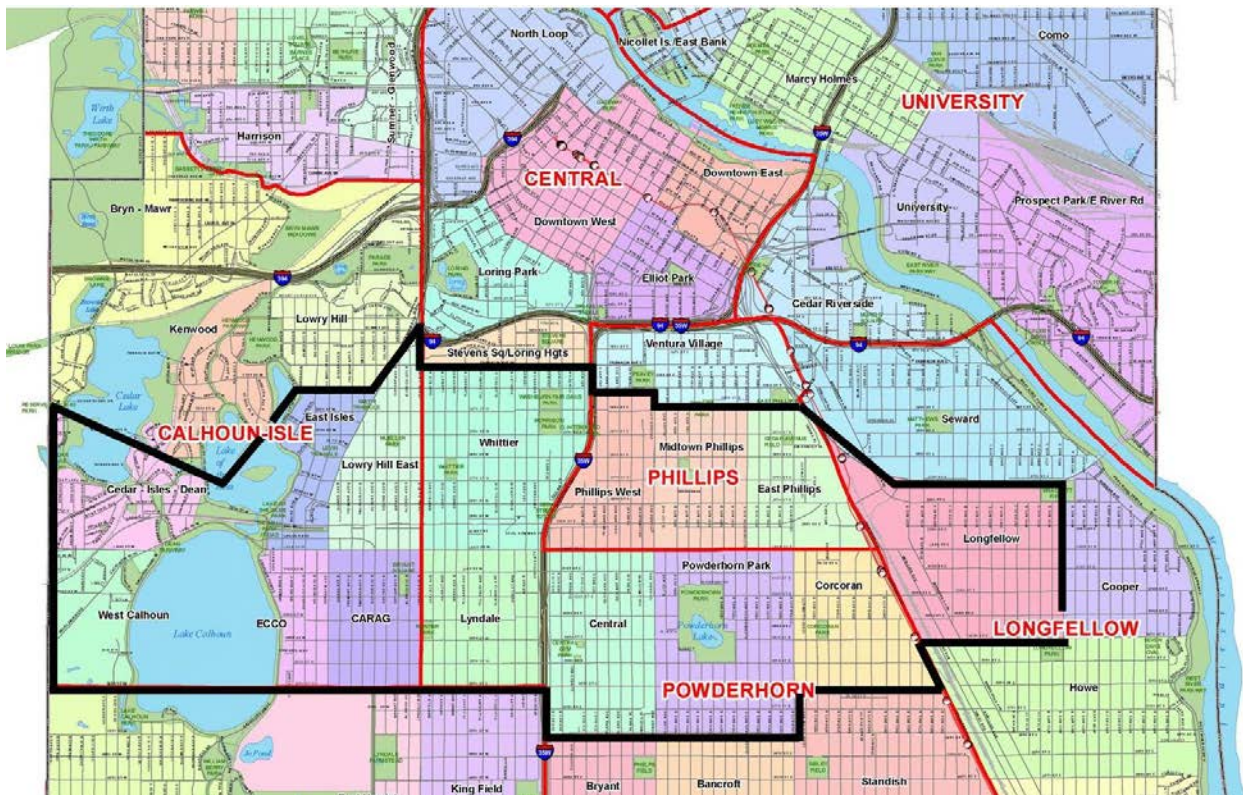
2. Potential Stakeholders

The study area for the Midtown Corridor AA touches a large number of Wards and neighborhoods in Minneapolis (see Figure 2). One of the initial (and ongoing) tasks in the Midtown Corridor AA will be to identify key stakeholders to insure that these organizations and individuals are fully represented in the study process and that a means of regular communication is identified for each. A *preliminary* list of potential stakeholders is provided below.

2.1 Federal, State, Regional and County Agencies

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)
- Metropolitan Council
- Metro Transit
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB)
- Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB)
- Hennepin County
- Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRA)
- City of Minneapolis
- Regulatory agencies (multiple)

Figure 2: Midtown Corridor Neighborhoods



2.2 Business Stakeholders

- Lake Street Council
- Uptown Association
- Lyn-Lake Business Association
- Midtown Business Association
- Lyndale Neighborhood Business Association
- Whittier Business Association
- Latino Economic Development Center
- Abbott Northwestern Hospital
- Allina Hospitals and Clinics
- Children's Hospital and Clinics
- Wells Fargo
- Midtown Global Market
- Calhoun Commons
- Calhoun Village
- Mercado Central

2.3 Non-Profit Organizations and Institutions

- Midtown Community Works Partnership
- Philips Partnership
- Midtown Greenway Coalition
- Minneapolis College of Art and Design
- Minneapolis Institute of Arts
- Children's Theatre Company
- Minneapolis Public Schools
- Minnesota Transitions Charter Schools
- Midtown YWCA
- The Green Institute
- Comunidades Latina Unidos en Servicio (CLUES)
- Chicano Latino Affairs Council
- Lao Family Community of Minnesota
- African Development Center
- Urban Ventures
- Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) groups
- Social service providers
- Non-profit organizations
- Advocacy groups
- Faith-based groups
- Emergency service providers

2.4 Public Stakeholders

- Calhoun-Isle Neighborhood
 - Cedar-Isles-Dean
 - East Isles
 - Lowry Hill East
 - West Calhoun
 - ECCO
 - CARAG
- Central Neighborhood
 - Whittier
 - Lyndale
- Phillips Neighborhood
 - Phillips West
 - Midtown Phillips
 - East Phillips
- Powderhorn Neighborhood
 - Central
 - Powderhorn Park
 - Corcoran
- Longfellow Neighborhood
 - Longfellow
- Property owners
- Residents (owners and renters)
- Businesses (property owners and leaseholders)
- Students
- Under-represented and under-served populations such as low-income families, transit-dependent and limited English proficient (LEP) residents
- Senior housing developments
- Commuters and traveling public

3. Potential Issues and Opportunities

The primary purpose of public participation during the Midtown Corridor AA is to understand and respond to potential issues and identify potential opportunities associated with the improvement of transit services and transportation facilities in the Midtown Corridor.

Potential Issues

- Impacts on existing transit riders
- Transit station/stop locations
- Coordination with other transit services and changes to existing services
- Impacts on the Midtown Greenway, including access to the Greenway

- Local traffic conditions and impacts
- Pedestrian and bicycle access, convenience and safety including impacts on sidewalks
- Meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Impacts to historic resources
- Development and redevelopment impacts
- Impacts to businesses, both during and after construction
- Impacts to properties (both commercial and residential)
- Quality of life impacts including noise, visual impacts, acquisition, etc.
- Wayfinding to/from and within station areas
- Negative environmental impacts
- Capital, operating, and maintenance costs
- Funding (capital, operating, and maintenance)
- Decision-making process

Potential Opportunities

- Improvements to transit service
- Connections to other transit services including Green Line (Southwest LRT) and Blue Line (Hiawatha LRT) stations
- Connection to future Orange Line (I-35W BRT) at the I-35W & Lake Street Station
- Development and redevelopment opportunities
- Additional amenities (architectural, landscaping, streetscaping, public art, etc.)
- Re-connection of Nicollet Avenue
- Positive environmental impacts
- Improvement to quality of life
- Opportunities for input

Issues, concerns, opportunities and constraints that are identified in written comments through the public participation efforts will be documented in a cumulative “issues tracking report.” This documentation technique will provide a means of insuring that there is public input in the study process and that issues raised by stakeholders are addressed as appropriate throughout the AA process and beyond. Issues identified by stakeholders will be summarized in project documentation.

4. Public Participation Techniques

A variety of public participation techniques will be used to reach as many people as possible during the Midtown Corridor AA. As shown in the Communications Matrix, which is provided in Appendix A, outreach techniques will be targeted to different stakeholders, depending on their information and participation desires. The matrix summarizes the communications tools that will be used and the targeted audiences for each of these tools.

4.1 Electronic Communications

Electronic media are essential to reaching those businesses, residents, students, commuters, and policy makers who have daily computer access. These media are increasingly critical for reaching students and other younger people.

Project Website

A project web page will be added to the existing Metro Transit website. The midtowntransitway.org domain name has been obtained because it is easy to remember. Going to this web page will automatically redirect the user to the Metro Transit project web page. While the project web page will be designed and maintained by Metro Transit, content for the page will be prepared by the consultant and will be submitted to Metro Transit on a regular basis. It is anticipated that new content will be posted at least monthly and more frequently when public events occur or major milestones are passed. Content will include at least the following:

- Agendas and meeting minutes for PAC meetings
- Project maps and documents
- Frequently asked questions
- Easy to read text and graphics summarizing the project goals, ongoing technical work and project recommendations
- Contact information
- Notices for upcoming public meetings
- Opportunity for public comment

The consultant team will work closely with Metro Transit creative services staff to design the website and to provide the initial and ongoing information to be included on the site. Metro Transit staff will determine appropriate search engines and key words to make it easy for the general public to access the website. All partner agencies and organizations in the Midtown Corridor will be asked to provide direct links to the project website to expand access to this information and provide a common source for project information. Metro Transit may offer reciprocal links to partners in return.

Social Media

Metro Transit's existing social media tools, particularly Facebook, will be used to provide information about project milestones, public meetings, and other opportunities to comment on the project. While social media will be managed by Metro Transit, the consultant team will provide periodic information for posting to Facebook.

E-mail Updates

An e-mail database will be compiled for the Midtown Corridor AA and will be updated periodically. This list will include all committee members, all identified stakeholder organizations, all individuals that sign-up for the list either at public meetings or via the project website, and any other organizations, media outlets and individuals that wish to be on the list. This e-mail distribution list will be used to distribute periodic information about the project, to announce public meetings, and to provide periodic project updates. The project also has an e-mail address, midtown@metrotransit.org, where the public can submit questions and comments about the project.

4.2 Print Communications

Project Updates and Factsheets

Quarterly (typically 1-2 pages) project updates, factsheets, and meeting handouts will be prepared regarding the Midtown Corridor AA process, the project purpose and need, proposed alternatives, the evaluation of alternatives, upcoming public meetings, and other topics relevant to the project. These materials will be posted on the project website, distributed at meetings and local events, sent to the email distribution list, and made available to committee members for use through their own organizations and venues.

Posters, Display Boards and Maps

Display boards and maps will be prepared for public open houses and other public meetings as needed to clearly illustrate the concepts and alternatives that will be discussed at those meetings. Posters (translated in up to three languages in addition to English) will be prepared to announce upcoming public meetings. These posters will be distributed to locations that are frequented by people living and working in the Midtown Corridor (for example, public libraries, community and recreation centers, grocery stores, drugstores, etc.). At this time, we anticipate that information will need to be provided in both English and Spanish. It is also possible that there may be a need for translation/interpretation in Somali and/or Hmong. This will be determined as a part of research done early in the AA process.

4.3 Public Open Houses

Public open houses will be held at four time points during the Midtown Corridor AA:

- Early in the AA process with a focus on purpose and need, goals and objectives, and universe of alternatives
- Evaluation of alternatives
- Presentation of the draft AA
- Selection of the locally preferred alternative.

Two meetings will be held at each of these four points in the western and eastern sides of the corridor. The consultant team will be responsible for all meeting logistics including reservation of venues, preparing meeting materials, preparing and distributing meeting announcements, and preparing summary notes for the meetings. Additional meetings will be held throughout the Midtown Corridor AA

to reach out to neighborhood and business organizations, advocacy groups, and to population groups that are typically under-represented in public processes and projects. These meetings may take the form of presentations to established groups or they may be informal discussions or one-on-one meetings. Project information may be provided at local events or festivals such as National Night Out, Uptown Art Fair, GoLatino!, Somalia Independence Day, etc. The consultant team will proactively identify opportunities for these meetings, particularly with under-represented populations, as well as respond when requested to make presentations to established groups. It is anticipated that the frequency of these meetings will average two meetings per month during the core study activity period (up to a total of 24 meetings). Figure 3 represents the tentative project schedule and the approximate timeline for when public meetings will be held.

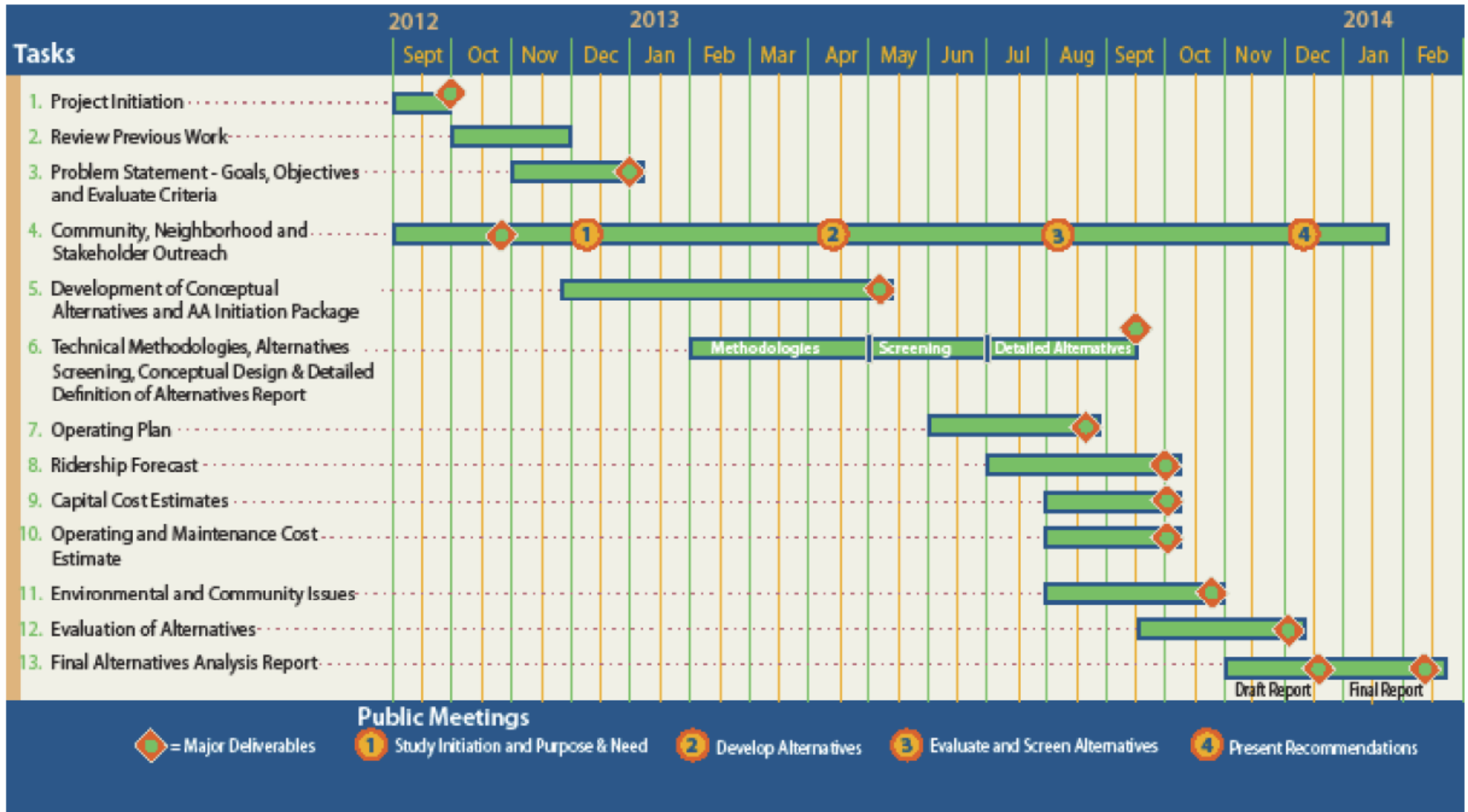
Announcements

Public open houses will be announced in a variety of ways including:

- E-mail notices to e-list (distributed by consultant team)
- News releases to the media (draft releases prepared by consultant team; all media contact through Metro Transit)
- Postings on all county and city websites and social media networks (content prepared by consultant team; postings by public agencies)
- Posters distributed to key locations in the corridor (posters prepared and distributed by consultant team)
- Notices/posters Lake Street – Midtown Station Park & Ride, in transit newsletters (as appropriate), and other venues identified during the course of the project.

Media (publications, radio and television) that target under-represented populations (for example, El Radio Rey) will be proactively included in news release distribution (consultant team will assist in expanding distribution list, if needed; all media contact will be through Metro Transit). The consultant team will also partner with community organizations and groups to expand the reach of announcements, especially to under-represented communities.

Figure 3: Project Schedule and Tentative Schedule of Public Meetings



Formats

It is anticipated at this time that the public open houses will include a series of display boards (designed, in effect, to be understandable as a self-guided tour) and might include a PowerPoint presentation at a designated time during the meeting. Meetings will be held on a weekday in the early evening to encourage people to stop by on their way home from work. Staff will be on hand to walk participants through the display boards and to answer questions.

All participants will be asked to sign-in and to provide e-mail addresses (or other contact information) for addition to the e-mail distribution list. Comment cards will be provided. In addition, a short (one-page) survey may be provided at one or more of the open houses to further encourage public input and to get additional feedback on specific issues, alternatives and/or priorities. A short handout or factsheet about the project will also be provided for individuals to take with them after the meeting. Interactive and participatory methods will be used in public meetings wherever possible. For example, participants may be given opportunities to draw additional alignments, to participate in map exercises that help to identify corridor problems and opportunities, to state priorities through “dot” exercises, to make notes on boards and/or layouts (flipcharts, post-it notes, etc.). Small group interactive discussions may be held at some meetings to address key issues or concerns. Throughout the AA, an effort will be made to keep all public outreach as interactive as possible.

Documentation

A summary of written comments, survey results, and attendance will be prepared for each series of public open houses. These documents are typically 10-15 pages in length, depending on the number of written comments received at the open houses. Follow-up answers to questions will be provided where needed. Any issues raised during these meetings will be incorporated into the issues tracking report.

4.4 Other Meetings and Presentations

Mass Media

Periodic news releases, particularly in association with planned public open houses or other major presentations about the Midtown Corridor AA, will be provided. All media relations will be conducted through Metro Transit. Draft content for news releases will be provided by the consultant team. The consultant team will be available upon request from Metro Transit staff to provide information and answer media questions regarding the project.

5. Targeted Outreach to Under-Represented Populations

A special effort will be made to identify people in the corridor that are often under-represented in public processes including people with disabilities, people who do not speak English or speak English as a second language, ethnic minority groups and organizations, immigrant groups, elderly individuals, etc. Strategies will be identified to reach out directly to these individuals and to more fully engage them in the Midtown Corridor AA process. Early in the AA process, an outreach effort will be made to social service organizations, churches, and established ethnic organizations in the Midtown Corridor to establish contacts and discuss effective communications strategies. Discussions will also be held with individuals currently engaged in the Corridors of Opportunities initiative to learn from their experiences. Metro Transit and city staff will be informed of these outreach activities as they occur. This information will be used to further identify and refine strategies that will be used to reach identified population groups:

Strategies that will be used to reach under-served populations include:

- Provide meeting notices in non-English language publications (at least Spanish and possibly Somali and Hmong)
- Ensure that news releases reach non-English language media outlets (print, radio, television)
- Translate meeting notices and project information
- Provide interpretation services and/or staff that are bi-lingual at public meetings (at least Spanish and possibly Somali and Hmong if requested)
- Attend meetings of established organizations that serve specific cultural/ethnic groups or business communities
- Attend local events and festivals to provide information and answer questions about the project

6. Public Participation Report

At the end of the Midtown Corridor AA process, a document will be prepared that summarizes the public participation efforts undertaken as a part of the AA. This document will describe the processes used for engagement, both formal and informal, and the way in which public input was integrated into the AA process and influenced the outcomes.

Appendix A: Communications Matrix

COMMUNICATIONS MATRIX

<i>Tools</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Residents / Owners</i>	<i>Businesses, employees and customers</i>	<i>Neighborhood Organizations</i>	<i>Business Associations</i>	<i>Social Service Organizations</i>	<i>Colleges, schools and bus services</i>	<i>City and county staff</i>	<i>Elected/appointed officials</i>	<i>Commuters and traveling public</i>	<i>TAC</i>	<i>PAC</i>	<i>News media</i>	<i>Emergency service providers</i>	<i>Regulatory agencies</i>
Electronic Media (content provided by consultant team; postings by public agencies)															
Project Website	Monthly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Blast Email	As Needed	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Links to Other Websites	Monthly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Social Media	As needed (to be provided by Metro Transit)														
Media Relations (content provided by consultant team; all media contacts by public agencies)															
News Releases	As Needed												X		
Printed Materials (consultant team will prepare/distribute all materials except county/city/Metro Transit newsletters – content will be provided for these newsletters)															
Updates/Factsheets	Quarterly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Display Boards	As Needed	X	X	X	X	X									
Posters	As Needed	X	X	X	X	X									
Events/Meetings (consultant team will prepare for and attend open houses, stakeholder meetings and presentations)															
Public Open Houses	Four	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Stakeholder Meetings	Periodic	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X						X
Presentations	Requested			X	X				X		X	X			
Local Events	Annual	X	X							X					