



Midtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis

Summary of November 2013 Public Meetings

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Prepared by the
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For



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Public Meeting Overview

Two public open houses were held for the Midtown Corridor Alternatives Analysis in November 2013. The purpose of these open houses was to provide the evaluation results of the three alternatives (rail in the Greenway, enhanced bus on Lake Street and combination of rail in the Greenway and enhanced bus on Lake Street) and gain public input on the final results: cost, ridership, service plans, station locations and travel time.

The open houses were held at:

Date/Time	Location	Attendance*
Nov. 20, 2013 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Intermedia Arts Minneapolis	77
Nov. 21, 2013 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	Colin Powell Center Minneapolis	67

*Attendance does not include Metro Transit staff and consultant staff, but does include Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Advisory Committee members who signed in at each location.

Meeting Format

Each meeting was two hours in length and conducted in an open house format with visual display boards. A 20-minute presentation was provided to give an overview of the study results. Opportunities were provided to solicit written information and input from attendees. Metro Transit staff and consultants were available to answer questions. A Spanish interpreter and Somali interpreter were on hand if needed.

Participant Comments/Feedback

Written comments/feedback on the three alternatives were collected via post-it notes on the three map plots for the three alternatives. A comment sheet was also provided and requested responses to the following:

- Which alternative best meets each project goal?
- How should the project goals be ranked by importance?
- How often do you travel on Lake Street per week (walking, bicycle, transit and automobile)?
- How often do you travel on the Midtown Greenway per week (walking, bicycle, transit and automobile)?

Open House Marketing

The open houses were advertised on Metro Transit's website, Facebook account and Twitter account. Flyers (which included Spanish and Somali translations) were distributed electronically to Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Advisory Committee members, as well to neighborhood organizations and business groups with a request to distribute the information through newsletters and/or list serves. Metro Transit staff also promoted the open house during table staffing at the Uptown and Chicago-Lake Transit Centers and during presentations at neighborhood meetings. A news release was also sent out to the media by Metro Transit.

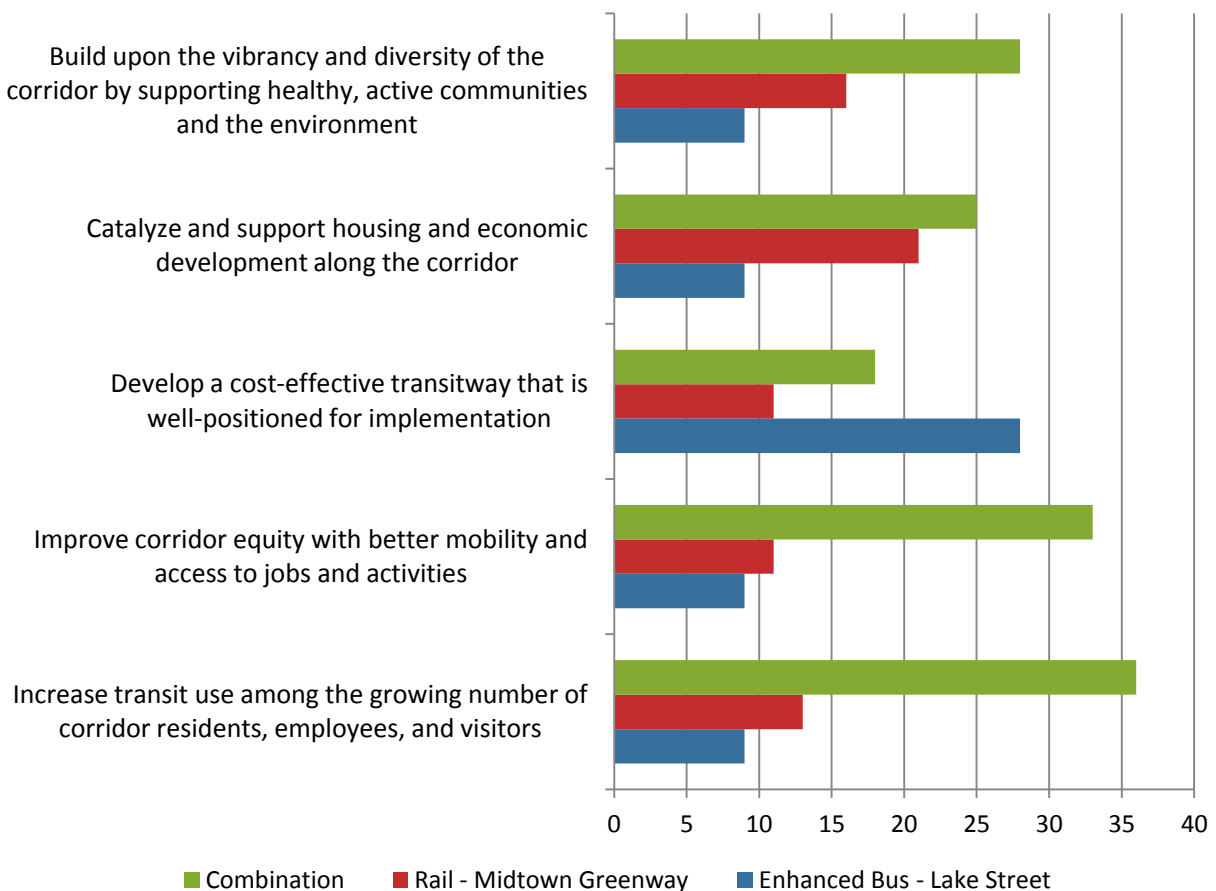
The Minneapolis Neighborhood Outreach staff also distributed the meeting flyer to their networks including their contacts in the Somali and Latino communities.

Results of Participant Activities

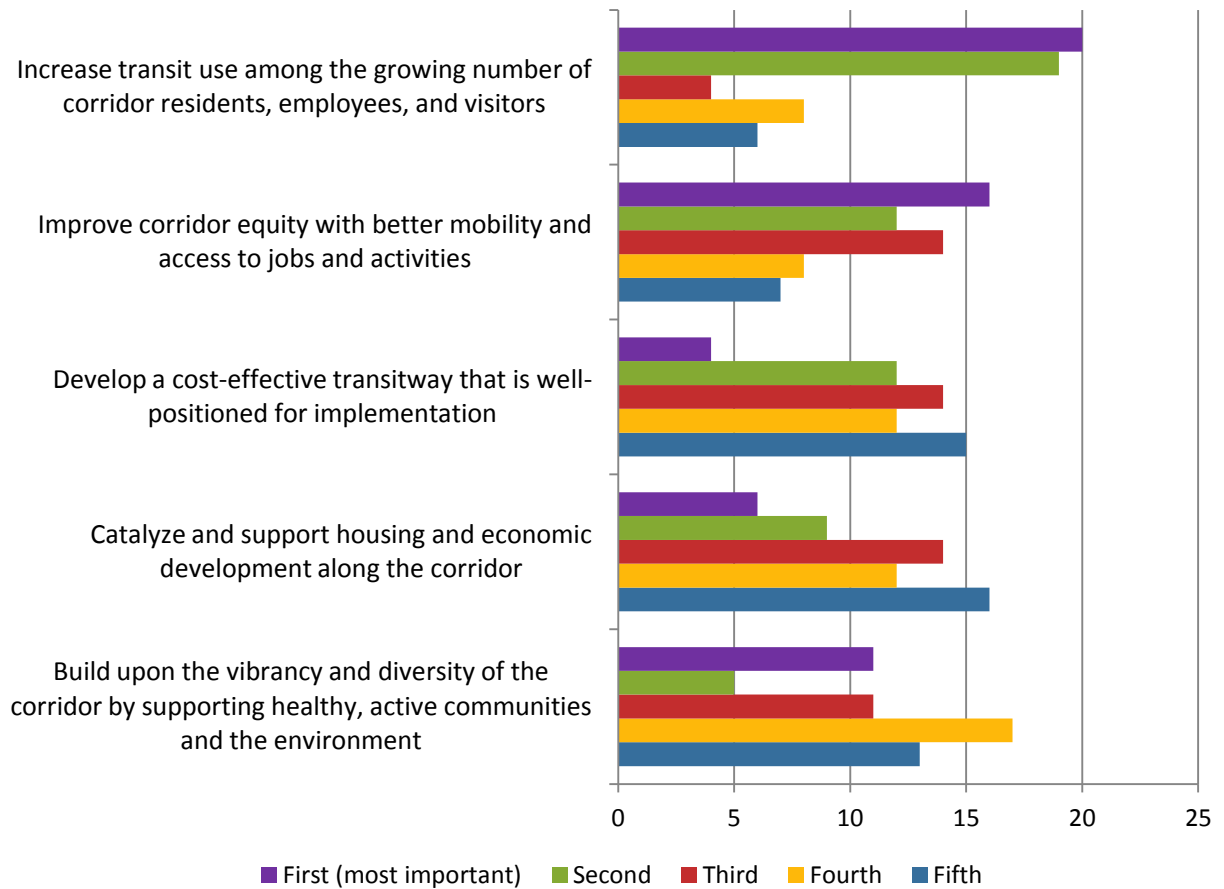
The following is a summary of the results from comment sheet questions. From the Nov. 20 open house, 31 comment sheets were submitted; 29 comment sheets were submitted at the Nov. 21 open house; 3 comment sheets were mailed in after the open houses occurred.

Comment Sheet Question Results

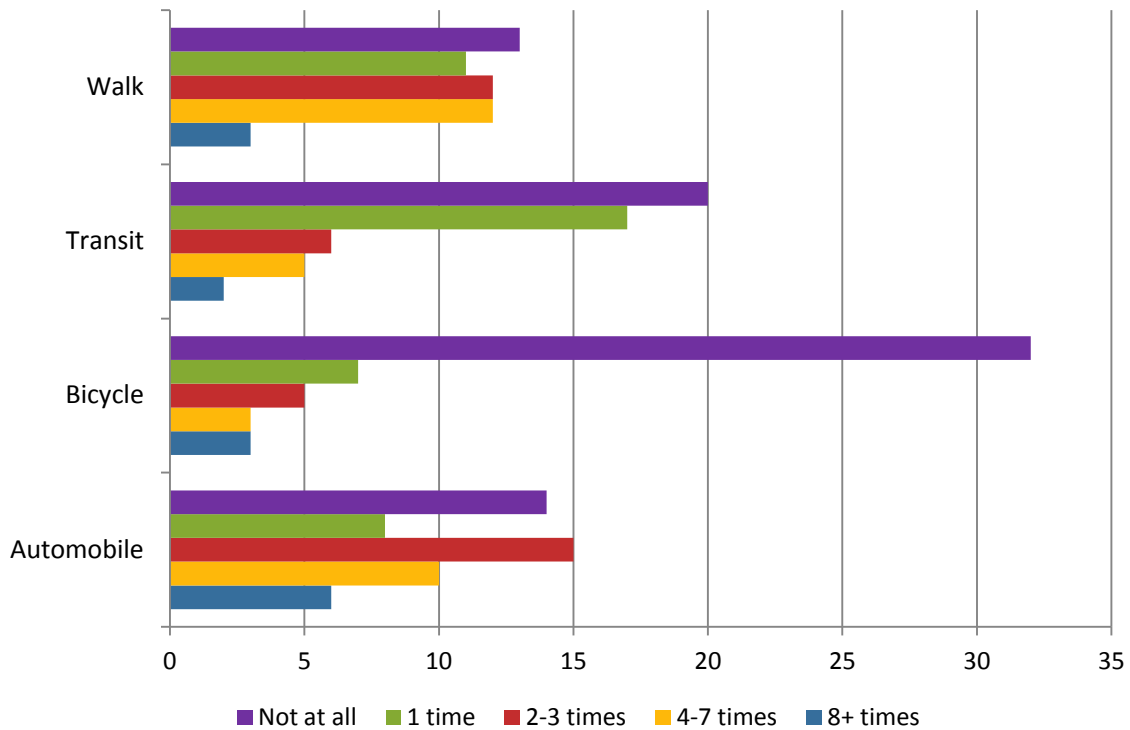
1. Which alternatives best meet the goals outlined in the project's purpose and need statement?



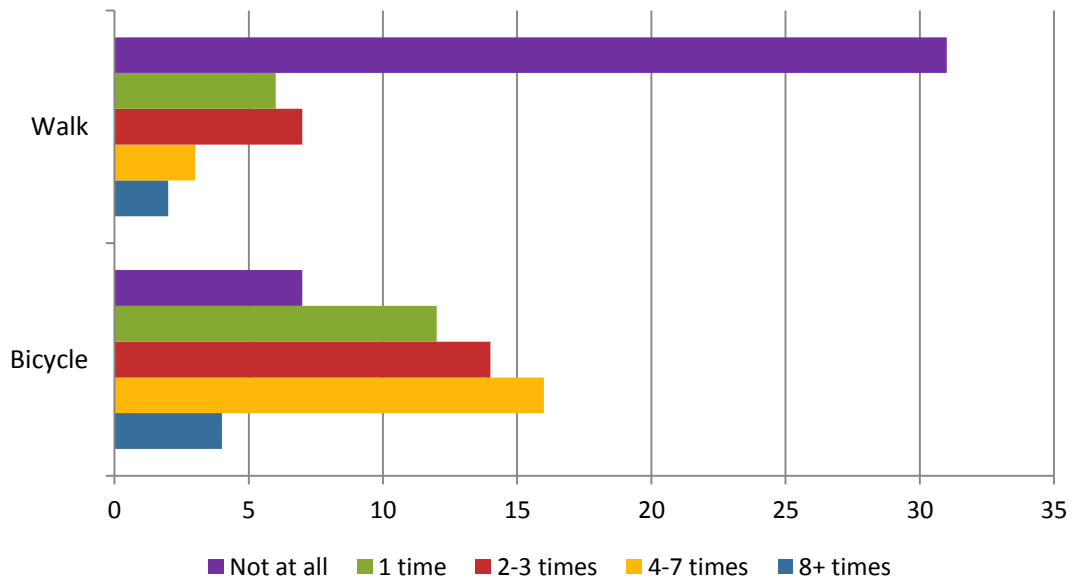
2. Ranked importance of project goals from 1-5 (1 being the most important)*



3. Weekly use of Lake Street by the following modes



4. Weekly use of Midtown Greenway by the following modes



Summary of Public Comments

The following is a summary of written comments received at or shortly after the public open houses. Comments include those from comment sheets, from the map layouts of the alternatives and from questions and comments discussed during the presentation and with staff.

The comments are organized by general topics with subtopics included where applicable.

Lake Street Enhanced Bus Alternative

Extension to St. Paul-Lake Street

- Would really like to see transit extended to Snelling.
- The extension to St. Paul is very important.
- *Placed on map layout at Minnehaha Ave Station:* Will a limited stop/express to Downtown St. Paul continue? Many, many state employees use #53!

Traffic Congestion-Lake Street

- A bit more information about the problem of combined local and enhanced bus together on Lake St would have been nice.
- Street traffic is getting much too congested as density increases.
- Lake Street is already congested adding the bus system would not help at all. I think it would actually slow down traffic.
- *Placed on map layout between Lyndale Ave and Nicollet Ave Stations on map layout:* Buses already stuck in traffic! How does this add?

Parking-Lake Street

- No need for removing 11 parking spots and narrowing sidewalks for each enhancement bus stops.
- Why not build parking on side streets for the businesses affected by removing on street parking?

Support of Alternative-Lake Street

- I'd like to see the enhanced bus option implemented and see how well it really works. I've heard about them for years and so much more affordable.
- Like the enhanced buses on Lake St.
- I am most supportive of BRT because it increases transit convenience, speed and comfort while being cost effective.
- My preferred choice is busses on Lake St.

Opposition of Alternative-Lake Street

- Enhanced bus at Lake Street is problematic without dedicated lane which wouldn't be practical (compared to Select Bus Service in NYC).
- The bus system will not help. The bus system would only be useful if Lake St. is widened.
- NO! Won't add capacity.
- Visionless planning!

General-Lake Street

- Have improved transit on Lake Street for businesses.
- I take the bus when I have to travel for work.
- I have had some brutal bus rides from the Midtown (Blue Line) station to the Chicago Ave stop as the bus was crowded and I had no place to put my suitcase.
- I walk on Lake Street for short errands as it beats driving.
- Signal-priority is nice, but dedicated lanes for bus on Lake would be nice.
- I now take the #23 to Hiawatha Light Rail
- Make sure local 21 service benefits from enhanced bus station amenities (level boarding, etc.) when possible.
- *Placed on map plot:* What will happen to service during the Uptown Art Fair?

Rail in the Greenway Alternative**Turf Track**

- If streetcar is built, it should have turf track and run at the speed of LRT. It is a freeway situation. Take advantage of it.
- I like the turf track aesthetically, but I understand the challenges. I wonder if a partial turf track, such as in double track areas could be a reasonable compromise. The possibility is north or south track using turf track.
- I absolutely support using the turf tracks.
- TURF TRACK. Ballasted track would look terrible and significantly reduce the aesthetic of the Greenway.
- Ballasted tracks are ugly, decrease available green space, and look less friendly for riders who are apprehensive about using rail.
- I want rail in the Greenway that is single, turf track to the extent possible to maintain the green in the Greenway.
- I would like to promote streetcar on turf.
- If streetcar is put on the Greenway, turf track should be used.
- *Placed on map layout north of Midtown Station on Blue Line LRT:* Grass tracks, no more pavement.

Design-Greenway

- My only two recommendations would be vertical vegetation on retaining walls and potential food stands at each stop in the Greenway to add to commercial activity in the area.
- I would like to promote streetcar with barrier between rail section and bike/walk section to lower noise and visual effect of 1 to 2 trains every 10 min.
- Please consider a more bike and pedestrian friendly corridor on 10th Ave between the Greenway and Powderhorn Park - Connecting the high amount of traffic between the two; including the Midtown Global Market.
- This project should not take away from the aesthetics of the corridor.
- Loss of "green" in the Greenway is a concern.
- *Placed on map layout just east of Lyndale Ave Station:* At location of Soo Line Community Garden: How would shifting bike trail north affect this space?

Single Track/Double Track

- If we need to cut cost, it makes sense to spend less by building single track where applicable.
- *Placed on map layout between Hennepin Ave S and Lyndale Ave Stations section:* Impossible double track with existing bike and ped trails.
- *Placed on map layout between Lyndale Ave and Nicollet Ave on single track section:* Bad engineering NOT realistic; double track all.
- Is there enough space for double tracks between James and Holmes? Worried the train will be right up against the houses.

Pedestrian/Bicycle-Greenway

- The needs of bikers and transit riders in the Greenway are being balanced well.
- I use the Greenway for commuting and exercising (running/biking).
- Not keen on people walking/biking/exercising pets being shared with trains or streetcars.
- I use 5xs/week in warmer weather, depends on season; more on Greenway when temp is 50+ Degrees
- 220 trains per day would destroy the environment for bicyclists along the greenway.
- Concerned with impacts to bicyclists. Any study done on increase of bicyclist along the corridor?

Stations-Greenway

- I don't see visioning for transit stops on Greenway.
- *Placed on map plot near Bloomington Ave Station:* Both Bloomington and Cedar Stations
- *Placed on map just west of Bloomington Ave Station:* Cedar Ave Station
- *Placed on map layout north of Midtown Station on Blue Line LRT:* Neighborhood must approve station locations.

Grade Crossings

- *Placed on map layout:* Elevate bikes over Humboldt, Irving and James Ave.
- *Placed on map layout:* Wouldn't we need more than a "stop sign" along Greenway at grade crossings for Humboldt, Irving, James, Knox? Especially for handicapped. Maybe we do need gate arms?
- Horns blaring every seven minutes near the Chain of Lakes is totally unacceptable.
- Worried about horns, alarms, noise from train near grade crossings by Humboldt and James.
- Crossing the Greenway in a vehicle at Humboldt, Holmes and James is difficult now with bicyclists; traffic will back up if a train runs through the intersections.
- Questions on vehicle choice: Difference between an LRT vehicle and streetcar. Worried that LRT is heavier and larger-make more noise. Are there any lighter vehicle options, like old-fashion trolleys?
- Vibrations and level of noise should be considered early on, not later when the decision has been made.

Support of Alternative-Greenway

- I think it's very important to improve mass transit in this corridor that connects the light rail lines.
- Rail is the best alternative presented. The reduction in travel time would be amazing and the more-reliable service would be greatly appreciated. Please, please, please, pursue rail, if nothing else.

- I support rail in the Greenway because it will provide rapid access to jobs, especially if Southwest LRT is built.
- Getting streetcar in the Greenway is my #1 priority. It's a unique opportunity to install a mode with dedicated right of way in a built up urban corridor.
- Its speed, ease of use, and potential for development and increased density are vital for the neighborhoods it serves!
- While getting the most transit use should be the goal it seems that the old railroad trench seems like a waste not to be utilized. This seems important with it possibly crossing three rail lines and a BRT.
- Greenway es bueno por el tren [Greenway is good for the train]
- Yo prefiero que pongan el tren en el Greenway [I prefer to put the train on the Greenway]

Opposition of Alternative-Greenway

- Light rail on the Greenway will change the green character of the bike/walk trail, greatly increasing noise and ruining the quieter ambiance.
- The Greenway is for bikes; I am in favor of keeping it that way.
- By adding rail to the Greenway, the tranquility and safety of bike travel is diminished. Basically, the Greenway would be ruined.
- The reason I bike now days is because of the Greenway. Changing the Greenway with rail is a bad idea.
- Light rail or modern trolley are extremely problematic between Hennepin and the lakes. Dangers: crossing for pedestrians and bicycles. Noise and vibrations: trains very close to houses. Traffic: over 2,000 cars per day traverse the Greenway at Irving Ave. Traffic jams would be horrendous if trains stop traffic every 7 minutes.
- I really value the green space on the Greenway and would like to see that maintained.
- Keep Greenway as an open space-not much in Midtown area.

General-Greenway

- The only type of rail in the Greenway that is compatible is historic streetcar; modern vehicles are out of scale
- Want to see full demographic analysis of population expected in and around Greenway - State demographer has an excellent presentation on the demographics through 2030 - Would like to see how this meshes with city plans, Metro Council projections. Affordability? Equity Impact Study?
- Non-stop through fixed guide-way if available, for more people living without cars.
- I think a train and increased frequency on the 21 might meet some of the need without needing an enhanced bus.
- Streetcar: Nicollet Ave to Hiawatha Ave.
- *Placed on map layout:* Where are the true pinch points for bike/ped/transit?
- *Placed just west of Hennepin Ave S Station:* Will you buy out homes along East Isles? Without adequate mitigation as in Los Angeles and New Orleans, it'll be inadequate.
- *Placed on map layout:* Air quality considerations (given existing human air pollution in Uptown and grades "D" in [illegible word] in Uptown), how mitigate against [illegible word] auto traffic!?

- *Placed on map layout north of Hennepin Ave S Station:* Make the developers build the park wider; make [illegible word]; add green space where RR has been; more green: rose gardens, wading ponds, tot lots.
- *Placed on map layout over Chicago Ave Station:* Streetcar only way to add transit capacity.
- *Placed on map plot:* Streetcar all the way to the Depot.
- Impressed with the rail speed; concerns with the rail speed.

Combination-Rail in the Greenway and Lake Street Enhanced Bus

Extension to St. Paul

- *Placed on map layout at the Midtown Station:* Streetcar up onto Lake all the way to Union Depot. Go all THE WAY TO St. Paul. Reopen tunnel on Cathedral Hill.

Support of Combination Alternative

- I think we need to develop multi-modal transit infrastructure, so I support a combination of light rail and enhanced bus, the benefits far outweigh the increase in capital cost.
- The dual track makes the most sense for many reasons, and the extension option is brilliant. It can reduce my transit commute significantly - cutting it in half. And I'd increase patronage of Lake Street restaurants too: hop off the streetcar for happy hour or meeting a friend for dinner.
- The main reason I support the combination is because it includes the service to Snelling and University.
- I think ridership will be higher with the streetcar in the Greenway - which is good. I think the enhanced bus is good to have too though.
- Yes, ONLY WAY to INCREASE CAPITAL.

Stations – Combination Alternative

- *Placed on map layout on the Midtown Greenway just east of the Bloomington Ave Station:* Need Cedar Ave Station (2).
- *Placed on map layout at Lake street between Bloomington Ave Station and Cedar Ave Station:* Keep station at Bloomington and Cedar Avenues
- *Placed on map layout on the Greenway on Bloomington Ave Station:* We are about to break ground on a new apartment building on Bloomington and the Greenway. We need the rail station there to make this work. It will add over 200 people right at Bloomington and the Greenway.
- *Placed on map layout at the Otis Ave Station:* Keep this station location

General- Combination Alternative

- *Placed on map layout on the Greenway between Hennepin Ave S Station and Lyndale Ave Station:* Dual track all the way; no half stopping, Get 'er Done!
- *Placed on map layout on Lake Street between Chicago Ave Station and Bloomington Ave Station:* No \$50 million on Lake St Enhanced Bus. We need interior transit options so we can get to Lake Street and light rail stations.

Project Goals

- [Referring to goal of "Catalyze and support housing and economic development along the corridor"]:
We already have great housing buildup along Greenway.
- [Referring to goal of "Improve corridor equity with better mobility and access to jobs and activities"]:
What is meant by "equity"; equity in buying homes along Greenway in East Isles?
- [Referring to goal of "Develop a cost-effective transit way that is well-positioned for implementation"]:
What is "cost effective" is it "lowest-cost"?
- [Referring to goal of "Build upon the vibrancy and diversity of the corridor by supporting healthy, active communities and the environment"]:
A joke; how can ever increasing air pollution and developments spewing [illegible] pollution of water in [illegible] between Lake of the Isles and Calhoun be environmentally sound?
- [Referring to goal of "Improve corridor equity with better mobility and access to jobs and activities"]:
Your study tells this better than I can. All alternatives do this.
- I think that there should be a goal to mitigate noise.

Feedback on the Public Meetings

- Given people who ride the #21 now and who live in the neighborhood, this was not a representative audience. Hope you had more than one Spanish speaking staff on-hand. Only saw one person helping Spanish speakers. Also hope you are reaching current #21 riders through other meetings.

Overall General Comments

I think the project is moving in a good direction.

I generally like the options. Keep working!

Ensure that transit dependent communities are at the foremost of all considerations.

Commuting speed is important to me.

What the dickens are you thinking - I appreciate forward thinking but maybe we ought to get SWLRT figured out prior to engaging in the next battle.

More density is necessary! We'll get used to it.

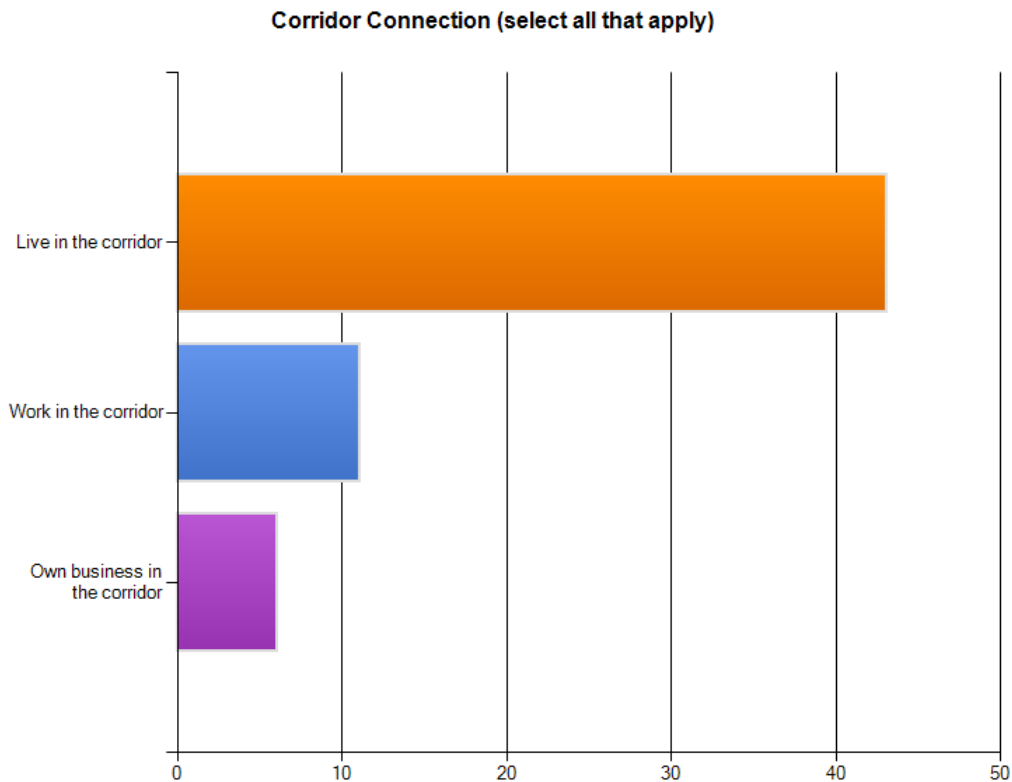
- Protect the bike traffic from pedestrian hazards.
- More bike infrastructure, please! :)
- Could there ever be rail extension to St. Paul?
- This is a great potential for investment in South Minneapolis!
- Thank you for this important work: 13 minutes Hiawatha to W. Lake, yay!
- My guesses: SWLRT 2017; Bottineau 2020; Greenway 2023
- The potential of connection with a Nicollet Streetcar line and the Harriet Trolley are SIGNIFICANT but not much discussed.
- Mostly housebound don't qualify for electric wheelchair or scooter, can't afford taxis and Metro Mobility, physically limited to walking 2 to 2 1/2 blocks at most.
- A couple of foreseeable trends have apparently not been considered in estimating ridership: 1. Increased car-sharing (e.g. Hour Car); 2. Self-driving vehicles. Combine these and we can expect to be able to summon a self-driving car and have it take you anywhere. Should undercut the cost of today's taxis by eliminating the driver. We can expect this will have a significant impact on mass transit in the coming decades.
- Bus cards in advance can be purchased right now; eliminate all cash buses.

- We are headed toward being a cold Washington D.C. I'm appalled by traffic on Hennepin Avenue and the "freeways." Side street turners onto Hennepin often get stuck in the intersection. And I'm going to start riding the bus.
- *Placed on map plots at Orange Line BRT under I-35W Station: No Freeway Widening! Stop35w.org*
- Streetcar on Chicago Ave between HCMC and Abbott Northwestern Medical corridor. (2)
- Bring SWLRT into the Greenway (dual-track) to Nicollet Ave/35W and then North into Downtown (2).

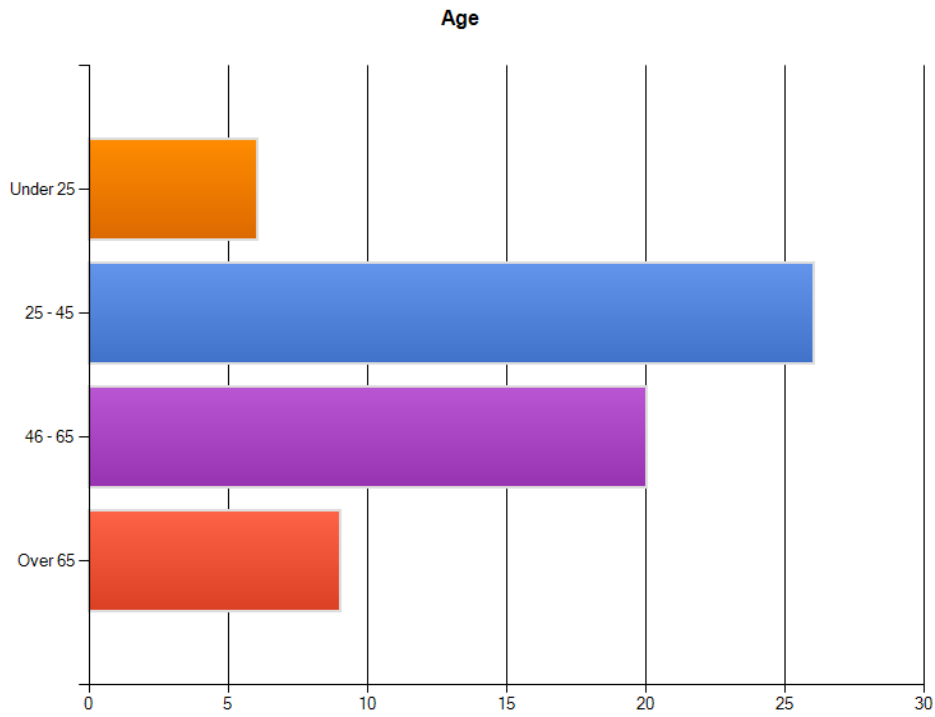
Demographic Information

The following is a summary of the demographic information collected from comment sheets completed at the open houses.

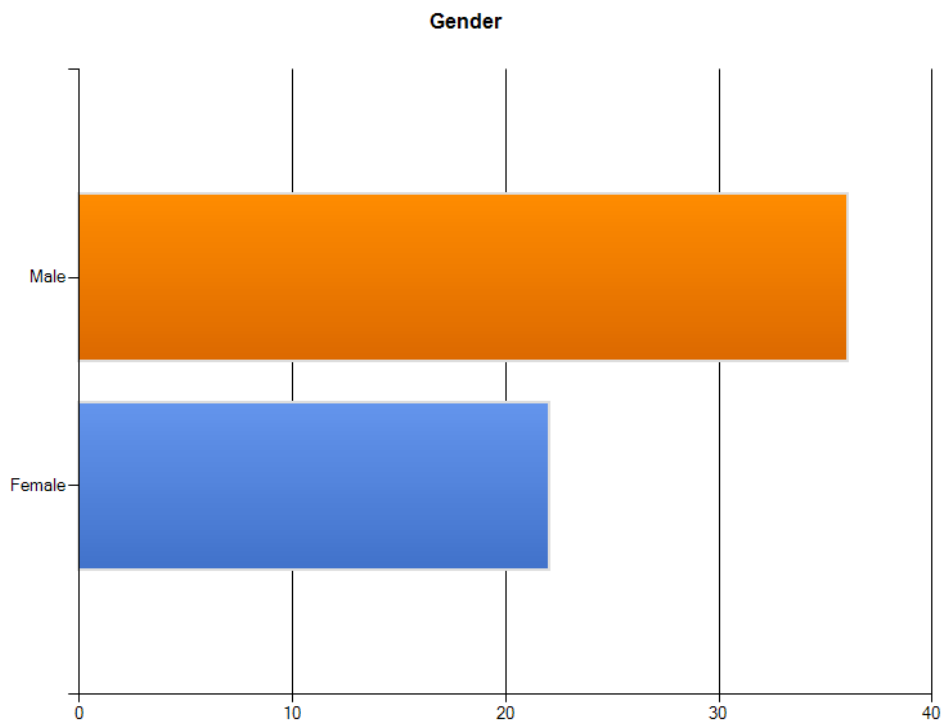
Corridor Connection



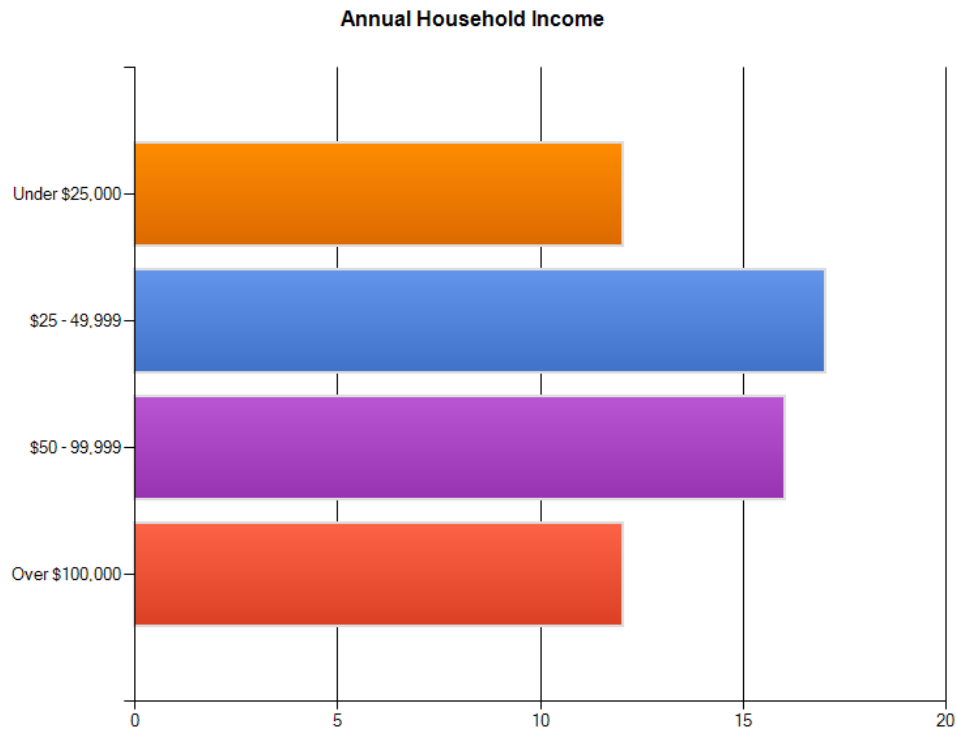
Age



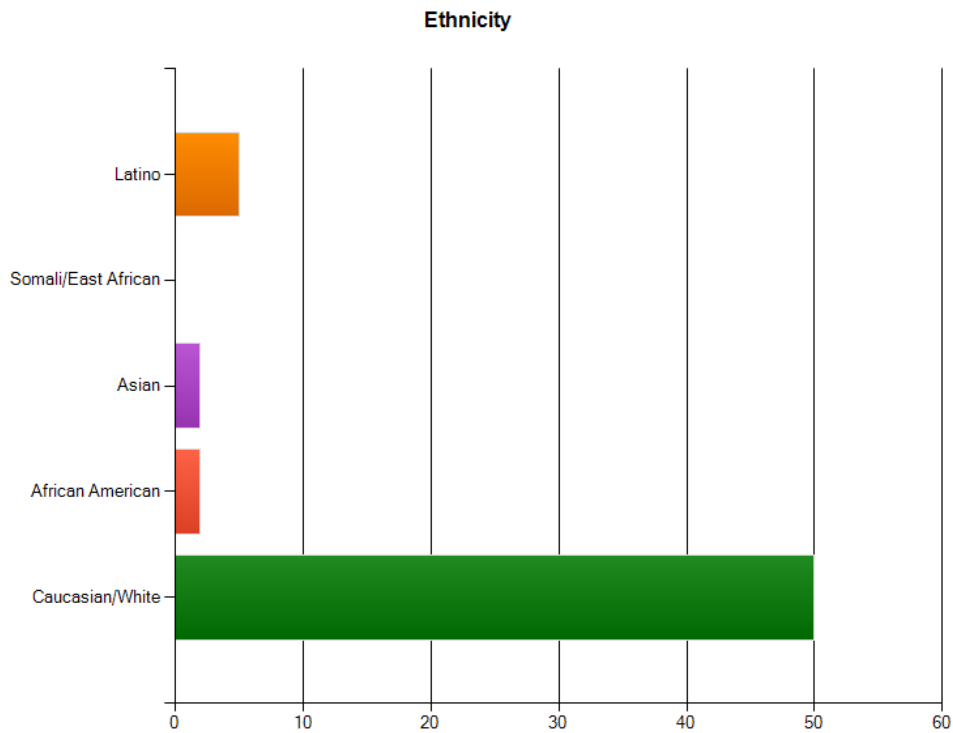
Gender



Annual Household Income



Ethnicity



Primary Language in Household

