

CHAPTER 3: FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The redevelopment of the Ford Site offers the possibility to redesign the transit service in Highland Park, including the Ford Site. As presented in this study, Highland Park is currently well-served by transit when considering geographic coverage, route spacing, service frequencies and span of service. Highland Park has many local bus routes and the A Line arterial BRT connection to the Blue Line, Green Line, and the future Riverview Corridor.

This chapter describes service concepts and facility improvements that **could** be considered as the Ford Site redevelopment plan becomes more refined and the demand for expanded transit service to the site is established. Network Next bus service improvement planning process would be an appropriate document for the service concepts described below to be evaluated against other system-wide service improvements.

Highland Park Bus Terminal and Layover

In order to maintain or potentially improve transit service in the area in the future, it is critical for Metro Transit to continue to have a place for buses to turnaround, with space for at least three buses to layover and an operator restroom. One strategy to provide more bus service within the new development efficiently is to relocate the bus layover location within the redeveloped area. A commitment between the city and Metro Transit to either maintain the existing location on northbound Kenneth Street near Ford Parkway or secure a new location nearby, such as within the Ford Site, is important for long-term stability. The compatibility of a layover site and adjacent land uses and close proximity to existing terminal is key.

Ford Site Concepts

Preliminary discussions between Metro Transit and the City of Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development staff have identified potential locations, both within the public right-of-way and on private property that will be owned by the future developer. Several concepts identified :

- At the intersection of Cretin and Montreal, a roundabout design could provide a way for buses to turn around and space for a restroom to be built and buses to layover on the south side of the roundabout near the CP Rail property.
- On Montreal between Cretin and Cleveland, buses could layover on either the north or south side of the street in a cut-out, possibly near the ball fields. This concept could also potentially include a partnership with Highland Ball to provide a restroom that could be shared by the general public and bus operators.
- Right-of-way that has been reserved for a possible future transitway along Cretin may offer enough room for a bus layover and restroom. Similar to the alternative above, this option would require either a roundabout or way for buses to go around the block to turn around.
- A transit center and bus layover could potentially be incorporated into the planned parking ramp that is proposed to be located adjacent to Ford Parkway, between Cretin and Cleveland Avenues. Metro Transit has a number of examples where the ground floor of a parking ramp is designed for a bus layover and transit center.

Kenneth and Ford

An alternative to a Ford Site layover facility options described above is to continue using the existing on-street layover area at Kenneth and Ford Parkway. This site has worked well as a bus turnaround and layover site for over 20 years. It is well-located from schedule operating efficiency standpoint, can accommodate three buses and there is a restroom for operators at the nearby Highland Recreation Center. A commitment between the city and Metro Transit to maintain the existing location on northbound Kenneth Street near Ford Parkway is important to preserve long-term stability if other development pressures emerge. An alternative to an on-street layover site would be to incorporate a bus layover into the redeveloped commercial block between Kenneth and Cleveland. Metro Transit has experience working with a number of cities to incorporate transit facilities into

private redeveloped properties throughout the region. Examples include the MOA, Southdale, Rosedale, Sun Ray Center, Star lite Center. This could be part of an MOU with the City of Saint Paul as this site is redeveloped sometime in the future.

If it is determined that the current on-street layover site is the best option for current and future bus operations, this decision will impact the Ford Site bus service plan. Most notably, most routes would continue to operate on Ford Parkway and/or Cleveland Ave on the perimeter of the development but still within walking distance to the highest density part of the development.

Ford Site Route Concepts

While the Ford Site is well served by nearly 800 daily bus trips on Ford Parkway, and more than 80 daily bus trips on Cleveland Avenue, several concepts could be considered.

Route 46

The current Route 46, providing more than 60 daily bus trips between the METRO Blue Line 46th Street Station and Highland Park, could be re-routed through the Ford Site via Cretin, Montreal, and Cleveland, continuing to end near West 7th Street and Davern and a potential connection to the planned future Riverview Corridor. This route change would not add operating cost to Route 46. However, as the Ford Site is redeveloped and the expected commercial and residential land use intensifies, Metro Transit will continue to evaluate ridership potential and adjust Route 46 service levels to respond to transit service demand.

Route 23

This route could be modified to serve the center of Ford Site via Cretin and Montreal, and will increase operating cost. Otherwise, it is likely that the route will continue to operate on Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue to the existing Kenneth and Ford parkway layover.

New Route 47

A new Route 47 could replace the current Route 46 between the METRO Blue Line 46th Street Station and Highland Park. The new Route 47 could operate through the Ford Site via Cretin, Montreal, and Cleveland, continuing to end near West 7th Street and Davern. One advantage to creating a separate route would be increased flexibility to tailor service levels to Highland Park needs, connecting the W. 7th St and METRO Blue Line corridors.

Route 70

This route could be modified to serve the Ford Site only if a new terminal within new development is available. Otherwise, it is likely that the route will continue to operate on Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue to the existing Kenneth and Ford layover.

Route 74

This route will likely continue to operate on Ford Parkway unless additional operating resources are available and there is sufficient demand to justify rerouting via the Montreal and Cretin Avenue extensions.

Route 84

This route will likely remain unchanged on Ford Parkway and Cleveland near the redeveloped Ford Site.

Route 87

This route could be modified to serve the Ford Site only if a new terminal within new development is available. Otherwise, it is likely that the route will continue to operate on Cleveland Avenue to the existing Kenneth and Ford Parkway layover.

Route 134

Route 134 provides limited stop service between Highland Park and downtown Minneapolis via Cleveland Avenue and Cretin Avenue on weekdays during peak hours. This route could be rerouted through the Ford Site if there is sufficient demand to justify rerouting via the Montreal and Cleveland Avenue extensions.