



Central Corridor LRT TLC Official Position Statement

Approved November 2007

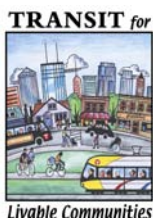
A Key Segment in a Regional Transitways System

The Central Corridor will be the core transit connector for the Twin Cities region, connecting the two largest downtowns, the University of Minnesota, and the state Capitol. The corridor has strong bus ridership and contains many diverse neighborhoods and a blossoming small business community. It is home to the Rondo Community, which suffered severe displacement in the last century caused by the construction of Interstate-94.

Improving transit in the Central Corridor will provide current and new transit riders with faster, more reliable, more frequent and more cost-effective service. It will help address traffic congestion, air and noise pollution, disinvestment in our core cities and suburban sprawl. Any transit investment in the Corridor must preserve key community assets and meet the needs and interests of the communities through which it passes. To ensure community participation in transportation and land-use decision making, timely education and outreach about decision making processes are required. Resources to authentically integrate community input are also necessary.

TLC recommends the following policies for the Central Corridor.

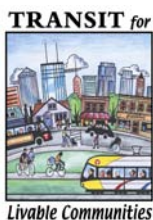
1. **Transit technology:** TLC believes that light rail transit (LRT), rather than bus rapid transit (BRT) or other bus alternatives, is the appropriate technology for the Central Corridor. LRT can best accommodate the projected ridership over the long term while improving air quality and reducing traffic noise. LRT also provides easier and faster boarding for wheelchairs, bicycles, and strollers, and people carrying groceries or luggage.
2. **Alignment:** TLC recommends that light rail follow a University Avenue alignment rather than the median of I-94. Placing light rail in a freeway median allows faster travel times but makes transit oriented development and pedestrian access to stations much more difficult. Oppose putting LRT in a tunnel at the U of M because a surface alignment will improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment along Washington Avenue. Hiawatha's surface alignment through downtown Minneapolis is working well.
3. **Location and number of stops:** TLC supports the addition of three additional stations on the east end of University Avenue (i.e. Hamline, Victoria, and Western Avenues) with agreement from the City and community to increase development density (at these and all other stations).
4. **Construction mitigation.** TLC recommends implementing strategies of construction staging and mitigation from cities like Salt Lake City, Utah, and Portland, Oregon, (Interstate corridor) in order to minimize the impacts on existing businesses and residents.



626 Selby Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55104
651-767-0298 (phone)
651-221-9831 (fax)
www.tlcminnesota.org
tlc@tlcminnesota.org

Transit for Livable Communities is a regional, nonpartisan organization working to reform Minnesota's transportation system. Through advocacy, organizing, and research, we promote a balanced transportation system that encourages transit, walking, biking, and thoughtful development.

5. **Pedestrian/bicycle environment:** TLC recommends that pedestrian and bike friendly design guidelines be adopted in the corridor. This includes improved facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists such as bike racks, street trees, pedestrian scale lighting, benches, and pedestrian signal countdowns both at the stations and along the Central Corridor.
6. **Bus service:** TLC recommends the retention of #94 route express bus service between the two downtowns. Bus service within the corridor should be restructured to ensure “high frequency” service along University Avenue. North/south mainline service connecting with University Avenue stations should be expanded. Signal priority should be given to buses and trains along the corridor.
7. **Roadway design and safety:** TLC recommends that University Avenue be redesigned to incorporate traffic calming principals that balance the needs of all users (transit, bike, pedestrian, auto, truck) and to promote driving at or below posted speeds and thereby promote a safer transportation system.
8. **Density:** TLC recommends that development reinforce transit use, increase the viability of neighborhood retail and the quality of neighborhood life. Generally, a minimum residential density of 12-24 units per acre is usually needed to support fixed route bus service (frequency of 15 minutes or less), and 12-30 units per acre for light rail.
9. **Design:** TLC recommends that developments be transit and pedestrian friendly. This generally means that: buildings face the street and include windows and architectural details that enhance the streetscape and increase safety; parking is concentrated off street or in the rear of buildings; drive-through uses are restricted; signage is regulated; alleys are enhanced as pedestrian routes, and historic preservation is encouraged.
10. **Diversity of uses:** City zoning, site plan and other regulations should encourage a mix of commercial, residential, and retail uses with a de-emphasis on one-story "big box" stores.
11. **Integration of density, design, and diversity.** TLC recommends the thoughtful integration of density, design, and diversity to enhance and preserve neighborhoods that are healthy, vibrant and livable.
12. **Affordability:** TLC recommends housing development that ensures life cycle housing for a range of incomes and household needs. Light rail can play an important role by reducing the need for expensive underground parking and by encouraging location efficient mortgages, both of which make housing more affordable for everyone.
13. **Community preservation:** TLC recommends emphasizing a “sense of place” in order to preserve and improve community, cultural and historical amenities.
14. **Parking:** TLC recommends that development minimize the amount of off-street parking needed and provided through use of shared parking, car sharing, and unbundling the parking from the cost of the development. Generally, off-street parking should be located behind, in, or under any structures. On-street parking is desirable and should be metered. A Parking Benefit District should be considered. Angle parking should be considered for reasons of adding additional parking or traffic calming. Local regulations should emphasize maximum number of spaces allowed instead of minimum.



626 Selby Avenue
 Saint Paul, MN 55104
 651-767-0298 (phone)
 651-221-9831 (fax)
www.tlcminnesota.org
tlc@tlcminnesota.org

Transit for Livable Communities is a regional, nonpartisan organization working to reform Minnesota's transportation system. Through advocacy, organizing, and research, we promote a balanced transportation system that encourages transit, walking, biking, and thoughtful development.