

Attachment C

Southwest LRT Preliminary Design Plans Minneapolis Station Area Descriptions

As noted in the staff report, City staff focused its review of the preliminary design plans on pedestrian accessibility, bicycle connections, interface with the bus system, and development compatibility. Improvements to the design as it relates to each of these topic areas were made throughout the preliminary engineering process, through the staff-level issue resolution teams, the public engagement processes led by the project office and Hennepin County's station area planning process, and through the negotiations between the City and the Metropolitan Council.

Following is a description of how the preliminary design plans address issues of connectivity and development compatibility, organized by station. These descriptions are based on the color roll plots provided by the Southwest LRT Project Office and available at www.swlrt.org.

West Lake Station

Platform Location

The West Lake platform will be southwest of the West Lake Street bridge, centered approximately at the existing trail access from Chowen Avenue. This platform location allows for a future second platform for rail transit service in the Midtown Greenway, which would terminate at the West Lake Station.

Pedestrian Connections

The continued presence of freight rail will be a substantial barrier to pedestrians accessing the station from points west of the corridor. In part to provide a more direct connection for pedestrians to the west who need to cross the freight tracks, the preliminary design plans show elevator and stair towers on each side of the Lake Street bridge down to the platform level.

Other proposed pedestrian improvements include:

- Stairs and ramp from The Lakes Citihomes Condos up to the sidewalk on the south side of Lake Street
- Improved sidewalks on the Lake Street bridge, with separation between pedestrians and traffic
- New curb ramps at several intersections throughout the station area, meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- New sidewalks, where they do not currently exist, on the streets leading to the platform from Excelsior Boulevard

Bicycle Connections

The existing bicycle trail will continue to serve this area and will provide direct access to the West Lake Street Station platform. The preliminary design plans do not show any additional dedicated bicycle connections to be constructed as part of the LRT project.

Bus Connections

Buses will serve the West Lake Street Station from two locations, which will vary by bus route. Routes traveling on Lake Street will be able to stop directly above the LRT corridor on the Lake Street bridge, with access down to the platform via the elevator and stair towers. This is a substantial improvement over plans previously presented to the public, which showed Lake Street bus stops much farther from the platform. Routes traveling on Excelsior Boulevard will use the platform-level street network to drop off and pick up passengers near the platform.

Development Compatibility

The Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority owns the vacant parcel of land between the platform location and the Whole Foods store, and intends to make the parcel available for transit-oriented development. Earlier versions of the station area design showed that property being used for a bus turnaround, with little or no opportunity for development. This has been rectified in the preliminary design plans, which show no bus turnaround. The plans also show a realigned Abbott Avenue (perhaps to be renamed W 31st St), greatly increasing the land available for development.

21st Street Station

Platform Location

The 21st Street Station platform will be located immediately south of 21st Street.

Pedestrian Connections

The preliminary design plans show the following proposed pedestrian improvements:

- A new sidewalk along the south side of 21st Street connecting the platform to East Cedar (“Hidden”) Beach
- A new sidewalk along Thomas Avenue south of 21st Street
- A new sidewalk connection to the trail and platform in the vicinity of 24th and Thomas

Bicycle Connections

The existing bicycle trail will continue to serve this area and will provide direct access to the 21st Street Station platform. The preliminary design plans show an added bicycle and pedestrian connection to the trail and platform in the vicinity of 24th and Thomas.

Bus Connections

Buses will serve the 21st Street station from the existing bus stops at 21st and Thomas.

Development Compatibility

To date, no development sites have been identified in the 21st Street station area.

Penn Station

Platform Location

The Penn Station platform will be located just east of the existing convergence of the Kenilworth Trail and the Cedar Lake Trail. This location allows the necessary pedestrian

bridge to Wayzata Blvd to be more visible and accessible from Penn Avenue than the previously-presented location, which was slightly farther west.

Pedestrian Connections

Pedestrians from the Bryn Mawr neighborhood to the north will access the station via a pedestrian bridge extending from Wayzata Boulevard, over the freight tracks, to an elevator and stair tower at the west end of the platform. Pedestrians from Kenwood Parkway will access the station via the existing trail access adjacent to I-394.

The preliminary design plans show the following proposed pedestrian improvements:

- Pedestrian signage and lighting along the existing trail connecting Kenwood Parkway to the Cedar Lake Trail and the station platform
- A new sidewalk along the south side of Wayzata Boulevard between the station and the I-394 pedestrian bridge at Thomas Avenue
- Improved sidewalks on the Penn Avenue bridge over I-394 as well as Penn Ave between I-394 and Mt. View Avenue
- New curb ramps at several intersections throughout the station area, meeting the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act

Bicycle Connections

The existing bicycle trail will continue to serve this area and will provide direct access to the Penn Station platform. The preliminary design plans show a new bridge carrying the Cedar Lake Trail over the TC&W freight tracks, the LRT tracks, and the Kenilworth Trail. Cyclists from the north will be able to access the station platform, as well as the Cedar Lake and Kenilworth Trails, using the pedestrian bridge and elevator tower.

Bus Connections

The preliminary design plans show a kiss-and-ride off Wayzata Boulevard that could serve as a bus stop providing direct access to the pedestrian bridge leading to the platform. However, Metro Transit has not indicated that it plans to serve the Penn Avenue station with buses.

Development Compatibility

The preliminary design plans do not present any obstacles to future development on future transit-oriented development sites along Wayzata Boulevard and Madeira Avenue.

Van White Station

Platform Location

The Van White station platform will be located immediately west of the Van White Memorial Boulevard bridge. The location of this platform has not changed throughout the design process.

Pedestrian Connections

Currently the only pedestrian infrastructure serving the Van White Station location is the existing Cedar Lake Trail and the sidewalk on the new Van White Memorial Boulevard bridge. The LRT project will construct substantial new pedestrian connections to serve the Van White station, including the following:

- An elevator and stair tower from the sidewalk on the Van White bridge down to the platform level
- A new pedestrian bridge connecting Bryn Mawr Meadows over the freight and LRT tracks to the station area
- A new street network providing access to the station with a complete sidewalk network
- Pedestrian improvements on Dunwoody Boulevard south of the station
- New pedestrian connections on Fremont Ave N, north of 2nd Ave N

Bicycle Connections

The existing bicycle trail will continue to serve this area and will provide direct access to the Van White Station platform on a trail alignment similar to what exists today. Cyclists bypassing the station will have the option to use a new trail segment that crosses Van White Memorial Boulevard at grade just south of the bridge. The preliminary design plans also show the addition of a bicycle trail along Fremont Ave N, north of N 2nd Ave.

Bus Connections

The preliminary design plans show a new street that passes under the Van White bridge adjacent to the platform. Buses will be able to stop on this street, providing direct access to the station.

Development Compatibility

The preliminary design plans are compatible with future development of Linden Yards East and West. The new street providing access to the platform will provide an opportunity for connecting a future access drive to Linden Yards West. The new pedestrian bridge connecting Bryn Mawr Meadows to the station area will allow for the existing pedestrian bridge over Linden Yards West to be removed.

Royalston Station

Platform Location

The Royalston platform will be located on the east side of a reconstructed Royalston Avenue, midway between Holden St N and 5th Ave N.

Pedestrian Connections

The preliminary design plans show a full complement of new sidewalks on reconstructed Royalston Ave, Holden St, and Border Ave, as well as sidewalk improvements on 5th Ave N. A new traffic signal at 7th St N and 5th Ave N will improve pedestrian accessibility to the station. Future phases of the design process will require careful attention to the sidewalk east of the platform connecting to 5th Ave N, where pedestrians may feel trapped between the LRT bridge structure and the fence bordering the Royalston Public Works facility.

Bicycle Connections

The preliminary design plans show a new protected bikeway on 7th St N between Plymouth Ave and 2nd Ave N, improving bicycle connections between north Minneapolis and downtown, as well as providing bicycle access to the station area.

Bus Connections

Metro Transit expects the Royalston Station to be the primary transfer point to the Green Line for buses serving north Minneapolis. The preliminary design plans show an inbound 7th Street bus stop just south of 6th Ave N, and an outbound 7th Street bus stop at 5th Ave N, where there will be a new traffic signal to allow safe pedestrian crossing of 7th Street.

Development Compatibility

The preliminary design plans do not present any obstacles to future development in the Royalston Station area.