

# Transit Equity:

Reducing Disparities Through and Around  
Improved Transit Service, Transit Oriented  
Development, Housing and Job Growth in  
Minneapolis

# Values

- Racial disparities in our region are worst in the nation
- We must address disparities through & around transit
- Transportation is key to economic development and job growth

# On Transit, Minneapolis Supports “All of the Above”

- New High-Speed Transit Service.
- Improved Service on Existing Corridors.
- Transit-Oriented Development and Development-Oriented Transit.

# Commitments

- Ensure that as the City of Minneapolis continues to grow, that growth is truly inclusive of all and serves to reduce existing disparities
- Work with and advocate alongside residents of Minneapolis, neighborhood groups and advocacy organizations
- Get the best outcome, within the constraints identified, at the Van White station: ideally, a shared vision of mixed-use, mixed income development including affordable rental and homeownership options

# Transit – Who Decides?

- Metropolitan Council
- CTIB
- Legislature & Governor
- Federal Government

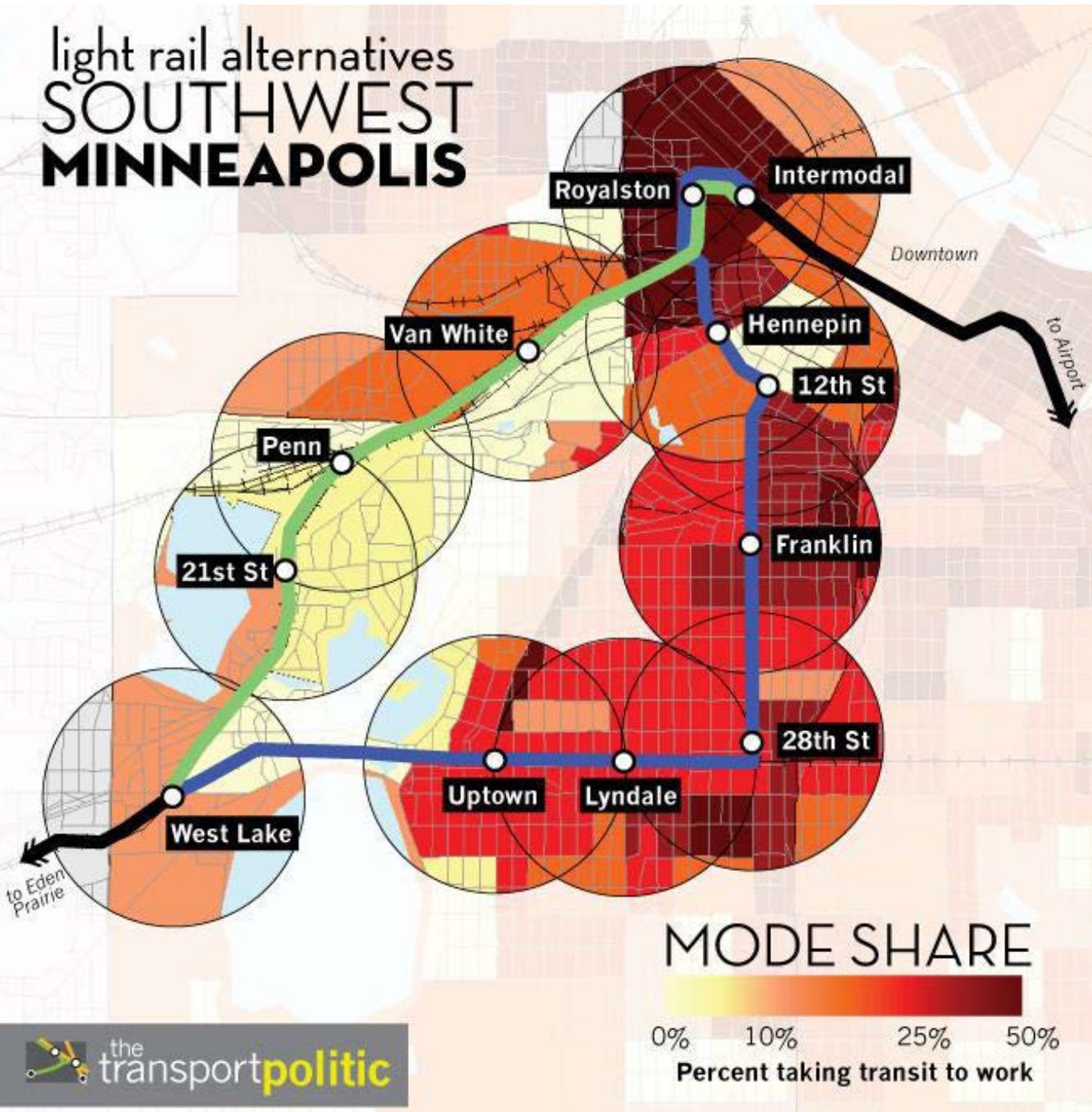
# City's Role

- Advocacy
- Planning
- Development (after the fact)
- Municipal Consent
- Not passive

# Southwest LRT – Federal Role

- “Funding Formula”
- 2009 and before = new riders
  - Bias against neighborhoods where people already take transit
- Post-2009 = all riders
  - Central Corridor “Stops for Us” campaign

# light rail alternatives SOUTHWEST MINNEAPOLIS

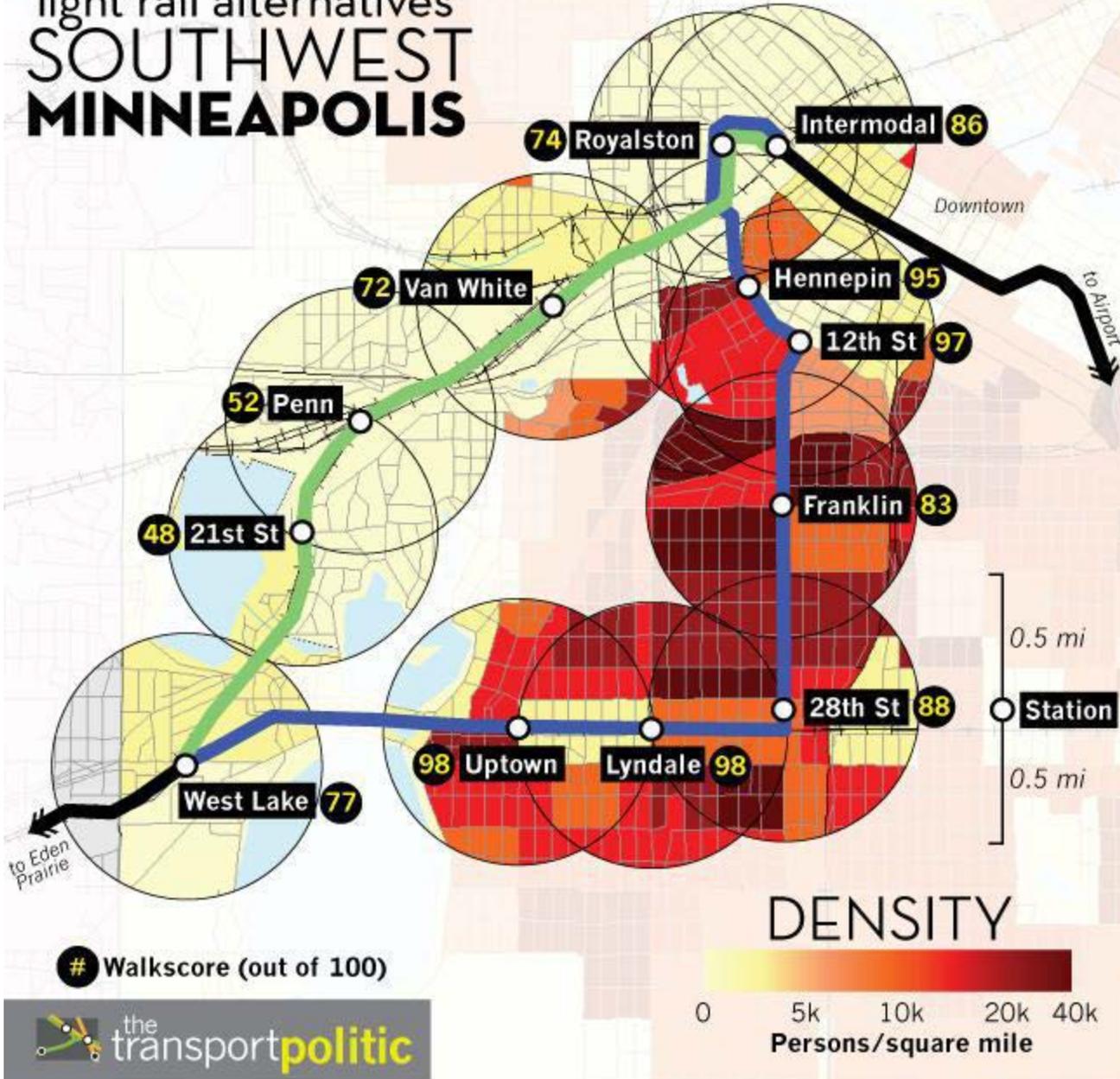


# Mode Share

# Limitations of Kenilworth Alignment

- Rail Stations should be
  - Accessible
  - Easy to find
  - Available land for development & job growth
- Limitations of Kenilworth Alignment

# light rail alternatives SOUTHWEST MINNEAPOLIS



## Density & Walkscores

# Walkscore (out of 100)



DENSITY



# The Good News

- Southwest LRT will nonetheless benefit equity by significant overall improvement of the regional transit system
- Central LRT was designed around advancing equity
- Central LRT and Southwest LRT will be a “interlined” train

# The Unknown

- If the region invests in priority transit corridors in Minneapolis that connect with the Green Line, Southwest could advance equity and benefit Minneapolis neighborhoods.
- Southwest LRT is the Spine
- Connections include more frequent regular local buses, several faster Enhanced Bus or “arterial BRT” lines and modern streetcars on a few key corridors.

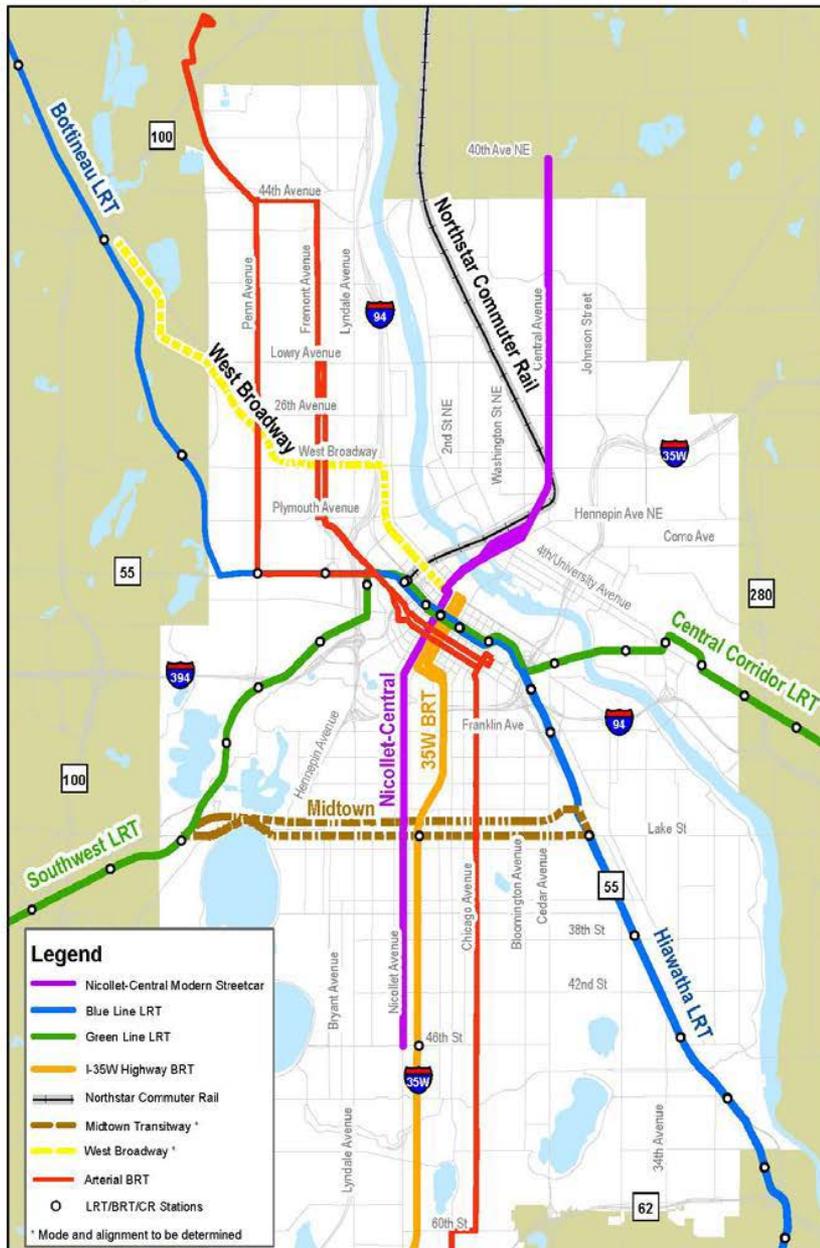
# A Transit Plan for North Minneapolis

- Access Minneapolis (2009)
- Transit is about moving people from point A to point B, but not just that.
- Transit should also be about economic development.
- Economic Development at rail stations.

# Bottineau LRT

- Recommended Alignment only had two stations in Minneapolis.
- Similarities to Southwest LRT
  - Fast route between suburban and downtown destinations
  - Few stations in the where the density was highest
  - Regional benefit, but a spine without connections
- Only one Enhanced Bus, or “arterial BRT” corridor, Broadway, was proposed for North Minneapolis in the Met Council’s plans

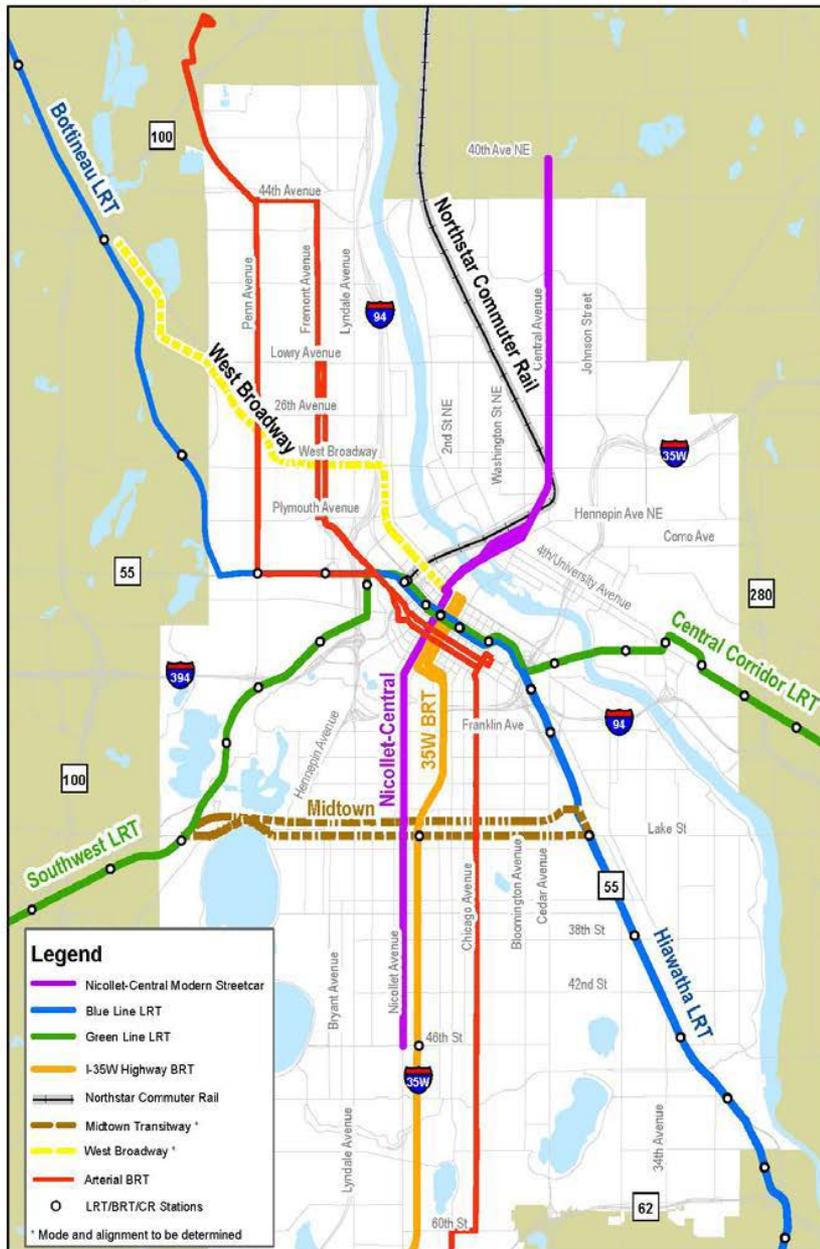
## Existing & Planned Rail and BRT in Minneapolis



Minneapolis approved LPA, but with conditions

1. Penn Ave N and Emerson/Fremont Aves N added to BRT network.
2. Penn Ave Community Works Project
3. Three-agency agreement between the City, County and Met Council to jointly fund a transit study of West Broadway

## Existing & Planned Rail and BRT in Minneapolis



September, 2014

# Why Rail on Broadway?

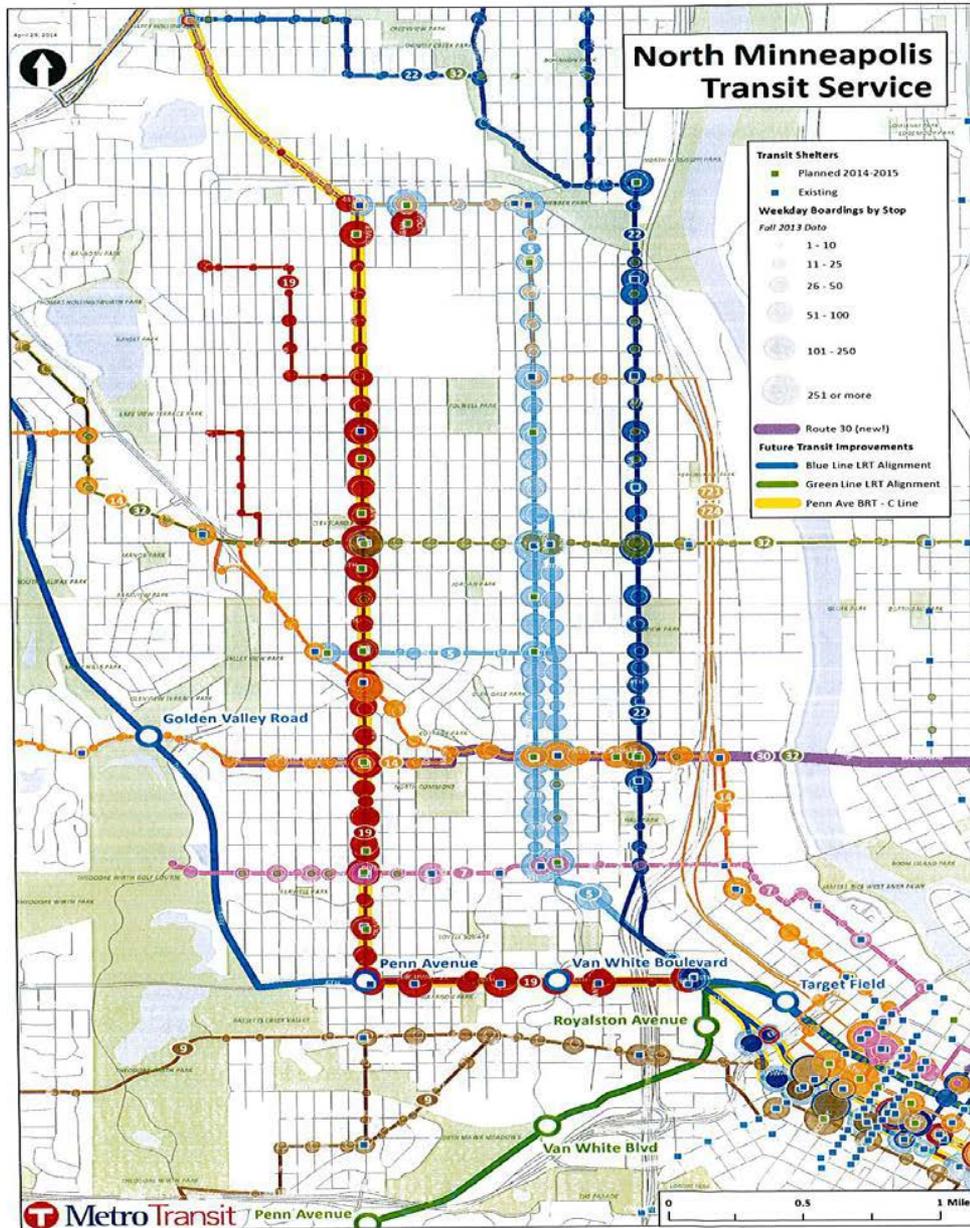
- 12-16 stops in North Minneapolis
- Land use and zoning
- Investors and developers want certainty.



# Advocacy to Met Council

- City not just interested in the highest performing corridors, like Broadway, Penn, and Emerson/Fremont, as well as Bottineau LRT
- City also supports comprehensive improvements, in frequency, security and amenities on all bus routes in North Minneapolis

# Bus Routes in North



# Advocacy to Met Council, ongoing

- Public Safety
  - Additional cameras and call boxes in Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty (RCAPs)
  - Install security camera software and associated hardware necessary to allow MPD to receive live feeds from Met Council security cameras
- Bus Frequency to Van White Station
  - 10-15 minutes during weekday rush hour and midday periods and at least every 20-30 minutes during evening periods, Saturdays and Sundays

# Advocacy to Met Council, ongoing

- Heated Bus Shelters and Bus Stop Amenities
  - Meet 100% of the need in Met Council’s identified Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty or “RCAPs.”
  - Adopt a single standard for defining when a bus shelter is warranted, not two separate standards for urban and suburban communities. Beyond RCAPs, shelters should be placed based on need and available space, not civic boundaries
  - There may be bus stop locations where a full size bus shelter would be too large within the available space and must be declined in favor of smaller amenities

# Equitable Transit Across Minneapolis

- There are low-income residents and communities of color throughout Minneapolis.
- Just like the Northside, there are high-performing transit corridors on the Southside and Eastside which are underserved compared to their potential, including Central Ave NE, University Ave SE, Chicago Ave, Hennepin Ave, Nicollet Ave, Franklin Ave and the Midtown Greenway/Lake Street Corridor.

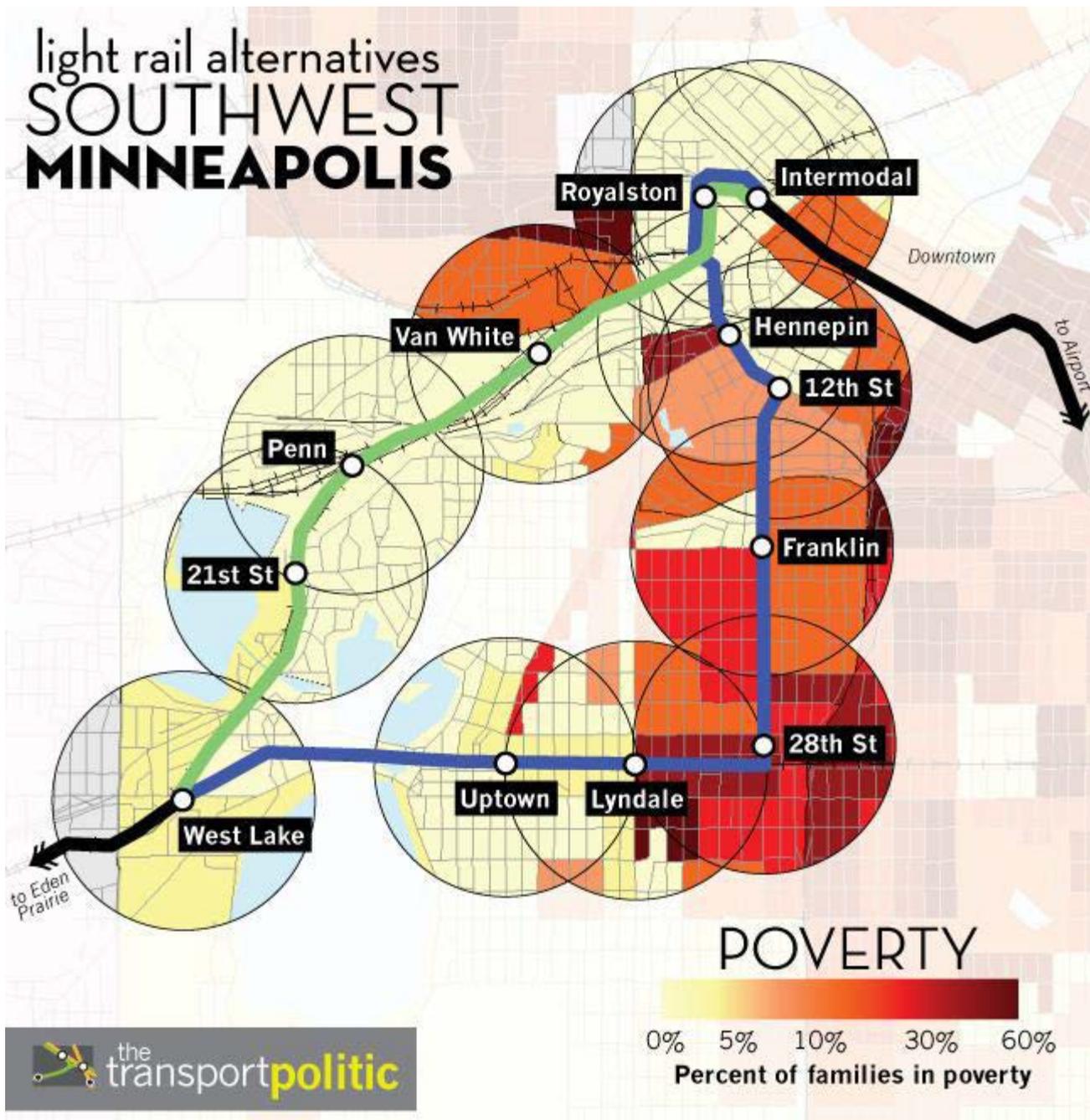
# What do these urban transit corridors have in common?

- They are the most efficient and least subsidized corridors in the entire transit system.
- Mass transit, in order to be as cost-effective as possible, requires mass – or density.
- The City of Minneapolis, by embracing density along transit corridors, is providing Metro Transit with its least expensive customers. Investments in transit improvements along already-dense streets are likely to be cost effective.
- By contrast, it costs Metro Transit more money on a per mile basis to provide transit service in sparsely populated communities where buses must travel more miles to pick up fewer passengers

# Serving the Communities Left Behind

- The City reluctantly agreed to proceed with Hennepin County's preferred alignment of Kenilworth
- By routing through Kenilworth and avoiding dense corridors, Southwest LRT provided far more modest benefits for Minneapolis neighborhoods.

# light rail alternatives SOUTHWEST MINNEAPOLIS



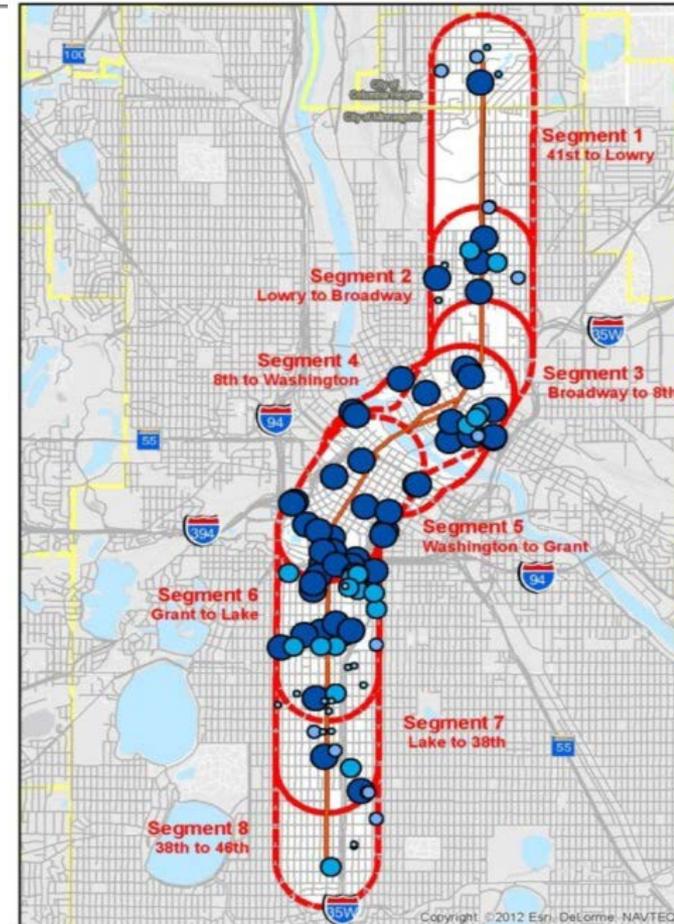
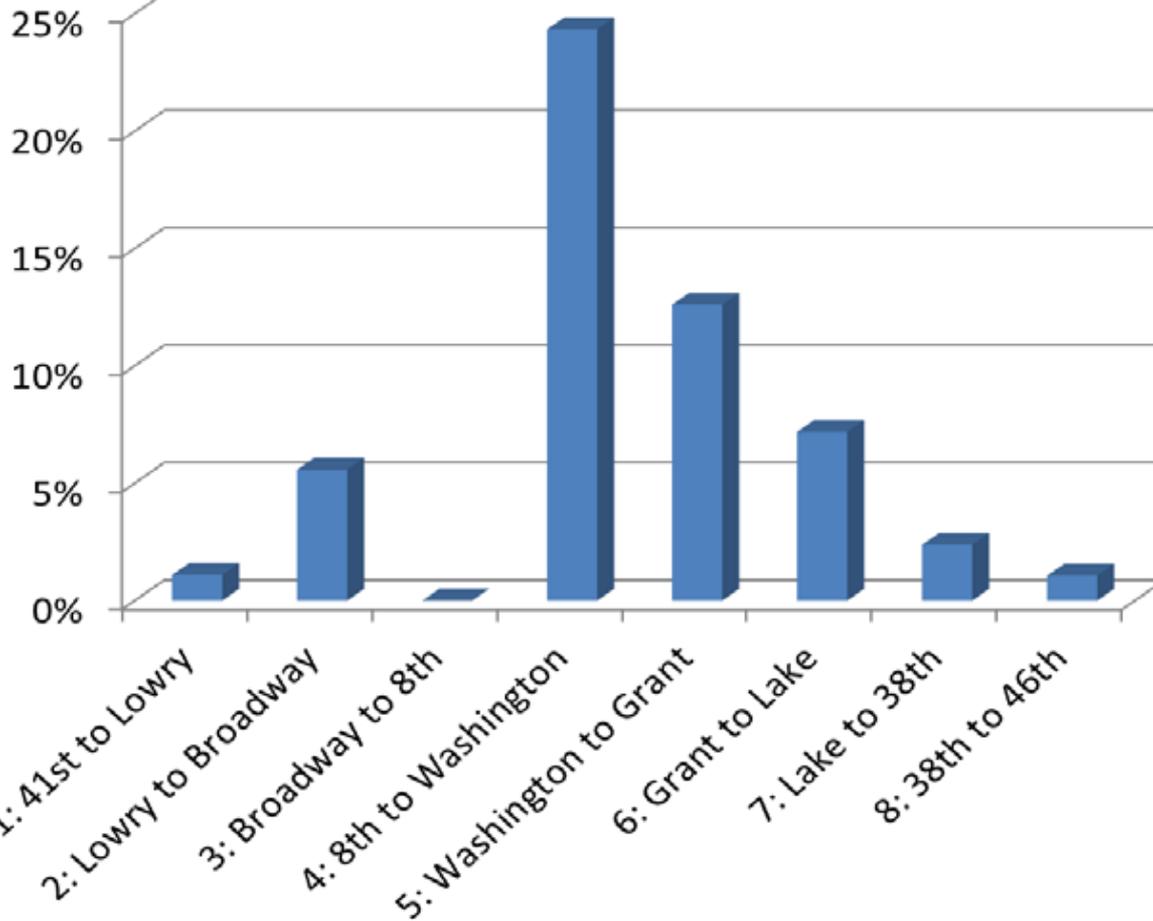
## After Kenilworth

- The City redoubled its ongoing efforts to bring a Modern Streetcar to the Nicollet and rail to the Midtown Greenway
- Poverty is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of 3

# Nicollet/Central Modern Streetcar

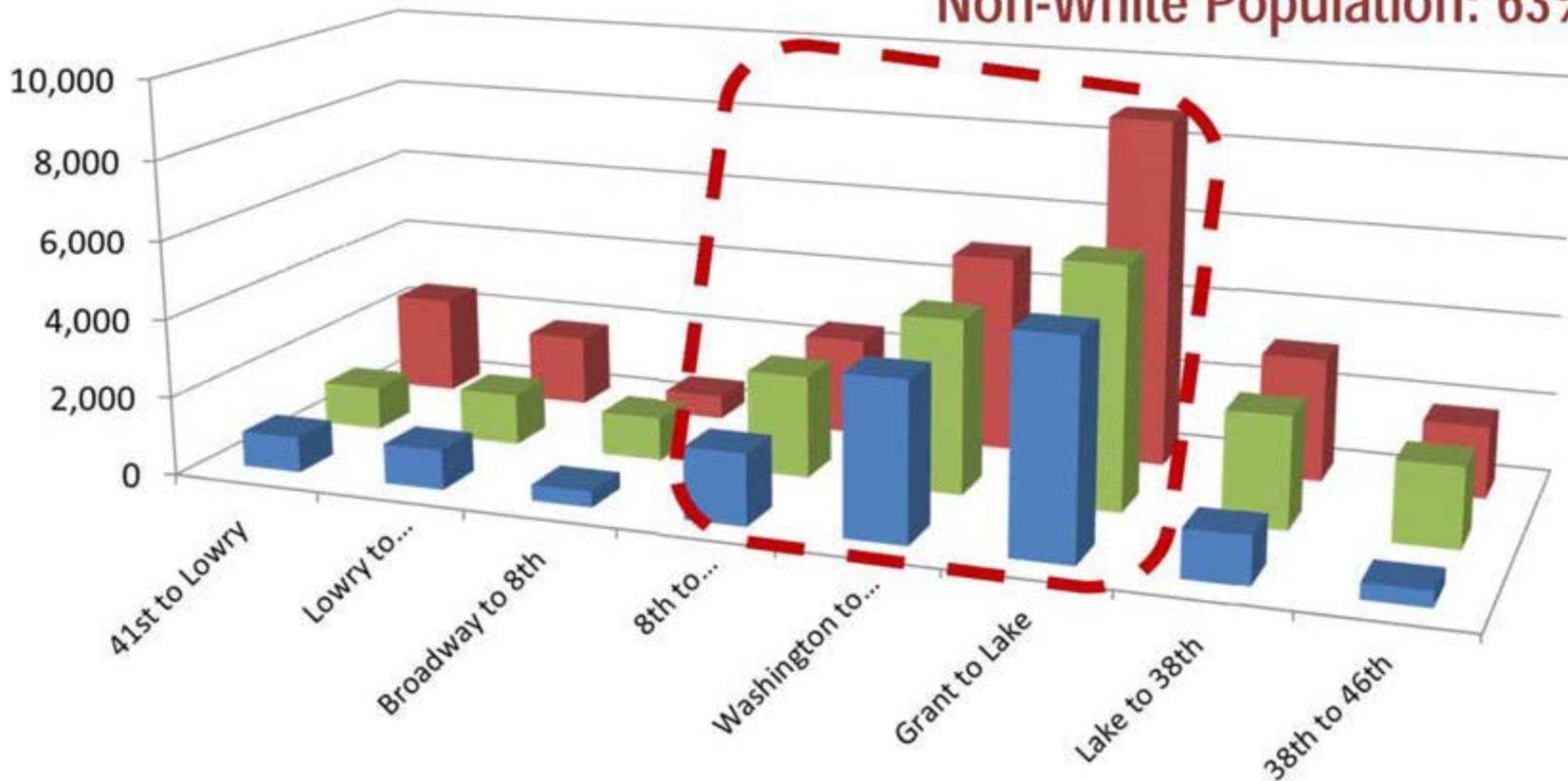
- 3.4-mile modern streetcar line
- Projected to carry over 9,000 daily riders.
- While the City hopes to eventually extend the streetcar further north and south, the first segment described above was chosen in part because it serves the greatest number of a.) people without vehicles, b.) population in poverty, c.) non-white population and d.) largest number of affordable housing units.

# Nicollet/Central: Percent of Housing Units That Are Legally Binding Affordable Units



# Nicollet/Central Starter Segment

No Vehicle Population: 74%  
Population Living In Poverty: 61%  
Non-White Population: 63%

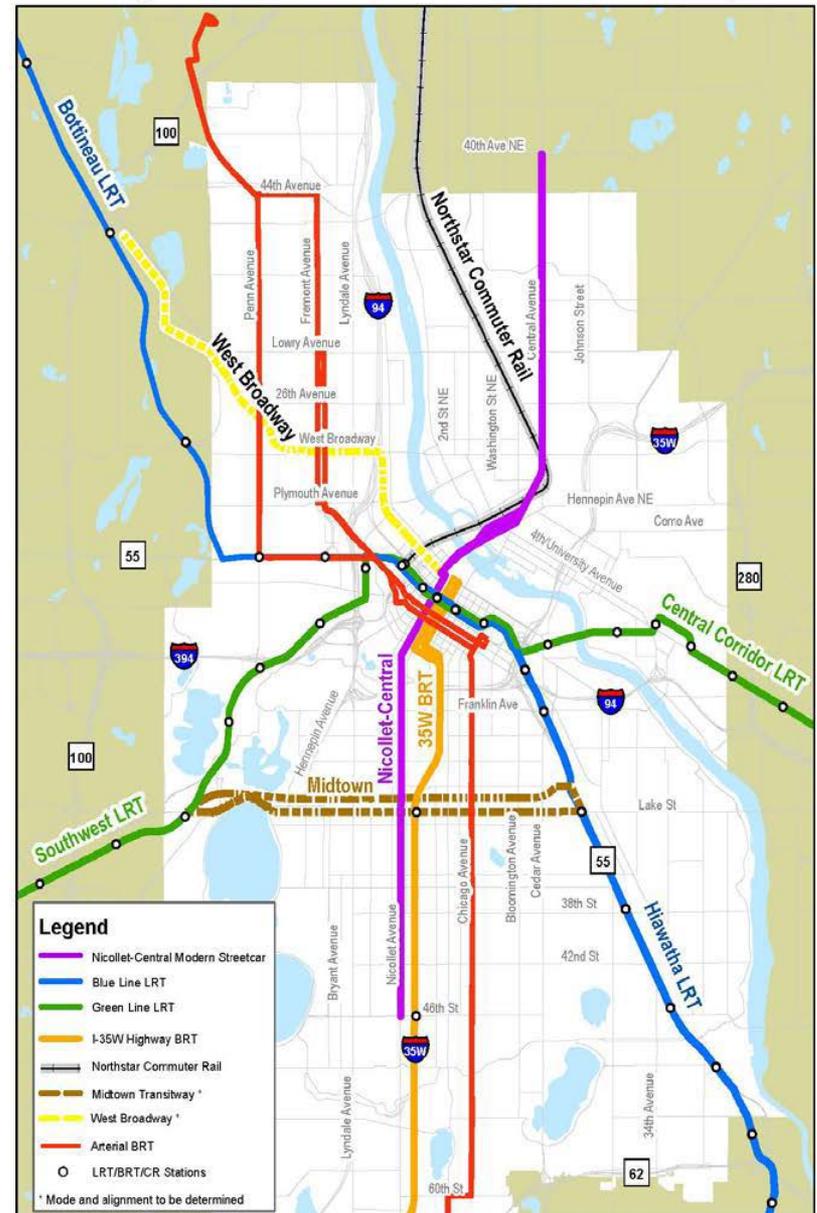


# Nicollet/Central Modern Streetcar

- Alternatives Analysis was completed in 2013 and the City Council and Mayor approved the route and mode as the recommended Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) on October 4, 2013.
- The City is currently leading an Environmental Assessment in collaboration with the Metropolitan Council, the presumed owner and operator.
- In spring 2013, the City established a value capture district on five blocks along the project which may be used to fund capital costs of the streetcar project, estimated to generate up to \$60 million of the total \$200 million project costs.
- The City appreciates equity advocates' support for adoption of a regional streetcar policy and the City commits to work with advocacy organizations, the City of St. Paul, Met Council and others to achieve this.

# A New Spine Through Downtown

- Hiawatha LRT built tracks through downtown which could then be used by Central LRT
- In a similar manner, the Nicollet/Central Modern Streetcar Project will provide a new rail spine through Downtown which could also be used by a future West Broadway Streetcar.



# Enhanced Bus on Chicago Ave

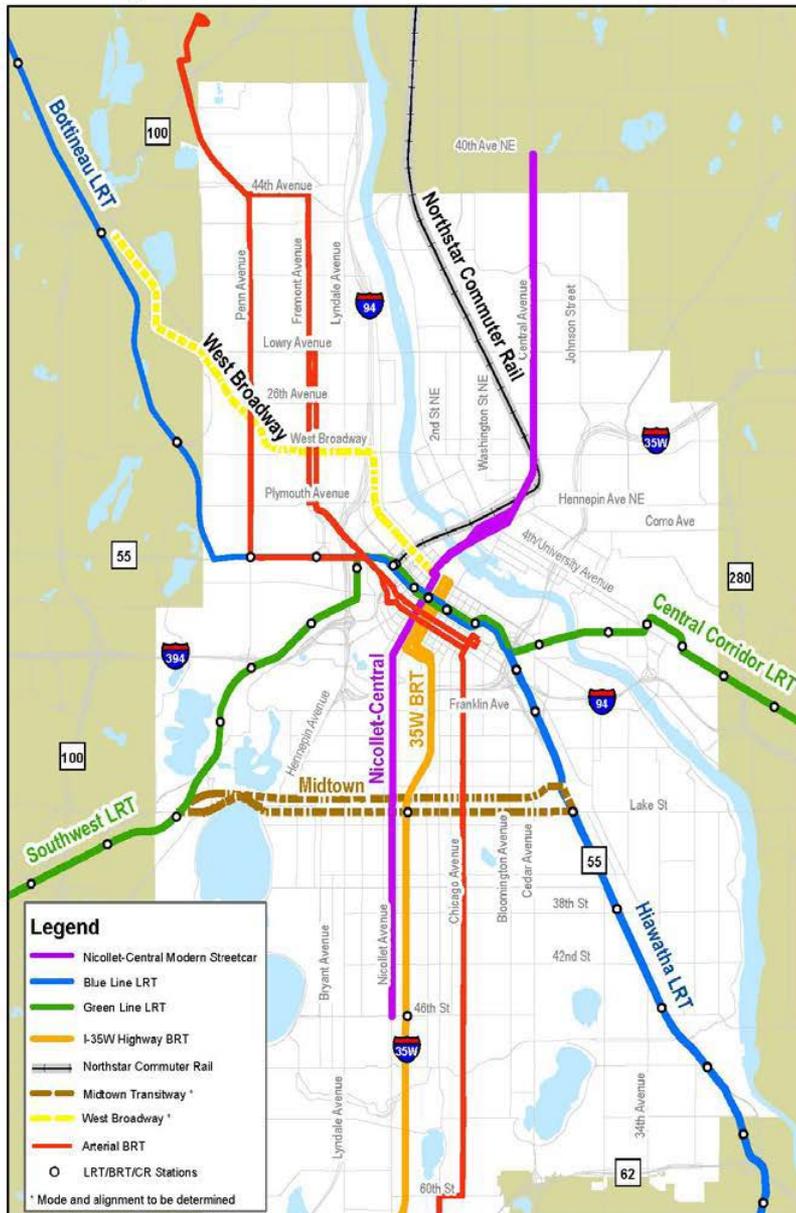
- Even before City negotiations over Bottineau LRT, Metro Transit planned for Enhanced Bus on Chicago Ave.
- Chicago Ave is currently served by the slow #5 bus.
- With the addition of the Emerson/Fremont corridor on the Northside (also served by the #5 bus) to Metro Transit's Enhanced Bus network, it makes sense to upgrade service on both the northside and southside sections of the corridor at the same time, if possible.

# Midtown Corridor

- Alternatives analysis for the Midtown Corridor in early 2014. The studied corridor included both the Midtown Greenway and Lake Street.
- Midtown Corridor Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) recommended the dual alternative of double/single-track rail in the Midtown Greenway and enhanced bus on Lake Street and as the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).
- The rail component is a 4.4 mile corridor along the Midtown Greenway that would operate in an exclusive guideway, mostly grade-separated from the street grid, with an estimated one-way travel time of 13 minutes. Potential rail vehicles include modern streetcar vehicles or single-car light rail vehicles.

# Orange Line BRT

- Orange Line BRT will provide high-speed, all-day transit access on 35W from Minneapolis to Burnsville
- Includes stations in Minneapolis at 46th Street, Lake Street and downtown stops on Marquette and 2nd Avenues.
- Among other benefits, Orange Line BRT will provide Minneapolis residents much better access to job opportunities in the southern suburbs.



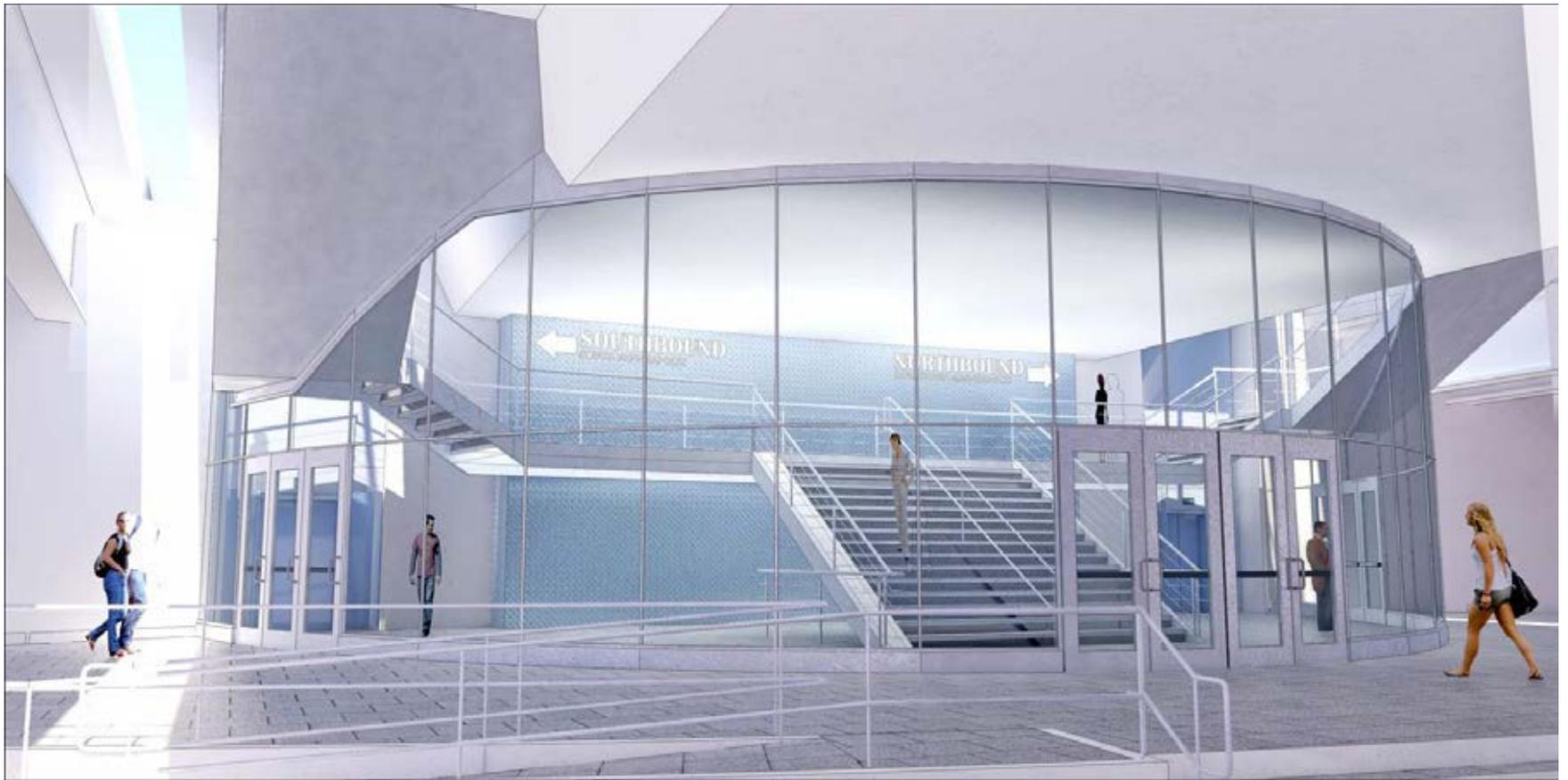
# Orange Line BRT needs a station at Lake



- This is 2014
- 35W is the most well travelled transit corridor in Minnesota.



# Orange Line BRT – Station at Lake (2017)



Until new station is built, Orange Line BRT cannot be fully built

# Advocacy to Met Council

- In addition to targeted investments in the highest-performing southside and eastside transit corridors like Nicollet, Central, Chicago, Midtown/Lake and 35W, the City also has long supported comprehensive improvements frequency, security and amenities on all bus routes in southside and eastside Minneapolis.
- The City commits to work with advocates to achieve these shared goals.

# Transit-Oriented Development on SWLRT

- Prospects for development are enhanced or limited by the inherent characteristics of station locations. Rail Stations should be
  - Accessible
  - Easy to find
  - Available land for development & job growth
- The unanticipated and unwelcome continuation of an active freight corridor will also inhibit development at several Southwest stations.
- Despite these challenges, the City will continue to promote economic development. Other than the 21st Street station, the City expects some level of development at each of the Minneapolis stations.
- Except for the Royalston station which could develop very quickly, the City does not expect development on the scale or speed of Central Corridor.

# Van White Station Area

- High priority for the City
- We have already invested substantial staff time and a total of over \$22 million in federal, county, and city resources for Van White Boulevard to create a new connection between North and South Minneapolis and reweave together neighborhoods long divided by both freight rail and I-394.
- Developable land is available, although poor soils will likely limit residential development.
- Some of the unique factors in the Van White station area include the presence of the impound lot and the possibility of future passenger rail.

# Impound Lot

- Public Works and CPED are working on plans to shrink and improve the impound lot.
- Three options were presented to the community that would:
  - improve the customer experience,
  - make the impound lot a better neighbor,
  - reduce the impound lot size, and
  - free up 6 to 10 acres for possible reuse or redevelopment.
- These improvements are long overdue.
- Efforts to improve the impound lot have been delayed by a desire to relocate it to another location, but an appropriate and viable location available for purchase has never been identified.

# Impound Lot, cont.

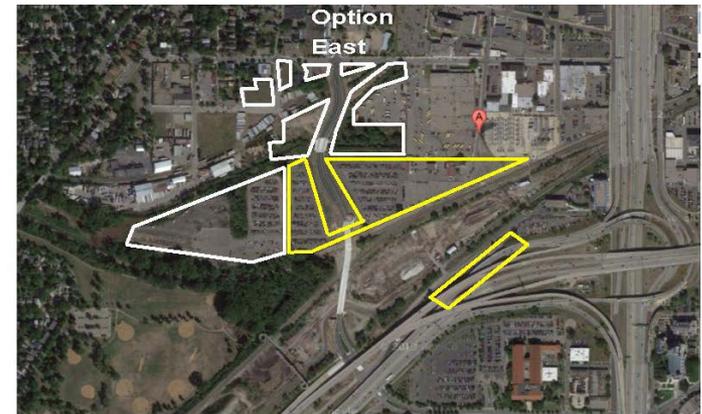
- Where is the industrial zoned land?
- Mostly in other parts of North and Northeast Minneapolis, and none of those communities, which already contain locally unwanted land uses would welcome the impound lot to their neighborhood.
- We do need an impound lot. “Tow around the corner” doesn’t work here.

# Three Options:

- Yellow border is a future, smaller impound lot.
- White border is land freed up for development.
- What are the neighboring land uses - and are they changing?

LatestImpoundOptionEast3

May 05, 2014



LatestImpoundOptionWest4

May 12, 2014



LatestImpoundOptionSplit3

May 05, 2014



# Being Towed in Minneapolis

- The Impound Lot is within reasonable walking distance of the Van White station.
- This new transit line and station will improve the ability of impound lot users to recover their impounded vehicle through the use of transit.
- Our choice: letting the perfect be the enemy of the good OR moving ahead to develop the land closest to LRT and Van White Blvd.

# Intercity Passenger Rail to Minneapolis

- MNDoT has developed a plan for high-speed passenger rail service to Chicago, Duluth and St. Cloud among other destinations.
- The City of Minneapolis supports such projects which would spur economic development and job growth in Minneapolis.

# Intercity Passenger Rail, cont.

- Such projects also foster equity by providing new ways for people to reach jobs and a competitive alternative to air travel.
- Such projects would also provide construction jobs.
- It is in the best interests of the City and its residents for such passenger rail lines to stop directly in downtown Minneapolis at the Target Field station, as close as possible to provide transportation access and more choices to the populations we seek to serve.

# Intercity Passenger Rail, cont.

- Both Union Depot in Saint Paul and Target Field Station in Minneapolis were built for this purpose.
- Stopping only in Downtown Saint Paul would significantly inconvenience residents of Minneapolis looking for shorter overall travel times to their destinations.

# Passenger Rail Layover Facility

- Having rail amenities serve City residents comes with certain burdens like rail layover facilities.
  - Hiawatha (Blue Line) LRT required an operations and maintenance facility between the Franklin and Cedar Riverside Stations, but the overall benefit to the City and its residents is clear.

# Van White: Uncertainty Hinders Development

- The City strongly supports sustainable, dense development near the Van White station that promotes equity and job growth.
- The biggest impediments to moving forward with such development are:
  - polluted and swampy land,
  - uncertainty regarding Southwest LRT
  - uncertainty regarding any future Passenger Rail layover facility
- The City has worked to develop a plan which reserves a small area for passenger rail layover. To balance the need for longer-term development of passenger rail service and near-term development opportunities, the City restrained the request of MNDoT to a smaller area of approximately what would likely be needed.
- The City seeks to accommodate rail projects to Chicago, Duluth and St. Cloud, but not, at this time, projects to Willmar and Eau Claire which seem less realistic in the reasonably projected future.

# Passenger Rail Layover Facility

- The plan depicting the smaller four acre area reserved for future rail layover, as shown below, still provides over six acres on Linden Yards East for near-term development.
- Only the easterly portion of Linden Yards East will be available for future study as a potential option for a regional commuter and high speed rail layover facility as shown above.
- The Cedar Lake Trail will run continuously through the Linden Yards site. Any future rail layover facility will be designed, enclosed, landscaped and mitigated for noise and air quality impacts.
- Even within the constraints described above, the City of Minneapolis believes there is a lot of potential at the Van White station. The City is committed to work with the Harrison and Bryn Mawr neighborhoods to achieve a shared vision of mixed-use, mixed income development including affordable rental and homeownership options.



FUTURE ROUNDABOUT

RAIL LAYOVER FACILITY (4.4 ACRES)

DEVELOPABLE AREA (6.7 ACRES)

### LINDEN YARDS EAST

- DEVELOPABLE AREA (6.7 ACRES)
- RAIL LAYOVER FACILITY (4.4 ACRES)



3/14/2013



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# Pedestrian & Bike Access

- City sought and secured \$30 million in accessibility improvements at the Southwest stations located in Minneapolis
- The City views these as necessary mitigations for both the alignment choice and the unexpected and unwelcome presence of freight rail.
- These pedestrian and bicycle accessibility components are an important step towards shared development goals.
- That package includes a pedestrian bridge from the Van White station area directly to Bryn Mawr meadows.
- For these investments to be most successful the City, Park Board and neighborhood groups must work together.

# Funding Transit

- Our region is way behind our peer regions in development of modern transit.
- The difference between them and us is funding.
- 2015 Legislature will consider a Transportation Funding Bill.
- Minneapolis supports new revenue for a comprehensive build out.
- Minneapolis will push for a bill that supports a sustainable and equitable system