# Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives Study

Technical/Community Advisory Committee

September 11, 2012

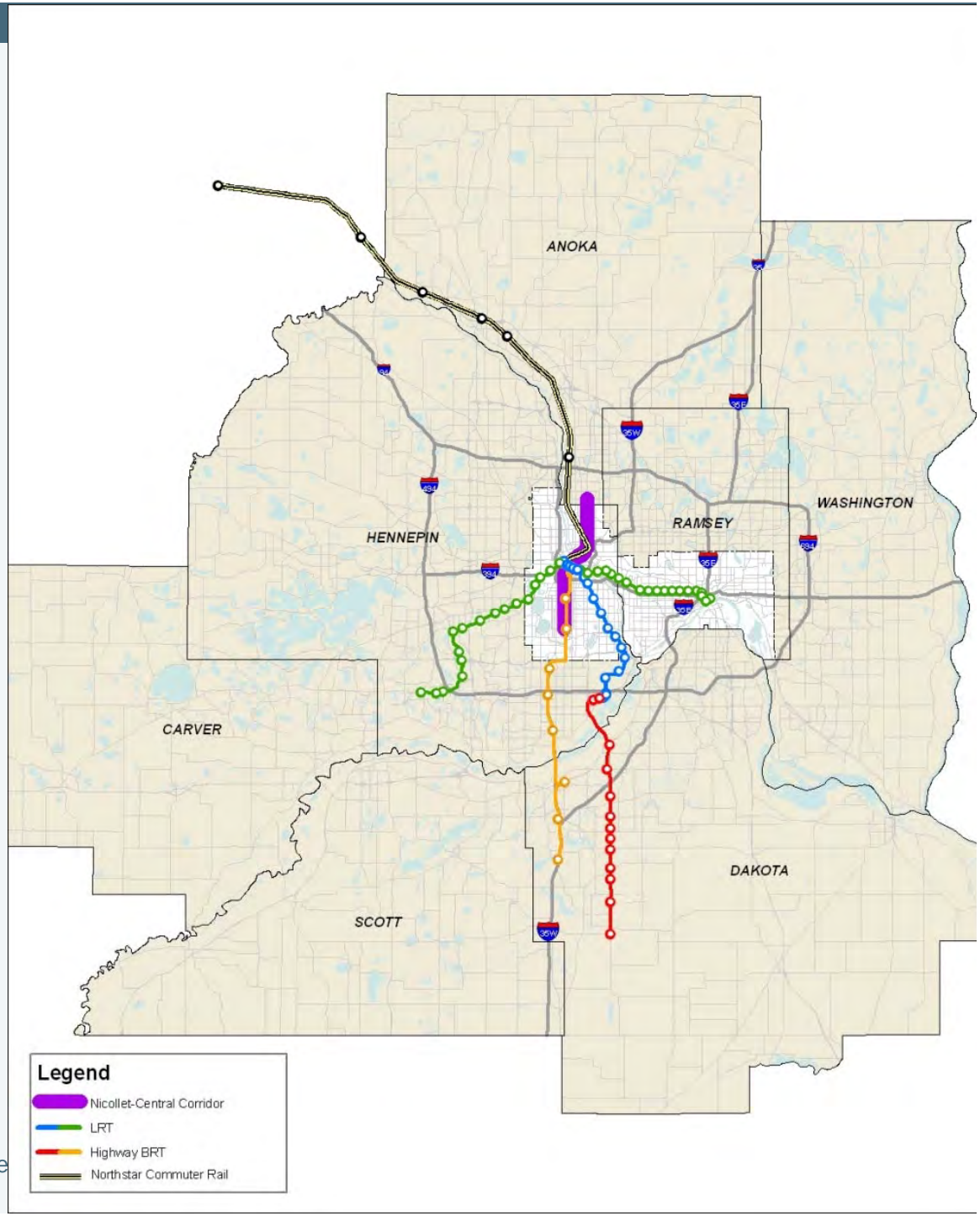
# STUDY OVERVIEW

# Study Overview

- identify a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)
- LPA to be adopted into the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*
- based upon evaluation of benefits, costs and impacts of transit alternatives
- alternatives to include (but not limited to):
  - Modern Streetcar
  - Enhanced Bus
- LPA first phase of a longer-range vision for transit service in 9.2 mile corridor

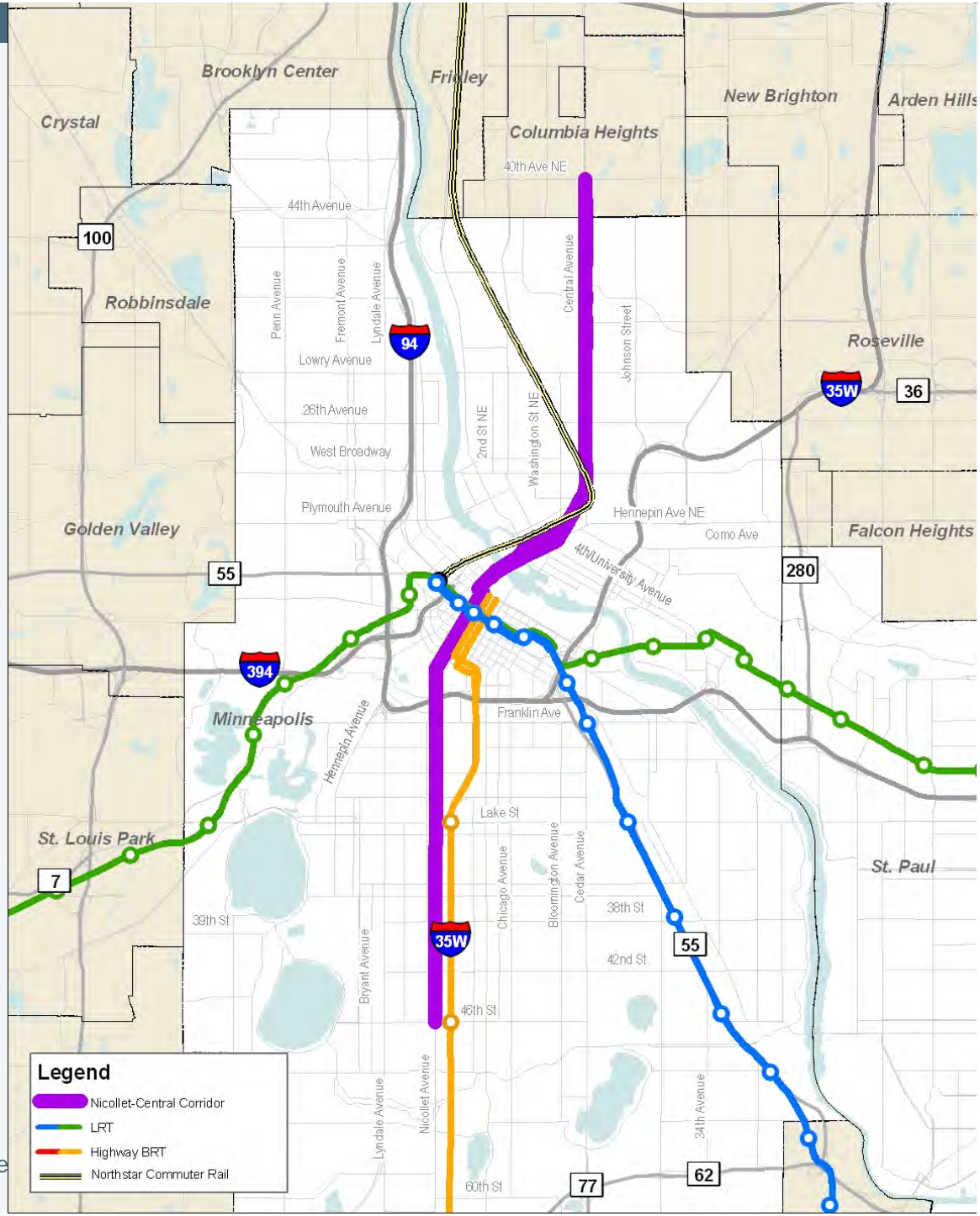
# Study Corridor

## Regional Context



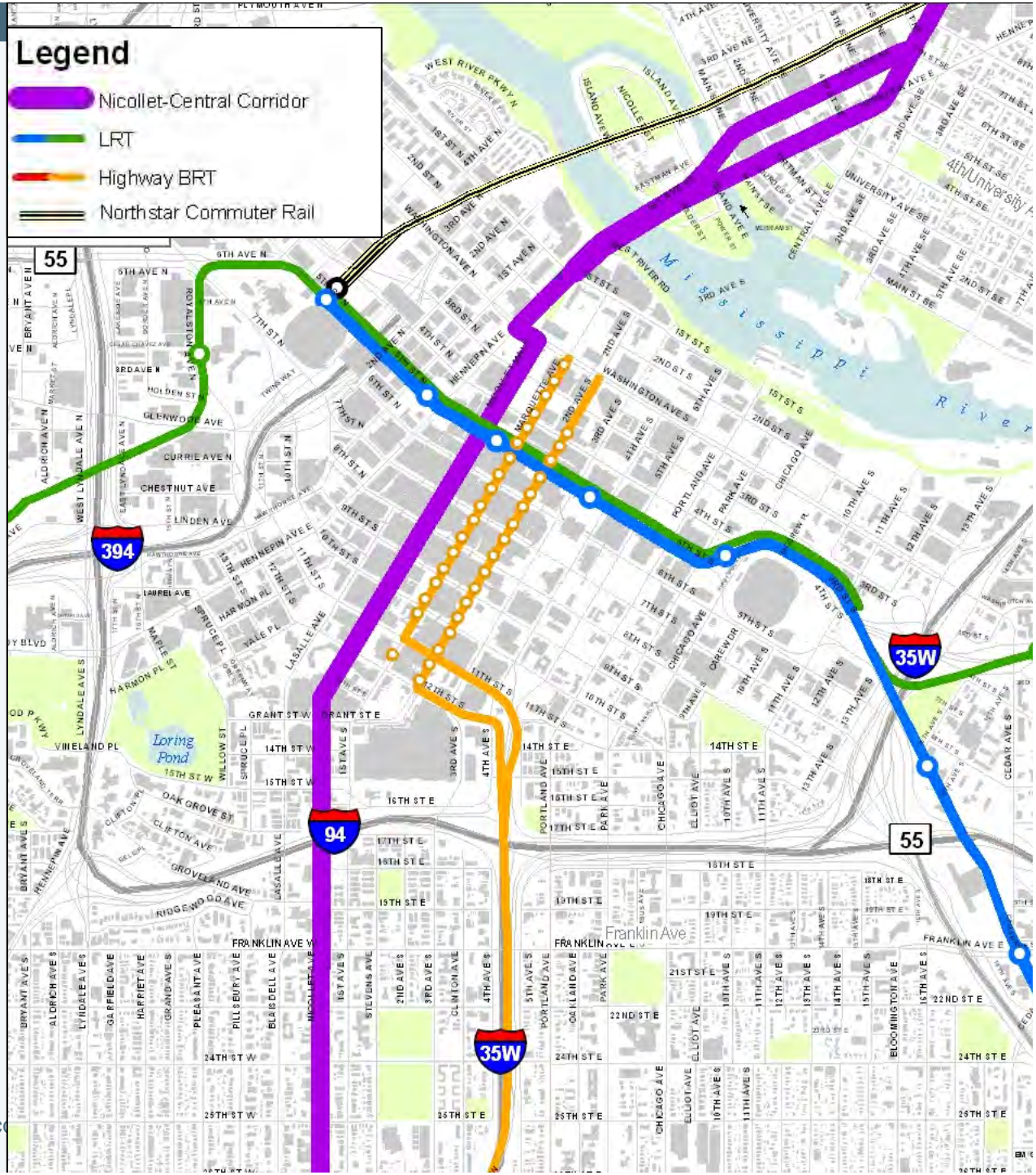
# Study Corridor

## Central Cities Context



# Study Corridor

## Downtown Context




minneapolis city of lakes

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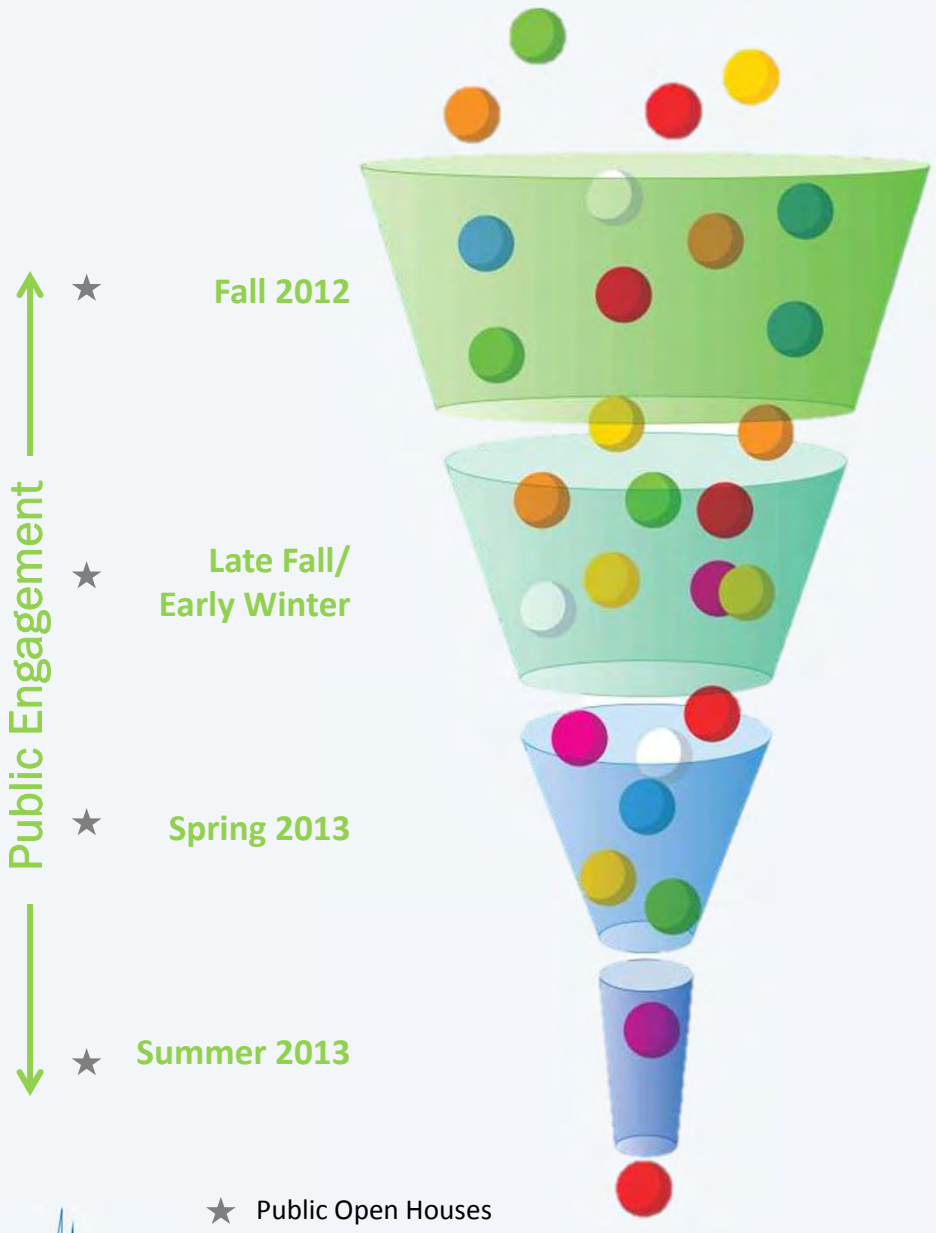
# Project Study Process




Purpose and Need ← We Are Here

- Corridor Problems and Challenges
- Vision for the Corridor
- Goals and Objectives and Evaluation Criteria

Initial Development and Screening of Corridor Transportation Options

- Transit Mode Options
- Corridor Segment Options

Detailed Definition and Evaluation of Alternatives

Selection of Locally Preferred Alternative

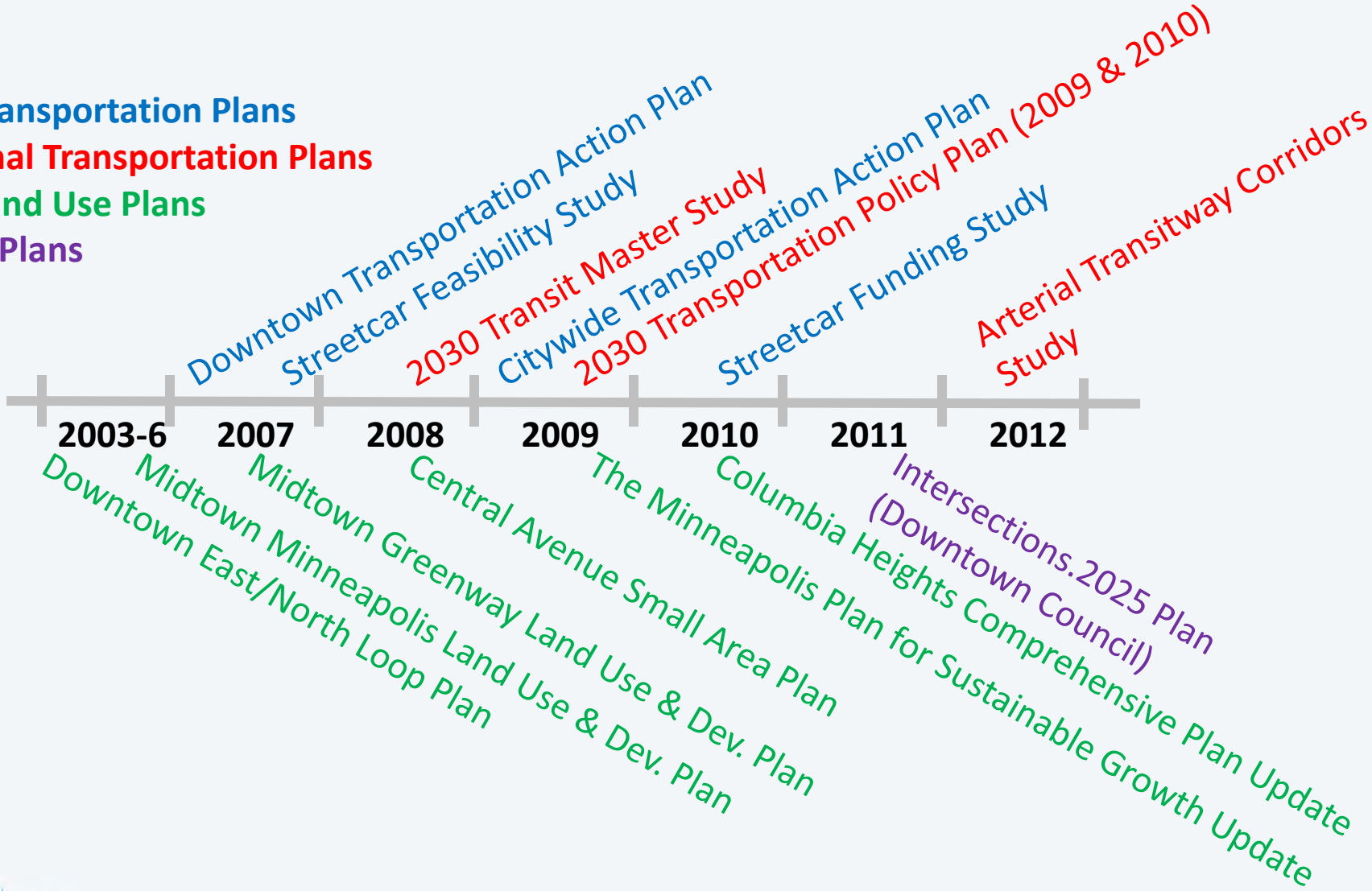
# Federally-Defined Study Process

- Alternatives Analysis required to be eligible for federal New Starts/Small Starts capital funding
- Locally Preferred Alternative must be incorporated into the long-range transportation plan for the region
- FTA Small Starts Program:
  - Total capital costs = Less than $250 million
  - Federal funding = up to 80% and max $75 million
  - More streamlined federal evaluation than New Starts

# PREVIOUS STUDIES & PLANS

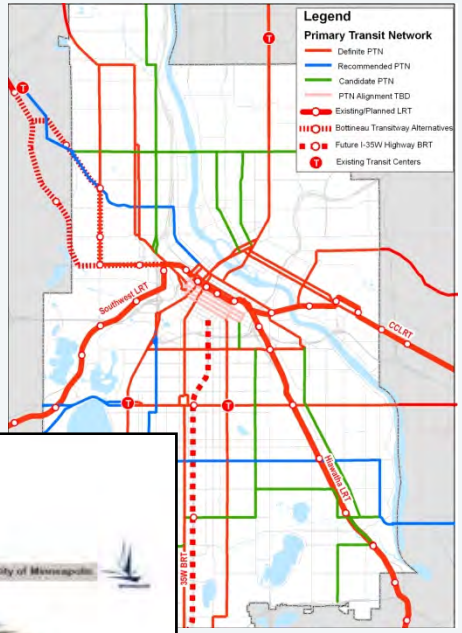
# Previous Plans & Studies

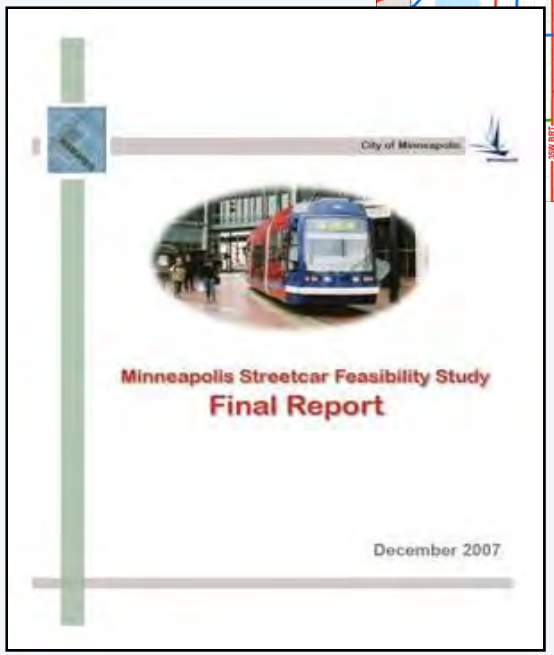
**City Transportation Plans**
**Regional Transportation Plans**
**City Land Use Plans**
**Other Plans**



# Streetcar Feasibility Study

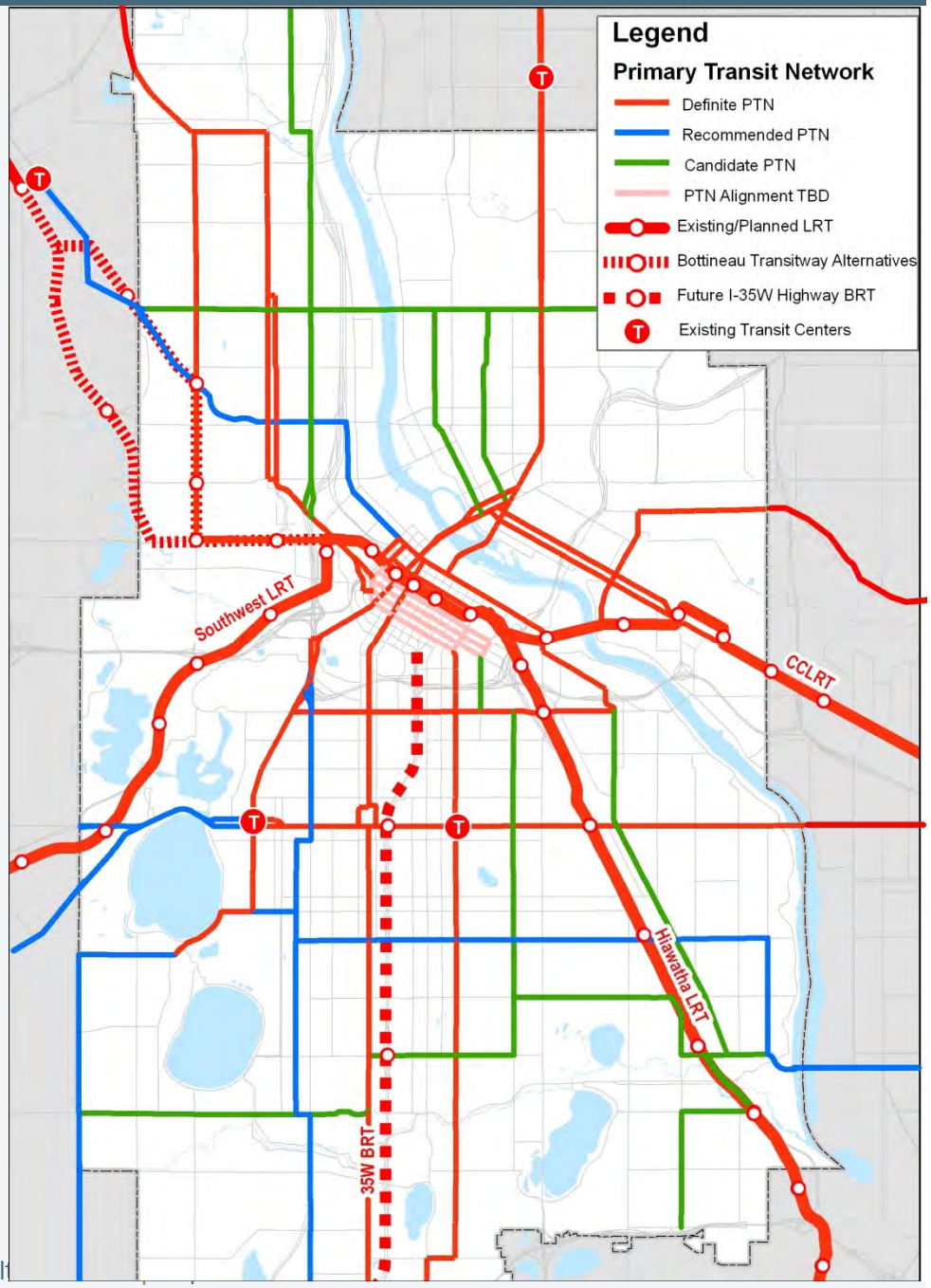
- Based upon Primary Transit Network
- Streetcar Study Goals
  - Increase transit ridership, especially near downtown
  - Increase the attractiveness of transit to new markets
  - Provide connections and distribution between regional transit and neighborhoods
  - Catalyze and organize development around a permanent transit investment



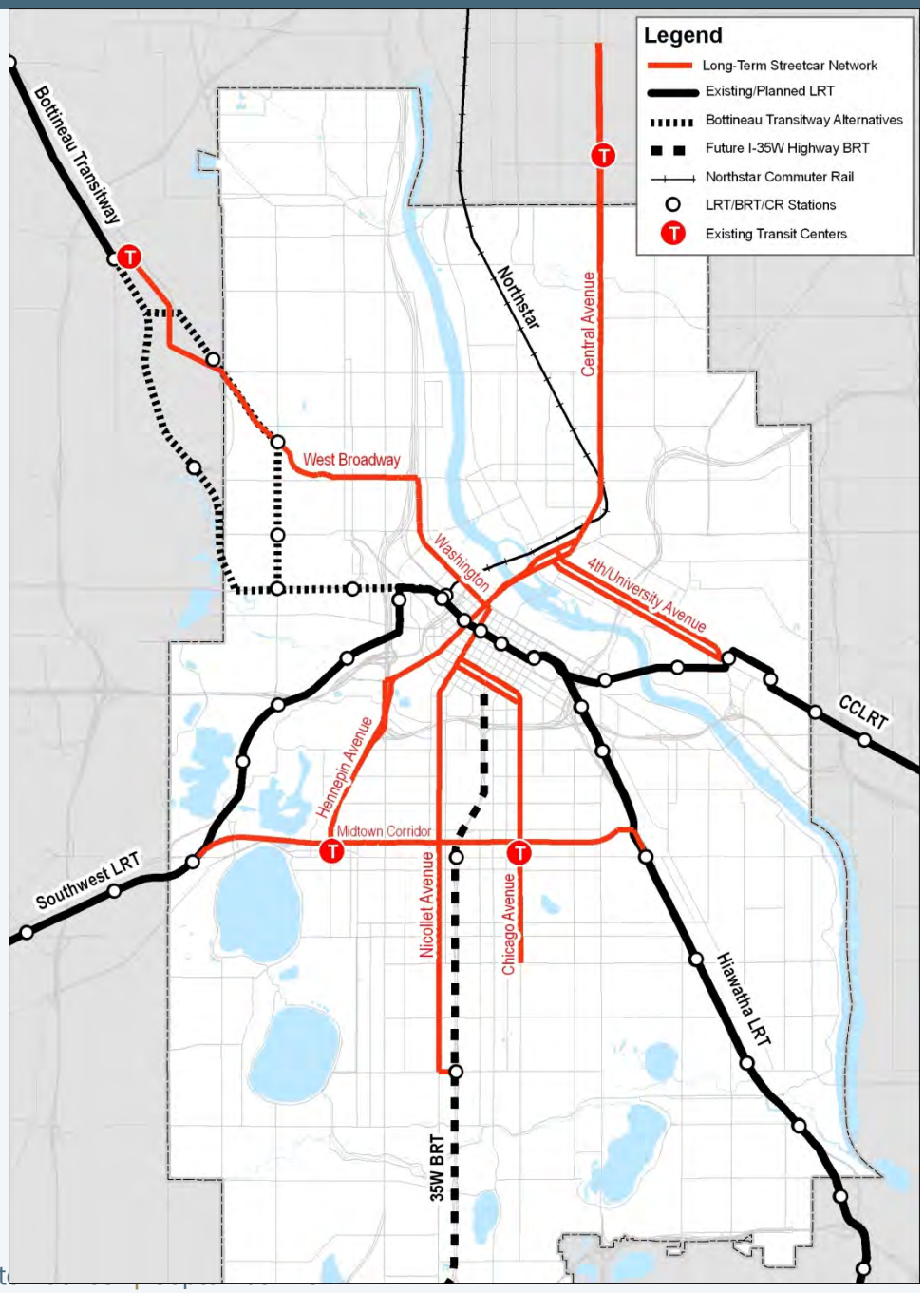
# Access Minneapolis Primary Transit Network

- Performance Criteria
  - At least every 15 minutes, 18 hours a day, 7 days a week
  - Reliable, on-time
  - At least 30% of speed limit
- Bus or rail
- Land Use/Transit Coordination
  - Direct growth/density to transit
  - Grow/improve transit through density



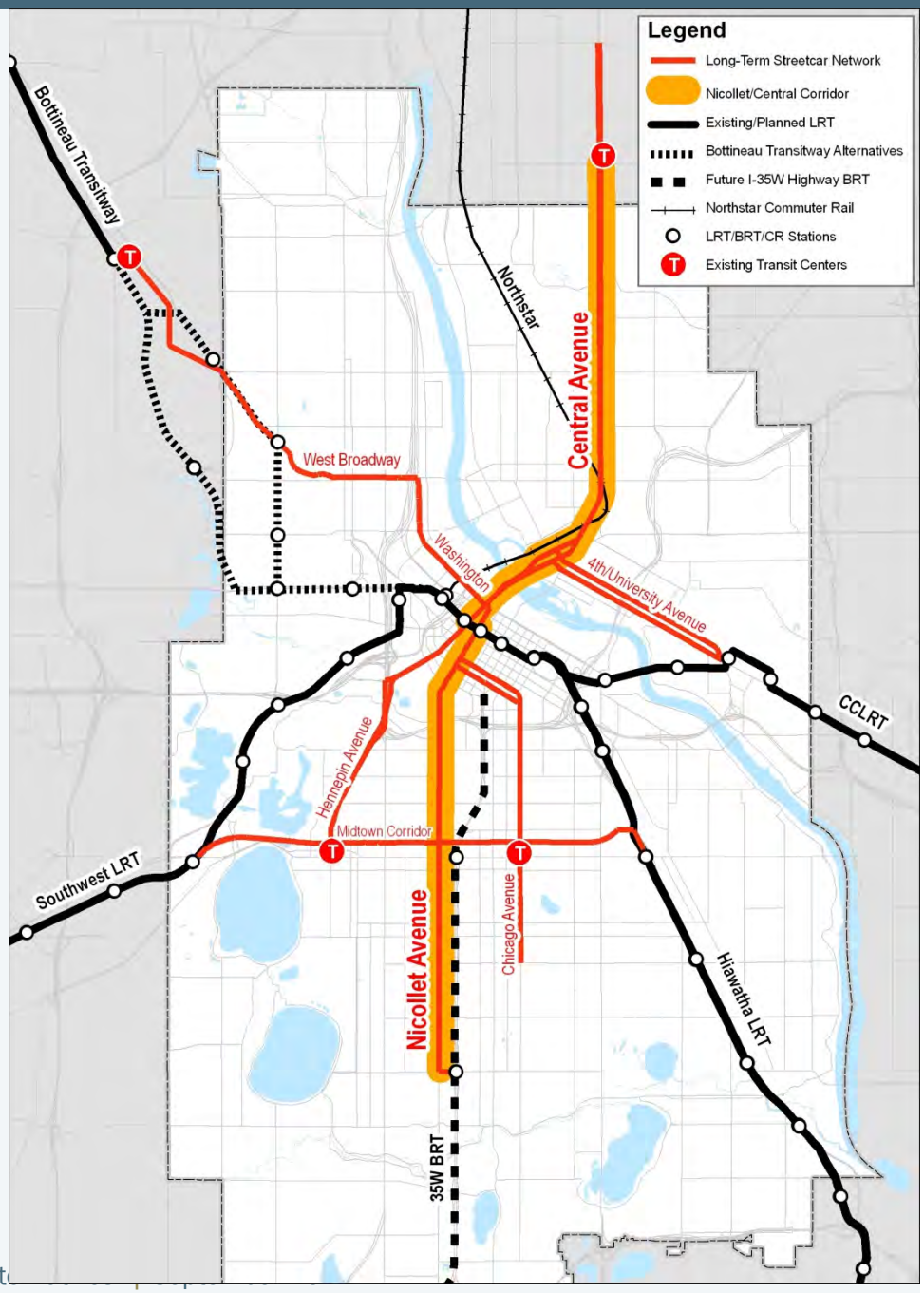
# Streetcar Feasibility Study

- 7 corridors recommended for long-term network
  - Central
  - 4th/University
  - Chicago
  - Nicollet
  - Hennepin
  - West Broadway/Washington
  - Midtown Corridor



# Nicollet-Central Corridor

- Prioritized by City Council for further study in 2010
- Best place to start implementation of long-term streetcar network
- $900,000 federal grant ($300,000 local match)



# 2030 Transit Master Study

- 2008 Met Council study in preparation for 2030 TPP Update
- 2 dozen potential bus and rail corridors beyond SW LRT evaluated
  - 12-mile Nicollet Avenue LRT line ranked at top (similar to Bottineau LRT)
  - 17-mile Central Avenue LRT line ranked near the top
- Both corridors recommended for Arterial BRT due to significant right-of-way impacts of LRT

# 2030 Transportation Policy Plan

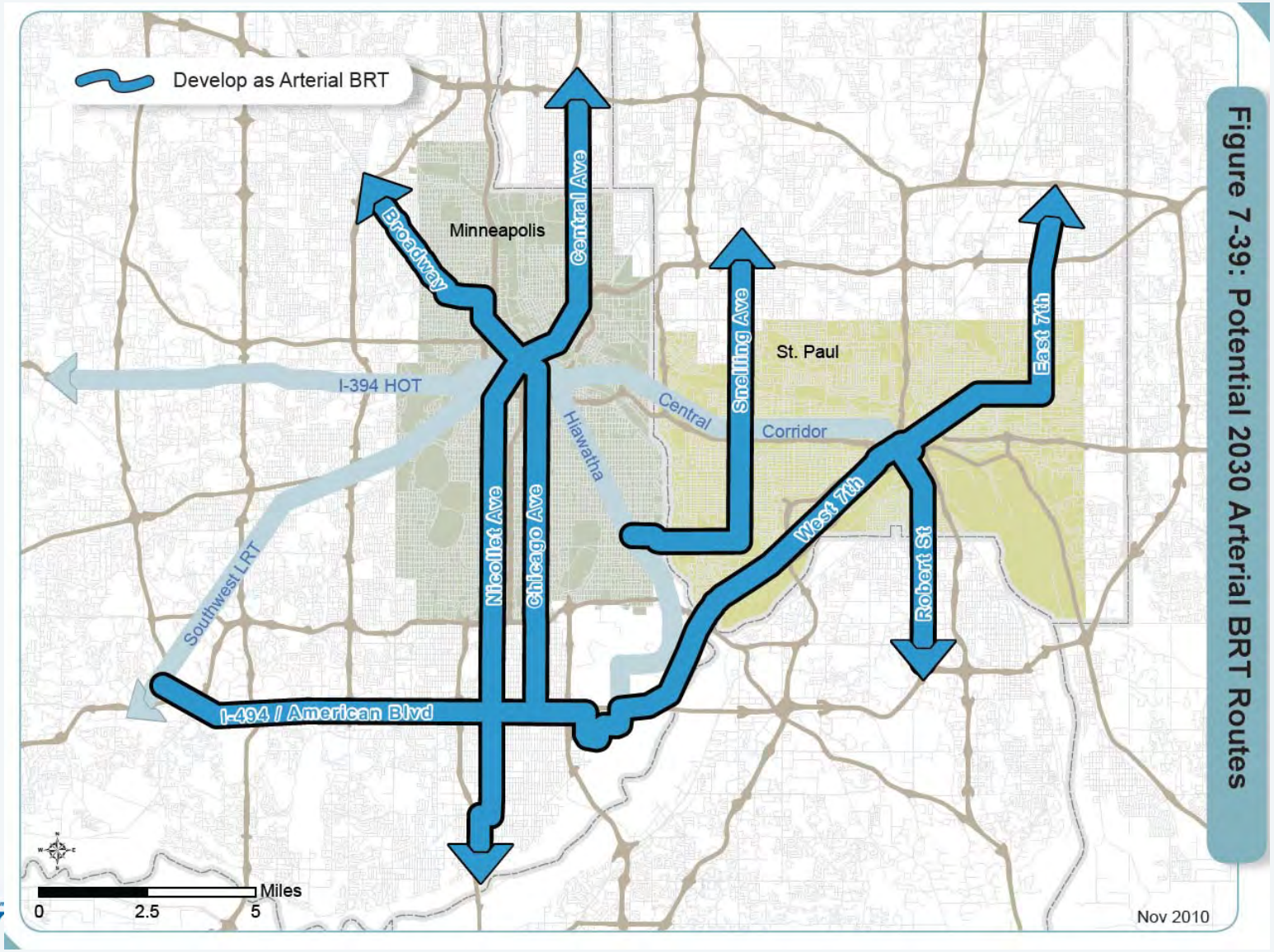
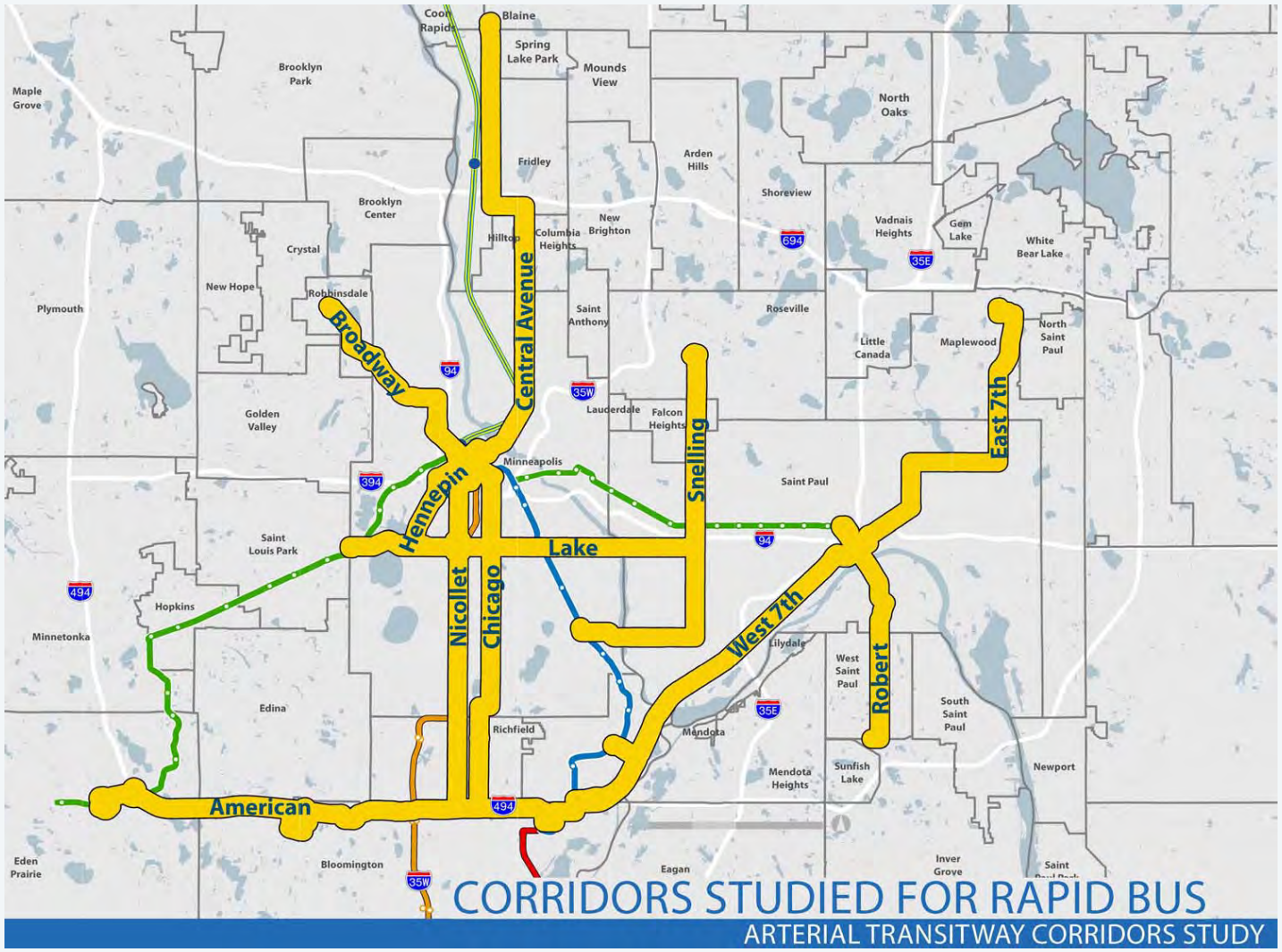


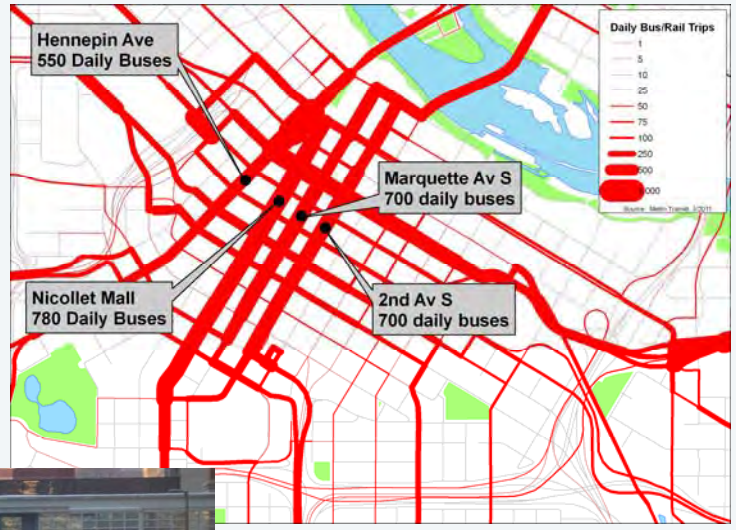

Figure 7-39: Potential 2030 Arterial BRT Routes

# Arterial Transitway Corridors Study

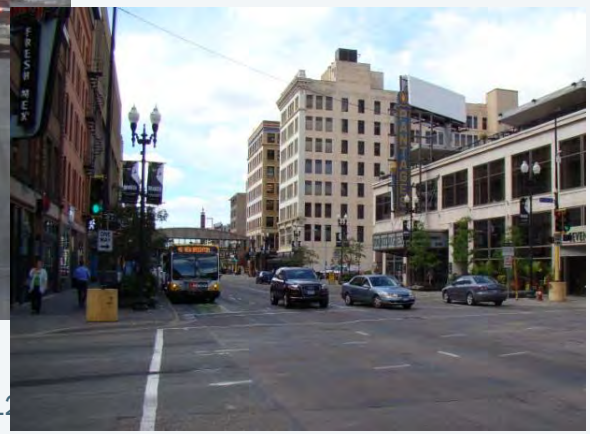


# Nicollet Mall and Parallel Streets

- 2007 Adopted Transportation Plan
  - multiple N-S transit alternatives evaluated
  - "yes" to local transit on Nicollet Mall
  - "yes" to express buses on Marquette/2nd
  - "yes" to 2-way traffic on Hennepin
- Marquette and 2nd avenues (MARQ2)
  - Double bus-only lanes constructed in 2009
  - Optimized for express bus service
  - Bus lanes nearing capacity in peak
- Hennepin Avenue S
  - Diagonal orientation - different transit and traffic travel market
  - 2009 conversion to two-way traffic
  - Buses operate in mixed traffic
- Nicollet Mall
  - Only car-free street in downtown Minneapolis
  - Peak hour bus volumes reduced 33% in 2009 with MARQ2 double bus lanes



Marquette/2nd Ave



Hennepin Ave.

# LIKELY ALTERNATIVES

# Some Modes Under Consideration

Mixed Traffic

## Arterial Bus Rapid Transit

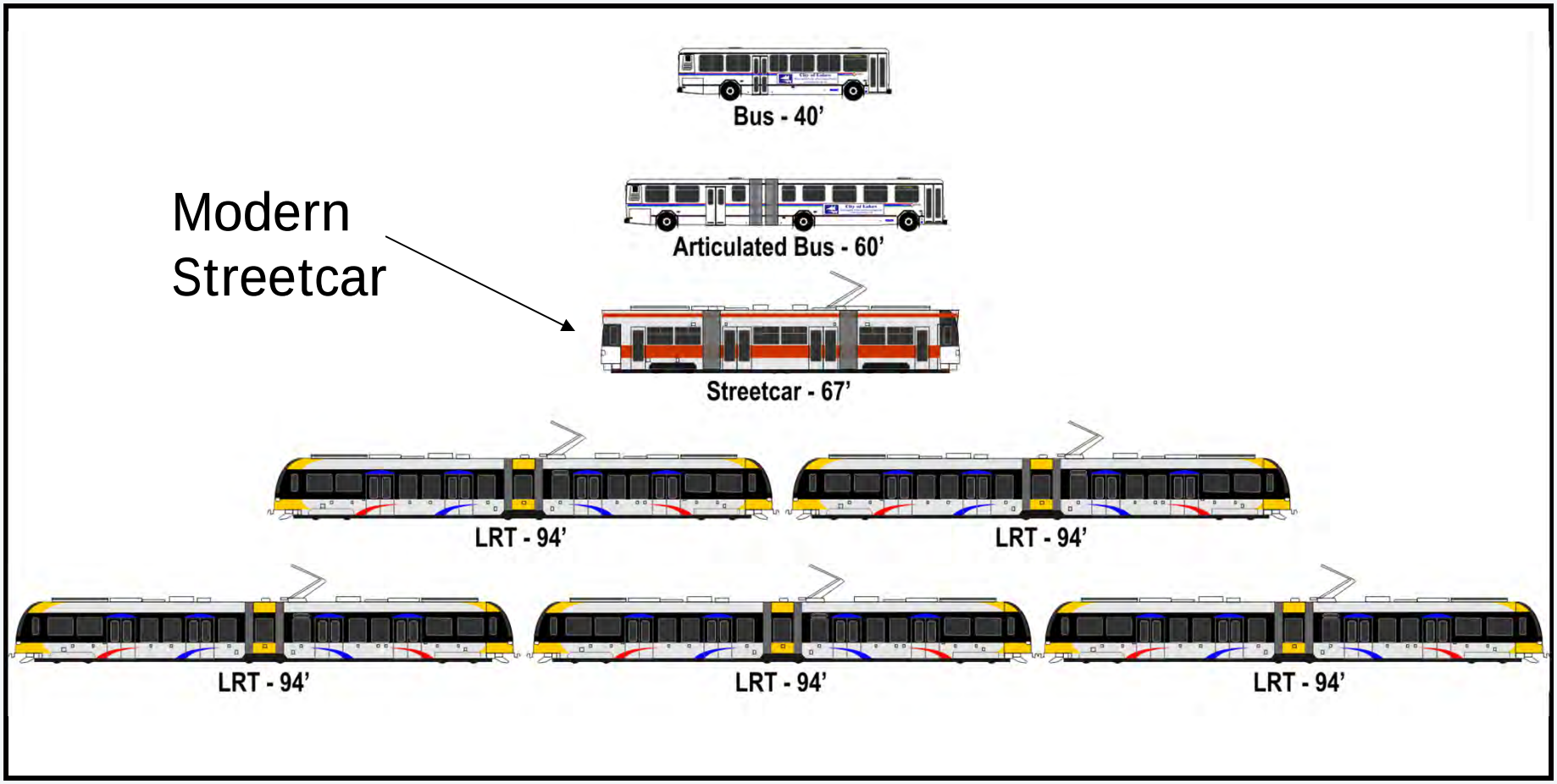
## Modern Streetcar

Exclusive Guideway

## Dedicated Busway

## Light Rail Transit

# Vehicle Technologies



# Modern Streetcar is NOT light rail.

- Light rail
  - exclusive tracks separate from cars
  - 2-3 car trains (each 94’ long)
  - ½ to 1 mile stop spacing
- Modern streetcar
  - tracks in mixed traffic lanes with cars
  - 1 car trains (67’ long)
  - ¼ to ½ mile stop spacing

# Modern Streetcar is NOT historic streetcar

- Historic streetcar
  - Not accessible
  - Passengers boarded in the street

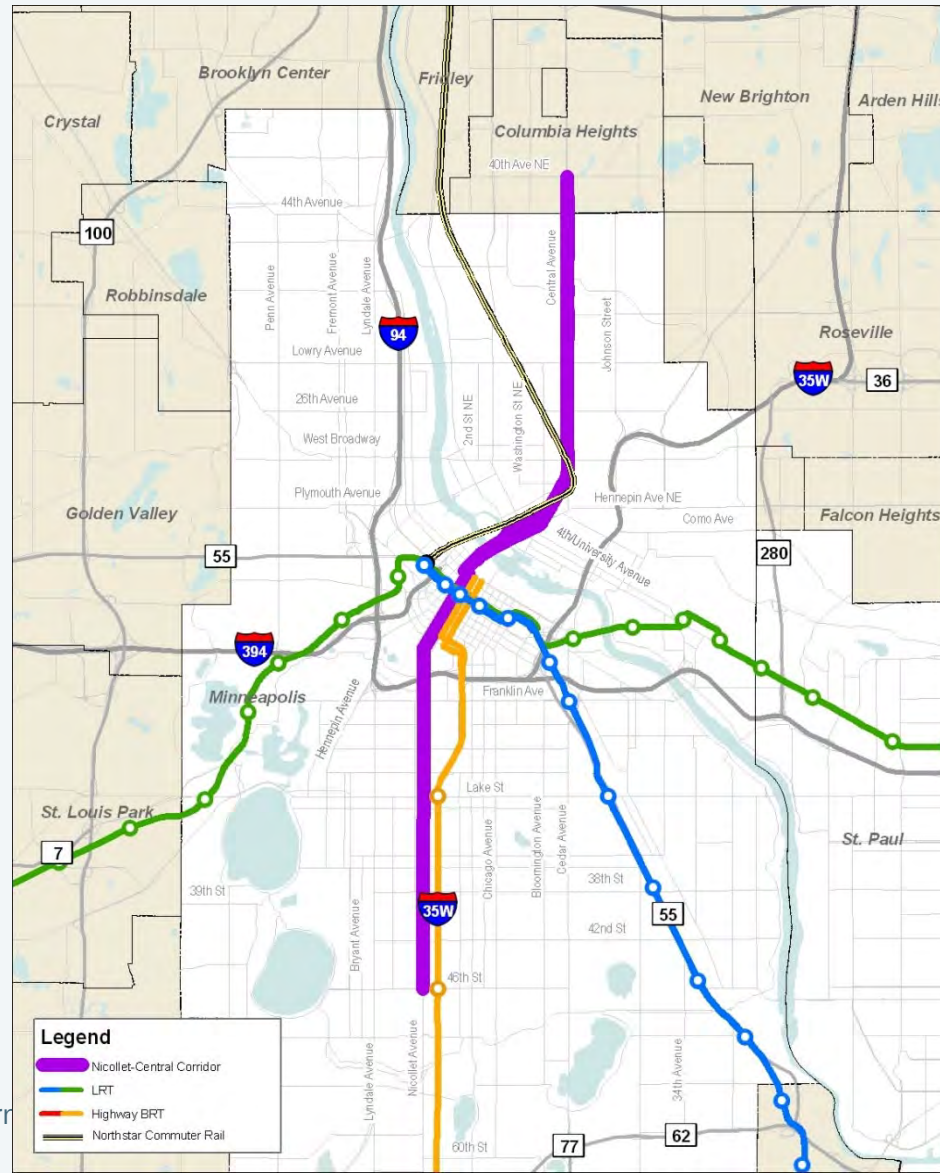
- Modern streetcar
  - Accessible
  - Passengers board from the sidewalk or median island

# What is Enhanced Bus?

- TBD, but probably based on Metro Transit Arterial BRT Concept
  - Curb extensions in parking lane
  - Level or near-level boarding
  - Off-board fare payment & ticket vending machines
  - Real-time transit information signs
  - Transit signal priority
  - Larger, branded vehicles
  - Operates in mixed traffic lanes with cars
  - (Similar facilities as modern streetcar in many ways)

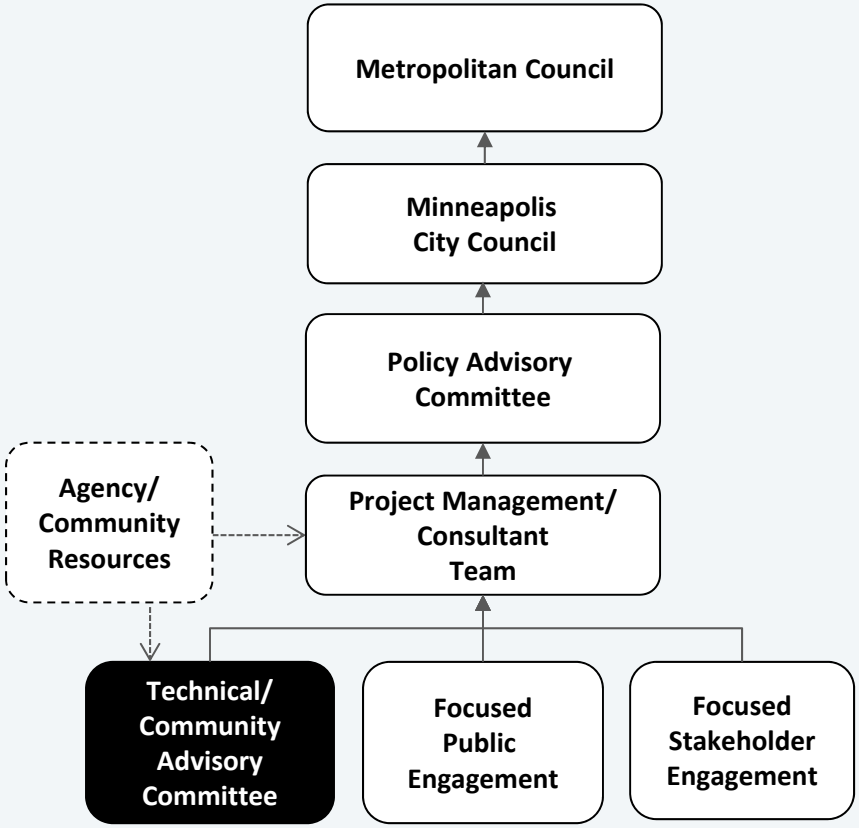
# Alternative Termini

- 9-mile study corridor
- Consider alternative minimum operating segments
- First phase of longer-term vision for implementation



# TECHNICAL/COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ROLE

# Decision-Making Structure



# T/CAC Responsibilities

- Attend monthly meetings.
- Communicate with Policy Advisory Committee representatives from your agency or your area.
- Serve as an ambassador for the Study and keep your constituencies up to date by sharing information throughout the process.
- Share email and mailing lists and provide support to maximize study outreach.
- Invite your constituents and other community members to participate in public outreach activities and to provide input through a variety of means.
- Participate in as many community events as possible as an observer to hear community input first hand.

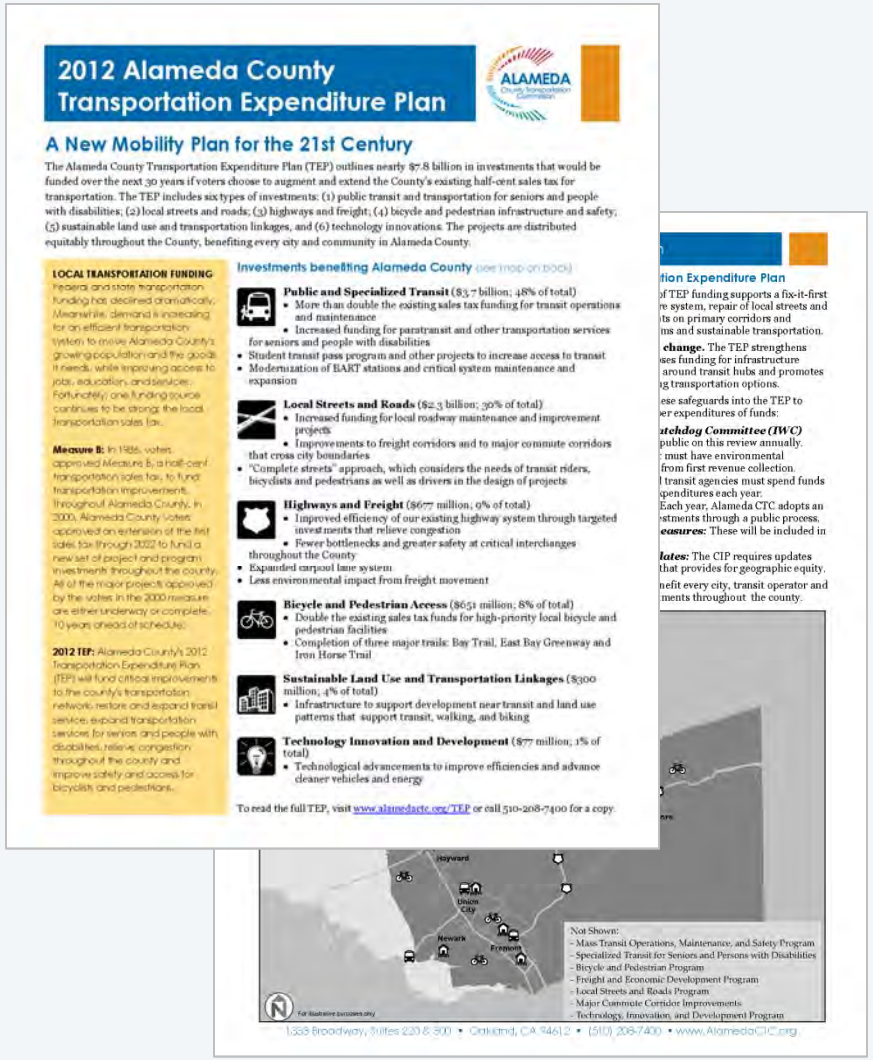
# T/CAC Responsibilities

- Allow the analysis to proceed and use the analytical results to determine the locally preferred alternative.
- Provide any relevant data or existing studies your agency may have that would further the study.
- Review project documents in a timely and objective manner and provide meaningful input.
- Provide comments through the committee process rather than working independently when comments are necessary.
- Make recommendations that are in the best interest of the entire Nicollet-Central corridor, the City and the region.

# PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

# Focused Stakeholder Outreach

- Up to 12 individual stakeholder interviews at project inception and throughout process.
- Speaker's Bureau – bring the project to scheduled meetings.
- Project website, newsletters and City Twitter/Facebook postings.
- One page fact sheet/newsletters summarizing all key deliverables and decision points
- Business to business peer forum
- Workshops focused on development and business
- Use of existing "list serves" and group mailing lists for distribution of materials and invitations



## 2012 Alameda County Transportation Expenditure Plan

ALAMEDA County Transportation Commission

### A New Mobility Plan for the 21st Century

The Alameda County Transportation Expenditure Plan (TEP) outlines nearly $7.8 billion in investments that would be funded over the next 30 years if voters choose to augment and extend the County's existing half-cent sales tax for transportation. The TEP includes six types of investments: (1) public transit and transportation for seniors and people with disabilities; (2) local streets and roads; (3) highways and freight; (4) bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and safety; (5) sustainable land use and transportation linkages, and (6) technology innovations. The projects are distributed equitably throughout the County, benefiting every city and community in Alameda County.

**LOCAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING**

Federal and state transportation funding has declined dramatically. Meanwhile, demand is increasing for an efficient transportation system to move Alameda County's growing population and the goods it needs, while improving access to jobs, education, and services. Fortunately, one funding source continues to be strong: the local transportation sales tax.

**Measure B:** In 1986, voters approved Measure B, a half-cent transportation sales tax, to fund transportation improvements throughout Alameda County. In 2000, Alameda County voters approved an extension of the first sales tax through 2022 to fund a new set of project and program investments throughout the county. All of the major projects approved by the voters in the 2000 measure are either underway or complete, 10 years ahead of schedule.

**2012 TEP:** Alameda County's 2012 Transportation Expenditure Plan (TEP) will fund critical improvements to the county's transportation network, restore and expand transit service, expand transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities, relieve congestion throughout the county and improve safety and access for bicyclists and pedestrians.

**Investments benefiting Alameda County** (see map on back)

**Public and Specialized Transit** ($3.7 billion; 48% of total)
- More than double the existing sales tax funding for transit operations and maintenance
- Increased funding for paratransit and other transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities
- Student transit pass program and other projects to increase access to transit
- Modernization of BART stations and critical system maintenance and expansion

**Local Streets and Roads** ($2.3 billion; 30% of total)
- Increased funding for local roadway maintenance and improvement projects
- Improvements to freight corridors and to major commute corridors that cross city boundaries
- "Complete streets" approach, which considers the needs of transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians as well as drivers in the design of projects

**Highways and Freight** ($677 million; 9% of total)
- Improved efficiency of our existing highway system through targeted investments that relieve congestion
- Fewer bottlenecks and greater safety at critical interchanges throughout the County
- Expanded carpool lane system
- Less environmental impact from freight movement

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Access** ($651 million; 8% of total)
- Double the existing sales tax funds for high-priority local bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Completion of three major trails: Bay Trail, East Bay Greenway and Iron Horse Trail

**Sustainable Land Use and Transportation Linkages** ($300 million; 4% of total)
- Infrastructure to support development near transit and land use patterns that support transit, walking, and biking

**Technology Innovation and Development** ($77 million; 1% of total)
- Technological advancements to improve efficiencies and advance cleaner vehicles and energy

To read the full TEP, visit www.alamedactc.org/TEP or call 510-208-7400 for a copy.

Hayward
Union City
Newark
Fremont

Not Shown:
- Mass Transit Operations, Maintenance, and Safety Program
- Specialized Transit for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Program
- Freight and Economic Development Program
- Local Streets and Roads Program
- Major Commute Corridor Improvements
- Technology, Innovation, and Development Program

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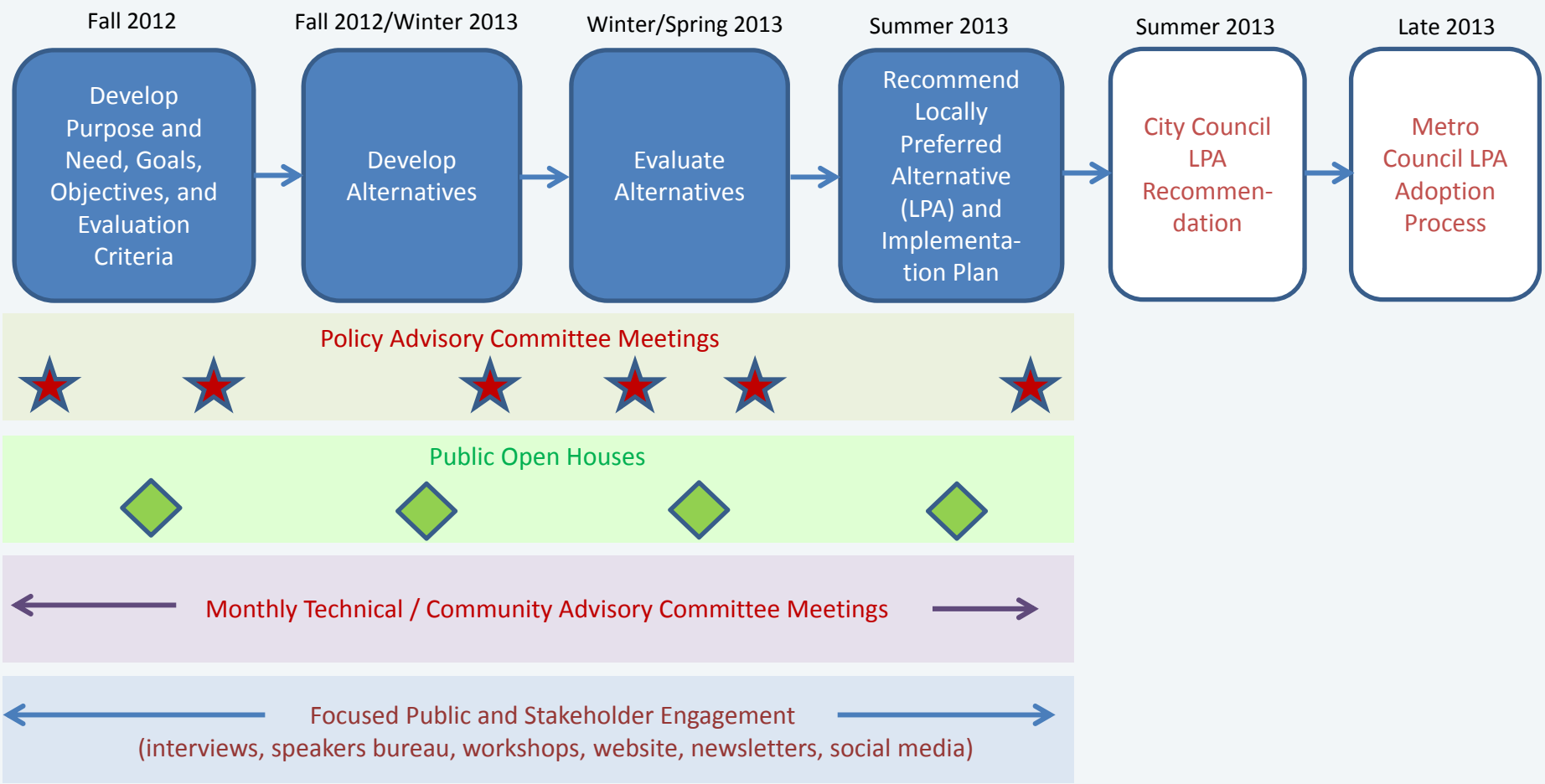
# Focused Public Outreach

- Public open houses at key study points
- Small group “tool kit” meetings that bring the project into any setting from churches and PTA meetings to living rooms
- “Virtual town hall” conversations leveraging City web media
- One page fact sheets/newsletters summarizing all key deliverables
- Public design exercises tied to neighborhood events and fairs
- Project website, newsletters and twitter feed through City sites.
- Use of existing “list serves” and group mailing lists for distribution of materials and invitations

# 4 Phases of Engagement & Decision-Making



# Stakeholder Interviews

Purpose: Get early input on perceptions of transit in the corridor and opportunities, issues, and challenges associated with a potential transit enhancement in the corridor

1. R.T. Rybak, Mayor
2. Peter Wagenius, Policy Director, Office of the Mayor
3. Kevin Reich, Councilmember, Ward 1
4. Diane Hofstede, Councilmember, Ward 3
5. Robert Lilligren, Councilmember, Ward 6
6. Meg Tuthill, Councilmember, Ward 10
7. Gail Dorfman, Hennepin County Commissioner
8. Brian Lamb, General Manager, Metro Transit
9. John Wheaton, Downtown Council Board Member
10. Jim Grube, County Engineer, Hennepin County
11. Marian Biehn, Executive Director, Whittier Alliance
12. Ethan Fawley, Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition
13. Christine Levens, Executive Director, Northeast Chamber of Commerce
14. John VanHeel, Citizens for a Loring Park Community

# Stakeholder Organization Meetings

| Date | Organization | Date | Organization |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8/14 | Downtown Mpls Neighborhood Assoc | 9/20 | Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee |
| 8/23 | Downtown Minneapolis TMO | 9/24 | St Anthony East Neighborhood Assoc |
| 8/27 | Citizens for a Loring Park Community | 9/25 | Northeast Business Association |
| 9/4 | Stevens Square Community Organization | 10/3 | Waite Park Community Council |
| 9/10 | Whittier Community Issues Committee | 10/9 | Northeast Park Neighborhood Assoc |
| 9/10 | Beltrami Neighborhood Council | 10/11 | Holland Neighborhood Assoc |
| 9/11 | Northeast Mpls Chamber of Commerce | 10/16 | Loring Business Association |
| 9/12 | Business Association of Whittier | Oct | Mpls Latino Engagement Task Force |
| 9/12 | Kingfield Neighborhood Association | Nov | Lyndale Neighborhood Business Assoc |
| 9/13 | Midtown Greenway Coalition | Nov | Lyndale Neighborhood Association |
| 9/17 | Columbia Park Neighborhood Association | TBD | Minneapolis Downtown Council |
| 9/18 | Mpls Pedestrian Advisory Committee | TBD | Nicollet Island-East Bank Neigh. Assoc. |
| 9/18 | Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association | TBD | Audubon Neighborhood Association |
| 9/18 | Windom Park Citizens in Action | TBD | North Loop Neighborhood Association |
| 9/19 | Logan Park Neighborhood Association | TBD | St Anthony West Neigh. Assoc. |
| 9/20 | Lake Street Council | | |

# www.minneapolismn.gov/nicollet-central

Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives - City of Minneapolis - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by City of Minneapolis

http://www.minneapolismn.gov/nicollet-central/index.htm

Minneapolis City of Lakes
Official Website of the City of Minneapolis

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Anna Flintoft, Project Manager
Department of Public Works
(612) 673-3885
anna.flintoft@minneapolismn.gov

Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives
- Study Process
- Get Involved
- Committees
- Study Documents

Sign up for e-mail updates

## Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives Study

The Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives Project will identify a preferred transit enhancement which could serve as a first phase of a longer-range vision for transit service throughout the 9.2-mile corridor, which extends from the 46th Street/I-35W Transit Station and Nicollet Avenue on the south, through Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis, and to the Columbia Heights Transit Center on the north via Central Avenue. The Project will determine the benefits, costs and impacts of implementing a variety of transit modes and service types, including streetcar and enhanced bus options, to identify a locally preferred alternative for inclusion in the Metropolitan Council's *2030 Transportation Policy Plan*.

During a one-year process, the project will:

- Identify a series of performance measures including mobility needs and land use/economic development goals to be supported by the preferred alternative
- Compare different transit modes and service alternatives (including streetcar and enhanced bus operations) and alignment termini to identify the best alternative for the corridor
- Provide a transparent and inclusive public engagement process that will involve all stakeholders in the decision making process
- Facilitate a local decision making process that identifies a locally preferred alternative that can attract federal transit funds

### Study Corridor Map

Basemap

**What do you think?**

Take a quick survey to tell us about transportation needs in the Nicollet-Central Corridor.

**Latest News**

**September Public Open Houses**

Tell us about the corridor needs at a public open house:

- **11 A.M.-1 P.M., Wednesday, September 26, 2012**
  Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall
- **5:30-7:30 P.M., Wednesday, September 26, 2012**
  5th Precinct Police Station, 3101 Nicollet Avenue S
- **5:30-7:30 P.M., Thursday, September 27, 2012**
  Eastside Food Co-Op, 2551 Central Avenue NE

Take a quick survey

Sign up for email updates

# Public Open Houses

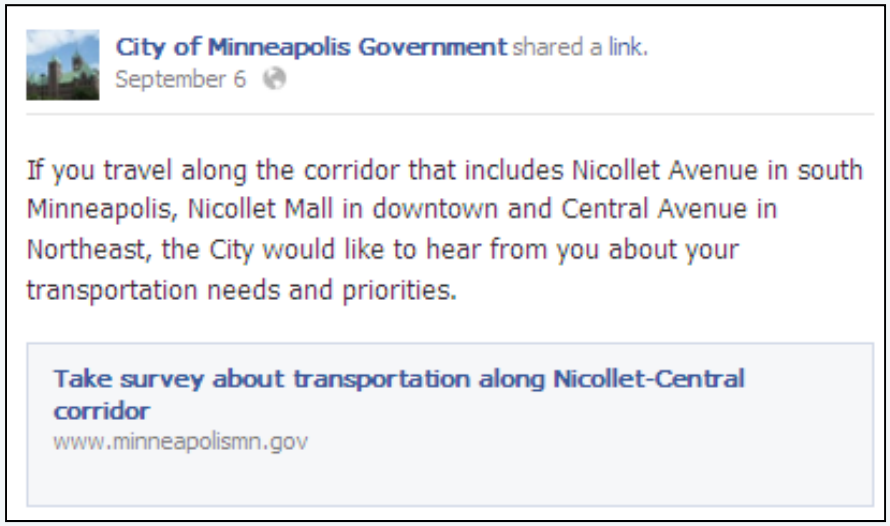
Tentative Schedule

- September 2012 (project rationale) – 9/26 and 9/27
- January 2013 (alternatives development)
- March 2013 (alternatives evaluation)
- June 2013 (LPA selection)

# Social Media

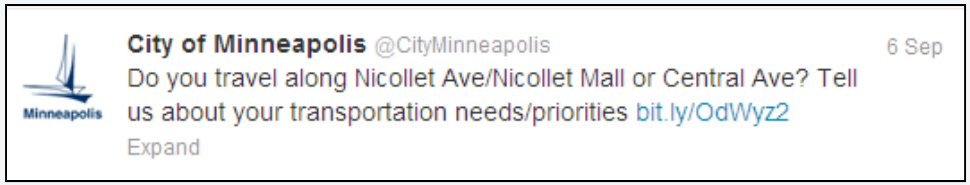
http://www.facebook.com/cityofminneapolis

12,000 likes




http://twitter.com/CityMinneapolis

17,000 followers



# Questions?

- Other organizations or individuals we should be engaging?

# FORMAL PURPOSE AND NEED REQUIREMENT

# Purpose and Need Statement

- Required for AA study
  - "…FTA requests the opportunity to review and comment upon the problem statement and corresponding goals and objectives developed for every alternatives analysis which is likely to result in the selection of a transportation improvement requiring Federal funding."
- Required by NEPA regulations

# Why It is Important

- Establishes the problems that must be addressed by the project
- Serves as the basis for development of project goals, objectives, and evaluation measures
- Provides framework for developing alternatives and subsequent analysis
- Articulates and justifies need to spend money to study and implement a project

# COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

# 3 Questions

- What are the most significant transportation challenges in the Corridor?
- What are the most biggest land use and economic development challenges in the Corridor?
- What are the most important reasons to improve transit in the Corridor?