

Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives

Policy Advisory Committee Meeting #5 September 19, 2013



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

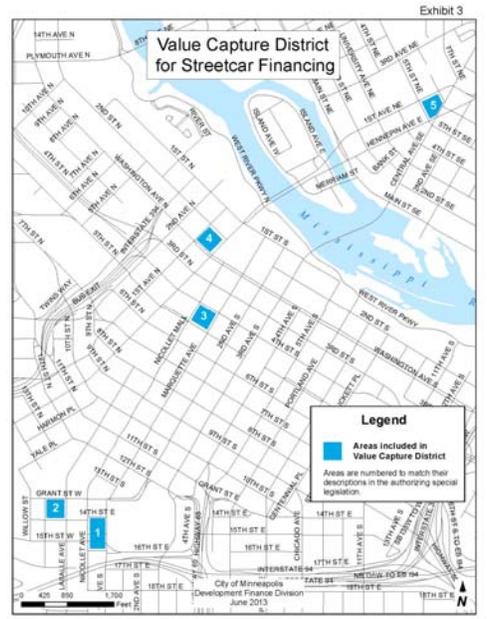
Agenda/Desired Outcomes

- Update on Funding
- Update on Technical Analysis
- Summary of Public Outreach, Public Comments and Survey Results
- **Action on Locally Preferred Alternative**
- Update on Next Steps



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

Update on Funding

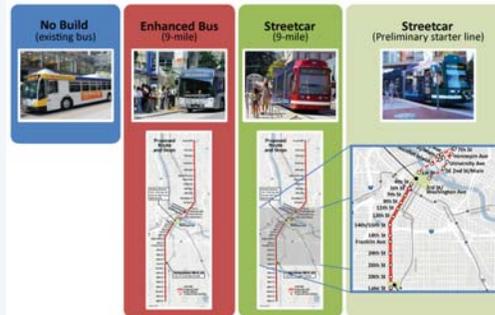


Update on Technical Study

Project Purpose

(approved by the Policy Advisory Committee 10/25/2012)

- Improve transit connectivity
- Enhance the attractiveness of transit service
- Catalyze development through an investment in transit infrastructure within the Nicollet-Central Corridor



Enhanced bus service plan intended to mimic streetcar

Implementation of either streetcar or enhanced bus in the corridor does not preclude arterial BRT

Enhanced bus is not arterial BRT.

Identify the LPA by Answering Three Key Questions

- What Transit Mode is Best?
- What River Crossing is Best?
- What is the “Streetcar Starter Line”?

Connect People and Places <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population and jobs • Activity centers • Pedestrian and bicycle connections 	Increase Attractiveness of Transit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ridership • Ability to accommodate growth 	Catalyze and Support Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development capacity • Ability to spur development
Integrate with Transportation System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic • Parking • Freight railroads 	Support Healthy Communities and Environmental Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural, historic and natural resources • Transit-reliant population • Environmental benefits 	Develop Implementable Project with Community Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital cost • Annual operating and maintenance cost • Public and business support



What Mode Is Best?

	Enhanced Bus	Modern Streetcar
Capital Cost	\$94 million	\$393 million
Annual O&M Cost	\$13.6 million	\$20.1 million
Ridership	13,400/weekday	19,900/weekday
Transit Reliant Riders	4,500/weekday	7,500/weekday
Economic Development Potential	Moderate	High
Public Input	<i>Some Support</i>	<i>Strong Support</i>



Why Streetcar?

- Serve City's and Region's growth
 - Minneapolis Streetcar Feasibility Study
 - Grow smart: Near and around transit
- Catalyze/organize walkable development
- Superior rider experience = Transit, walking and cycling are real transportation options
 - Easy on/off at stops, smooth ride, no fumes
 - Consistent accessibility for aging population
 - Attracts more riders
- Durability
- Transit-Oriented Development = Economic viability of City and Region

Purpose and Need

- Improve transit connectivity
- Enhance the attractiveness of transit service
- Catalyze development through an investment in transit infrastructure within the Nicollet-Central Corridor



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013



What Streetcar Might Look Like



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

7

What Streetcar Might Look Like



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

8

What Streetcar Might Look Like



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

9

What River Crossing is Best?



Hennepin Avenue Bridge

- Better bike/ped access to river
- Access to Nicollet Island
- Lower capital & O&M cost
- Slightly higher ridership/faster travel time
- Central is on NRHP



Why a Streetcar Starter Line?

- Experience of other US streetcar systems
- Competitive for federal funding
- Serve as downtown spine of future streetcar network
- Capture majority of benefits of 9.2-mile streetcar

Initially defined as 3.4-mile segment between Eighth St NE to Lake St

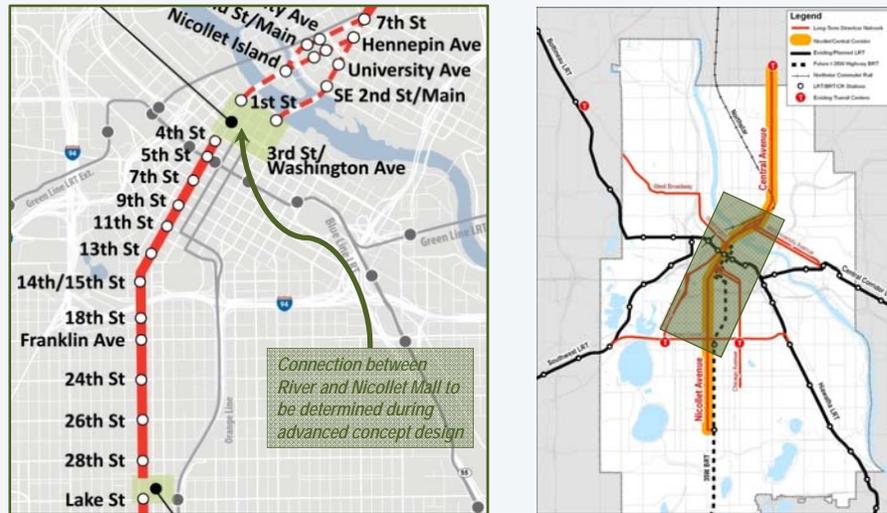
PEER SYSTEM	OPENING YEAR	ROUTE LENGTH (MI)
Portland Phases 1-4	2001-2007	4.0
Portland - Phase 5	2012	3.3
Seattle South Lake Union	2007	1.3
Seattle First Hill	2014	2.5
Tucson	2013	3.9
Atlanta	2014	1.3

Additional Priorities for Identifying a Starter Line

- Strong existing and future development anchors
- Strong east-west transit connections
- Potential to replace existing buses



Fifth St NE to Lake Street: 3.4 miles



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

12

Why Lake Street to 5th St NE

- Transportation Important for Regional and Federal Funding and Support
 - Strong ridership (9,200 riders); many short trips between Lake and downtown
 - Can replace some buses on Nicollet Avenue (and remove some buses from Nicollet Mall)
 - Important east-west connection at Lake Street and connection to I-35W BRT
- Connects neighborhoods to downtown across both barriers (river and I-94)



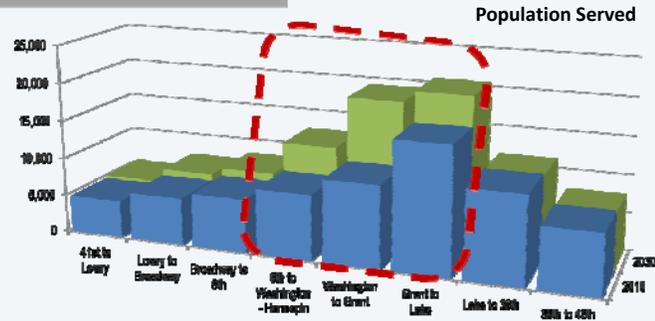
Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

13

Serves Most People and Jobs

Connect People and Places

- 90% of growth in population and employment
- Connects all but two activity centers

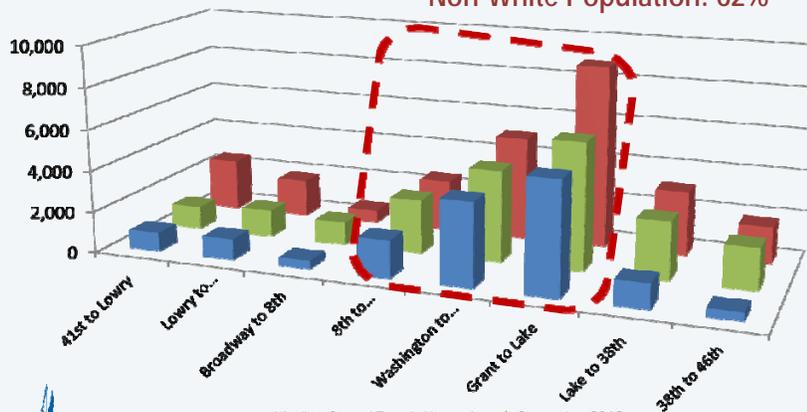


Serves Most Transit-Reliant People

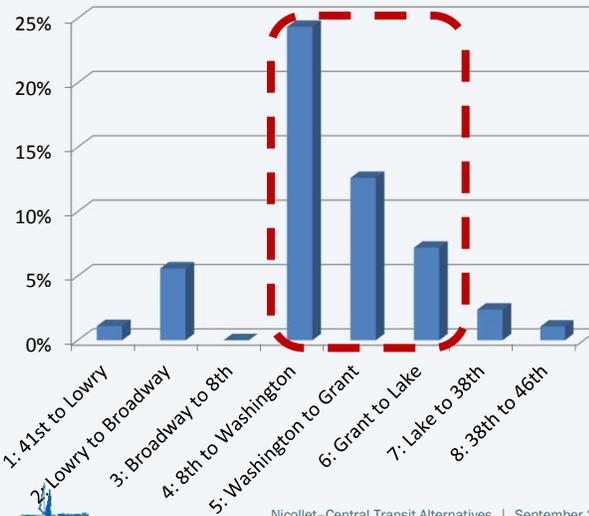
No Vehicle Population: 62%

Population Living In Poverty: 74%

Non-White Population: 62%



Serves 90% Affordable Housing



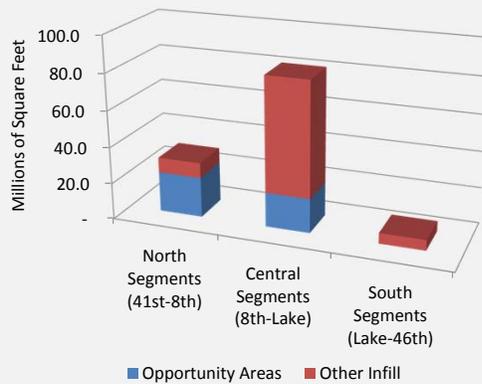
Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

16

Best Economic Development Potential

Catalyze and Support Economic Development

- 69% of development capacity
- Serves 5 of 9 opportunity sites



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

Streetcar Starter Line

- 9,200 weekday boardings
- Annual O&M Cost: \$10.6 million
- Capital Cost: \$180-\$200 million
- Potential FTA cost-effectiveness rating: Medium or better
- Generally supported by public but interest in extending further north if financially feasible



Potential Locations for Operations and Maintenance Facility



Summary of Public Outreach/Comments

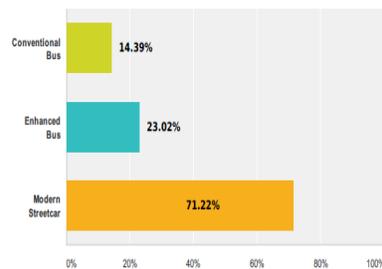
- 4 public open houses on August 6, 7, 14 and September 9 (100+ people)
- Presentations to 31 neighborhood organizations, business associations and advisory committees (500+ people)
- On-line survey (100+ surveys completed)



Survey Results

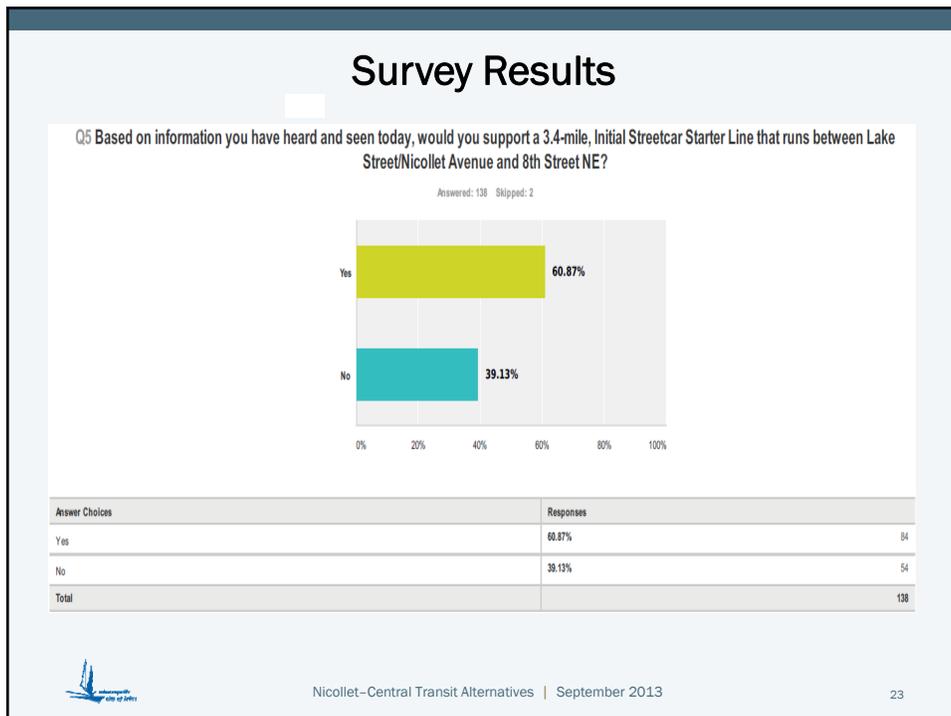
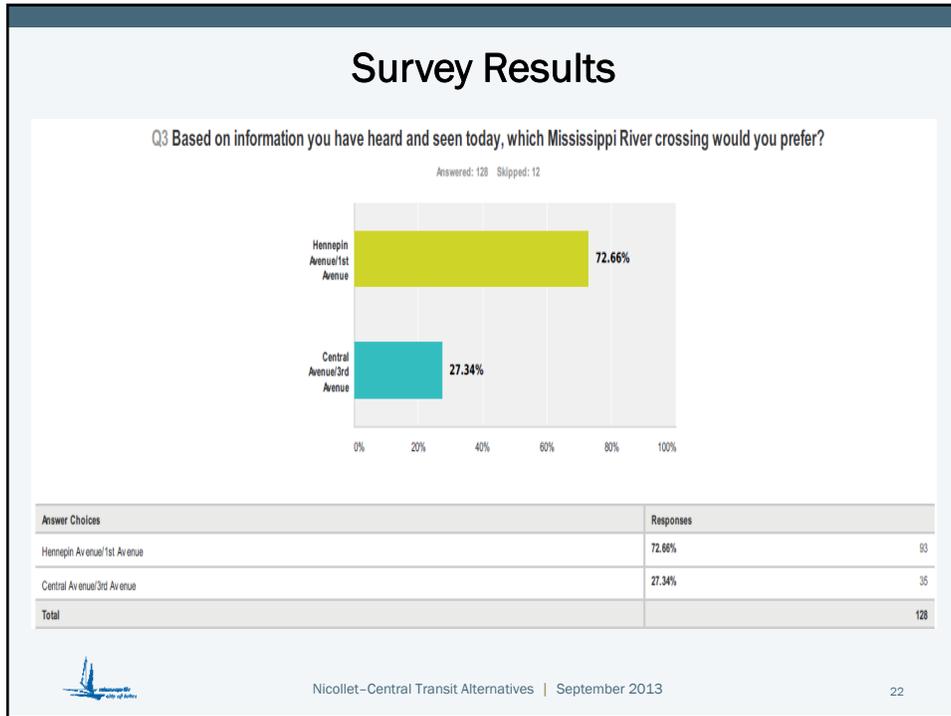
Q1 Based on information you have heard and seen today, which alternative(s) do you prefer?

Answered: 139 Skipped: 1



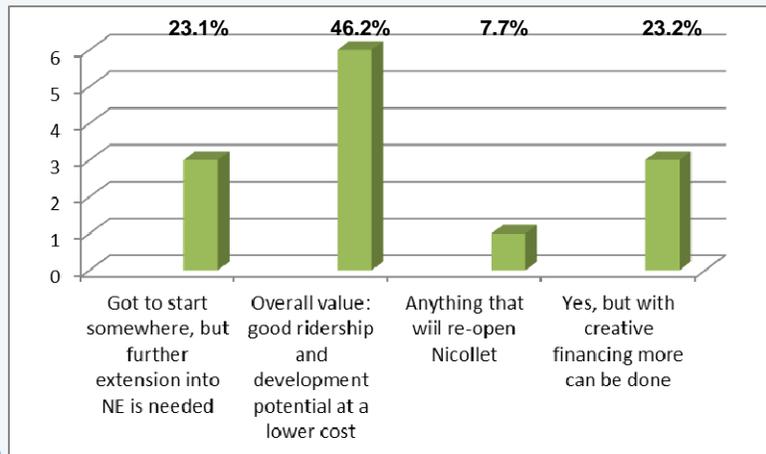
Answer Choices	Responses
Conventional Bus	14.39% 20
Enhanced Bus	23.02% 32
Modern Streetcar	71.22% 99
Total Respondents: 139	





On-Line Survey Rationale for Selection of Options

- Why do you support the 3.4-mile long Starter Line?



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

24

Common Themes

- Support for modern streetcar
- Support for Hennepin/1st Ave River Crossing
- Support for the 3.4-mile long starter line
- Desire for extension (now or later) further to the north (Broadway, 14th or Lowry)
- Concerns about traffic, parking and construction impacts for businesses
- Concerns about bicycles and streetcar
- Concerns about cost and funding



Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives | September 2013

25

Summary of T/CAC Comments

- Streetcar is best mode
- Hennepin Avenue is best river crossing
- Starter line from Lake Street to 5th Street NE is acceptable but would like to see line extended as far north as is financially feasible



Proposed PAC Resolution

- That the Policy Advisory Committee approve the Locally Preferred Alternative as modern streetcar running between Lake Street and approximately 5th Street NE on Nicollet Avenue, Nicollet Mall and Hennepin/1st Avenues, using the Hennepin Avenue bridge to cross the Mississippi River.



Next Steps

- Public Hearing and TPW Recommendation – September 24
- Council Action – October 4
- Complete LPA Document and Implementation Plan
- Amend Regional Transportation Policy Plan to Include LPA
- Prepare Interagency Agreements
- Complete Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Engineering

