Geography Lesson – First!
SOUTHWEST LRT

- 15 miles, 17 new stations
- Will provide single seat trips to downtown Minneapolis, U of M and St. Paul
- Capital Investment: $1.25 billion
- Projected Rides: 30,000 / weekday in 2030
A Sample of SWLRT Demographics

- Within a half-mile walk of the Southwest LRT stations:
  - 210,000 existing jobs (2000)
    - 147,000 in downtown Minneapolis
    - 62,000 jobs located near stations
  - 270,000 jobs in 2030
  - 60,000 people live in 31,000 households (2000)
  - 16,000 residents of racial and ethnic minorities (2000)
  - 3,600 households incomes below poverty level (2000)
SWLRT Project Phases

2002 – 2005  Feasibility Studies
2005 – 2010  Alternatives Analysis
2010 – 2011  Pre-Preliminary Engineering
2011 – 2014  Preliminary Engineering
2014        Record of Decision (ROD)
2014 – 2015  Final Design
2015        Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA)
2015 – 2017  Construction
2018        Revenue Operation
SWLRT Project Funding

- $1.25 Billion project budget
Corridors of Opportunity (CoO) Vision

Transitway corridors will guide our region’s growth, vitality, and competitiveness. Development along transitways will create distinctive places and strengthen local assets while increasing ridership and expanding access to jobs, affordable housing, and essential services for residents of all incomes and backgrounds.

Southwest LRT will become a model for the nation for the early integration of LRT engineering and land use planning so that the region’s investments benefit residents, businesses, and communities, and provide opportunities for all.
• Cities: City of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka and Eden Prairie
• Three Rivers Park District, Minneapolis Park Board, Watersheds, etc.
• Metro Council and Metro Transit
• Hennepin County
• Urban Land Institute
• Each has staff, each has elected or appointed members
Committees - Studies

- TIC
- BAC
- CAC
- SWLRT Steering Committee
- SWLRT Community Works

- DEIS
- PE
- TSAAP
Southwest LRT Committee Structure

- Metropolitan Council
- Southwest LRT Corridor Mgmt Committee
- Southwest Project Office
- Shared Advisory Committees: CAC, BAC, LUCC
- Supporting Committees
- Hennepin County
- Community Works Steering Committee
- Technical Implementation Committee
Collaboration is Challenging

- Time consuming, many meetings per month
- Organizations with different cultures
- Different types of communications
- Decision making processes are not the same
- Understanding and patience is needed.
Collaboration is Exciting

• The first line in Minnesota to go through major populations in suburbs
• Jobs are thriving on this line.
• Creates many opportunities for redevelopment and new infrastructure
• Putting engineers and planners and designers and decision makers in the same room
What’s it like on the ground?

- We have spent a lot of time justifying the line, whether it has been through for FTA, the State, local, etc.
- We have spent some time getting to know each others issues and understand some of the complexities at each station.
- Lots of work; providing feedback on RFP’s; interviewing firms for work products, preparing documents for various steps in the process.
What’s it like on the ground?

• Keeping people informed
  – city council, planning commission, economic development commission
  – residents, businesses

• Preparations
  – Ordinances, redevelopment investment, infrastructure planning, grant writing
  – Developer inquiries, property owner inquiries
MINNETONKA STATIONS

THERE ARE TWO PROPOSED LIGHT RAIL STATIONS IN HOPKINS.

THE SHADY OAK STATION IS SITED SOUTH OF 17TH AVENUE AND EXCELSIOR BOULEVARD.

THE OPUS STATION IS SITED AT THE OPUS OFFICE PARK WEST OF HWY. 169, SOUTH OF BREN ROAD WEST AND NORTH OF BREN ROAD EAST.

THE SHADY OAK STATION IS LOCATED ON THE HENNEPIN COUNTY REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY’S (HCRRA) RIGHT-OF-WAY.
Development Opportunities

Shady Oak Station - Minnetonka

Legend:
- City boundary
- Streams
- NWI Wetlands
- Planned Transitway
- 1/2 mile station buffer
- Planned Stations
- Near Term Opportunities
- Long Term Opportunities
- Currently Developing or Previously Developed
PRELIMINARY CONCEPTUAL SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Rendering looking from Excelsior Blvd down the new 17th St Extension towards the Shady Oak Station...
Development Opportunities
Opus Station - Minnetonka

Southwest Transitway
- Planned Transitway
- 12 mile station buffer
- Planned Stations

Development Opportunities
- Near Term Opportunities
- Long Term Opportunities
- Currently Developing or Previously Developed
BIRD’S EYE VIEW OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT AT OPUS SITE

BIRD’S EYE VIEW OF PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT AT OPUS STATION HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW
8th Avenue Artery! City of Hopkins
Opportunities

• National example of cooperative land use planning prior to the transit line design work.

• Private investment in partnership with public infrastructure

• Strategic redevelopment investment that leverages many sources
Transitional Station Area Action Plans (TSAAP)

Bridge the gap between current conditions and future needs by recommending infrastructure improvements that maximize Light Rail Transit system investments by:

- Supporting anticipated development by opening day of LRT
- Identifying prime sites & joint development opportunities
- Enhancing existing businesses
- Supporting a full range of housing opportunities
- Ensuring multimodal access to the station and surrounding area
- Setting the stage for long-term development
TSAAP Components

- LRT Elements (park/ride, platforms, etc.) Locations
- Access and Circulation Plans
- Infrastructure Plan (2012-2018)
- Public Outreach/Engagement
- Stormwater Management
- Action Plans
TSAAP Builds Upon Related Work

- Station Vision/Typologies
- Market Assessment
- Infrastructure Inventory (existing + 2030)
- Housing Analysis
- Development Tools Assessment

Transitional Station Area Action Plans
TSAAP = integrate LRT engineering and land use
Future Considerations

ORDINANCE NO. 2011-xx

AN ORDINANCE ADDING A NEW SECTION 300.36 TO THE CITY CODE REGARDING THE SOUTHWEST LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT OVERLAY DISTRICT

The City of Minnetonka Ordains:

Section 1. The Minnetonka city code is amended by the addition of a new section 300.36 to read as follows.

Section 300.36. Southwest Light Rail Transit Overlay District.

1. Preamble.
The Southwest Light Rail Transitway is an identified regional transportation corridor planned for rail transit improvements to connect the city of Minneapolis and many planned communities in the southwest suburban area. Planning has been ongoing for a number of years as it is a transportation project of regional significance. In 2009, the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority completed a corridor-wide conceptual station area planning effort. The Southwest Light Rail Transit Study anticipates the location of two light rail transit stations in the city of Minnetonka. These stations will be catalysts for new development and redevelopment in their surrounding areas. In addition, the city is currently undertaking planning studies of the two areas to develop a more definitive and coordinated development plan to guide this development and redevelopment in a transit-friendly manner. A coordinated development plan is necessary for the Shady Oak Road area station because there is multiple ownership of affected properties, realigned public infrastructure will be needed, environmental clean-up is needed on some properties, and many parcels have older development nearing the end of their life-cycle and are ripe for redevelopment. A coordinated development plan is also
Future Considerations

• Being able to make it through comment period on DEIS, making sure our concerns are documented;
• Understanding the needs of the preliminary engineering process, staffing;
• Being able to articulate deal breakers versus things we can live with.
The train has left the station!

• But it is still 6 years away
• But 72 months isn’t a lot of time to establish the community’s identity as it relates to light rail.
• We have 2,190 days to organize, build, and develop transit friendly projects around stations
• Collaborating to stay on track!