

Appendix A

Planning Study and Document Review (July 2017)

Passenger Rail Community Engagement

Planning Study and Document Review

July 2017

Prepared for:



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Introduction

Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report Overview

The Edina Transportation Commission (ETC) and City of Edina have initiated a study to determine community interest in passenger rail service on the Dan Patch/CP Rail line through the city of Edina. The Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report will answer two questions:

- Should the City request elimination of the “gag rule”?
- Should the City dedicate resources to developing a plan to encourage the development of passenger rail service in Edina?

This reporting process is driven by engagement with the residents, businesses, and decision-makers of Edina. The ETC has examined and documented the strengths and weaknesses of passenger rail service in Edina, including thoughtful consideration of the pros and cons that are driven by the city and those influenced by external factors.

Purpose of the Planning Study and Document Review

The interconnected nature of the regional transit system demands an awareness of the multitude of initiatives that are ongoing in the Twin Cities region and in Minnesota. This memo highlights key information from related studies and plans that are relevant to the development of the Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report.

Document Review

Dan Patch Corridor Commuter Rail Feasibility Study

Overview

In the early 2000s, Dakota County initiated a study to examine the feasibility of commuter rail within the Dan Patch Corridor. The proposed corridor was a 44-mile commuter rail route that started in Minneapolis and moved west for approximately 5 miles to St. Louis Park, where it turned south and proceeded for approximately 40 miles to a terminus at Northfield Yard in Northfield.

The *Dan Patch Commuter Rail Feasibility Study* was undertaken to further examine the feasibility and design of a commuter rail system that built on recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Transportation’s (MnDOT) *Twin Cities Metropolitan Commuter Rail Feasibility Study*. The *Dan Patch Commuter Rail Feasibility Study* provided a more detailed exploration of commuter rail dynamics within the corridor and its relation to other modes and corridor land use patterns. The final study was released in December 2001.

Impact to the Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

The Dan Patch Commuter Rail Feasibility Study found that while reintroducing passenger rail transit service in the existing railroad corridor is technically feasible (the corridor carried passenger traffic from 1910 to 1942), corridor communities have concerns regarding the livability of neighborhoods and recreational facilities adjacent to the rail line should passenger service be implemented. Further studies would be needed to evaluate and address community concerns raised through the study.

Technical Findings

- Service assumptions indicated that 14 trains¹ per day, running in morning and afternoon weekday peak periods, would carry 7,500 trips per day on the 44-mile line
- Existing railroad right-of-way is adequate to accommodate both planned freight and proposed passenger service (14 trains per day) on a single track, which is consistent with the existing condition
- The line would require complete rebuilding, for an estimated capital cost of \$441 million (in year 2010 dollars). With environmental contingency included, the cost would increase to \$461 million.
- Before fare revenue is deducted, operating and maintaining the service would cost an estimated \$11.7 million annually (in year 2010 dollars).
- Assuming federal funds cover 50 percent of the capital cost, the annual non-federal cost to construct, operate, and maintain commuter rail service over 20 years, starting in 2010, is estimated at \$22.5 million to \$23.4 million (in year 2010 dollars). This assumes the total capital cost is spread out equally over the 20-year period and added to the annual net operating and maintenance cost.

Public Participation Findings

Over 2,300 people attended 24 different city council, county board, neighborhood, and community organization meetings and public open houses. Of the approximately 600 people who attended the five open houses and commented on the project, approximately 70 percent opposed and approximately 30 percent supported the implementation of commuter rail in the Dan Patch Corridor.

Recommendations

Although implementing passenger rail transit service in the Dan Patch Corridor is physically possible, the real and perceived adverse impacts to adjoining land uses and the cost of improving the right-of-way and operating the system made corridor improvements impractical at the time of this study. MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council, and the cities and counties within the Dan Patch Corridor should first explore and promote other transit and transportation improvements.

Recommendations from this study include exploring and promoting other transit opportunities, evaluating other commuter rail lines such as the Northstar Line, keeping the public informed, and investigating the possibility of purchasing the line from CP Rail and Twin Cities & Western (the owner of the river bridge) for commuter rail use.

City of Edina Strategic Vision and Framework

Overview

Vision Edina is a long-term strategic framework designed to help the community understand and guide important decision-making that will impact Edina's future. This framework lays out the key issues identified by the community in eight strategic focus areas:

- Residential Development Mix
- Transportation Options
- Commercial Development Mix
- Live and Work
- Educational Focus
- Population Mix

¹ One train is defined as four to five passenger cars and a locomotive

- Environmental Stewardship
- Regional Leadership

These focus areas, and the issues and actions that accompany them, represent emerging priority areas that can guide future changes in the city.

Impact to the Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

There is no mention of passenger rail or commuter rail in this document. The Transportation Options focus area suggests that the community overall is highly supportive of increased diversity and integration of transportation and local access options. One of the strategic actions within this focus area is to work to expand transit options to Edina and ensure that Edina residents do not become further isolated from the regional transit system.

Transportation Chapter of Edina's Comprehensive Plan

Overview

The Transportation Chapter of the 2008 Edina Comprehensive Plan was prepared under the guidance of the ETC. The chapter is meant to provide guidance to city staff and elected officials regarding the planning and implementation of effective transportation facilities and systems over the planning horizon. It provides residents and businesses background on transportation issues and insight on the City's decision-making on transportation issues. It also communicates the City of Edina's perspectives and intentions regarding transportation planning issues.

Impact to the Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

The Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan identifies the Dan Patch Corridor as a possible commuter rail corridor by the Metropolitan Council. However, the development of this corridor for commuter rail is beyond the time horizon of this plan (2030).

Laws of Minnesota 2002, Chapter 393, Section 85

Overview

This law prohibits certain actions related to the Dan Patch commuter rail line, as identified in the Metropolitan Council's Transit 2020 Master Plan. Informally, this law is known as the Dan Patch gag rule because it prohibits the Metropolitan Council, the Commissioner of Transportation (MnDOT), and regional rail authorities from studying commuter rail in the Dan Patch Corridor.

Impact to the Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

Subdivisions 2 and 3 of Section 85 explain that the Metropolitan Council and the Commissioner of Transportation must not take any action or spend any money for study, planning, preliminary engineering, final design, or construction for the Dan Patch commuter rail line. The Metropolitan Council and the Commissioner of Transportation must remove all references, other than references for historical purposes, to the Dan Patch commuter rail line from any future revisions to the transportation development guide, regional transit master plan, state transportation plan, and commuter rail system plan.

Subdivision 4 states that no regional rail authority may expend any money for study, planning, preliminary engineering, final design, or construction for the Dan Patch commuter rail line.

Metropolitan Council 2040 Transportation Policy Plan

Overview

Adopted in January of 2015, the Metropolitan Council's 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) is one of the major systems plans under the region's development framework document Thrive MSP 2040. While Thrive MSP 2040 sets a vision for what the region should be in the next 30 years, the system plans lay out the detail for achieving this vision. Each of the system plans—transportation, water resources, and regional parks—establishes policies and develops strategies to move the region towards this vision by 2040.

Impact to the Edina Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

The TPP explains that MnDOT has primary responsibility for planning intercity passenger rail in Minnesota. Beyond that, the Metropolitan Council participates on advisory committees to ensure that any new or upgraded rail service is consistent with other regional plans.

While there is no mention of passenger rail in Edina specifically, there are two strategies in this document related to increased investment in passenger rail based on demand:

- Goal C. Access to Destinations
 - Strategy C18. The Council, MnDOT, regional railroad authorities, and railroad companies will pursue short- and long-term improvements to accommodate future freight and passenger rail demand.
- Goal D. Competitive Economy
 - Strategy D2. The Council will coordinate with other agencies planning and pursuing transportation investments that strengthen connections to other regions in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest, the nation, and world including intercity bus and passenger rail, highway corridors, air service, and freight infrastructure.

The Transportation Policy Plan also discusses commuter rail. Commuter rail is an express transit service that primarily connects downtown employment centers to distant population centers. Commuter rail typically operates on existing freight railroad tracks to reduce infrastructure costs. The Northstar Line is the only existing commuter rail line in the transitway system and is not considered part of the METRO system of all-day, frequent transitway service.

Definition of Commuter Rail: A passenger railroad that carries riders within a metropolitan area, between urban areas and suburban and exurban locations. Commuter rail lines usually operate on freight rails or dedicated tracks with few stations and multiple departure times primarily in mornings and evenings. Stops are typically five miles or more apart and route lengths can extend more than 20 miles.

Metropolitan Council Regional Transitway Guidelines

Overview

The Regional Transitway Guidelines, completed by the Metropolitan Council in February 2012, established a set of “best practices” to support the development and operation of transitways in a consistent, equitable, and efficient manner throughout the metro area. As a Metropolitan Council document, the guidelines are meant to apply whenever investments in a transitway corridor are being studied, planned, or made in the region. The guidelines provide parameters for decisions related to the planning, designing, building, and operating of four transitway types: (1) commuter rail, (2) light rail transit, (3) highway bus rapid transit (BRT), and (4) arterial BRT. Dedicated busways, express bus with transit advantages, and streetcar are not addressed in the guidelines.

Impact to the Edina Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

The document includes information and guidelines for commuter rail but does not offer the same for intercity passenger rail. There is some mention, however, of the need to coordinate commuter rail schedules with other services that share the same right-of-way, including Amtrak or other passenger rail modes. The guidelines also mention that commuter rail runningways will often make use of existing freight and intercity passenger rail runningways, which may direct commuter rail planning and design.

The guidelines in this document should be used to examine and differentiate between the alternatives being considered for passenger rail. The service operation transitway guidelines provide a list of criteria, such as service definition and network design, route structure, transit services coordination, and travel time, to consider collectively when making service operation decisions.

As final options are identified, guidelines for station spacing and siting, such as minimum daily boarding forecasts, average station spacing for the line, and minimum spacing between two stations, can be used to further define the best available option(s). Guidelines for transit type runningways, such as rail track type and grade separation, also help to differentiate between the viability of routes.

Elements of passenger rail runningway operations and maintenance to be addressed during planning and design include but are not limited to: integrated freight-commuter rail operations, safety, security, communications and central control, system compatibility, contingency planning, and periodic repairs and replacement.

GrandView District Development Framework

Overview

The GrandView District Development Framework is part of a small area planning process required by Edina's Comprehensive Plan for areas designated as Potential Areas of Change. The process was led by a group of community residents, business owners, and property owners and led the Edina City Council to adopt seven guiding principles for the redevelopment of the GrandView District. The framework lays out a wide variety of potential improvements to land use, the public realm, transportation, and sustainability, along with an implementation timeline.

Impact to the Edina Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

The CP Rail corridor is referred to multiple times throughout the document. One of the goals under the transportation section of this framework is to, "Preserve the CP Rail corridor for future, possible public transit, and non-motorized movement/connection in the District." Specifically, the framework suggests the development of an at-grade bike path alongside the CP Rail right-of-way from Eden Avenue to Brookside Avenue. The future land use plan proposes a broader mix of land uses around the area between Vernon Avenue South, Eden Avenue, Highway 100, and the CP Rail corridor. This sort of development would likely increase density in the area, which could have a positive impact on the feasibility of passenger rail. One of the seven guiding principles for the framework is also related to transit, though not to the rail corridor specifically. The sixth guiding principle is as follows: "Improve movement within and access to the District for people of all ages by facilitating multiple modes of transportation, and preserve future transit opportunities provided by the rail corridor." This suggests that some residents, business owners, and property owners in this area may be open to passenger rail in the corridor.

MnDOT Statewide Rail Plan Update, 2015 DRAFT

Overview

This document is the 2015 update to the Minnesota Comprehensive Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan, first developed in 2010, and is referred to as the 2015 Minnesota State Rail Plan. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 2008, section 174.03 subdivision 1b, the purpose of the State Rail Plan is to guide the future of both freight and passenger (intercity) rail systems and rail services in the state. The development of the plan was jointly undertaken by MnDOT's Office of Freight and Commercial Vehicle Operations (OFCVO) and Passenger Rail Office.

The plan follows the six-chapter structure required by the Federal Railroad Administration for state rail plans. The 2015 Minnesota State Rail Plan builds upon the technical analyses and findings of the 2010 State Rail Plan, incorporates information on changes between 2010 and 2015, and reflects the most current state of the system and stakeholder comments.

Impact to the Edina Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report

While there is no specific mention of Edina, this report provides strong support for increased investment in passenger rail in general. Minnesota has a vision to develop a passenger rail system that results in improved travel options, costs, and speeds for Minnesota and interstate travelers. Population and economic growth forecasts show a need for a statewide transportation network made up of multiple modes of travel.

As a part of the *2010 Statewide Freight and Passenger Rail Plan*, a needs analysis was conducted for all potential passenger rail corridors in Minnesota. Connections from the Twin Cities to St. Cloud; Fargo, ND; Northfield; Albert Lea; Des Moines, IA; Mankato; and Eau Claire, WI are all identified as Phase I or Phase II projects, which means they are desirable projects that are within a 0- to 20-year implementation horizon. A passenger rail line that extends from the Twin Cities to Northfield would pass through the City of Edina by way of the CP MN&S subdivision. Currently, public support appears to be greatest for service to Northfield, continuing eventually to Des Moines, IA and Kansas City, MO.

Many open house respondents expressed support for passenger rail development in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest. Although questions and comments about passenger rail were usually specific to the city in which the open house was hosted, some citizens were also interested in statewide passenger rail development. Some respondents were opposed to any passenger rail development, citing capital cost and land impacts as major deterrents.

The demand forecasts only considered travel between the Twin Cities and key outlying markets that were identified as possible intercity rail origins and destinations as part of Phase I and Phase II projects. Most demand was estimated using standard demographic data such as population and employment. However, special generators, such as casinos, medical centers, universities, and tourism markers, have unique demand characteristics and were also considered. Table 1 depicts the demand for rail service between the Twin Cities and major origins and destinations along corridors that are feasible and desirable to implement within a 20-year timeline.

Table 1: 2012 and 2040 Annual Passenger Demand and 2040 Rail Demand From/To the Twin Cities (Phase I and Phase II Corridors)²

| City | Total Annual Demand (To/From Twin Cities; 2005) | Total Annual Demand (To/From Twin Cities; 2040) | Rail Demand (To/From Twin Cities; 2040) | Rail Share (To/From Twin Cities; 2040) |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--|
| St. Cloud, MN | 11,115,313 | 13,730,016 | 1,107,005 | 8.1% |
| Eau Claire, WI | 5,820,841 | 6,813,058 | 268,812 | 3.9% |
| Mankato, MN | 3,781,513 | 4,160,051 | 234,864 | 5.6% |
| Northfield, MN | 1,685,353 | 2,139,927 | 117,746 | 5.5% |
| Willmar, MN | 1,587,159 | 1,543,243 | 53,561 | 3.5% |
| Fargo, ND | 3,931,143 | 3,978,633 | 37,032 | 0.9% |
| Des Moines, IA | 2,927,518 | 3,025,124 | 18,729 | 0.6% |
| Sioux Falls, SD | 1,680,987 | 1,504,088 | 17,987 | 1.2% |
| Marshall, MN | 622,150 | 551,251 | 9,502 | 1.7% |
| Sioux City, IA | 599,627 | 628,263 | 1,907 | 0.3% |

Summary

This document review illustrated three key messages related to passenger rail in the Dan Patch Corridor.

First, it is technically feasible to implement passenger rail in the Dan Patch Corridor. The *Dan Patch Corridor Commuter Rail Feasibility Study* (2001), the *Transportation Chapter of Edina's Comprehensive Plan* (2008), and the *MnDOT Statewide Rail Plan Update* (2015) all suggest that the Dan Patch Corridor has the potential to carry passenger rail.

Second, there was significant resistance to using this corridor for commuter rail in the late 1990s and early 2000s, which led to the adoption of the gag rule. This community opposition was discussed in the *Dan Patch Corridor Commuter Rail Feasibility Study* (2001) and is reflected in the excerpt from *Laws of Minnesota 2002, Chapter 393, Section 85*.

Finally, more recent plans and policy documents indicate that there is interest in more transit options in Edina. The *MnDOT Statewide Rail Plan Update* (2015) referred to public support for passenger rail generally in Minnesota and specifically between Minneapolis and Northfield by way of the MN&S subdivision, which travels through Edina. The *City of Edina Strategic Vision and Framework* also expressed public support, especially among younger residents, for the integration of diverse transportation options. The *GrandView District Development Framework* (2012) also expresses public support for increased transit options and specifically mentions the desire to preserve the CP Rail corridor for possible transit use in the future.

² Source: 2015 Minnesota State Rail Plan, page 2-43, Table 2.4.

Appendix B

Existing Conditions and Policy Analysis (August 2017)

Passenger Rail Community Engagement

Existing Conditions and Policy Analysis

August 10, 2017

Prepared for:



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Introduction

Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report Overview

The Edina Transportation Commission (ETC) and City of Edina have initiated a study to determine community interest in passenger rail service on the Dan Patch/CP Rail line through the city of Edina. The Passenger Rail Community Engagement Report will answer two questions:

- Should the City request elimination of the “gag rule”?
- Should the City dedicate resources to developing a plan to encourage the development of passenger rail service in Edina?

This reporting process is driven by engagement with the residents, businesses, and decision-makers of Edina. The ETC will examine and document the strengths and weaknesses of passenger rail service in Edina, including thoughtful consideration of the pros and cons that are driven by the city and those influenced by external factors.

Purpose of the Existing Conditions and Policy Analysis

The success of transit locally is based on the existing travel market and land use surrounding stations. A shared regional vision for transit amongst numerous neighboring cities and agency partners is necessary to bring projects to fruition. This memo summarizes the current conditions and policy relevant to the development of passenger rail in Edina.

Existing Conditions and Peer Comparison

Transit service within the Dan Patch Corridor could take a variety of forms. Service types range from intercity rail with daily service, to commuter rail with peak period-focused service, to light rail with frequent all day service.

Table 1: Passenger Rail Characteristics

| Mode | | Peak Period Frequency | Typical System Length | Relative Capital Cost Per Mile | Average Station Spacing | Tracks Shared with Freight? |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| Intercity Rail* |  | Daily service | 50-500 miles | \$\$ |  20 miles or longer | Yes |
| Commuter Rail* |  | Every 30+ minutes | 20-50 miles | \$\$\$ |  7 miles or longer | Yes |
| Light Rail* |  | Every 10 minutes | 10-20 miles | \$\$\$\$\$ |  1 mile | Possible |
| Streetcar |  | Every 7-15 minutes | 1-5 miles | \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$ |  1/8 to 1/4 mile | No |

* Vehicle population technology can be diesel, electric, or diesel multiple unit (DMU)

The success of transit in any given corridor is based on the travel demand between origins and destinations along the corridor. The travel demand is driven in part by the density of use along the corridor, especially at station areas. A quarter mile walk is often used as a comfortable distance for walk access to a transit stop/station. Bike and drive access can extend the reach of stations beyond three miles.

Because the Dan Patch Corridor is in very early stages of consideration, service type and station locations are not determined. A comparison was conducted for the land use within one mile of stations at current and planned transit corridors in the Twin Cities region, and a station at Grandview in the city of Edina. The comparison includes population density, household density, and employment density.

Household density (Table 2) varies from over 7 households per acre to about 1 household per 20 acres at current and planned station areas in the current and planned corridors in the Twin Cities region. The Grandview area has about 2 households per acre.

Table 2: Household Density

| Transitway ¹ | Station Area | Households/Acre |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Dan Patch Corridor | Grandview | 1.98 |
| Blue Line | 38th Street Station | 5.05 |
| Blue Line | 46th Street Station | 3.82 |
| Blue Line | 50th Street Minnehaha Park Station | 3.38 |
| Blue Line | Airport Terminal 1 Lindbergh Station | 0.07 |
| Blue Line | Airport Terminal 2 Humphrey Station | 0.05 |
| Blue Line | American Blvd 34th Ave Station | 0.26 |
| Blue Line | Bloomington Central Station | 0.35 |
| Blue Line | Cedar-Riverside Station | 7.32 |
| Blue Line | Fort Snelling Station | 0.71 |
| Blue Line | Franklin Avenue Station | 6.49 |
| Blue Line | Lake Street Midtown Station | 4.85 |
| Blue Line | VA Medical Center Station | 2.06 |
| Blue Line Extension | 63rd Avenue Station | 2.96 |
| Blue Line Extension | 85th Avenue Station | 1.65 |
| Blue Line Extension | 93rd Avenue Station | 0.90 |
| Blue Line Extension | Bass Lake Road Station | 2.26 |
| Blue Line Extension | Brooklyn Boulevard Station | 1.74 |
| Blue Line Extension | Golden Valley Road Station | 2.54 |
| Blue Line Extension | Oak Grove Station | 0.27 |
| Blue Line Extension | Penn Avenue Station | 3.19 |
| Blue Line Extension | Plymouth Avenue Station | 2.53 |
| Blue Line Extension | Robbinsdale Station | 2.99 |
| Blue Line Extension | Van White Boulevard Station | 3.79 |
| Green Line Extension | Bassett Creek Valley Station | 6.49 |
| Green Line Extension | Beltline Blvd Station | 3.77 |

| Transitway ¹ | Station Area | Households/Acre |
|--|--|-----------------|
| Green Line Extension | Blake Road Station | 2.75 |
| Green Line Extension | Bryn Mawr Station | 2.89 |
| Green Line Extension | City West Station | 1.22 |
| Green Line Extension | Downtown Hopkins Station | 2.88 |
| Green Line Extension | Eden Prairie Town Center Station | 1.91 |
| Green Line Extension | Golden Triangle Station | 0.48 |
| Green Line Extension | Louisiana Avenue Station | 3.02 |
| Green Line Extension | Opus Station | 1.85 |
| Green Line Extension | Royalston Ave / Farmers Market Station | 6.60 |
| Green Line Extension | Shady Oak Station | 2.50 |
| Green Line Extension | SouthWest Station | 2.10 |
| Green Line Extension | West 21st Street Station | 2.83 |
| Green Line Extension | West Lake Street Station | 2.98 |
| Green Line Extension | Wooddale Avenue Station | 3.73 |
| Northstar | Anoka Station | 1.77 |
| Northstar | Big Lake Station | 0.34 |
| Northstar | Coon Rapids - Riverdale Station | 1.60 |
| Northstar | Elk River Station | 0.25 |
| Northstar | Fridley Station | 2.05 |
| Northstar | Ramsey Station | 0.34 |
| Northstar/Blue Line/Blue Line Ext/Green Line Ext | Target Field Station | 6.11 |

¹ Green Line was not included because traveling between two downtowns rather than a radial route was not considered a valid comparison.

Population density (Table 3) varies from over 26 people per acre to about 1 person per 6 acres at current and planned station areas in the current and planned corridors in the Twin Cities region. The Grandview area currently has about 5 people per acre with the density forecasted to decrease to 4.7 people per acre in 2040. Four people per acre is a good minimum benchmark for some level of increased investment in higher frequency transit.

Table 3: Population Density

| Transitway ¹ | Station Area | Year 2010 Persons/Acre | Year 2040 Persons/Acre |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dan Patch Corridor | Grandview | 5.02 | 4.70 |
| Blue Line | 38th Street Station | 11.27 | 12.70 |
| Blue Line | 46th Street Station | 8.43 | 11.88 |
| Blue Line | 50th Street Minnehaha Park Station | 7.20 | 10.12 |
| Blue Line | Airport Terminal 1 Lindbergh Station | 0.03 | 0.02 |
| Blue Line | Airport Terminal 2 Humphrey Station | 0.03 | 0.27 |
| Blue Line | American Blvd 34th Ave Station | 0.27 | 2.34 |

| Transitway ¹ | Station Area | Year 2010 Persons/Acre | Year 2040 Persons/Acre |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Blue Line | Bloomington Central Station | 0.52 | 2.65 |
| Blue Line | Cedar-Riverside Station | 17.60 | 26.37 |
| Blue Line | Fort Snelling Station | 1.34 | 2.34 |
| Blue Line | Franklin Avenue Station | 17.60 | 23.09 |
| Blue Line | Lake Street Midtown Station | 13.33 | 15.36 |
| Blue Line | VA Medical Center Station | 4.00 | 5.77 |
| Blue Line Extension | 63rd Avenue Station | 7.44 | 8.61 |
| Blue Line Extension | 85th Avenue Station | 4.79 | 4.92 |
| Blue Line Extension | 93rd Avenue Station | 2.41 | 3.99 |
| Blue Line Extension | Bass Lake Road Station | 5.50 | 6.37 |
| Blue Line Extension | Brooklyn Boulevard Station | 4.66 | 4.66 |
| Blue Line Extension | Golden Valley Road Station | 6.89 | 6.83 |
| Blue Line Extension | Oak Grove Station | 0.60 | 4.61 |
| Blue Line Extension | Penn Avenue Station | 8.13 | 8.08 |
| Blue Line Extension | Plymouth Avenue Station | 6.94 | 6.63 |
| Blue Line Extension | Robbinsdale Station | 6.91 | 7.09 |
| Blue Line Extension | Van White Boulevard Station | 9.16 | 14.43 |
| Green Line Extension | Bassett Creek Valley Station | 11.49 | 16.47 |
| Green Line Extension | Beltline Blvd Station | 7.06 | 10.04 |
| Green Line Extension | Blake Road Station | 6.06 | 7.95 |
| Green Line Extension | Bryn Mawr Station | 5.65 | 8.84 |
| Green Line Extension | City West Station | 2.05 | 4.23 |
| Green Line Extension | Downtown Hopkins Station | 6.34 | 7.98 |
| Green Line Extension | Eden Prairie Town Center Station | 3.10 | 8.16 |
| Green Line Extension | Golden Triangle Station | 1.05 | 4.07 |
| Green Line Extension | Louisiana Avenue Station | 6.45 | 8.15 |
| Green Line Extension | Opus Station | 3.40 | 5.05 |
| Green Line Extension | Royalston Ave / Farmers Market Station | 10.65 | 23.70 |
| Green Line Extension | Shady Oak Station | 5.48 | 6.65 |
| Green Line Extension | SouthWest Station | 3.92 | 9.13 |
| Green Line Extension | West 21st Street Station | 6.28 | 8.98 |
| Green Line Extension | West Lake Street Station | 6.19 | 8.69 |
| Green Line Extension | Wooddale Avenue Station | 6.97 | 9.48 |
| Northstar | Anoka Station | 3.64 | 4.44 |
| Northstar | Big Lake Station | 1.00 | 5.31 |
| Northstar | Coon Rapids - Riverdale Station | 4.57 | 5.41 |
| Northstar | Elk River Station | 0.69 | 1.98 |
| Northstar | Fridley Station | 4.71 | 24.52 |

| Transitway ¹ | Station Area | Year 2010 Persons/Acre | Year 2040 Persons/Acre |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Northstar | Ramsey Station | 1.03 | N/A |
| Northstar | Target Field Station | 9.95 | N/A |

¹ Green Line was not included because traveling between two downtowns rather than a radial route was not considered a valid comparison.

Employment density (Table 4) varies from over 39 employees per acre to about 0.75 employees per acres at current and planned station areas in the current and planned corridors in the Twin Cities region. The Grandview area has about 1.6 employees per acre.

Table 4: Employment Density

| Transitway ¹ | Station Area | Year 2010 Employees/Acre | Year 2040 Employees/Acre |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dan Patch Corridor | Grandview | 1.64 | 1.68 |
| Blue Line | 38th Street Station | 2.03 | 2.18 |
| Blue Line | 46th Street Station | 1.32 | 1.27 |
| Blue Line | 50th Street Minnehaha Park Station | 1.68 | 2.58 |
| Blue Line | Airport Terminal 1 Lindbergh Station | 2.65 | 7.98 |
| Blue Line | Airport Terminal 2 Humphrey Station | 2.09 | 7.43 |
| Blue Line | American Blvd 34th Ave Station | 5.03 | 15.37 |
| Blue Line | Bloomington Central Station | 6.54 | 19.14 |
| Blue Line | Cedar-Riverside Station | 27.42 | 39.79 |
| Blue Line | Fort Snelling Station | 1.67 | 4.68 |
| Blue Line | Franklin Avenue Station | 15.26 | 21.89 |
| Blue Line | Lake Street Midtown Station | 5.91 | 7.53 |
| Blue Line | VA Medical Center Station | 1.48 | 3.32 |
| Blue Line Extension | 63rd Avenue Station | 1.49 | 1.72 |
| Blue Line Extension | 85th Avenue Station | 2.54 | 3.37 |
| Blue Line Extension | 93rd Avenue Station | 1.70 | 4.89 |
| Blue Line Extension | Bass Lake Road Station | 1.53 | 2.04 |
| Blue Line Extension | Brooklyn Boulevard Station | 3.07 | 3.72 |
| Blue Line Extension | Golden Valley Road Station | 3.42 | 3.83 |
| Blue Line Extension | Oak Grove Station | 0.79 | 6.98 |
| Blue Line Extension | Penn Avenue Station | 2.94 | 3.86 |
| Blue Line Extension | Plymouth Avenue Station | 2.96 | 3.59 |
| Blue Line Extension | Robbinsdale Station | 1.28 | 1.99 |
| Blue Line Extension | Van White Boulevard Station | 10.37 | 15.1 |
| Green Line Extension | Bassett Creek Valley Station | 7.20 | 13.82 |
| Green Line Extension | Beltline Blvd Station | 3.94 | 6.88 |
| Green Line Extension | Blake Road Station | 3.62 | 5.04 |
| Green Line Extension | Bryn Mawr Station | 3.01 | 3.56 |

| Transitway ¹ | Station Area | Year 2010 Employees/Acre | Year 2040 Employees/Acre |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Green Line Extension | City West Station | 9.85 | 16.05 |
| Green Line Extension | Downtown Hopkins Station | 4.83 | 6.15 |
| Green Line Extension | Eden Prairie Town Center Station | 6.02 | 9.33 |
| Green Line Extension | Golden Triangle Station | 7.15 | 12.20 |
| Green Line Extension | Louisiana Avenue Station | 6.05 | 8.29 |
| Green Line Extension | Opus Station | 9.74 | 15.60 |
| Green Line Extension | Royalston Ave / Farmers Market Station | 50.40 | 73.04 |
| Green Line Extension | Shady Oak Station | 4.61 | 6.42 |
| Green Line Extension | SouthWest Station | 4.83 | 8.19 |
| Green Line Extension | West 21st Street Station | 3.39 | 2.93 |
| Green Line Extension | West Lake Street Station | 2.43 | 4.01 |
| Green Line Extension | Wooddale Avenue Station | 7.36 | 10.44 |
| Northstar | Anoka Station | 3.97 | 4.17 |
| Northstar | Big Lake Station | 0.17 | 4.16 |
| Northstar | Coon Rapids - Riverdale Station | 3.17 | 4.41 |
| Northstar | Elk River Station | 0.52 | 0.77 |
| Northstar | Fridley Station | 2.26 | 80.95 |
| Northstar | Ramsey Station | 0.67 | N/A |
| Northstar | Target Field Station | 56.37 | N/A |

¹ Green Line was not included because traveling between two downtowns rather than a radial route was not considered a valid comparison.

Comparison Summary

Based on the metrics of household, population, and employment density for the 46 other station areas evaluated, the example station area at Grandview performs as follows:

- Households – 20 station areas (43%) have less or similar household density to the Grandview station area
- Population – The Grandview area currently has about 5 people per acre with the density forecasted to decrease to 4.7 people per acre in 2040. 18 station areas (39%) have less or similar population density to the Grandview station area. This number falls to 13 (28%) in the year 2040. Four people per acre is a good minimum benchmark for some level of increased investment in higher frequency transit.
- Employment – The Grandview area has about 1.6 employees per acre. 12 station areas (26%) have less or similar employment density to the Grandview station area. In 2040, this decreases to 4 station areas (9%).

Based on these metrics, the Grandview station area falls within approximately the bottom 1/3 of the stations studied. Household density is the strongest, while employment density faces some challenges. While these are common metrics, the success of a station at Grandview also is highly dependent on other factors such as end points, type and frequency of service, number of stations, connection to other transit service, etc.

Process and Implementation Timeline

The timeline for implementation of passenger service in the Dan Patch Corridor is based on a couple of the transitways that have been implemented in the Twin Cities region. Our experience in the region has been approximately 20-30 years from planning to revenue service. Given that some initial planning has been completed previously, it is reasonable to expect an 8 to 10 year duration to revenue service following removal of the “gag rule.” The removal of the legislation prohibiting study of the Dan Patch Corridor for commuter rail would be the critical first step followed by four planning and engineering steps of varying duration:

- Pre-Project Development Study and Development of Locally Preferred Alternative: 2 years
- Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Documentation: 3 years
- Final Design: 2 years
- Construction and Testing: 2 years

Stakeholder Input

A meeting with local jurisdictional stakeholders was held on Thursday, August 10, 2017. Those in attendance included Mark Nolan, City of Edina; Kirk Roberts, City of Bloomington; Jack Sullivan, City of St. Louis Park; and Joe Gladke, Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority. Staff from the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Metropolitan Council were also invited, but declined the invitation. Brian Smalkoski from Kimley-Horn and Associates facilitated the meeting.

The discussion focused on two primary questions:

- Since implementation of the “gag rule” in 2002, what have you heard about this corridor? (publicly and politically)
- Within your organization, is there an openness to further study of passenger rail in the Dan Patch corridor?

St. Louis Park noted that they have been focused on Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension). Since the Freight Rail Relocation study there has been an active group called “Safety in the Park.” With this Edina study folks have expressed some concern and there have been additional questions, but nothing really before that. City staff are looking for information to pass back to the community and they have noted interested in a trail corridor as there are limited north-south options with the current design of the city.

Bloomington noted some interest since Edina started this study, but it doesn’t have a position regarding the Dan Patch Corridor. There is a resolution that was passed back around the time of the legislation that also prohibits further study while supporting other transit initiatives. Regarding intercity rail, Bloomington noted that there are negative externalities without the benefit of service. It was also noted that the city is already busy with other transit projects including: Mall of America, 169, 77, and Blue Line.

Hennepin County noted that their hands are full and this project would be on the back burner. The recent focus has been getting the tax increase passed to fulfill the current transit vision.

Questions during the discussion included:

- Any increase in freight traffic? (Still one train per day)
- Impetus for study? (Grandview transportation study brought the issue to the forefront)
- What if the City Council does not take the recommendation? (That is a possibility)
- Any conversations with the railroad? (During the Grandview study there was a conversation. The railroad noted that they have no plans for passenger service in the corridor).

Stakeholders would like to be kept apprised of study progress, but will remain neutral in the discussions of passenger rail in the Dan Patch Corridor.