

Discussion Draft

Working Draft for Discussion

**Saint Paul and Minneapolis
Community Statement
on the
Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project**

April 28, 2009

Please submit your comments by June 1, 2009

To: Carol Swenson

District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul & Minneapolis

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The Community Statement is a
product of the

Saint Paul and Minneapolis Community Summit
on the
Central Corridor Light Rail Transit Project
held
March 7 & 8, 2009

Discussion Draft

Community Summit Planning Group

Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
Asian Economic Development Association
Aurora Saint Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation
Community Stabilization Project
District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
ISALAH
JUST Equity
Jewish Community Action (March 8 only)
Minnesota Project
MICAH
Saint Paul NAACP
Transit for Livable Communities
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789
University Avenue Business Association
University UNITED
William Mitchell Community Development Clinic

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Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
Aurora Saint Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation
Community Stabilization Project
District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
Housing Preservation Project
Jewish Community Action
MICAH
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Ramsey County Commissioner Toni Carter
Transit for Livable Communities
United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789
University UNITED
City of Saint Paul — Loan of Chairs

Disclaimer submitted by the Preserve and Benefit Historic Rondo Committee to the Community Summit March 7 & 8, 2009 for submission into the Summit Statement/ document.

The organizations (St. Paul NAACP, Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation and Community Stabilization Project) seeking to reach agreement with the Metropolitan Council, Ramsey County, the City of Saint Paul and or other government entities on certain aspects of the Central Corridor LRT project have legal rights pursuant to common law, state statutes and federal statutes. Nothing in any of The Community Summit documents or subsequent agreements entered into by these organizations waives or otherwise diminishes in any way these rights or any of the remedies available to these organizations pursuant to any source of law whatsoever.

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April 28, 2009

Dear Community Member,

This *Community Statement Working Draft Summary* on the Central Corridor light rail transit project is designed to provide you with a snapshot of key concerns and potential solutions, based on discussions that took place at the Community Summit meeting on March 7th and 8th, where more than 150 people participated.

Now we need YOU and other community members to add your voices.

Throughout the month of May, we will be collecting additional input on the *Community Statement*, including suggested strategies and initiatives for working together as one large 'Corridor Community.' This is important because we need to ensure that community concerns are addressed in planning for the Central Corridor light rail line and as the line is built and changes take place.

We ask you contribute to the drafting of the Community Statement by letting us know:

1. What issues or concerns are missing?
2. What other solutions or strategies might be explored for moving forward? Who can help — concerned citizens, people with expertise, groups not currently represented in the Community Summit process?
3. If a written agreement with government agencies and community partners were created, what would it need to include for you to be confident that it will make a difference? Who would you trust to represent you in crafting an agreement?

Responses are welcome by e-mail or by filling out the enclosed Comment Form. Whether you respond as an individual or as part of a discussion group, your comments and suggestions are valued, and will become part of the *2009 Community Statement on the Central Corridor Light Rail Line*, to be endorsed at a reconvened Community Summit in June.

To ensure your comments are included, please submit them by June 1, 2009 to:

Carol Swenson
District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul & Minneapolis
1080 University Avenue W.
Saint Paul, MN 55104
carol@dcc-stpaul-mpls.org | 651-249-6877

A copy of the full *Community Statement Working Draft* is available at:
www.dcc-stpaul-mpls.org or call Carol Swenson at 651-249-6877

Please join this very important effort to ensure that all our communities survive and prosper as we move forward together. Thank you for your interest and participation.

The Community Summit Planning Group

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Community Statement Summary on The Central Corridor Light Rail Project

“To be successful, the light rail line must not only improve mobility, but must also serve as a catalyst to strengthen and enhance existing and future neighborhoods, workforces and businesses along the line.”

Community Summit, March 7 & 8, 2009

On March 7 & 8, 2009, over 150 people gathered at a Community Summit to talk about the future of their communities, families, and businesses and the proposed Central Corridor Light Rail line. The Community Summit had two major goals:

- Gather together to share visions, issues, and solutions so we can speak with a unified voice about the future of our neighborhoods and business communities in the Central Corridor; and
- Create a comprehensive *Community Statement* that could be used as the basis for a written agreement(s) among governmental entities, community members, businesses, and organizations to coordinate efforts and hold everyone accountable.

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first time that individuals, small businesses, Minneapolis and St. Paul neighborhoods, and organizations have gathered together to take up the challenge of addressing community, workforce, and small business concerns and solutions from a comprehensive point of view. The desire is to create a living document that synthesizes and summarizes issues and concerns and begins to identify solutions and resources for addressing them.

The Community Summit was approached in the spirit of inclusiveness, cooperation and mutual respect. It was not intended to replace or compete with previous or ongoing planning initiatives and efforts to address known concerns related to the LRT project. Rather, the Summit was designed to pause and reflect on issues, old and new, to learn what is being done to address them, and to identify promising solutions and strategies that might benefit from cooperative community support for implementation. Ultimately, we all want our communities — and the diverse constituents in them — to be full participants in the decision-making process, to survive the construction of the LRT, and to thrive after the line is in operation.

Beginning with the premise that the Central Corridor LRT line will be built, the Summit looked at how we might work together to resolve issues and concerns about the negative impacts it will have and to ensure that everyone benefits equitably from this billion-dollar infrastructure project.

The Summit was organized around seven overarching issues that are key to community members and small businesses:

- Community as Stakeholders
- Equitable Development and Affordable Housing
- Environment and Sustainability
- Neighborhood Livability
- Transportation Equity
- Mitigation for Small Businesses
- Workforce Training and Hiring & Minority and Women Contracting

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After Saturday's opening session, Summit participants worked in a series of small discussion groups to address issues under each of the above topics. Participants moved among discussion circles; notes were taken of each discussion; written ideas were introduced from those who could not attend; and at the end of the day each discussion group was asked to summarize: 1) the Comprehensive Community Vision they heard; 2) the Guiding Principles; and 3) Promising Action Strategies. On Sunday, those who returned worked for a half-day to refine and flesh out the work of the previous day.

Knowing that many would not be able to participate in the March meeting and, therefore, not everyone's voice may have been heard, Summit planners created a three part process for writing the Community Statement: 1) convene a Community Summit to generate a draft Statement; 2) circulate the draft for further comment and input; and 3) reconvene the Summit to review and endorse the Community Statement and propose a path for moving forward. In short, the March Summit meeting was intended to be a beginning, not an end in itself.

This summary provides you with a snapshot of key themes that were identified under each issue, potential solutions that seem most promising, and who, to the best of our knowledge, is working on these issues. We ask you contribute to the drafting of the Community Statement by letting us know:

- What issues or concerns are missing?
- What other solutions or strategies might be explored for moving forward? Who can help — concerned citizens, people with expertise, groups not currently represented in the Community Summit process?
- If a written agreement with government agencies and community partners were created, what would it need to include for you to be confident that it will make a difference? Who would you trust to represent you in crafting an agreement?

We invite you to join this very important effort to ensure that all our communities survive and prosper as we move forward together. Please share your comments and suggestions, and let us know how you would like to be involved in the future.

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Section A. Community as Stakeholders

Lead Summit Planners: Metric Giles, Community Stabilization Project and Dennis Presley, Sr., Got Voice, Got Power! & Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation

Brief summary of Summit Discussion: Many Summit participants believe that the Metropolitan Council does not respect them and that their voices will not be heard on issues related to the design, construction and operation of the Light Rail project.

There is concern that decision-making is not transparent because technical information is not presented in a way that is easily understood by persons who are not professionally trained. Nor is all decision-making information made available or discussed with the public prior to the Met Council formulating their decisions and recommendations.

Finally, Central Corridor decision-making lacks substantive community participation. Community members do not have a sense of the timeline for decision-making and the implications of incremental decisions for the larger LRT project or for neighborhoods. This makes it difficult to know when to weigh in and who to talk to about issues of particular interest to the community. Communication channels established by the Central Corridor Project Office are not always two-way; community members who offer input or raise questions through the proper channels often see no tangible evidence that concerns were fully conveyed to project decision-makers, and sometimes there is no Met Council response.

Because of the apparent lack of consultation with the community on major decisions, community members experience frustration and disenfranchisement. This sentiment relates to all the project decisions controlled by the Met Council and spills over to issues and decisions not directly influenced by the Met Council.

Summary of issues brought forward – What would you add to this list?

- The Project's Community Advisory Committee concept and meeting format does not allow for adequate discussion and community participation in CCLRT decision-making.
- Too often it is not clear to the community which of the Project Partners is responsible for responding to concerns, especially when funding is at issue.
- Holding the Met Council accountable for its CCLRT decision-making is difficult; since the Council members are appointed by the Governor, not elected, they do not answer to the community and they cannot be voted out of office.

Potential solutions identified – What potential solutions or opportunities can you think of?

- *Asset Mapping*, a community organizing approach developed by John McKnight, was proposed as a strategy to reach out to individual community members and to document their concerns and the assets they bring to the table. Other organizing strategies may also be effective and should be considered.
- Create a written agreement for the Central Corridor that is focused on content, accountability, and consequences.
- Create a recognized body to oversee and coordinate accountability for meeting goals.

Beginning list of organizations working on these issues – Who else is or should be involved?

- Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
- Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul
- Community Stabilization Project
- District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis and individual member organizations
- Got Voice, Got Power!
- Ramsey and Hennepin Counties

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Section B. Equitable Development | Affordable Housing

Lead Summit Planners: Veronica Burt, JUST Equity & Aurora Saint Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation and John Slade, MICAH (Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing)

Brief summary of Summit Discussion: Many of the neighborhoods bordering University Avenue have had long histories of injustice, and all were affected by the construction of Interstate 94 (I-94). The gutting of Rondo by I-94 continues to reverberate in the community. Residents fear that the turmoil of construction and subsequent gentrification due to increased land values will force them out of their homes or businesses. The rail line is also seen as both a physical and a psychological barrier between neighborhoods.

Summary of issues brought forward — What would you add to this list?

- Increased land values will impact owners and renters.
- Speculators will change the character of the neighborhood.
- Special efforts will be needed to ensure preservation of existing affordable housing.
- New construction will need to include affordable units and relocation must be just.
- A wide variety of ownership options and housing types will be needed.
- Historical injustices need to be addressed (all along the Corridor).
- The ‘freeway mentality’ encourages people to move through without stopping.
- Retention of small ethnic businesses on the eastern end of University Avenue.

Potential solutions identified — What potential solutions or opportunities can you think of?

- Modify the property tax system [for the corridor] so seniors, low-income homeowners and renters can stay in their homes.
- Mandate rent controls and/or work with landlords to ensure low to moderate income households can stay in their homes.
- Create a “model” development agreement that ensures affordability.
- Develop a central location to assist residents with relocation benefits.
- Establish creative land banking programs that involve the city.
- Apply “cultural heritage development concepts” and share power with local groups.
- Educate property owners about land speculation and the negative impacts on neighborhoods.
- Preserve existing affordable housing by gathering baseline data and using it to develop enforceable regulations with teeth.
- Ensure that people can cross University Avenue safely at each intersection.
- Establish proposed “World Cultural Heritage District” for the eastern end of University Avenue to provide an economic development framework to stabilize the existing ethnic businesses and diverse neighborhoods and encourage new ethnic businesses in this area.
- Set aside land for affordable commercial space.
- Create funding programs to assist small ethnic business through construction and to prepare them for new growth opportunities.

Beginning List of organizations working on these issues — Who else is or should be involved?

- Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
- Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation
- Central Corridor Affordable Housing Working Group
- Cities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
- Community Stabilization Project
- Frogtown Rondo Action Network
- Frogtown Rondo Partnership
- Hennepin and Ramsey County
- Housing Preservation Project
- ISAIAH
- Metropolitan Council funding programs
- MICAH
- Preserve & Benefit Historic Rondo
- Rondo Land Trust
- University Alliance
- University UNITED
- William Mitchell Development Clinic
- World Cultural Heritage District

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Section C. Environment and Sustainability

Lead Summit Planner: Dan Thiede, Minnesota Project

Brief summary of Summit Discussion: Sustainability should be at the core of Central Corridor development. We need to take advantage of energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities that put money back in the pockets of building owners and tenants. We need to integrate functional, productive, resilient, and beautiful green spaces along the light rail line that build community. We need to make sure there is effective community education about living greener and the impact that each person can make through their daily actions. And we need to create good green jobs for those who need them most.

We need to be inclusive. All community members should be able to save energy, to produce renewable energy, to green their yards and streets, to grow and eat healthy local foods, and to go green in their own routine, while also having access to the good green job opportunities that are being created.

Summary of issues brought forward – What would you add to this list?

- Saving energy through conservation and efficiency in buildings of all kinds.
- Producing renewable energy along the corridor to power buildings and light rail.
- Increasing natural systems and sustainable infrastructure along the corridor.
- Educating community members about how they can be “green.”
- Creating good green jobs for community members who need them most.

Potential solutions identified – What potential solutions or opportunities can you think of?

- Implement energy education and outreach programs.
- Establish energy efficiency installation programs.
- Implement “Complete Green Streets” programs that utilize green infrastructure.
- Coordinate and cooperate across agencies to apply green infrastructure improvements.
- Promote and support community gardens.
- Support Green Jobs technical education and training programs, and connect with others engaged in this work.
- Tap Economic Stimulus Fund opportunities for Green Jobs.

Beginning list of organizations working on these issues – Who else is or should be involved?

- Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
- Aurora/St. Anthony Community Peace Sanctuary Garden
- Capitol Region Watershed District
- Center for Energy and Environment
- City of Minneapolis
- City of St. Paul
- District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul & Minneapolis
- District Energy
- Energy Harvest Group
- Fresh Energy
- Friends of Parks and Trails
- Frogtown Trees
- H.I.R.E. Minnesota
- Hennepin County
- H & K Climate Solutions
- The Minnesota Project
- Neighborhood Energy Connection
- Preserve & Benefit Historic Rondo
- Ramsey County
- Saint Anthony Park Community Council
- Saint Anthony Park Community Garden
- St. Paul Design Center
- St. Paul District Energy
- Solar in the Cities Project
- Southeast Como Improvement Association
- Trust for Public Land
- University UNITED/U-Plan
- Watershed Districts
- Xcel Energy

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Section D. Neighborhood Livability

Lead Summit Planner: Anne White, District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

Brief summary of Summit Discussion: Maintaining and enhancing the livability of neighborhoods is viewed as one of the most important requirements for the Central Corridor light rail line. Neighborhood livability is defined in terms of reasonable traffic volumes and driving behavior on local streets; pedestrian, bicyclist, and bus rider safety and comfort; adequate parking; LRT station areas that serve as the gateway to adjacent neighborhoods; equitable distribution of LRT benefits; protecting the diversity and cohesion of local neighborhoods; and community participation in project scheduling and mitigation strategies to minimize negative impacts during construction. To be successful, the light rail line should improve the quality of life for all neighborhoods along the corridor.

Summary of issues brought forward – What would you add to this list?

- Traffic increases on neighborhood streets would make them more dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists and less desirable places to live.
- Safety is a major concern for the community, and must be given top priority.
- Parking and traffic issues are critical for businesses and residents.
- Each LRT station should serve as a gateway, and reflect the distinct identity of the adjoining neighborhoods.
- Equitable distribution of benefits and protecting the diversity and cohesion of local neighborhoods are major concerns for the community.
- Planning for construction must include local business and community participation in decision-making on scheduling and mitigation to minimize negative impacts while the light rail line is being built.

Potential solutions identified – What potential solutions or opportunities can you think of?

- Adopt and implement a “Complete Streets” program (cities and counties) for the corridor with emphasis on streetscaping the entire length of the line, preserving on-street parking, and building the missing stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline.
- Re-visit the decision regarding 2 versus 4 lanes of traffic on University Avenue. A 2-lane roadway is a means for preserving on-street parking, providing wide sidewalks, creating more space for streetscape improvements, and fostering a supportive environment for small commercial and service businesses.
- Engage adjacent neighborhoods in the public art process for each LRT station to ensure that the unique history and character of the area are reflected in the station.
- Look for additional ways in which neighborhood identity can be integrated into redevelopment opportunities, new streetscaping, etc.
- Remove proposed fencing and barriers along the light rail line that further divide communities to the north and south of University Avenue.

Beginning list of organizations working on these issues – Who else is or should be involved?

- City of Minneapolis
- City of Saint Paul
- District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
- Frogtown Rondo Action Network
- Frogtown Trees
- Preserve and Benefit Historic Rondo
- Public Art Saint Paul
- St. Paul Design Center
- St. Paul SmartTrips
- Transit for Livable Communities
- University Alliance
- University UNITED / U-Plan
- City of Saint Paul / Met Council Parking Solutions Team
- Transportation Equity / Stops for Us Coalition
- Bicycle Advisory Board
- Met Council CCLRT Project Office

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Section E. Transportation Equity

Lead Summit Planners: Michelle Dibblee, Transit for Livable Communities and Joan Vanhala, Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

Brief summary of Summit Discussion: Transportation equity was defined in broad terms, to include not only equity for different user populations, but also equity among different modes of transportation — walking, bicycling, bus transit, light rail transit, commuter rail, automobiles, and trucks. Discussions focused on specific aspects of the transportation network — the bicycle environment, bus service, the missing LRT stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline — and finally, how all modes must work together as a network. The overarching theme that emerged from breakout discussions was that: “Creating an integrated network of bus, bicycle, pedestrian, and light rail transit that serves all communities in the corridor and increases the overall use of transit is an essential outcome of the Central Corridor LRT construction.”

Summary of issues brought forward — What would you add to this list?

- Bicyclist access and safety must be fully addressed in planning for LRT.
- To ensure equitable transit access, bus and light rail service planning must be coordinated and the three missing stations must be built to ensure a net gain in service for all communities along the corridor.
- Construction of Central Corridor LRT must be a catalyst to enrich the entire network of transportation options in and around the corridor.

Potential solutions identified — What potential solutions or opportunities can you think of?

- Create the necessary infrastructure for bicyclists (signage, bike boxes, bike lanes, bike boulevards, etc.)
- Build the three missing stations at Western, Victoria, and Hamline by the time the line goes into operation in 2014 and ensure the Route 16 bus service continues to run at its current level of service.
- Develop Bike/Walk plans for the entire corridor as well as station areas.
- Implement the supporting bus network in the CCLRT Project proposal.
- Improve bus service overall by implementing the new bus network in the CCLRT Project proposal and creating a “grid” of transit service.
- Foster mixed-use development strategies, which support a range of transportation choices.

Beginning list of organizations working on these issues — Who else is or should be involved?

- Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
- Bicycle Advisory Board
- Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis
- Community Stabilization Project
- District Councils Collaborative of Saint Paul and Minneapolis
- ISIAAH
- Jewish Community Action
- JUST Equity
- Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
- Preserve and Benefit Historic Rondo Committee
- St. Paul SmartTrips
- Stops for Us Coalition
- Transit for Livable Communities

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Section F. Mitigation for Small Businesses

Lead Summit Planner: Linda Winsor, University Avenue Business Association

Brief summary of Summit Discussion: It is essential that the Central Corridor LRT benefit small, local businesses and that resources are provided to enable them to survive through construction and thrive once the light rail is up and running.

Summary of issues brought forward — What would you add to this list?

- Preservation of as much on-street parking as possible should be a priority.
- Construction mitigation must be provided for small businesses to enable them to survive through construction of the light rail line.
- Establishment of a welcoming and pedestrian friendly environment is fundamental to ensuring that small businesses benefit from LRT.
- Mitigation is needed for businesses and property owners who experience special assessments and property tax increases.

Potential solutions identified — What potential solutions or opportunities can you think of?

- Explore new and innovative parking solutions to ensure easy access to businesses.
- Create a mitigation fund for small businesses that could be used for both construction and business mitigation.
- Work with businesses and residents to establish a construction strategy and schedule that minimize negative impacts; put a citizen/small business group in charge of a construction incentive fund.
- Pursue a range of funding sources to ensure streetscape and public realm improvements are realized and establish business improvement districts where they are logical.
- Address the property tax concerns.
- Designate the eastern end of University Avenue as a World Cultural Heritage District and support creation of a cultural tourist destination.

Beginning list of organizations working on these issues — Who else is or should be involved?

- "U-7" — 7 community development corporations serving small businesses in the corridor, led by Neighborhood Development Corporation
- University Avenue Business Association
- Asian Economic Development Council (Hmong Business Association)
- Central Corridor Partnership
- City of St. Paul
- St. Paul Building Owners and Managers Association
- St. Paul/Met Council Project Office Parking Solutions Team
- University UNITED/U-Plan
- World Cultural Heritage District

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Section G. Minority & Women Workforce Training and Hiring & Contracting

Lead Summit Planners: Bernie Hesse, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 789 and Lisa Amman, ISAIAH

Brief summary of Summit Discussion: Communities along the Central Corridor have significant numbers of minority and women workers who need family-supporting jobs and contractors who need equitable access to construction and supply contracts. The Met Council Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (BDE) office must set aggressive requirements for DBE and minority and women workforce hiring. We must help prepare community members by connecting them to training and apprenticeship programs. The community must be knowledgeable about hiring and contracting goals and involved in holding the government and contractors accountable for achieving the goals.

Summary of issues brought forward — What would you add to this list?

- Untapped pool of minority and women workers who live in the corridor, but need training.
- Ambitious and absolute goals are needed for women and minority workforce and contracting jobs, with a substantial number based in Saint Paul and Minneapolis
- Early notice of types and numbers of LRT construction jobs is needed so potential workforce are well-informed about job and contracting opportunities.
- Early notice of training requirements and resources is needed so DBEs and workers can prepare to compete for jobs.
- The community is not included in development of DBE, minority, and women hiring, recruitment programs or accountability requirements.
- Construction contract language is too ambiguous and not enforceable, which mean neither the governmental entity nor the contractor can be held accountable when goals are not met.
- Minority businesses along the light rail line must be protected to prevent a loss of existing minority jobs. Once the LRT is operational, additional resources will be needed to guarantee affordable rents and taxes.

Potential solutions identified — What potential solutions or opportunities can you think of?

- Local governments should press the Met Council to set aggressive and enforceable hiring and contracting goals. Community members and advocacy organizations should work with unions to raise percentages of jobs awarded to minorities and women .
- Consider a contractor incentive program for reaching goals and encourage learning from executives and contractors who have been successful in reaching goals, e.g. the Flat Iron Company and I-35W bridge project.
- Develop a fully integrated list of job components for University Avenue minority and women residents with flow chart of skill sets for different jobs.
- Develop a web site — U_Ave_jobs.org — that answers such questions as: What's out there? How do I get in? Who is delivering it?
- Engage community organizations in an aggressive and coordinated campaign to reach out to corridor residents and minority and women contractors about the opportunities.
- Secure funding for scholarships for jobs training and pre-apprenticeship programs.
- Build a network of jobs training and pre-apprenticeship providers.
- Work with existing businesses in the corridor (those not associated with construction of the light rail) to expand opportunities to hire local minority and women workers.

Beginning list of organizations working on these issues — Who else is or should be involved?

- Building and Trades Union
- H.I.R.E.
- Hubert Humphrey Job Corps
- ISAIAH
- Met Council DBE Office
- Minnesota Build
- Preserve and Benefit Historic Rondo
- St. Paul NAACP
- United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789
- Workforce Center
- World Cultural Heritage District