

Phase 1 White Bear Avenue Station

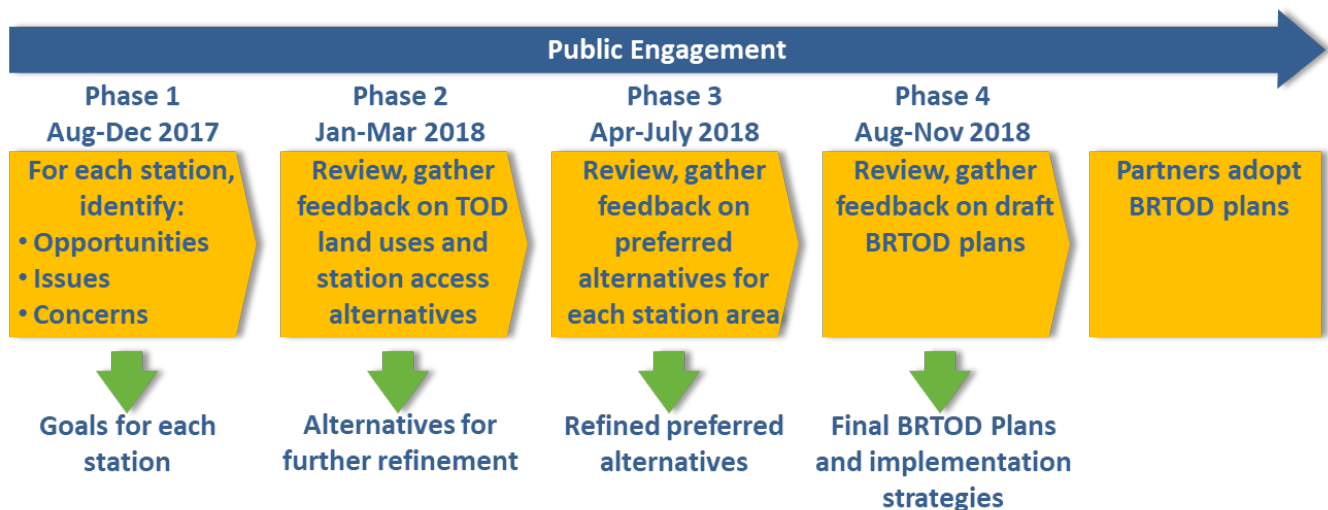
Constraints and Opportunities Summary

The following is a summary of Phase 1 community engagement activities for the White Bear Avenue Station planning area. The purpose of Phase 1 is to gather stakeholder feedback on draft station area-specific constraints and opportunities to guide the Phase 2 alternatives to address them.

Process

Gold Line BRTOD Phases and Timeline

See the phases and timeline below for this station area.



Engagement

The consultant team and WCRRA staff conducted in-person meetings with the District 1 Community Council’s Land Use Committee and with the community, and online engagement via the Gateway Corridor Gold Line BRT website (<http://thegatewaycorridor.com/station-development/>).

In-Person

The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Inform key stakeholders about the planning process, project objectives, and consultant-identified constraints and opportunities for the station area (1/2 mile radius of the station)
- Gather feedback on station area constraints and opportunities, and key issues or opportunities that need to be addressed
- Review next steps and how the information gathered will be used to inform station area alternatives and BRTOD concepts in Phase 2

Each meeting began with the consultant’s [presentation](#) of the BRTOD Plans overview, project phases, and a draft analysis of the constraints and opportunities for the station area, along with a [handout](#).

Participants then provided feedback on constraints and opportunities on a Response Sheet that included a graphic description and the following questions:

Questions related to station area **constraints**:

- What other constraints do you think are missing?
- What prevents you or your family from getting to transit or neighborhood destinations by walking or biking?
- Within walking or biking distance of your home, what types of uses are missing that would benefit you or your family?

Questions related to station area **opportunities**:

- What other opportunities do you think are missing?
- What kinds of improvements would encourage or support you to walk or bike to the BRT station and places in your neighborhood?
- At this station area or within walking or biking distance of your home, what types of uses would be most useful and convenient for you and your family?

In-person sessions included the following:

- Community meeting with District 1 Community Council Land Use Committee for St Paul station areas at White Bear Avenue and Sun Ray, October 2 2017, 6:30-7:30 pm, District 1 office, Sun Ray Shopping Center Office, 2105 1/2 Old Hudson Road, St Paul
- Community meeting hosted by District 1 Community Council and Transit for Livable Communities, November 9 2017, Sun Ray Family Dental offices, 1871 Old Hudson Rd, St Paul

Online

Online feedback was taken October through early November 2017 via a link on the Gateway Corridor Gold Line BRT website. Participants were provided with basic project information followed by exactly the same graphics and questions described above for in-person engagement

Station Area Objectives

In-person and on-line engagement provided feedback on draft station area constraints and opportunities to help shape specific station area objectives to guide Phase 2 station area land use and access alternatives. Key objectives identified for this station area include the following:

- Consider a safe and direct extension of Hazel Street south to Suburban Avenue (I-94 undercrossing)
- Create a safe station environment
- Ensure safe walking and biking within the station area
- Maintain affordable housing
- Promote additional housing and development opportunities

Results: Constraints and Opportunities

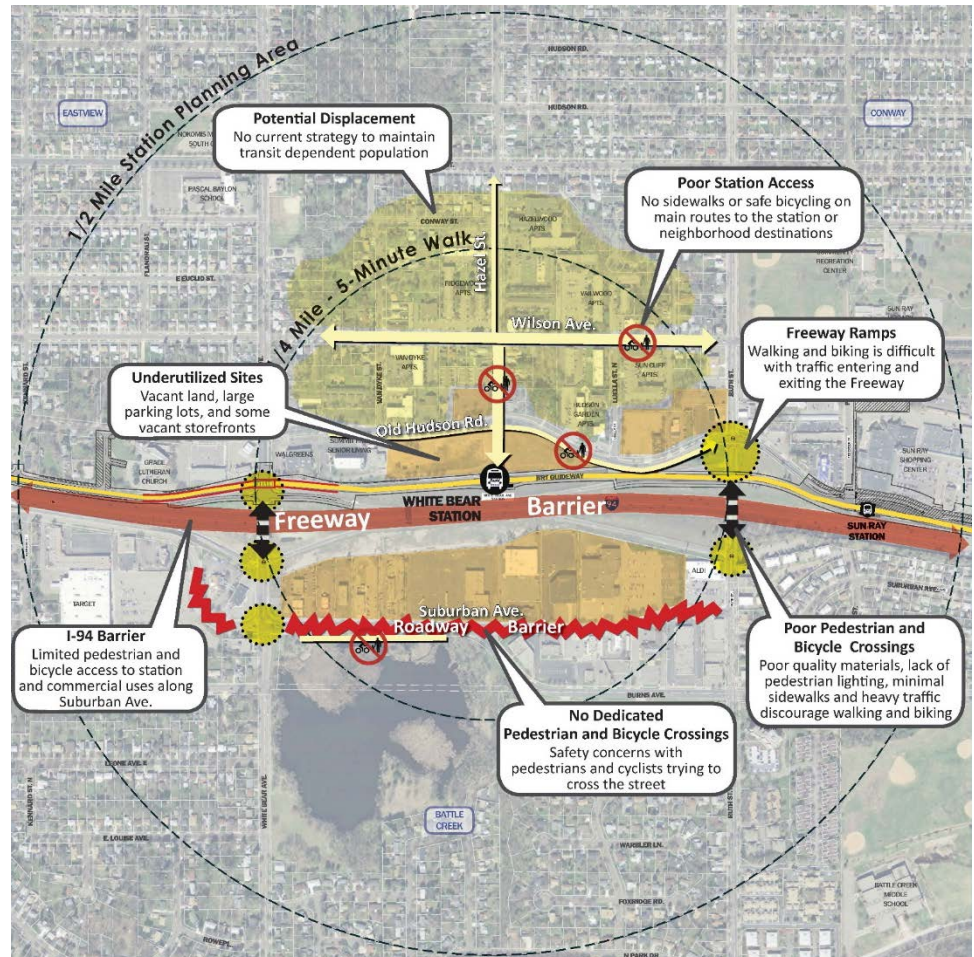
The results compilations below are from in-person and online feedback, along with the graphics and explanations that were provided to participants.

Constraints

Content

Participants provided feedback via a written Response Sheet that contained the graphic, description, and questions shown below.

Today, it is hard for those who choose to walk or bicycle in the area 1/2 mile around the future White Bear station, and I-94 is a major barrier to residents on the south side who wish to access the future BRT transit. Many existing parcels along Old Hudson Road are vacant and there are few opportunities for goods and services to meet daily needs within walking or bicycling distance of the planned station.



- What other constraints do you think are missing?
- What prevents you or your family from getting to transit or neighborhood destinations by walking or biking?
- Within walking or biking distance of your home, what types of uses are missing that would benefit you or your family?
- Additional comments, questions, or concerns about constraints in this station area?

Stakeholder Feedback

1. What other constraints do you think are missing?

- Barriers between BRT stop and existing Target, grocery stores south of I-94
- Lack of walkway along Suburban (which is Ramsey County property); because there are no businesses along there, there would be no one to keep it clear during the winter
- Hazel Street extension/underpass, concerns:
 - Concerns about lighting, safety, homeless population, drainage, will the tunnel become a urinal?
 - Concern about responsibility for maintenance and cleanliness

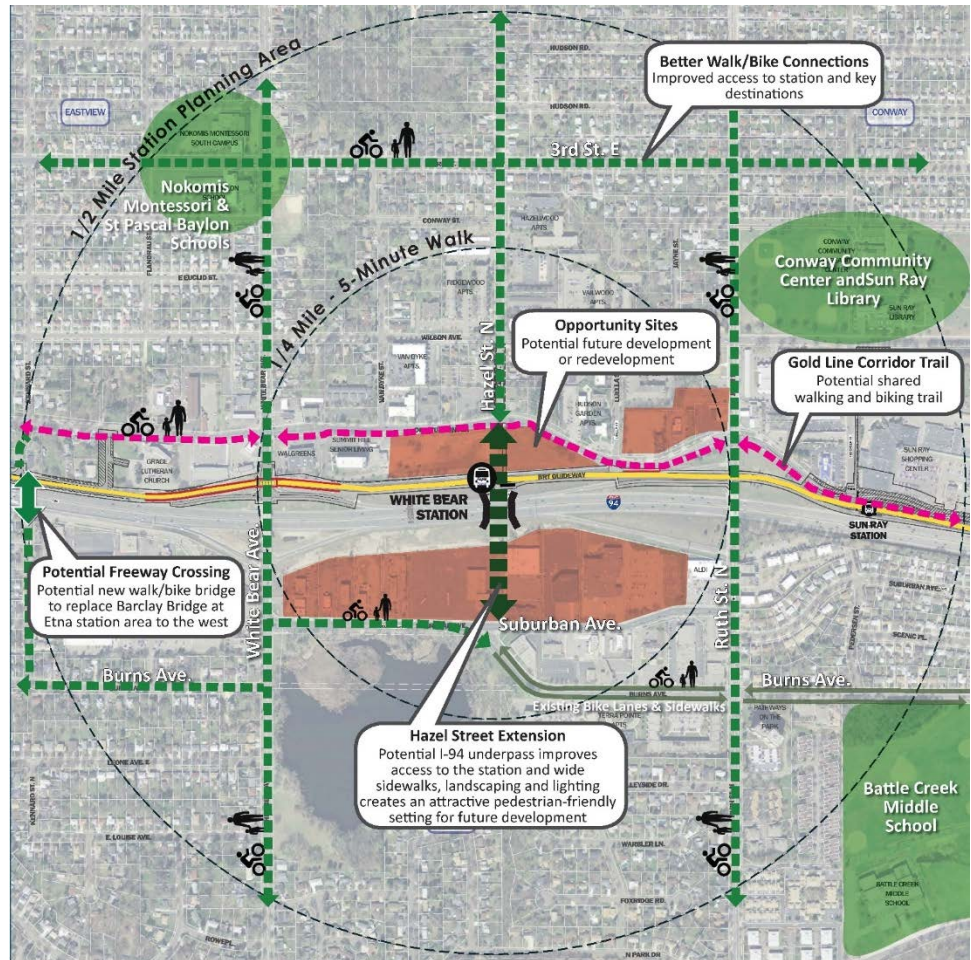
- Confusion about the \$15 M quoted cost estimate for a tunnel structure <Sara Allen clarified that this cost is not currently included in the project, and is simply a proposed idea to help alleviate the barrier issue of I-94 for pedestrians and bicyclists>
 - Participants favored improvements to existing White Bear and Ruth over the large investment of a tunnel. Could improvements to these streets also prompt redevelopment to S side of I-94? Discussed reconnection of walkable grid network.
 - Skepticism about market reality for S side of I-94.
- No easy/safe access to bike and walk routes between BRT stops and nearby regional park and trail resources (e.g. Battle Creek Park)
 - Not many walking/biking trails in this area, so important to include parks and trails staff in these conversations
 - Pedestrian-scale lighting is missing or poor on many streets, making walking/biking after dark a safety concern
- 2. What prevents you or your family from getting to transit or neighborhood destinations by walking or biking?**
- Distance between stops and my shopping destinations (e.g. Target)
 - Lack of good bus shelters for inclement weather
- 3. Within walking or biking distance of your home, what types of uses are missing that would benefit you or your family?**
- Chiropractor
 - Health clinic
- 4. Additional comments, questions, or concerns about constraints in this station area? (None)**
- Concern that narrowness of Hazel will lead to traffic/parking problems
 - Sidewalk needs to be aesthetically pleasing and safe
 - Street improvement assessments to property owners – who pays? How has it been done on other projects? Will city maintain?

Opportunities

Stakeholder Content

Participants provided feedback via a written Response Sheet that contained the graphic, description, and questions shown below.

For the future White Bear station area, there are many ways to improve walking and bicycling to transit and neighborhood destinations. Potential future development along Old Hudson Road and Suburban Avenue could provide additional housing options, and nearby goods and services to meet the daily needs of current and future residents.



- What other Opportunities do you think are missing?
- What kinds of improvements would encourage or support you to walk or bike to the BRT station and places in your neighborhood?
- At this station area or within walking or biking distance of your home, what types of uses would be most useful and convenient for you and your family?
- Additional comments, questions, or concerns about opportunities in this station area?

Feedback

- 1. What other opportunities do you think are missing?**
 - Improved stormwater management to improve water quality in nearby wetland, pond and Battle Creek
- 2. What kinds of improvements would encourage or support you to walk or bike to the BRT station and places in your neighborhood?**
 - Dedicated bike and walking paths with good bus stop shelters
 - Hazel Street extension/underpass, attractive and appealing:
 - Would significantly improve station access for walkers and bicyclists
 - Ideas for vehicle + sidewalks + bicycles with excellent lighting make this safe and attractive

- Creates additional opportunities for housing on the south side; have to find ways to work with property owners and the impact it might have on them
 - This will help improve street grid and set the stage for important and valuable development opportunities to meet business and residential needs
 - This is a much more pedestrian-friendly I-94 crossing than at White Bear, even with proposed improvements there
- More shade, benches along walking, biking routes
 - Shorter path between south side of I-94 and proposed BRT stop
 - Suburban needs to be narrowed to be pedestrian/bike friendly, which would be supported by a Hazel Street extension/underpass
- 3. At this station area or within walking or biking distance of your home, what types of uses would be most useful and convenient for you and your family?**
- Burger joint/bar
 - Coffee shop
 - Health clinic
 - Important to protect/ensure sufficient affordable housing in the area
 - Socioeconomic mix of residents and uses is the only way; concerns about displacement
- 4. Additional comments, questions, or concerns about opportunities in this station area?**
- Want to know what market really is for with development on south side of I-94 -- not just what is hoped
 - What improvements help attract the service and attention of the city *and* create resistance to gentrification? Does the tunnel strategy help with either?