

**Robbinsdale/42nd Ave. Station Area Plan
Community Working Group Meeting #2**

Wednesday, July 8th, 2015

6:30 – 8:30 pm

Public Safety Building, Community room (basement level)
4101 Hubbard Ave., Robbinsdale

Agenda

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| 1. Getting Started | 6:30 PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Introductions</i>• <i>Meeting purpose</i> | |
| 2. Updates | 6:40 PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>LRT Project Update</i> | |
| 3. Summary of community input so far | 6:45 PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>CWG, community meeting, design workshop</i> | |
| 4. Recap of downtown Robbinsdale design workshop, June 23-26 | 7:00 PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Purpose and process</i>• <i>Outcomes</i>• <i>Next steps</i> | |
| 5. Table exercises | 7:20 PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Community character statement exercise</i>• <i>Map exercise: Areas of change and stability</i> | <i>7:20 PM</i>
<i>7:40 PM</i> |
| 6. Market study – summary information | 8:00 PM |
| 7. Wrap Up and Next Steps | 8:15 PM |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Next CWG Meeting: August 13</i>• <i>Other</i> | |
| 8. Adjourn | 8:30 PM |

**Meeting Notes
Community Working Group #2
July 8, 2015
Robbinsdale Public Safety Building, Basement Community Room**

**Robbinsdale 42nd Avenue Station
Phase II Bottineau Station Area Planning**

Participants

Community Working Group: Present – Beth Stack, Kris Murphy, David Ulbrich, Issa Mansaray, Reva Chambliss, Nicholas Benham. Absent – Judd Harper, Blake Lehane, Lesli Anderson, Chad Haines, Danyelle Perquet. City of Robbinsdale: Rick Pearson; Metro Transit: Shelley Miller; Hennepin County: Darlene Walsler, Denise Engen, Andrew Gillett, Oliver Smith; Consultant team: Jay Demma

Updates and Background Information

Darlene Walsler (Hennepin County) started the meeting with introductions and an overview of the Health Equity Engagement Cohort (HEEC) organizations and their role in the community working groups (CWGs) for Bottineau LRT corridor station area planning. She also gave an overview of the evening's agenda, including background information on an opportunity that had arisen since the group last met; a downtown Robbinsdale design workshop that took place on June 23-26.

Shelley Miller (Metro Transit) gave an update on the status of LRT planning, reporting that METRO Blue Line project office staff are working out how to consider/address some of the ideas from the design workshop as they move forward with station design. Miller also let the CWG know that the Metropolitan Council/METRO Blue Line Project Office will be hosting a series of community meetings in each city on the LRT line later in July and in early August – and to stay tuned for more information on meetings dates and details.

Design Workshop

Walsler then presented an overview of the design workshop, ideas that resulted from the workshop, and next steps. The Robbinsdale CWG and the HEEC had opportunities to meet with the design team facilitating this workshop. CWG/HEEC members who participated had an opportunity to talk about their experience and thoughts about the workshop. The whole group discussed what they thought about the workshop ideas and experience.

Discussion: Design Workshop

- Seeing the visuals [developed at the workshop] really helped
- Really valuable, and the consultants were knowledgeable and experienced; they learned the city very well and quickly; they had no previous Robbinsdale ties so had fresh eyes and fresh ideas
- Hubbard Marketplace is not well utilized at the current time, and should incorporate some active uses like an art gallery or something else
- EMI is concerned about their parking lot being taken over, and they are worried about possible loss of their building as is the gas station across the street

- People love the large “Robbinsdale” sign on the stores/buildings that would wrap the parking structure, and they like that the parking structure would be wrapped with other buildings (making it less visually-impactful)
- People want to see the “wrapping” of the parking structure[with development] to be there on opening day
- Developers like to see these types of designs because it gives them ideas on how to build new things, with the possibility of relocating some existing businesses to other spaces still in town

Community input summary/Community character statements

Denise Engen (Hennepin County) provided the CWG members with a summary of the community input that had been received so far, focusing on the community workshop held on June 11 at Robbinsdale Middle School. Key messages from the public include:

- The parking structure should be compatible with downtown scale and character, and should be integrated with downtown.
- Visual/physical connections to downtown from the station are very important
- Pedestrian-scale, walkable design is very important
- Access to the station by all modes (pedestrian, bicycle, bus and car) is important; traffic management is important

Engen led the members through a large group discussion about developing “character statements” for the station area. These are, short bulleted statement that describe how the station should look and function in the future. The draft language developed for discussion was based on community input. The public’s comments will help staff/consultants develop proposals that meet community goals and reflect this community input. The community comment summary and character statements will be shared and used at community meetings to provide a check list of sorts to help the community evaluate whether plans are addressing community concerns, meeting community needs and advancing a community vision for the future. The statements will be revised, based on the CWG discussion and the CWG have the opportunity to comment again at its next meeting. The public will also have a change to weigh in on the statements at a community meeting in the fall.

Draft Community Character statement:

Describing the station area 10-15 years into the future...

The 42ND Avenue/Robbinsdale station area:

- *Is a vibrant, safe and active community with a unique small town character and a thriving downtown that is well connected to the community*
- *Is poised for future growth supportive of providing diverse housing options and growing local business – in keeping with Robbinsdale’s small town character*
- *Is walkable, bike friendly, safe and secure, with community gathering or public spaces*

Exercise Questions:

- From what you have heard, what changes should we make (if any)
- Is anything missing?
- How might this statement help the community accomplish its work?

Discussion: Community character statements exercise

- First statement (words to add/consider):
 - charming, inclusive, welcoming, green space, convenient
- Second statement (words and ideas to consider)
 - life cycle housing for young and old
 - youthful
 - range of housing options
 - There is a lack of larger, move-up homes within Robbinsdale; these are needed in order to keep families in the community as they grow and have children.
- Third statement (words and ideas to consider):
 - Welcoming
 - Connectivity across Hwy 81 and other areas

Areas of stability and change

Andrew Gillett (Hennepin County) led the CWG in a map exercise to look at places in the station area that may potentially see changes in existing land uses over time. The areas discussed are where there may be market interest in redevelopment or reuse of existing sites. The purpose of the exercise was a general discussion to get input on these areas for future policy discussion. The group looked at a large map with areas of change indicated by yellow outlines. CWG members commented on these areas and gave their ideas on which were higher priority areas. They suggested removing some areas and adding others (see the map below).

Comments: Areas of change map exercise

- Upper Robbin Center (near CVS) is an area that could benefit from change
- Housing for younger families in the station area would help make it more vibrant
- The U.S. Bank property could be a good redevelopment opportunity
- It would be nice to see some new development on the west side of the tracks in the station area
- Prioritize redevelopment north of 41st Ave N on Hwy 81 first, and then look at the southern area of town later
- Development could start on both the north and south ends, then fill in towards the middle
- Attract more tenants to the Robbinsdale Town Center mall
- Redevelop Robbin Center mall

Comments: Areas of stability and change map
(Maps is for general discussion regarding future policy)



General Questions

- Does Metro Transit own Hubbard Marketplace?
- Is the paved loop around Hubbard Marketplace going to be the “kiss and ride”?
- How much does a park and ride cost to use?
- Do we foresee business patrons parking in the park and ride structure?
- Is the development along 41st ½ Ave N part of opening day improvements?
- Are there other parking ramps/structures that incorporate buses, and how will safety be addressed with vehicular traffic around the Hubbard Marketplace?
- How will the west side of the tracks in the station area be connected to the station?

Next Steps

- The Metropolitan Council/METRO Blue Line Project Office will be hosting a series of community meetings in each city on the LRT line later in July and in early August. The group will receive information about those meetings once the dates are set.
- The next Community Working Group meeting is August 13 (tentative).

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

42ND Avenue/Robbinsdale station, May-June 2015

KEY MESSAGES

- *Robbinsdale residents love where they live and want to make sure that LRT and related development will not change the character of downtown.*
- *Pedestrian-scale, walkable design is important, as is safe station access by all modes (pedestrian, bicycle, bus and car)*
- *A parking structure should be compatible with the scale and character of downtown and be integrated with downtown; visual/physical connections to downtown from the station are very important*
- *Strong support for local businesses; redevelopment opportunities seen – in keeping with a vision for Robbinsdale*

What people value most about Robbinsdale

- *The traditional, yet quirky, small-town feel of Robbinsdale; its local businesses*
- *Proximity to downtown and good access in general; a small town in the big metro*
- *Safe and walkable city; one can get most anywhere; family friendly*
- *Great people and neighborhoods; civic pride and civic engagement are valued*

Hopes for LRT in Robbinsdale

- *Keep and strengthen Robbinsdale's identity; show LRT riders that something is going on in Robbinsdale*
- *LRT development will bring more independent businesses to downtown Robbinsdale and more development to the city*
- *Improved connections (transit, bikes, walking, cars); station connected to downtown and to North Memorial Hospital*
- *Improve roads, traffic and improve existing parking problems*
- *Set the stage for growth in business and diversify housing stock by providing more choices*
- *Provide a community gathering area; visual and physical connections from station to downtown are important*

Concerns and challenges

- *Safety: pedestrian safety at crossings, kids and people on bikes; personal safety, good lighting, "eyes on the street"*
- *Parking and traffic: scale, location, size and aesthetics of park and ride structure; "hide and ride"; more traffic*
- *Maintaining/improving bike and pedestrian paths, sidewalks and trails; providing safe & convenient railroad crossings*
- *Noise (bells); loitering; concern for property values*

Considerations for station area planning

- *Character and scale of downtown*
- *Potential for redevelopment and use/reuse of vacant and underutilized parcels*
- *Connections between North Memorial Hospital complex and LRT station*
- *Add connections and facilities to ensure walkability and bike access*
- *Redevelopment and use/reuse of vacant and underutilized parcels; increase diversity of housing types*
- *Wayfinding throughout the community*
- *Keep center of downtown lower density; density can increase as move away from West Broadway*
- *New uses and small businesses such as a co-op grocery store, quick coffee, salons, liquor store, brew pub, day care (particularly one appropriate for different cultural groups), laundry, minority owned/ethnic-oriented businesses, "foodie" restaurants; more "daytime businesses"*

Vision for the future

- *Vibrant, safe and active community where the walkable downtown "flows" into the neighborhoods*
- *Unique small town character is preserved – with some improvements*
- *Thriving commercial district where local businesses are supported and grow*
- *Diverse housing choices that are attractive and affordable for young people and older people*
- *Walkable, bike friendly, safe and secure station area – with community gathering or public spaces*

PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY: Park and Ride 42ND Avenue/Robbinsdale station, May-June 2015

KEY MESSAGES

- *Parking structure should be compatible with downtown scale and character, and should be integrated with downtown.*
- *Visual/physical connections to downtown from the station are very important*
- *Pedestrian-scale, walkable design is very important*
- *Access to the station by all modes (pedestrian, bicycle, bus and car) is important; traffic management is important*

Considerations for park/ride design

- *Compatible with character and scale of downtown; strong visual and physical connection from station*
- *Attractive design*
- *Efficient traffic movement in and out of garage*
- *Lighting for safety and personal security*
- *Integrate business/commercial uses (EMI, retail, services) by "wrapping" the structure*
- *Preserve/repurpose Hubbard Market if possible*

Desires for other related uses and facilities

- *Public/indoor waiting area that is safe and inviting*
- *Public restroom*
- *Fencing and buffers*
- *Green space*
- *Coffee shop, other commercial*
- *Address existing parking needs in downtown with shared use*

42ND Avenue/Robbinsdale station

Community Character Statement

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- ✓ *Is walkable, bike friendly, safe and secure, with community gathering or public spaces*

Questions:

- From what you have heard, what changes should we make (if any)
- Is anything missing?
- How might this statement help the community accomplish its work?