VICTORIA

STATION AREA PLAN

Adopted October 19, 2011

SAINT PAUL

COLLIERS INTERNATIONAL TURLEY MARTIN TUCKER

URBAN STRATEGIES INC.

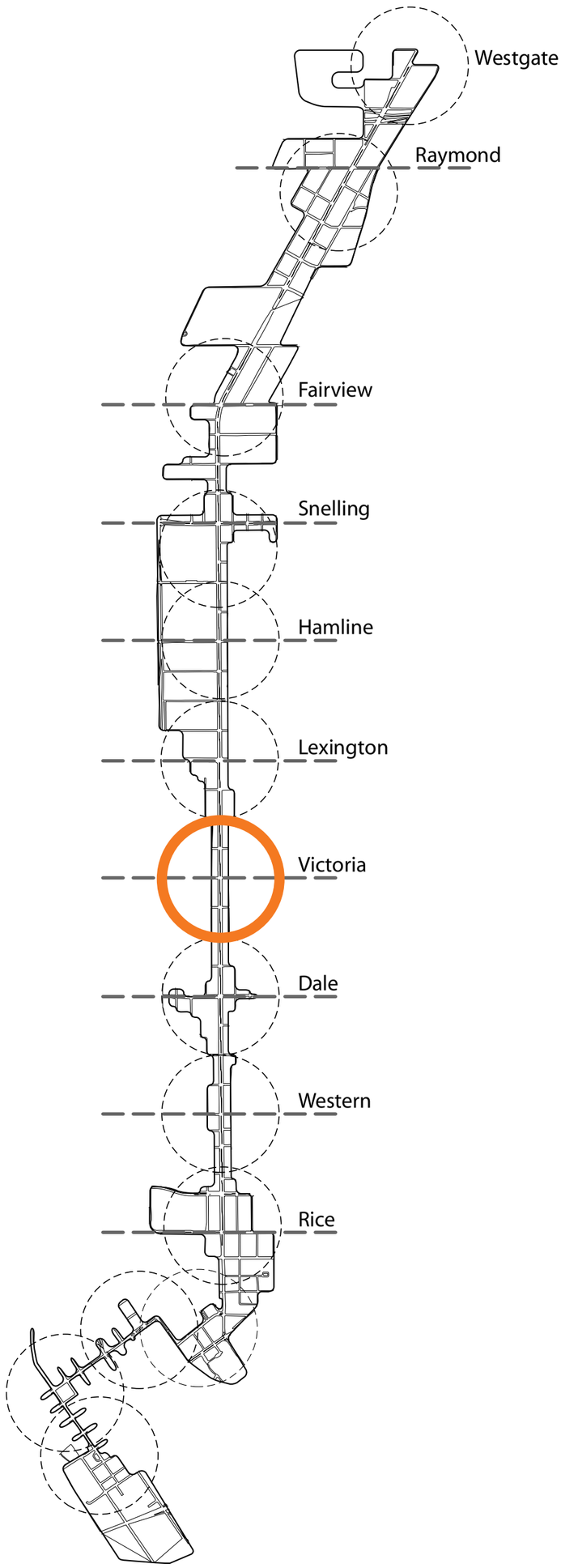

Westgate
Raymond
Fairview
Snelling
Hamline
Lexington
Victoria
Dale
Western
Rice

Table of Contents

The Station Area Plans, Introduction and Moving Forward chapters are adopted as addenda to the Central Corridor Development Strategy.

Planning for the Central Corridor

Planning for the Central Corridor is an opportunity to focus and guide future investment, both public and private, to create a stronger, more vibrant community that is a better place to live, work and do business. The goal is to support economic development and overall corridor prosperity that results in new housing at all income levels, more and better jobs and more business activity. The resulting increases in the property tax base and sales tax revenue will provide the resources for additional public services and infrastructure that, in turn, support economic development activity. The plans focus on an improved movement network, high-quality design, and improved open space and pedestrian amenities that will support and encourage economic investment, as well as create a more livable, attractive and vibrant community.

The Central Corridor Development Strategy (CCDS) establishes a set of strategies for how the Corridor should grow and change over the next 25-30 years in response to the LRT investment. The station area plans, using the foundation of the CCDS, provide a more detailed framework for integrating decisions about future land use and development; the public realm; and the movement of LRT, buses, cars, pedestrians, and bicycles at each station area.

Station Area Plans and Future Development

The station area plans were developed through a series of community-based roundtables, workshops and open houses, guided by a steering committee of community representatives. Property owners, residents, business owners, and institutional and organizational representatives participated in this grass-roots process.

3-D Renderings of the Corridor

During the workshops, participants created a 3-D model of potential future development at station areas. These models have formed the basis of a series of computer generated renderings which have been used to depict potential new buildings, open spaces, and other public realm improvements within this plan. Since there is little vacant land along the Corridor, most of the change depicted would involve reuse, redevelopment and replacement of existing buildings and surface parking lots. While these renderings are used throughout these plans to illustrate how the principles and objectives for new development could be realized, it is important to note that these images represent only one of many possible development scenarios. The renderings are not intended to prescribe how new development will look, but are an example of how the vision, goals, and objectives of these plans might be realized. The intent was to illustrate potential building height maximums, open spaces and streets to demonstrate transit-supportive developments for individual parcels.

Change Over Time

Change will occur when individual property owners decide it is either the right time to reinvest in their properties, sell to someone else who will reinvest in the property, or the City has the resources and appropriate public purpose to purchase property. Change will happen incrementally over time, and likely more slowly until LRT is up and running.


Victoria St
TWIN CITY BEAUTY SUPPLY
TWIN CITY NAIL SUPPLY
699-8303
TAI HOA
34

The Victoria Station Area Today

1

This chapter provides a snapshot of the Victoria station area's history, and a brief description of the physical conditions that are shaping the role and character of the Victoria station area today.

The History of the Victoria Station Area

The history of the Victoria Station Area is rich with small-scale, human drama. Neither a major commercial intersection nor a node for government, the area has instead been a haven of ordinary family life for successive waves of immigrants and refugees from poverty, war and trauma. Family, home, garden, work, worship—and on occasion, tragic crime and bawdy entertainment—have long been the touchstones of life in this area.

Today the neighborhood's grid of modest, working class homes looks nothing like the marshy wilderness inhabited by nomadic bands of Dakota Indians, although the frogs in those swamps did give rise to the neighborhood's enduring moniker, Frogtown. European incursion came in the late 1700s as traders drove ox carts along trails that crossed today's University Avenue. The ox cart roads disappeared in 1870s, made obsolete by James J. Hill's railroad line, but the trails shaped transportation routes to this day.

Saint Paul's steamboat and railroad transportation industries provided work for many Frogtowners, who toiled along the river as steamboat stevedores and later in the Dale Street and Jackson Street shops, forging parts and fixing trains. Most were Polish and German Catholics who built homes and places of worship such as St. Adalbert's, University Avenue Congregational Church, and Saint Agnes churches.

African Americans built family and community lives south of University, in what was known as the Rondo neighborhood. In the early 1900s, both the Rondo and Frogtown neighborhoods were home to many prominent African Americans, including Frederick McGhee, Minnesota's first black attorney, and Val Do Turner, Minnesota's first African American physician and founder of the local chapter of the NAACP.

The Victoria Theater building at 825 University Avenue, though now vacant, illustrates the Station Area's history of vibrant commercial activity. Designed in 1915 by one of St. Paul's most prominent architects, this neighborhood silent movie house was converted in 1924 into the Victoria Cafe, a cabaret-style nightclub.

The construction of I-94 through the neighborhood in the 1960s divided communities and displaced thousands of African American residents. With the arrival of Southeast Asian refugees after the Vietnam War, the Avenue began to evolve into a multi-ethnic bazaar of small retail shops, groceries and restaurants. Today the Avenue is a showcase for the area's immigrant, family-based traditions, which continue with new players, but the same themes.

FIGURE 1.1 - University Avenue Congregational Church, 1964

FIGURE 1.2 - Victoria Theatre detail, 2010

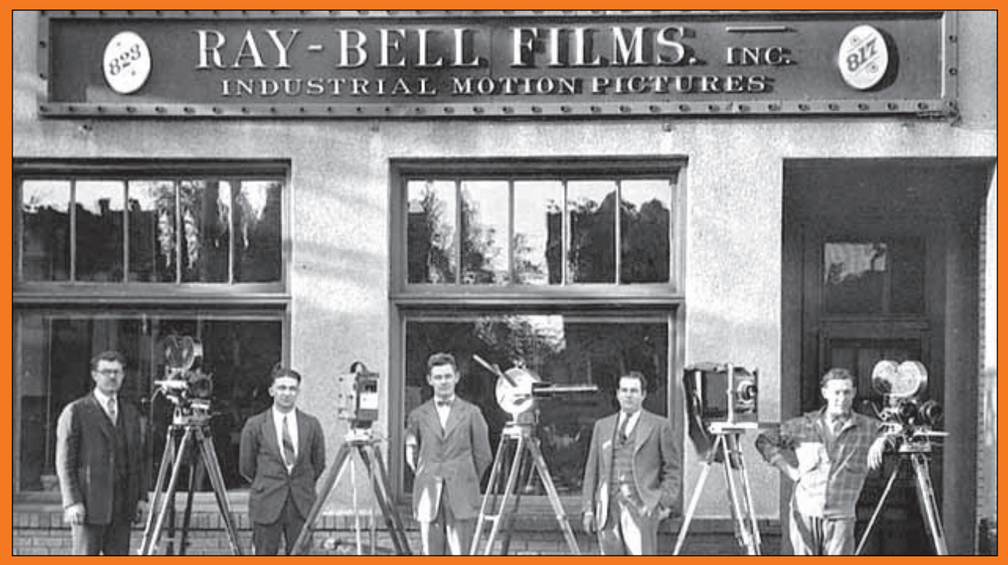


FIGURE 1.3 - Men and cameras in front of Ray-Bell Films at 817-823 University Avenue, 1925 - 1926

FIGURE 1.4 - Moe Thompson, owner of the Victoria Cafe, with entertainers, mid-1920s

Source of photos: Minnesota Historical Society, Sara Nelson, and Kurt Gegenhuber

The Victoria Station Area Today

The Victoria station area is a traditional streetcar neighborhood comprised of residential areas surrounding a mixed-use "main street" spine.

While over half of the traditional "main street" mixed-use buildings remain, several larger vacant lots and smaller areas of surface parking create gaps in the streetscape. This condition diminishes the overall image of the area but also presents opportunities for reinvestment. One of the area's unique physical characteristics is the numerous houses that front the University Avenue corridor. Their larger setbacks and front yards soften the character of the Avenue helping to create a neighborhood feel for the station area.

The station area, part of the larger, historically African-American Rondo neighborhood, is characterized by a strong multi-cultural presence that extends west to Lexington and east to beyond the Rice station area. This area is home to a concentration of cultural associations and businesses from communities within Saint Paul and around the world. The station is poised to support a Rondo renaissance and provide an opportunity to help restore the community's economic engine that was lost to the construction of the I-94 freeway in the 1960's. North and south of the Avenue, the stable residential neighborhoods are characterized by blocks of early 20th century housing. In recent years, high rates of housing foreclosure and resulting residential vacancies have placed stresses on the stability of the neighborhood. In some cases this has led to the demolition of dwellings, creating gaps that need attention.

The Victoria station area is served by Maxfield Elementary, located at the southern edge of the neighborhood, within a five-minute walk of the station. The school's playground represents the only existing publicly accessible open space within the station area. There are also several notable historic structures within the station area, including the Saint Paul Fellowship Church on Victoria just north of University, and the Victoria Theater which currently sits vacant along the north side of University Avenue.

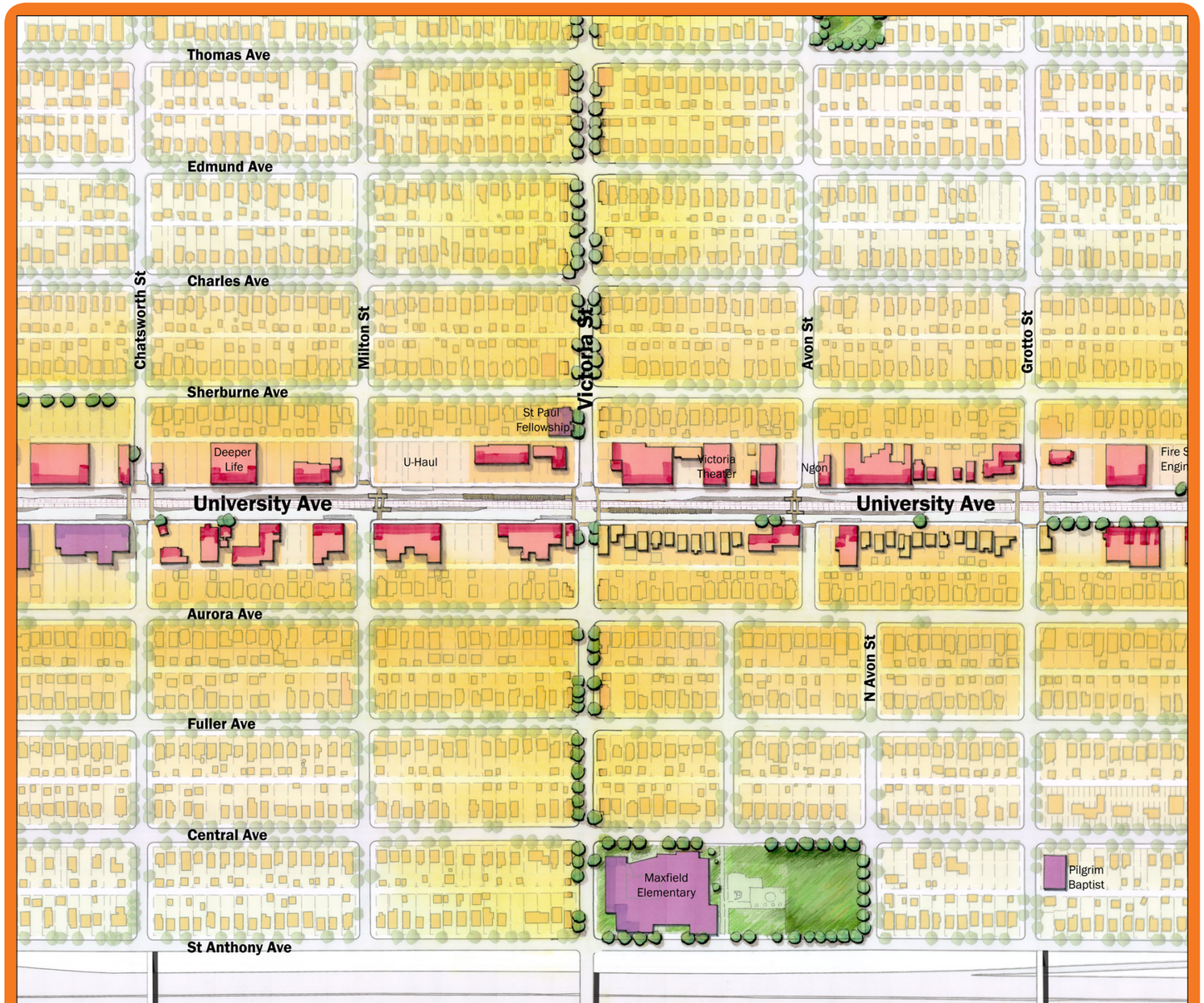


FIGURE 1.4 - The Victoria station area is a traditional streetcar neighborhood comprised of residential areas centered upon University Avenue's "main street".

FIGURE 1.5 - The unique presence of **single detached residential buildings along University** Avenue within the Victoria station area creates a more generous streetscape through setbacks and landscaping. This gives the impression of a neighborhood feel along the Avenue that is treasured by area residents and visitors.

FIGURE 1.6 - Small **"main street"** retail buildings comprise about a third of the built form along University Avenue. They create a pedestrian friendly, animated street face. However, this sense of place is compromised by vacant sites and an abundance of surface parking lots.

FIGURE 1.7 - Large underutilized sites such as the U-Haul lot represent opportunities for new development adjacent to the station. Sites such as this have the potential to generate higher levels of activity and enhance the character of the station area.

FIGURE 1.8 - The **Saint Paul Fellowship Church** is a handsome local landmark, immediately visible from the proposed station location.

FIGURE 1.9 - North and south of University Avenue, the neighborhood is comprised of blocks of **early 20th century homes** served by rear alleys. In recent years these areas have been severely hit by numerous foreclosures and vacancies.

FIGURE 1.10 - Maxfield Elementary, located just east of Victoria Street and north of I-94 is a hub for the local community. The school's playground represents the only public open space within the station area.


BLACK SWAN
South
Chinese Szchuan
Free Delivery Tel:

The Future of the Victoria Station Area

2

The Future of the Victoria Station Area chapter describes:

- **the planned location of the future LRT platform;**
- **forecasted market opportunities for new growth and investment;**
- **a description of the Station Area Boundary and Areas of Stability and Change within the Victoria station area; and**
- **a vision statement describing the future potential role and character of the station area with regard to both the immediate community and the broader Central Corridor.**

The Future of the Victoria Station Area

The Victoria station area will remain a predominantly residential area, though gradual redevelopment will bring new housing and local services to the Avenue over time.

While LRT will increase pedestrian and transit user access, raising the profile of local businesses and strengthening the redevelopment potential of underutilized sites, the ultimate health of the station area will be strongly linked with the strength of the local neighborhoods, the quality of the housing offered and success of the local school.

2.1 The Victoria LRT Platform

The future Victoria LRT station (Figure 2.1) is planned as a split side platform centered on the intersection of Victoria Street and University Avenue. This is a two platform configuration, with the westbound platform to the west of Victoria, and the eastbound platform to the east. LRT passengers will be able to access their platforms either from the main traffic signal located at Victoria, or at non-signalized pedestrian crossings at Milton and Avon Streets.

Traffic at the intersection of Victoria and University will differ slightly from its current operations. Motorists will be able to turn left onto Victoria, or complete a U-turn, on green arrows only. The median will be closed at Milton and Avon Streets, so through traffic across University Avenue will not be allowed. New traffic signals will be placed at Mackubin and Grotto Streets (immediately west and east of the station area, respectively), to facilitate additional safe pedestrian and bicycle crossings, and to provide another opportunity for left turns onto and off of University. Due to the location of elements such as the LRT platforms, left turn lanes, pedestrian crossings, bus stops and driveways, on-street parking will be removed between Milton and Avon Streets on both sides of the street. Parking will also be lost on the north side of University between Chatsworth and Milton, and the south side between Avon and Grotto.

2.2 Market Forecast

Building on the Central Corridor Development Strategy market forecast, a review of the Victoria station area characteristics and market potential was undertaken to consider the extent and potential timing of future development. The predominantly residential character of the Victoria station area means that reuse and redevelopment will most likely be strongest along the Avenue with some smaller neighborhood infill projects occurring elsewhere over time.

Victoria Station Area Market Potential

	Forecast Development Potential 2010-2035	Forecast Pre-Construction Development 2010	Forecast Development During LRT Construction 2011-2014	Early LRT Operation 2015-2025	Mature Operation 2026-2035	Specific Market Opportunities
# of Residential Units: Rent	250 - 300	-	50	100	100 - 150	Affordable housing is most likely needed in early years with a transition to a balance of market rate and affordable housing as LRT ridership matures.
# of Residential Units: Own	50 - 100	-	-	-	50 - 100	The recent value loss in the condo market will discourage new condo development.
Amount of Office Space (sqft)	60,000	-	-	20,000	40,000	The residential character of the area means that there is little identity as an office market and limited office potential.
Amount of Retail Space (sqft)	15,000	-	-	5,000	10,000	New retail will likely be focussed on serving the needs of the immediate neighborhood.
Amount of Industrial Space (sqft)	-	-	-	-	-	This is not an industrial market.
Number of Hotel Rooms	-	-	-	-	-	More immediate access to I-94 is required for hotel development and there is currently limited demand

FIGURE 2.2 - The **Victoria Station Area Development Forecast** predicts modest growth with opportunities for mixed use infill development and housing.

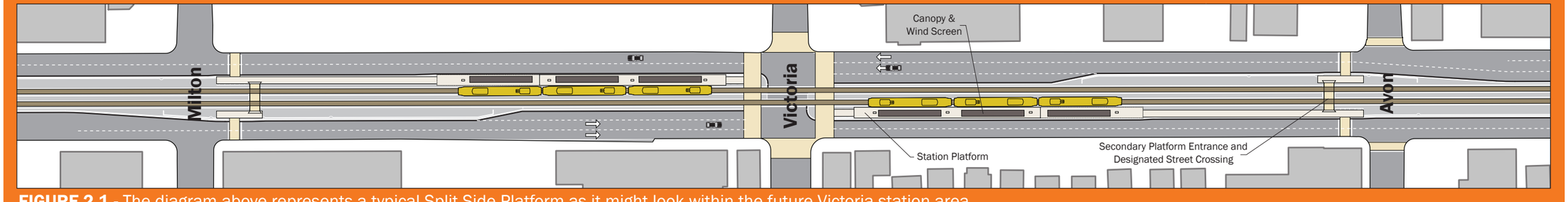


FIGURE 2.1 - The diagram above represents a typical Split Side Platform as it might look within the future Victoria station area

The success and redevelopment potential along the Avenue is strongly linked and strengthened by the proximity of adjacent residential neighborhoods. This proximity will encourage residential redevelopment along University as opposed to new office developments. The development, redevelopment, and reuse potential will strengthen as the line matures.

Though the many small land parcels and buildings along University Avenue will make land assembly and large-scale redevelopment difficult, several sites (including the current U-Haul site) have the potential for substantial programs of redevelopment and intensification. Given these factors, it is estimated that within the next 25 years, the Victoria station area will experience modest growth in the areas of housing and commercial development, with new retail development focusing primarily on meeting the daily needs of the surrounding neighborhood. Figure 2.2 provides the estimated breakdown of the total potential development within the Victoria station area over the next 25 years.

Defining the Study Area

The Station Area Planning Boundary captures portions of Historic Rondo and current Frogtown and Summit-University neighborhoods. It consists of blocks within a five-minute walking radius from the station. This boundary is the primary focus for all recommendations contained within this document. Within the boundary, an Area of Change has been delineated. This was originally identified through the Central Corridor planning process and confirmed through the station area planning process. It is shown as the area between the alleys and the Avenue. The Area of Change denotes the parcels where change is welcome and should be encouraged within the Victoria station area, whether through gradual infill and/or intensification or comprehensive redevelopment. The majority of the lands within the Victoria station area are outside the area of change. Emphasis in these areas is on preserving and enhancing the neighborhoods in order to ensure that the existing low-rise residential character is reinforced and that there is a stable population in the vicinity of the LRT.

Finally, the current and future area of high pedestrian activity has been identified as a Mobility Enhancement Zone. Section 5.0 of this plan presents recommendations for balancing modes of movement within this active core area.

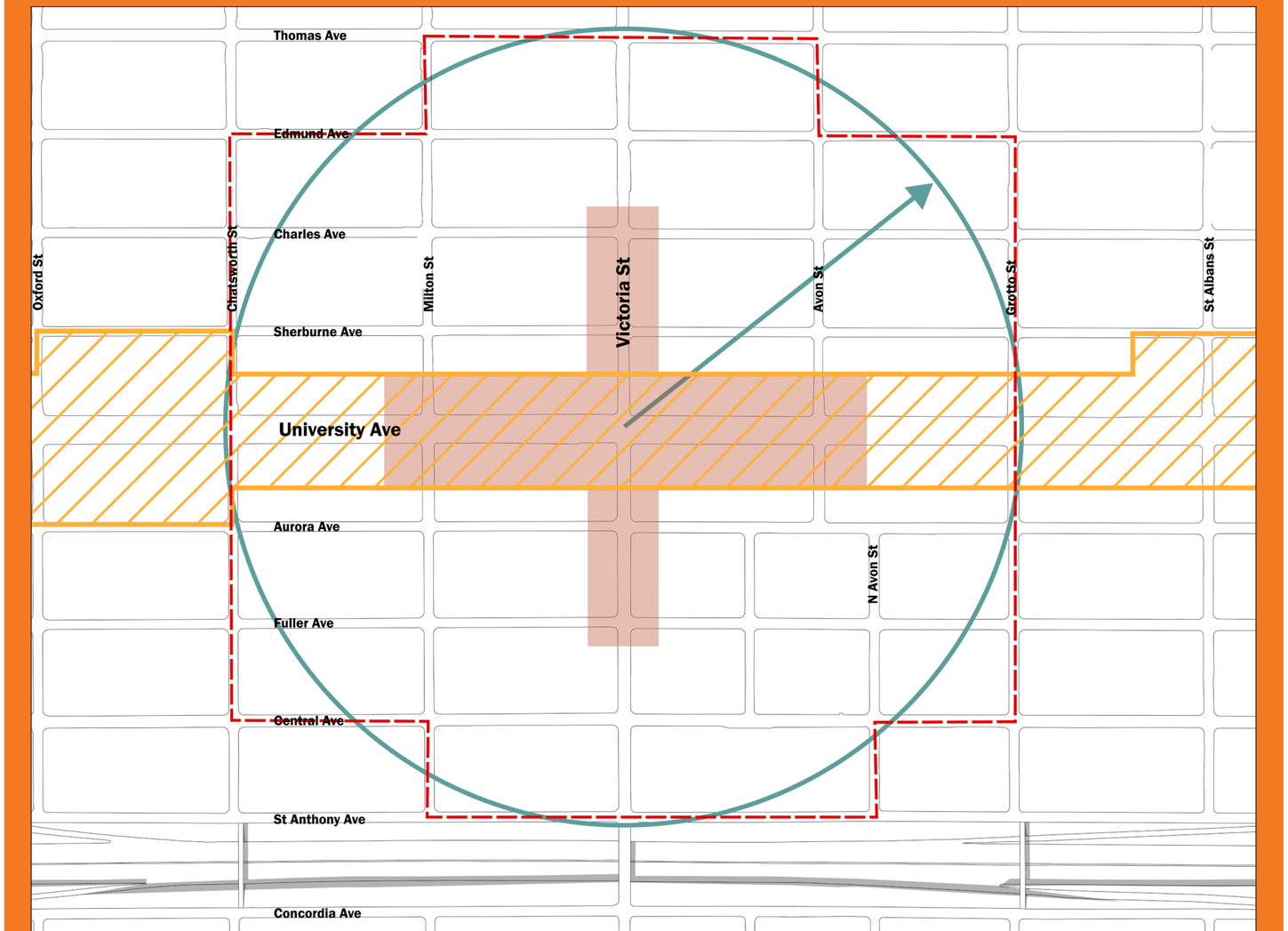


FIGURE 2.3 - The diagram above illustrates the lenses of understanding applied to the Victoria station area.

Mobility Enhancement Zone
5-minute Walking Radius (1/4 mile)
Area of Change
Station Area Planning Boundary

The Future of the Victoria Station Area

2.4 Looking Ahead – The Victoria Station Area in 2035

The Victoria station area will remain a strong, primarily residential neighborhood focused on an inviting and diverse mixed use “main street.” Incremental change over time will comprise sensitive infill housing aimed at strengthening the character of the existing residential neighborhoods and new low-rise development that will fill in the missing gaps along University. Existing residential areas will witness slow and steady improvement through targeted revitalization programs aimed at enhancing neighborhood stability and improving the quality of the residential housing stock. The function, access and appearance of alleys shall be improved through targeted rehabilitation, enhanced lighting, and consolidated commercial parking and will serve as a buffer, rather than blight, to adjacent residential uses.

The introduction of LRT will create modest demand for new residential uses near University. This will help to diversify the housing mix and provide long time residents the ability to remain in the neighborhood, downsize their living arrangements and seek more affordable housing choices as they age. Alongside, and in some cases integrated within, these new residential developments, smaller commercial spaces will provide opportunities for new neighborhood businesses to establish themselves along the Avenue.

Opportunities for new gathering places exist in conjunction with redevelopment opportunities along the Avenue. Where new spaces are provided, they will be smaller in scale and integrated into adjacent development creating the opportunity for the activities of ground-floor uses to spill out into the streetscape. One specific open-space prospect exists at the northwest corner of Victoria Street and University Avenue. There, a new plaza space adjacent to the station would provide either a place of rest or active patio space that could animate the station area and preserve a unique view north to the Saint Paul Fellowship Church.

Victoria Station Area Vision:

An inclusive, multicultural neighborhood focused around an attractive low-rise “main street” that reflects the smaller neighborhood feel of the area. New developments and reuse of buildings along the Avenue will contain an integrated mix of residential uses and commercial spaces that contribute to an active pedestrian street and provide an opportunity for neighborhood residents and local businesses to stay in place and thrive. North and south of University, existing neighborhoods will be reinforced with rehabilitated and sensitive infill housing that contributes to the scale and character of the area.

FIGURE 2.4 - The rendering illustrates one possible long term, full build out of the station area. It depicts a vision for the Victoria station area as a traditional neighborhood of stable residential areas organized around a strengthened and attractive "main street" with a mix of small businesses and residential uses. The colors represent distinct *Character Areas* that are addressed in Chapter 4 of the Station Area Plan. Rather than attempting to predict the location and distribution of anticipated long-term investment, this conceptual model illustrates the application of transit-supportive principles throughout the entire station area. The total development yield illustrated is therefore not meant to be precisely representative of the 2035 market forecast (Figure 2.2) for this station area, but demonstrates how, over the long term, new development can help to achieve the community, place-making and transit supportive opportunities that exist in the station area.

3

Public Realm - Creating Places

The following Key Moves identify priority investments for improving the public spaces and pedestrian environment in the Victoria station area in a manner consistent with the Vision of the Central Corridor Development Strategy: a beautiful urban place with pedestrian-friendly, attractive, tree-lined boulevards. These recommendations explore opportunities for streetscaping, enhanced open space connections, community gathering places and expressions of public art.

The Victoria station area suffers from a lack of public parks and community gathering spaces.

Though the neighborhood represents one of the most active communities along the corridor, the historic residential character, combined with a lack of institutional uses, has meant limited opportunities for the creation of new public spaces. The one open space that exist within the station area is associated with the playground at Maxfield Elementary School. It contains a range of elements including a small playing field, basketball court and children's playground.

Southeast of the intersection of University and Victoria, a series of detached houses stretching for two blocks along the south side of the street creates a unique landscape characteristic. Here, more generous housing setbacks and front yards create a softer village-like feel with private yards, landscaping and larger trees immediately adjacent to the street. Despite this condition, much of the current streetscape and public realm along University Avenue is inadequate. Narrow sidewalk widths together with more recent zero-lot line developments have limited the use of street trees while in other places, surface parking lots detract from the character of the area.

Throughout the station area, the demolition of vacant housing has resulted in the creation of numerous vacant lots. These vary in upkeep, ranging from maintained grass or garden environments to overgrown plots.

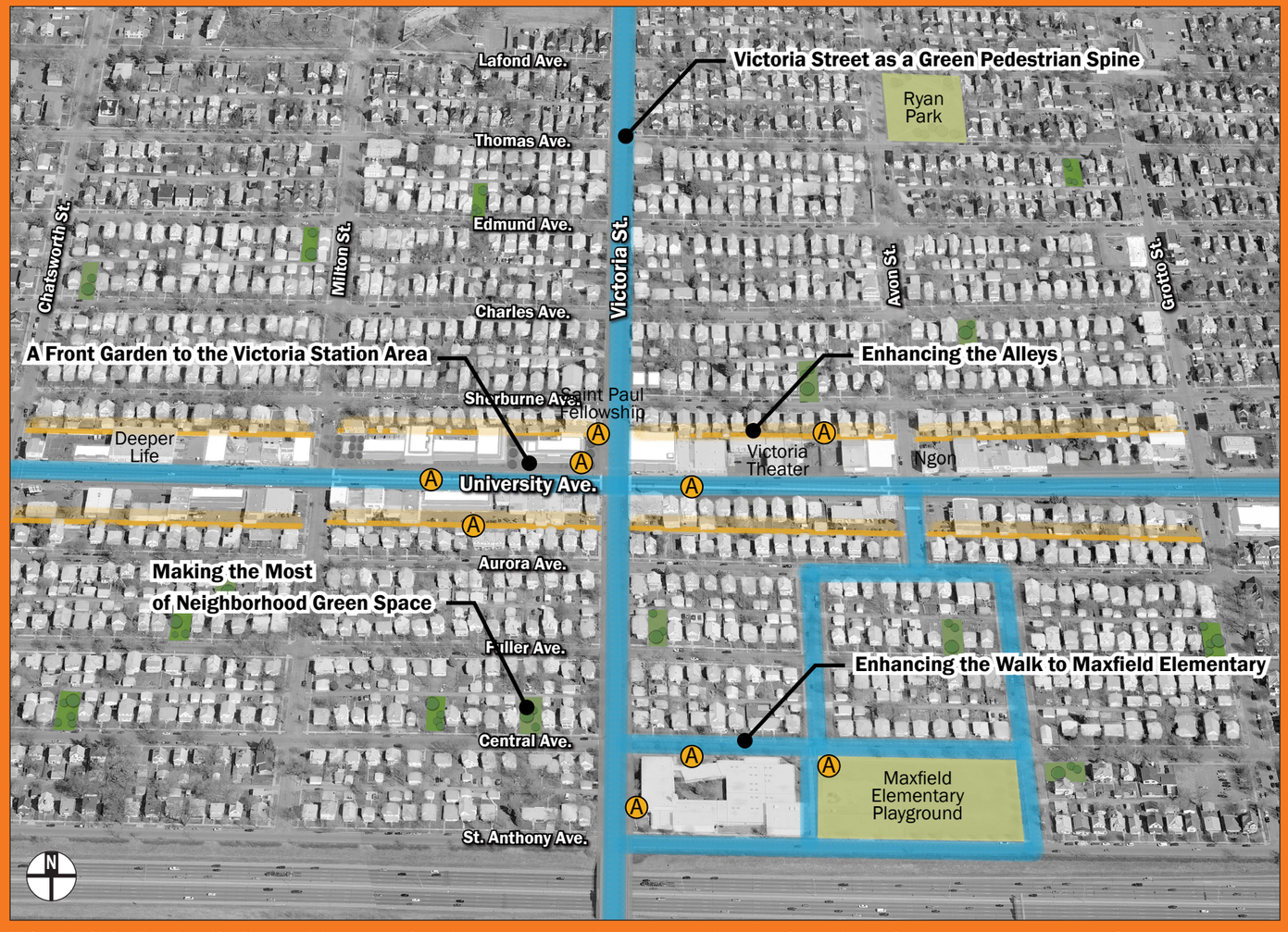


FIGURE 3.1 - The **Public Realm Plan** identified here demonstrates one possible configuration of an improved network of open spaces and pedestrian routes. It illustrates an enhanced Victoria Street connection linking Maxfield Elementary north to the station, an enhanced "green" Avenue fronted by new gardens and small open spaces, community green spaces and enhanced alleys.

3.1 Victoria's Public Realm: *Key Moves*

The following Key Moves describe a series of ideas for future investment in the public realm. While the eventual location and configuration of these spaces may be different than the images presented here, developers, City departments and other stakeholders should strive to achieve the general intent and purpose of the Key Moves described in this section. These conceptual Moves will require a range of implementation measures - from allocation of municipal capital works budgets to private investment and parkland dedication and/or acquisition - to be determined on a site-by-site basis as investment occurs.

Enhance the Front Garden Characteristics of the Victoria Station Area

FIGURE 3.2 - The use of small planted setbacks and landscaping with small gardens fronting University could build on the pattern established by the existing Avenue houses and help to reinforce the smaller neighborhood feel of the station area.

The landscaped edge created by the residential housing along University Avenue sets up an opportunity for the development of a distinct landscape characteristic adjacent to Victoria Station. The use of setbacks and landscaping along University within the station area would help to reinforce the smaller neighborhood feel of the area. New buildings here should be encouraged to provide new plazas and open spaces that can relate to uses along the Avenue and create additional gathering places for members of the community and visitors.

Through the course of the public workshop, an opportunity was identified for the creation of a new plaza at the northwest corner of Victoria and University (see page 28). A new plaza in this location could emerge as a component of a redeveloped U-Haul block. It would preserve views north from the station entrance to the Saint Paul Fellowship Church, could relate to community supportive uses in the base of the building, and provide a prime location for expressions of public art celebrating the history and character of the Rondo community.

FIGURE 3.3 - The landscaped edge established by existing house form buildings (top) creates a distinct landscape characteristic along University Avenue within the station area. Small landscaped setbacks (bottom) would help to reinforce this characteristic and provide enhanced privacy for ground floor residential uses.

Public Realm - Creating Places

Make the Most of Neighborhood Green Space

FIGURE 3.4 - The existing small underutilized green spaces represent an opportunity for community led initiatives such as gardening or neighborhood art installations.

There are a number of underutilized open or vacant spaces located throughout the community. These spaces are the result of a high number of housing foreclosures and sporadic demolitions. Though small in scale, these spaces represent a tremendous opportunity for public realm and open space initiatives that can help to bring members of the community together, and create smaller places of respite within the neighborhood, and provide opportunities for neighborhood access to locally grown produce.

Opportunities for community-led initiatives such as the creation of community garden plots, landscape treatments or locally based expressions of public art should be explored as a means of temporarily re-activating these underutilized spaces in the absence of redevelopment.

Improve the Alleys

FIGURE 3.5 - A series of targeted alley improvements would enhance access to commercial businesses and reduce concerns related to neighborhood safety.

The loss of on-street parking resulting from the introduction of LRT has placed an emphasis on the character and function of the area's alleys. With the addition of LRT, the alleys will emerge as critical components of the neighborhood's movement network, providing important access to local businesses and the potential for access to off-street parking and loading.

A targeted alley program aimed at improving the condition, maintenance and character of the alleys will help to support their expanded role and enhance the safety and comfort of users. Opportunities for enhanced paving, pedestrian lighting and the integration of stormwater management features such as permeable paving, raingardens or expandable tree grates should be explored. Additional rear business entrances could be created to facilitate movement and activate the alleys. The shared commercial/residential alleys also present opportunities for public art that can help enhance their attractiveness to members of the community.

Enhance the Walk to Maxfield Elementary

FIGURE 3.6 - A series of targeted streetscape improvements around Maxfield Elementary School are needed to make it safer and more comfortable for people to walk to and from the school.

Frequented by neighborhood children and adults, the streets around Maxfield Elementary School have an added importance within the station area. Ensuring that the streets and sidewalks around the school are safe and comfortable is part of the Safe Routes to School initiative, and will also make it easier for all members of the community to get around safely.

A targeted series of streetscape improvements should be implemented around the school to connect it north to the LRT. These improvements should be aimed at enhancing crossing points through the creation of crosswalks and curb bump-outs, and supported with enhanced pedestrian amenities such as seating, pedestrian lighting and garbage receptacles.

Establish Victoria as a Connecting Green Spine

FIGURE 3.7 - Victoria Street could serve as a continuous green connection for the larger neighborhood. The new plaza at Victoria and University could be seen as a "Green Gateway" for other green initiatives.

The station area and the surrounding neighborhood are home to a number of open spaces including the proposed Frogtown Farms, Ryan Park, and Maxfield Elementary School. An improved streetscape on Victoria in conjunction with enhancements to Ryan Park and Maxfield playground would help to make the most of these amenities, linking neighborhood parkland, community gardens and urban agriculture within the wider station area and with commercial nodes at Grand, Selby, and Minnehaha. This includes strengthening connections south between the station platforms, Maxfield Elementary and the Victoria Street bridge over I-94 and north to connect with the emerging green industry cluster at Pierce Butler. Enhancements could include amenities such as pedestrian lighting, seating, bike facilities as well as garbage and recycling receptacles.

A new public open space and public art at Victoria Street and University Avenue could serve as a "Green Gateway" to the corridor, and act as a connector for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users to green spaces north and south of the Avenue.

A New Neighborhood Park

FIGURE 3.8 - Parks and Recreation have identified several service gaps in the city, including this area between Hamline and Victoria north of University.

The draft Parks and Recreation System Plan identifies the need for a new neighborhood park between Hamline and Victoria. Within the almost four-mile stretch along the Central Corridor between Prior Avenue and Marion Street there are only four parks totaling approximately 13 acres. Central Village Park (4 acres) and Western Park (5 acres) are neighborhood parks located at the eastern end of the corridor. While both parks are in relatively good shape and provide neighborhood facilities, stronger neighborhood connections to each would be beneficial for the corridor.

In planning for this area, consideration needs also be given to the multitude of parks and recreational facilities that are located just north and south of the area. Stronger north-south connections to these facilities are needed to encourage their use.

Integrate Public Art Opportunities:

Artist: Peter Morales

Artist: Isaac Duncan

Artist: Cliff Garten

FIGURE 3.9 - Incorporating public art into a program of enhanced street furniture such as in this example of a bench (left) or bicycle rack (center) would help to contribute to pedestrian and cycling amenities while creating an interesting neighborhood environment. The use of artistic lighting (right) that could act as beacons for the neighborhood could be incorporated into the design of the station and/or distributed throughout the station area.

All future public development projects and public-realm projects within the station area should include public art, consistent with the City's adopted public art ordinance. Private property owners and developers are encouraged to recognize the potential for public art to shape and transform the experience of public places, and consider strategies to include public art and to involve artists.

Public art is:

1) The creation of site-specific objects and site-integrated work to beautify public spaces, improve their function and enhance their meaning in the community; and
2) The creation of site-specific experiences using various art forms and media, including time-based works, to enhance the sense of place.

Public art has the potential to express the distinct character of the station area as well as to emphasize the continuity and wholeness of the corridor. The following concepts and opportunities identified through the workshop process represent some of the specific possibilities for public art within the Victoria station area.

- Victoria station area's streets present significant opportunities for public art. Functional elements designed by artists such as pedestrian lighting, gateways and/or wayfinding marking special places of historic interest, seating, and signature bicycle racks would be useful and add interest.
- Victoria LRT Station and station area offer possibilities for public art that define and distinguish the station and its surrounding neighborhood by celebrating the proud character of the historic Rondo community, and the cultural diversity of the area. An example could include a mural or sculpture within the station platform depicting the history and impact of the Pullman porters.
- Sculptural lighting could be integrated into the station area platform and/or dispersed throughout the area at strategic locations. The lighting could be customized at different locations to recognize the neighborhood's cultural diversity.
- The streets around Maxfield Elementary, called out as a priority for streetscape improvements, could incorporate elements of public art to distinguish the zone around the school supporting the Safe Routes to School initiative, and to provide seating places for the neighborhood's elderly to rest. This effort builds upon Saint Paul's ongoing tradition of commissioning public art street furnishings.
- A new public gathering space at the northwest corner of Victoria and University in a recommended development for the U-Haul site could be planned with artist(s) on the professional design team and/or feature signature works of public art, sculptural lighting, or a landmark historic mural.
- The pedestrian bridges at Chatsworth and Grotto over I-94 were pointed out as places where artists' contributions could turn them into unique features and neighborhood identifiers as well as make them more inviting and safe for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially children attending the school south of I-94.
- A community-sanctioned and supported mural program engaging local youth in public art practice by mentoring with professional artists could enliven blank facades and improve the character of the neighborhood alleys.
- Temporary or seasonal public art installations by emerging artists could grace neighborhood green initiatives including urban community gardens and stormwater gardens.

Future Character Areas - Policy Directions

4

Recognizing the diverse places within each station area, a series of distinct Character Areas have been identified for the Victoria station area.

Utilizing a series of 3-D renderings derived from models developed through the course of community workshops, this section builds on the transit-supportive development types identified in the Central Corridor Development Strategy to describe historic and emerging Character Areas within the Victoria station area. Each Character Area contains a series of policy directions to guide future investment and change in built form, land use and circulation over time. These directions identify the appropriate location and scale of taller buildings, requirements for transitioning development to stable neighborhoods, a desirable mix of transit-supportive uses, and recommendations for accommodating a system of movement that balances modes of active, transit and automobile transportation.

Images in this section illustrate how the goals and objectives of the station area plan may be realized. Flexibility in the interpretation and application of these guidelines is anticipated in order to allow for a range of transit supportive development scenarios that reflect the directions and intent established in this Station Area Plan.

Future investment in the Victoria station area should build on two distinct Character Areas.

Investment in the Victoria station area should preserve the integrity and character of the stable residential neighborhoods, rehabilitating the existing commercial building stock and filling in the gaps along the Avenue with a range of mixed-use buildings and residential uses. A flexible and permissive land-use strategy follows that emphasizes connectivity, design performance, transit-supportive qualities, a broad mix of uses, active first floor building faces and shared parking solutions.

Together, these approaches will strengthen and repair the area's "main street" quality and reinforce the fabric of the area as a traditional transit-supportive community with housing, neighborhood employment and a range of local services.

While this overall direction will help guide change over the entire Victoria station area, this section describes two distinct yet related Character Areas: the Avenue and the surrounding neighborhoods connected by the alleys that act as the transition between the two areas. Each Character Area requires specific policy direction to achieve its built form and land use potential over time. The following Character Area descriptions and policy directions guide future development in the broader station area. Each of the two Character Areas contains a series of policy directions to guide future investment and change in built form, land use and circulation over time.

The final section of the chapter outlines common policy directions for parking and access that apply to each of the Character Areas.

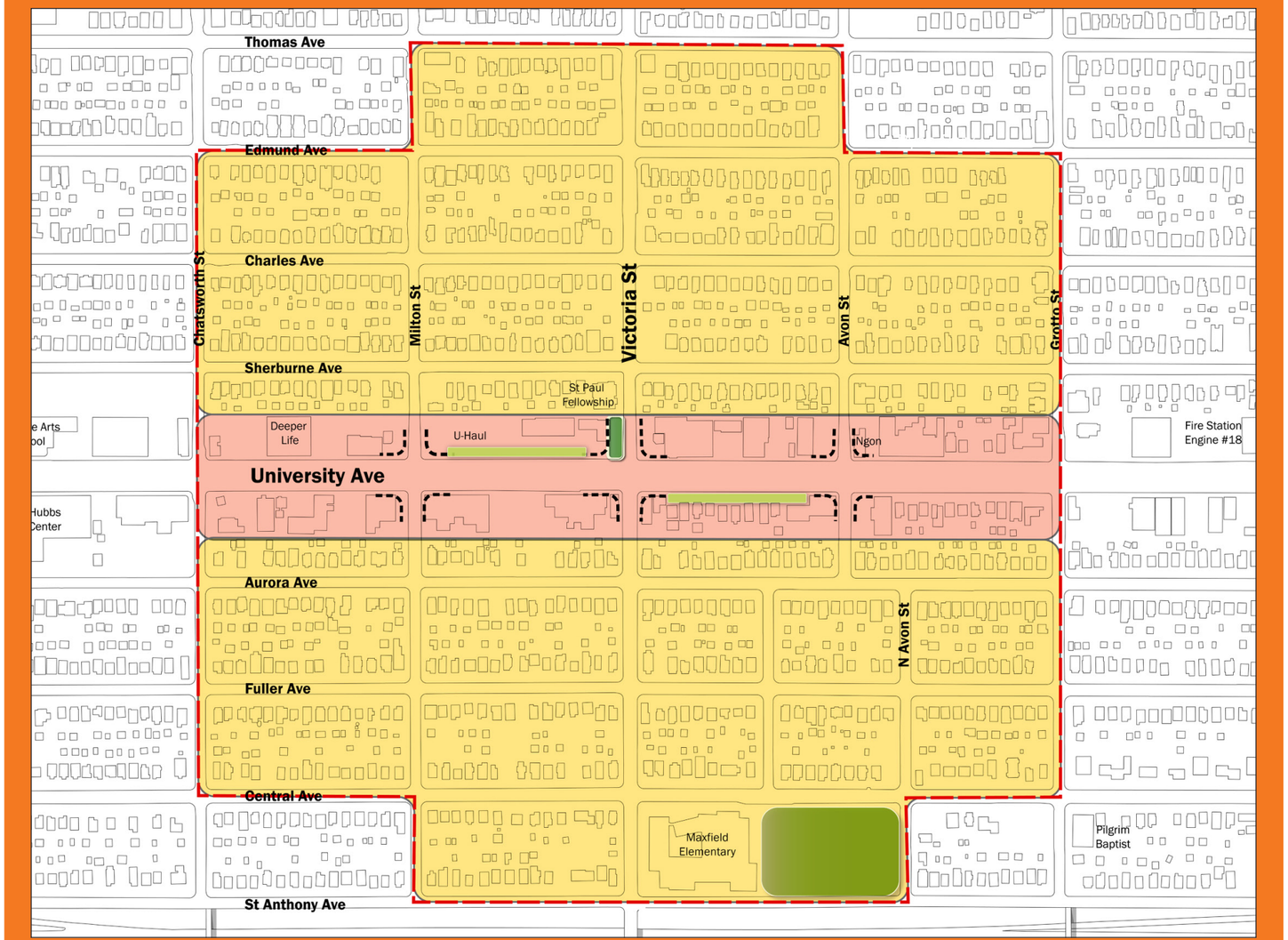


FIGURE 4.1 - The Victoria station area is comprised of two *Character Areas* each with their own potential.

- Strengthening the Avenue
- Sensitive Neighborhood Infill
- Priority Active Frontage
- Green Setbacks
- Proposed Open Space
- Existing Open Space
- Station Area Planning Boundary

Future Character Areas - Policy Directions

4.1 Strengthening the Avenue

The unique character of the Victoria station area can be reinforced with a repaired and restored University Avenue containing a mix of services, green spaces and gathering places catering to the local community.

Current uses that take up large areas for surface parking and generate little walk-in traffic, such as U-Haul, represent potential redevelopment opportunities over time. The character of University Avenue can be improved with a range of developments that help to both define the street and bring additional street life to the neighborhood.

Developments along this stretch of University Avenue could be comprised of either smaller two and three story infill developments or, where adjacent parcels can be combined, larger three and four story developments with building setbacks that transition down towards the neighborhoods.

4.1.1 Built Form

New development should fit with its surroundings

a) New development or expansion of existing buildings should be predominantly low rise in scale and generally between three and four stories in height. Infill and intensification, where appropriate, may be greater than four stories in height.

b) Buildings should transition down in height towards the alley and the neighborhoods to the rear.

c) To create a comfortable relationship with pedestrians on University Avenue, buildings should be stepped back from the street, generally around the third floor.

d) The Victoria Theater is a unique historic structure and is an important local landmark for the neighborhood. New uses and developments should seek to reuse the Theater to strengthen the connection between the station area's past and present condition.

FIGURE 4.2 - The model illustrates the potential for a strengthened neighborhood "main street" with new low-rise buildings that reinforce the small neighborhood feel of the area.

All new development should promote transparency and activity at street level

e) All first-floor units and storefronts should have at least one pedestrian entrance oriented towards the Avenue, station access points and/or key gathering places.

f) Commercial or retail uses located at grade should help to animate the street by incorporating extensive use of transparent glazing that allows activity within to be seen from the street.

g) New development adjacent to the Avenue should be set back a minimum of 4 feet to accommodate a 14-foot sidewalk/pedestrian zone. An additional 6 feet should be permitted on sites adjacent to the station to encourage active ground floor uses such as sidewalk cafes.

Explore the potential for community green space along the Avenue

h) New developments along the Avenue should explore the potential for the placement of community green space immediately adjacent to the street. This could be achieved through slight variations in the setback of new development, or the provision of small courtyard spaces that could be fronted on to by development.

4.1.2 Land Use & Development Pattern

The neighborhood "main street" should have many uses

a) A greater mix of uses should be encouraged along the edges of the Avenue where they afford an easy connection to public transit, and benefit from the visibility and profile of being located on a major transportation corridor.

Encourage flexible live-work spaces and affordable incubator spaces

b Ground-floor residential units should be designed as adaptive, grade-related live-work units with taller floor to ceiling heights that can evolve over time to accommodate a wide range of uses: studios, professional offices, community services, etc.

c) The development of smaller commercial spaces that share access to common amenities such as meeting spaces can help to reduce costs for local start-up businesses that want to get a foothold on the Avenue.

Development must contribute to the Character of the area

d) Buildings should be designed to front adjacent streets and open spaces.

e) Where there is insufficient public right-of-way for new street tree planting or public realm amenities, new buildings should be set back from property lines to establish an outdoor area for seating, display space, landscaping or public art as appropriate. A minimum pedestrian promenade dimension of 14 feet would provide for street trees, sidewalk and outdoor seating.

f) Developments within the area defined as Priority Active Frontage (Figure 5.3) should provide entrances and spaces for active uses at grade to support greater levels of activity adjacent to the LRT.

g) Where parking lots create gaps in the street frontage they should be adequately landscaped along the street.

Integrate the Traction Power Sub-Station (TPSS) into the streetscape at Milton and University

h) New developments adjacent to the proposed TPSS should explore opportunities for the use of generous landscaping and planting patterns that can be extended west across the front and sides of the Sub-Station site integrating it into the development.

i) The TPSS site should be generously landscaped with trees and shrubbery on all sides in order to assist in shielding it from adjacent uses. A 14-foot set back from the current ROW would enable the creation of a 14 foot sidewalk and a 10 foot planted area along University.

4.1.3 Circulation, Parking & Access Infrastructure

Preserve and enhance the Alleys

a) Alleys in the station area should be preserved as public right-of-way in order to maintain access for businesses and development along University Avenue and to increase automobile and pedestrian circulation.

b) A targeted program of clean-up, maintenance and alley enhancements should explore opportunities for new paving, enhanced lighting, public art and the integration of stormwater management features such as permeable paving and rain-gardens. Alleys shared between commercial and residential uses should incorporate elements to buffer commercial traffic and noise.

Improve the Quality of Existing Parking

c) Re-configure parking lots to maximize supply within current constraints. The redesign of striping and access points to enable shared parking and circulation, and the addition of pedestrian amenities and lighting can help to enhance conditions for pedestrians and increase the utilization of commercial lots. In the Victoria station area, the furniture store parking lot on the southeast corner of University and Avon has potential to share parking with the many smaller office and high turnover businesses in this area.

d) Reduce or eliminate commercial parking requirements for development along University. This strategy will reduce development costs, increase affordability, support transit ridership with more compact development and create new possibilities for flexible, small scale live-work spaces.

e) Close curb cuts where possible, and discourage new curb cuts. Driveways (also called curb cuts) create a discontinuous frontage along the streetscape, resulting in the loss of parking. Businesses often have multiple access points, some of which could be voluntarily closed to gain additional on-street spaces.

f) Install parking meters on all remaining spaces on University Avenue.

g) Install time-limited signage on Milton and Avon to preserve spaces for commercial users.

h) Work with business and property owners to substitute street parking spaces for deliveries, loading and bike parking where needed.

i) In the short-term, parking for office uses south of the Avenue between Victoria and Grotto can be improved through the establishment of shared perpendicular parking off the alley. A continuous "parking band" across the backs of the existing houses would help to organize parking conditions and increase space for residents and their guests.

j) Provide ADA-accessible pedestrian pathways from rear parking to University Avenue, following the example of the new Aurora Saint Anthony Development at 774 University Avenue.

Create a new mixed use development at Victoria

During the Victoria station area workshop, the potential for redevelopment of the U-Haul site was explored. Participants felt that the site represented a unique opportunity along the corridor for the development of a mixed use housing and commercial development that could provide affordable commercial and business incubator space for area entrepreneurs as well as a range of rental and home ownership options that could meet the needs of the local community.

In order to maintain the existing neighborhood character, it was felt that the site would be appropriate for a low-rise development between 3 and 4 stories in height. Step-backs around the third floor on University and towards the north would help to reduce the scale of the buildings along the street and provide a transition to the lower density housing along Sherburne. By setting the building back from the street a new development could permit enhanced landscaping, small plaza spaces and/or gathering spaces adjacent to the Avenue. A plaza at the northwest corner of Victoria and University would preserve sight lines north to the Saint Paul Fellowship Church and could relate to community supportive uses in the base of the building.

FIGURE 4.3 - During the Victoria station area workshop, the potential for the redevelopment of the U-Haul Site into a mixed-use housing and commercial development was explored. Variations in the building setback and the creation of small plaza spaces were identified as opportunities to “green” University, create community gathering spaces and reinforce the neighborhood feel of the station area.

FIGURE 4.4 - The integration of small plaza spaces such as the example above would help to create more store frontage for ground floor tenants, establish neighborhood gathering places for local residents and visitors to the area and help to strengthen connections to parking at the rear of the buildings.

FIGURE 4.5 Small building setbacks along the Avenue would provide additional privacy and private amenity space for ground floor residents and reinforce the green neighborhood feel of the station area (top). In retail areas (bottom), these setbacks should incorporate a greater use of enhanced sidewalk areas to support higher levels of pedestrian activity and enable ground floor uses to spill out onto the street.

4.2 Sensitive Neighborhood Infill

The neighborhoods that surround the Victoria Station should be reinforced through reinvestment and sensitive infill.

New buildings should respect and fit in with the development pattern, scale and height of adjacent properties. This may include rehabilitation of existing single-family homes, the construction of new single-family and multiple-family townhome dwellings, and the construction of new accessory units. Vacant lots could be re-purposed as temporary community gardens or green spaces that can enhance the image and character of the area.

FIGURE 4.6 - The rendering illustrates the potential for sensitive neighborhood infill development that strengthens the character and quality of the existing neighborhoods with new single family, duplex and townhouse development.

4.2.1 Built Form

Design for sensitive infill:

a) All development should be designed to preserve light, views, and privacy in single family neighborhoods.

b) To repair the residential character of the existing low-rise neighborhoods, buildings should be no greater than 3 residential stories in height and adopt similar setback and massing characteristics to the existing residential development in the area.

c) Redevelopment or new development on either side of Victoria Street should be oriented to actively address all adjacent public streets with doorways and generously proportioned windows that can enable more “eyes on the street.”

4.2.2 Land Use & Development Pattern

Encourage sccessory units in areas of stability:

a) Accessory units and multi-unit dwellings should be encouraged as a means of simultaneously increasing density and housing options within the station area. These renovations represent excellent opportunities to repair and strengthen residential properties and provide opportunities for additional sources of revenue for families on a fixed income.

Re-purpose underutilized vacant open space:

b) The sale of private vacant lots to adjacent residential land owners for private yard space should be encouraged.

c) Publicly owned, vacant open space should be re-purposed either through the sale of the lands to adjacent owners for private yard space, redevelopment as new infill housing or as community gardens/public open spaces until other purposes can be found.

4.2.3 Circulation, Parking & Access

Ensure that parking does not detract from the character of the neighborhoods:

a) Off-street parking should not be permitted between the primary frontage of any dwelling and the public sidewalk.

Enhance the alleys:

b) There should be a focus on beautification, greening, and safety in residential alleys. Residents should be encouraged to install lighting on the alley and to remove blight and overgrowth from the area adjacent to their properties. Residential stormwater management techniques can help limit flooding and pooling, which can erode and damage alleys over time.

FIGURE 4.7 - Small infill projects such as the single family example being constructed at Charles Avenue and Milton Street (above) or the triplex on Aurora Street (below) can help to fill small gaps in the street at a scale that is complimentary to the surrounding neighborhood.

4.3 Managed Parking Strategies

Accommodating parking for businesses and residents will be an important challenge as the Victoria station area evolves.

The loss of on-street parking as a result of the addition of LRT will place increased emphasis on existing parking resources, and makes exploration of parking solutions critical in each station area. While there has been a push for the creation of new surface parking lots to the rear of existing University Avenue stores and businesses, such lots should not cross the alley - new surface lots that front Aurora and Sherburne would have the detrimental effect of eroding residential streets and could result in neighborhood instability.

In the future, a strategy of shared parking will need to focus on the provision of more discrete neighborhood lots, maximizing the effectiveness of the alley system and managing on street parking north and south of the Avenue.

The following policies provide a range of parking strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of parking solutions within the Victoria station area.

a) Encourage better utilization and design of existing parking lots, and share the use and cost of parking. Discourage the establishment of large new single-use surface parking lots on University Avenue, and the expansion of existing lots within the station area.

b) Discourage new surface parking fronting on University, which detracts from the vitality and pedestrian-friendly “main street” character of the Avenue.

c) Where alternative parking solutions are not available surface parking fronting onto University Avenue should be limited to a maximum of 60 feet in width (for the provision of two parking aisles and one drive aisle) and utilize landscape buffers along the Avenue to minimize the visual impact on the pedestrian environment.

d) Larger redevelopment sites should create or utilize shared, structured or below-grade parking.

e) Maximize side-street parking where possible. Minimize curb cuts on north-south streets and along the Avenue by consolidating driveways. The use of flexible stall spacing, parking meters, and time-limited signage on side streets will help to encourage short trips and enable frequent vehicle turnover. Work with businesses and property owners to substitute space for deliveries and loading, and bike parking, where needed.

f) Deliveries or loading that currently take place in the parking lane should be coordinated to happen during off-peak hours. In addition to rear and side street loading, some deliveries may need to occur in the curb lane of traffic, as some businesses have only street access.

g) Manage neighborhood parking to to discourage all-day commuter parking.

h) Evaluate the current residential permit parking system to gauge its effectiveness, and explore allowing employees of businesses to park in the permit district in order to preserve limited nearby spaces for customers.

i) Encourage greater use of mass transit, ridesharing, biking, and walking, reducing the demand for single-occupancy automobile parking. Require a Travel Demand Management plan as a part of the site plan review process for larger developments, or for employers using City financial assistance.

j) Once LRT becomes operational, explore the potential for off-peak, on-street parking along University Avenue.

k) Use parking enforcement technology to enforce parking regulations including time limits at parking meters, area-wide time limits, and permit restrictions.

l) Explore partnerships to create, manage, and maintain shared parking lots.

m) Encourage the centralization of refuse and recycling between businesses. If clusters of businesses could access common refuse and recycling facilities it would result in fewer dumpsters freeing up valuable space for additional parking.

n) Create a Parking Improvement District to fund alley enhancements and shared off street parking solutions, streetscape improvements, snow removal and the cost of operating a shared parking facility.

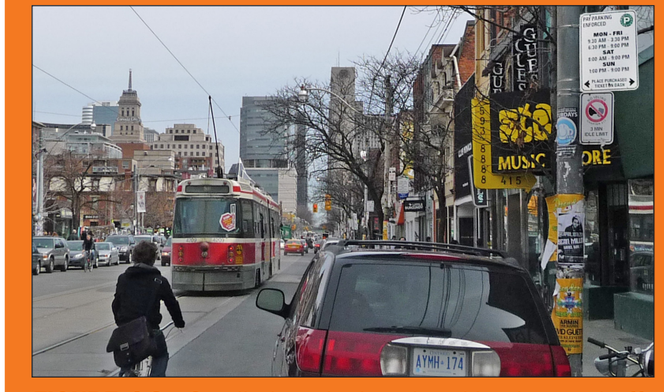


FIGURE 4.8 - Small shared, signed parking lots and off-peak, street parking represent two opportunities to enhance parking provision along the avenue.

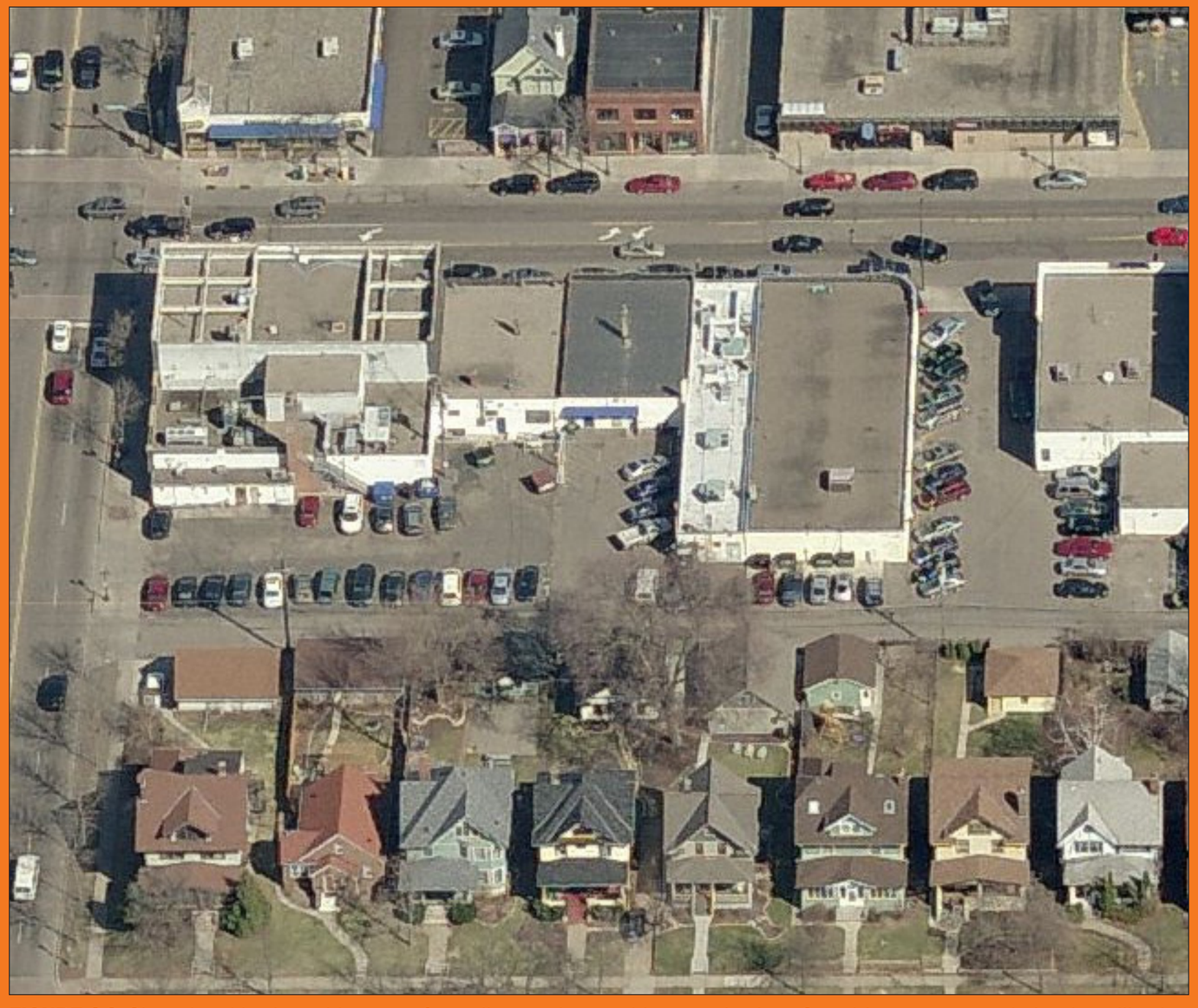
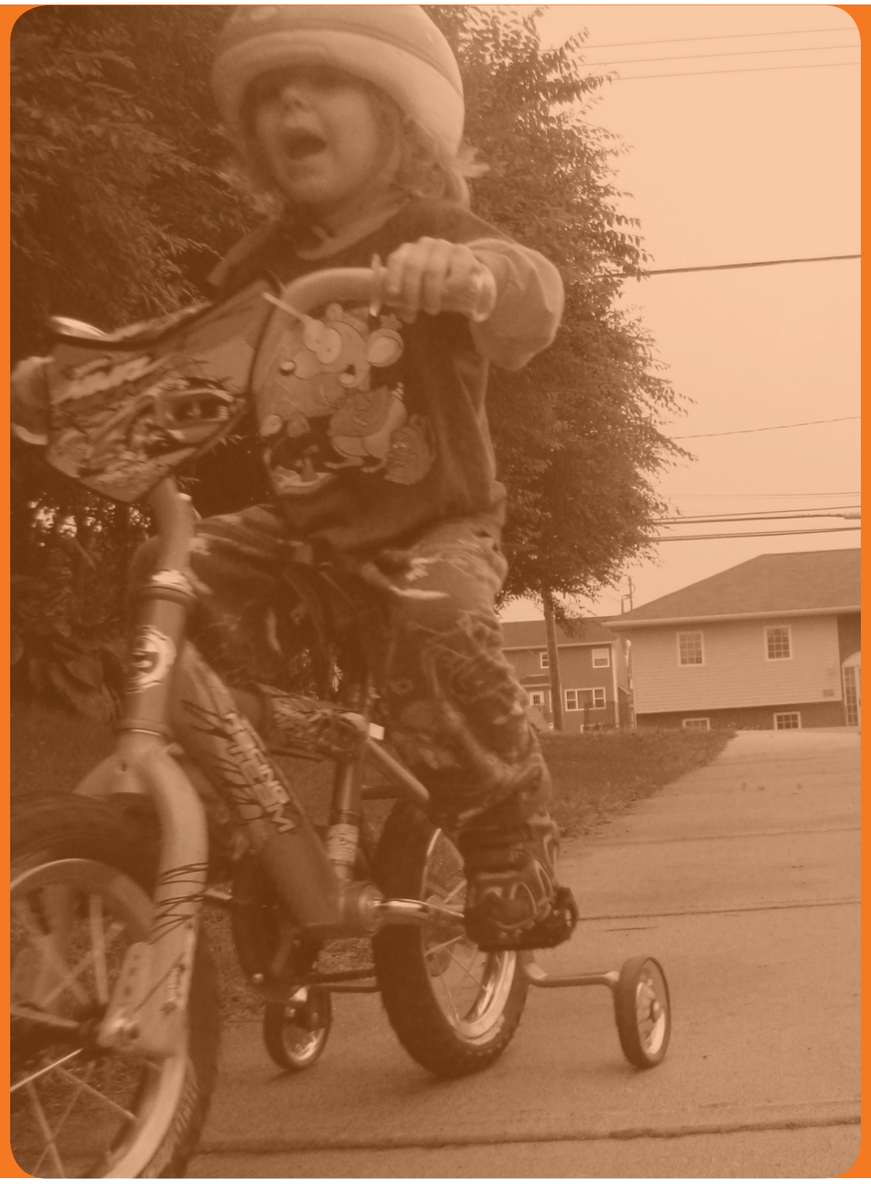


FIGURE 4.9- Shared parking lots with access from alleys such as at this example along Grand Avenue can maximize the utilization of limited amounts of parking along the Avenue.



Movement - Balancing Modes

5

This chapter contains strategies for improving options to move to, from and within the Victoria station area. These include Connections to improve the linkages, safety, efficiency and quality of pedestrian and cyclist routes, and The Mobility Enhancement Area, to provide safe and efficient pedestrian access to the Victoria LRT platforms and destinations along University Avenue.

Movement - Connecting the Corridor

The intersection of University and Victoria Street is predominantly traversed by local residents, business owners and their customers.

Given the intact block structure and limited opportunities for significant redevelopment, many of the local street patterns within the Victoria station area will not be greatly impacted by LRT. In order to maximize the positive impacts of LRT on movement, investment should focus on enhancing the experience of moving people between the LRT station, local residences and businesses, and on enhancing existing east-west and north-south connections linking the Victoria station area to the broader mobility network.

Recommendations for improving and expanding mobility options are structured into two key themes:

The first theme is **Connections**, which describes a strengthened pattern of movement options for pedestrians, transit riders and cyclists to reach destinations within the Victoria station area, both to the Central Corridor's many neighborhoods and the broader region.

The second theme is the **Mobility Enhancement Area**, which more closely examines the future impact of LRT on movement patterns around the proposed platform location and provides recommendations for ensuring a safe, efficient and pleasant pedestrian experience for area residents, workers and visitors alike.

5.1 Connections

Improving movement options for pedestrians, transit riders and cyclists wanting to reach the Victoria station area from adjacent neighborhoods and the broader city is critical to maximizing the benefits of the investment in LRT. The Connections diagram (Figure 5.1) identifies existing and proposed key routes to and within the Victoria station area, and illustrates recommendations for improving connectivity, safety, efficiency and quality of these routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

Improve Bike Connections To and From the Station Area

The Bike Walk Central Corridor Action Plan (adopted May, 2010) identifies a range of opportunities for enhancing cycling connections within the station area. Chatsworth and Grotto afford exclusive pedestrian and bicycle crossings over I-94 within the station area. Both crossings would benefit from a significant rehabilitation or replacement project that includes pedestrian-scaled lighting and the addition of landscaping that does not obscure views to and from the bridge.

Two primary east-west bicycle routes, north and south of University Avenue, have been identified as candidates for the creation of bicycle boulevards. North of the Avenue, Charles Avenue is the preferred route because of its calm traffic pattern and convenient but safe distance from the Avenue.

South of the Avenue, Fuller is the preferred route. It would extend west to the Midway Marketplace and east to the Dale station area where it will divert onto Aurora Avenue. Where these routes meet with Victoria Avenue, non-signalized bike/pedestrian crossing treatments should be provided to calm traffic, restrict vehicular movement and promote greater levels of pedestrian safety.

Improve Victoria Street

This busy multi-modal route is an important north-south connector between neighborhoods on either side of the station area. As such, it should undergo a beautification treatment designed to accommodate and encourage pedestrian activity. Components of this program should include enhanced lighting, new street trees, on-street parking, curb bump-outs where feasible, and improved pedestrian crossings adjacent to Maxfield Elementary School.

Preserve and Enhance the Alleys

The alley system parallel to University Avenue provides not only an interface between residential and commercial uses but an important point of access for businesses who may be losing on-street parking and loading as a result of the addition of LRT. Enhancing these important connections through repaving, improved signage and lighting would help to facilitate access to local businesses and residents and increase welcome levels of activity. This should be supported through the consolidation of parking as opportunities arise.

Future Bus Service

The Route 16 serves a distinct market from the proposed LRT service. Route 16 serves a more local market than LRT, and the 16 is particularly important to those who cannot easily walk long distances – the young and old, persons with disabilities, those who are transporting groceries and other goods, and those who are transit dependent. University Avenue has high midday and weekend ridership, rather than the traditional peak of morning and afternoon commuter rush hours found elsewhere. Route 16 service during the midday, evenings and weekends should be retained to meet this demand.

In the Victoria Station, a new bus, the Route 60, has been proposed. The 60 would follow a circulator pattern, with service along University Avenue, Victoria, St. Clair, and Hamline. This route would connect high-density housing bounded by this area, as well as provide transfer points to three LRT stations and other bus service in the corridor.

Improve the Freeway Crossings

Victoria Street is a strong north-south connection linking the Victoria station area south to the Selby neighborhood over I-94. It currently suffers from narrow sidewalks with no separation from adjacent traffic. Wider sidewalks on either side of the bridge and the incorporation of public art and lighting would improve conditions for pedestrians crossing the highway.

Establish a Network of Complete Streets

The State of Minnesota has recently passed legislation in support of the establishment of complete streets policies. The planning and design of new streets and the refurbishment of existing streets within the station area should identify and balance the safety and accessibility needs of all users including motorists, pedestrians, transit users and vehicles, and bicyclists.

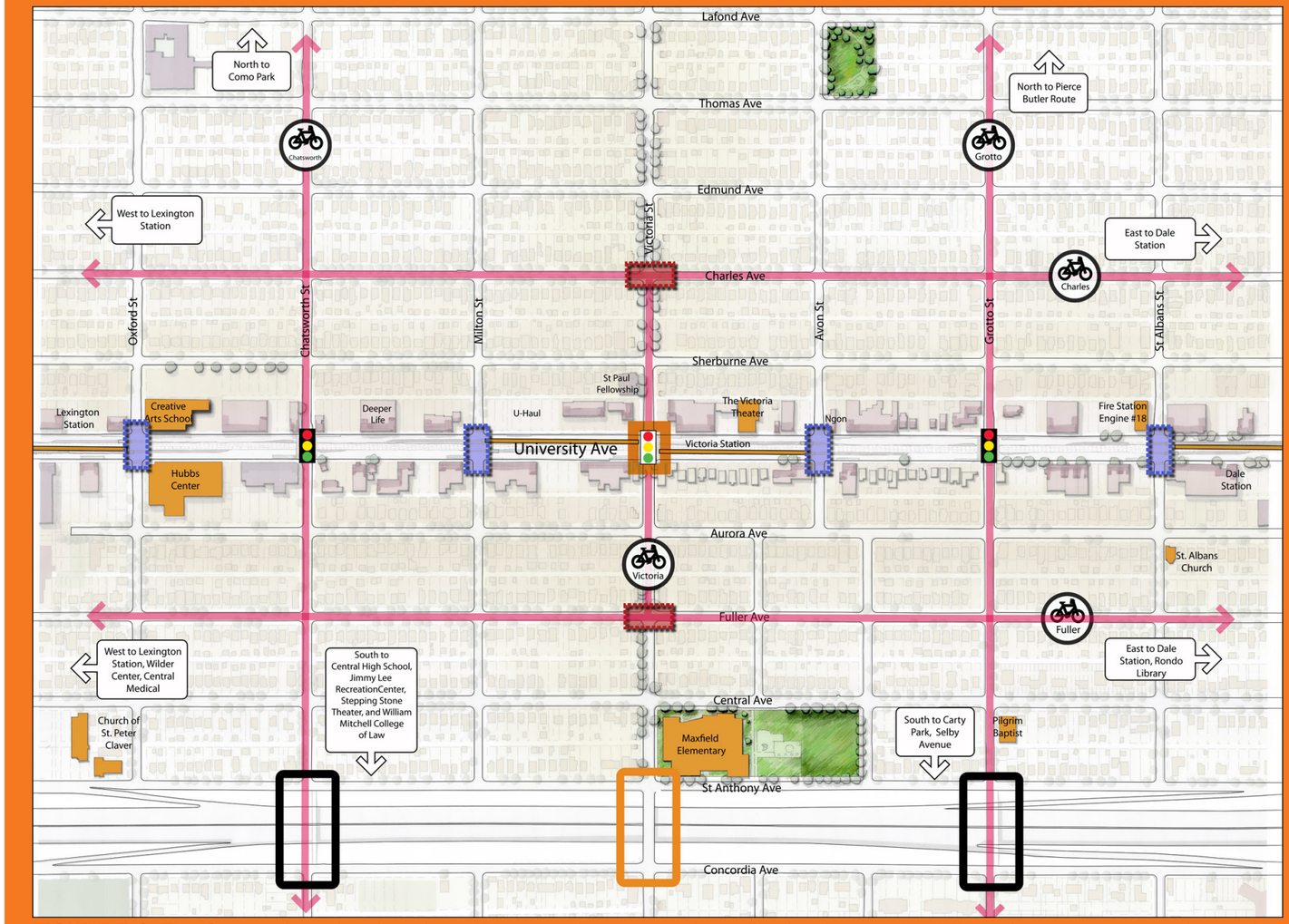


FIGURE 5.1 -The *Connections* drawing above illustrates key connections, destinations and public realm moves across the station area.

5.2 The Mobility Enhancement Area

The Mobility Enhancement Area diagram (Figure 5.2) illustrates the proposed movement patterns within the Victoria station area.

Mobility Enhancement Area

An opportunity for enhanced mobility around the Victoria Station occurs in two key areas. North and south of University, an opportunity exists to rebalance Victoria in favor of pedestrians and support the proposed east/west cycling routes along Fuller and Charles.

Along the Avenue itself, an enhanced palette of streetscape amenities can be used to support higher levels of pedestrian activity.

Special strategies for the Victoria Station Mobility Enhancement Area include:

- Requiring streetscape improvements with any redevelopment of vacant or underutilized sites in the station area. These could include street trees, and enhanced landscaped boulevards on University Avenue and reduced curb radii, bump-outs, narrower driveways and special paving patterns in the broader station area;
- Providing enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crossings across Victoria at both Charles Avenue and Fuller Avenue to create a safe and convenient east/west connection and contribute to the proposed bicycle boulevard routes that have been identified there;
- Developing, in conjunction with local artists, a unique streetscape standard of pedestrian lighting, landscaping, bicycle racks, seating, wayfinding, and garbage and recycling receptacles. This standard should reinforce the distinct neighborhood approach to development and community open space and reinforce the clean and green image of the station area.

The Station Transfer Zone

The Station Transfer Zone (identified in Figure 5.2) stretches from Milton Street in the west to Avon Street in the east and encompasses a large section of the Avenue Character Area, including a potential open space associated with the long-term redevelopment of the U-Haul site.

An opportunity exists to improve the character of the Avenue by expanding sidewalks and incorporating pedestrian amenities that will support the emergence of a healthy “main street” and positive transit experience.

Special strategies for the Victoria Station Transfer Zone include:

- Fully integrating the treatment of the LRT platform with any potential future green space;
- Incorporating special signage and wayfinding which will help to direct visitors to local businesses;
- Incorporating expressions of public art that help to define and distinguish the station and the community;
- Providing pedestrian amenities such as pedestrian-oriented lighting, seating, as well as garbage and recycling receptacles; and
- Providing bicycle racks and lockers for cyclists, which should be placed along the streets within the station transfer zone as space permits.

The Designated Crossings

Within the Victoria Station Mobility Enhancement Area there are a number of designated crossings. The primary crossing to the platforms is located at the intersection of Victoria Street and University Avenue. Two non-signalized crossings are located along University at Milton Street and Avon Street. These will be linked directly to the far sides of the station platform to provide additional pedestrian access to the station and space for bicycle parking.

Along Victoria Avenue there are two east/west bike/pedestrian crossings at Charles and Fuller. These are important crossings that will extend the corridor-wide east/west bicycle routes east to the Lexington Area and west towards Dale and the Rondo Library.

For more detailed descriptions of the Mobility Enhancement Area, Station Transfer Zone and Designated Crossings proposed for the Central Corridor, please refer to Chapter 1 of the full set of Station Area Plans.

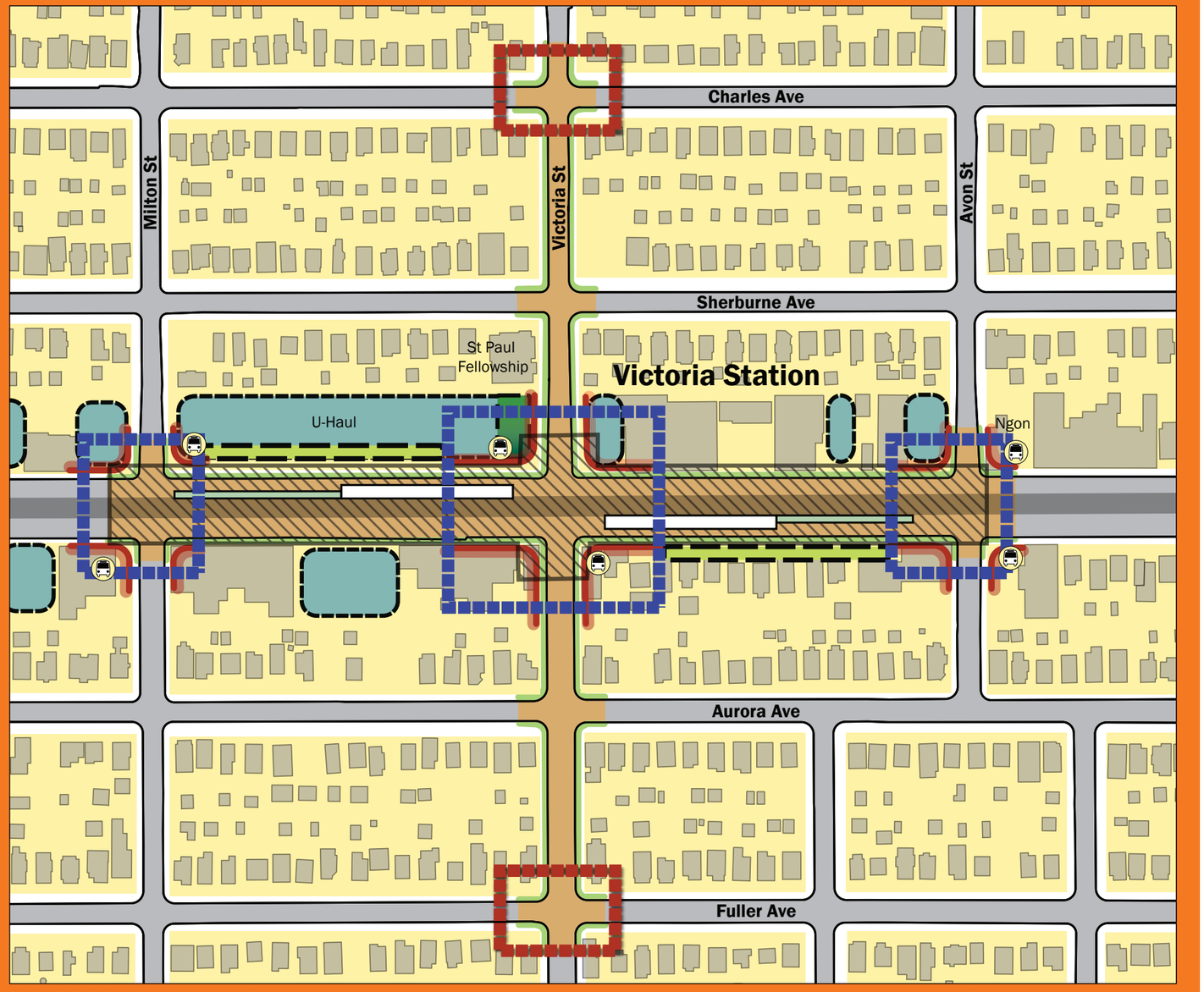


FIGURE 5.2 - The Mobility Enhancement Area illustrates the area around the station where a higher level of pedestrian activity can be anticipated.

- LRT Platform
- LRT Platform Extension
- Mobility Enhancement Area
- Station Transfer Zone
- Bus Stop
- Priority Active Frontage
- Green Setbacks
- Open Space Candidate Site
- Sites with Future Development Potential
- Station Access Point and University Avenue Crossing
- East - West Bike / Pedestrian Crossing

Getting There

6

Achieving the long-term objectives set out in this document for the Victoria station area will require the sustained collaboration of many local partners, investors and stakeholders and will occur over time. The following recommendations provide direction on key initiatives that are core to the success of the future Victoria station area.

Getting There

In addition to the broader Community-Building Strategies described in the CCDS, and the Station Area Implementation Strategies set out in the Moving Forward Chapter in this series of Station Area Plan documents, the following describes place-specific strategies for the Victoria station area.

Using this Station Area Plan

The development concepts illustrated in this Plan, including the location of new open spaces, represent possible development scenarios. Their purpose is to illustrate how the principles and objectives for new development, as contained within the CCDS and this Station Area Plan, could be realized over time. They are not intended to be prescriptive for evaluating future development proposals, but are examples of how the vision, goals, and objectives of this plan can be realized.

Until such time as the City is able to secure necessary resources, either through public investment or through negotiation with private developers for desired new open spaces or other public infrastructure, private property may be used for any legal use permitted under the current zoning classification, provided that the proposed use meets all applicable conditions and/or standards.

Once adopted as a component of the City of Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan, City staff intend to pursue mechanisms, programs and partnerships that will collectively assist in realizing the vision and objectives created for each station area. The sum of the CCDS's 21 Community-Building Strategies (Section 4.3); the Getting There recommendations from individual Station Area Plans (Section 6.0); and the Station Area Plan Moving Forward Chapter, contain a range of strategies, partnerships and recommendations for assisting in realizing the strategic place-making and economic development potential of this station area.

Redevelopment of the U-Haul Site

The City should work with the owner of the U-Haul site to develop an appropriate plan for its future redevelopment. Redevelopment of this site should be in accordance with the long-term vision of this document, and include public realm improvements like a new community park space/ transit plaza.

Ensuring Inclusive Communities

The greatest strength of this community is its diversity. The potential for gentrification and displacement of low-income individuals, families, and small businesses from the Corridor as property values rise is a primary concern of area residents and stakeholders, as it would erode the unique qualities that distinguish the area's past, present and future. Members of this community who wish to stay in this area and contribute to and benefit from its revitalization must therefore have the option to do so.

Chapter 4 of the CCDS contains a series of strategies and recommendations for realizing a complete and inclusive housing and business community. These include supply-side regulatory and financial incentives to encourage the construction of affordable housing units; options for assisting individuals and families to purchase their own home; strategies to support small businesses, both through the short-term construction of LRT, and for the long-term benefits afforded by this investment; and options for securing community benefits as new development occurs throughout the corridor. In addition, some combination of Tax Increment Financing, the STAR Program, a regional transit-oriented development "bank," or Invest Saint Paul, each described in the Moving Forward Chapter, may assist in creating more inclusive and complete communities.

Parking Solutions

The City of Saint Paul began the Neighborhood Commercial Parking Pilot Program (NCPP) in 2009 to help mitigate the proposed loss of on-street parking. In 2010, the NCPP will fund a limited number of projects that improve parking management, increase the amount and utilization of commercial parking, and/or encourage business and property owners to equitably share the use and costs of off-street parking. The forgivable loan program encourages short-term, low-cost solutions that will help businesses through the construction and transitional years until light rail is operational.

Programming Traffic Lanes on University Avenue

As LRT ridership matures, the City should reevaluate the number of traffic lanes on University Avenue and explore a range of enhanced bicycle accommodation options, as well as the reintroduction of on-street parking and deliveries to better serve businesses and to help buffer pedestrian activity from automobile traffic.

Complete Streets

The City of Saint Paul should work with local stakeholders to develop new criteria for assessing level of service on all modes of transportation including pedestrians, cyclists, transit and private vehicles. The benefits and trade-offs of different street design strategies should then be identified in relation to the impacts on various users so that decisions can be made with an understanding of the full service impacts. The Bike Walk Central Corridor Action Plan has identified a range of design approaches for cyclists and pedestrians throughout the corridor.

A Central Corridor Systems Plan

The City should study and propose strategies for operation and maintenance of major city systems within the Central Corridor, including snow plowing and/or removal, alley circulation and maintenance, deliveries and loading, safety and security, refuse and recycling, medians and streetscape landscaping, street furniture, right-of-way acquisition, stormwater management, and other city systems that will be impacted. The study should address strategies both for the construction period and for more long-term permanent solutions.

Small Business Support

The City of Saint Paul is helping to maintain active small businesses throughout the construction period with programs such as Ready for Rail. The City should also seek to attract new small businesses who may be drawn to the accessibility and profile afforded by LRT. These efforts could include marketing support including: regular mail-outs to customer bases, identifying access disruptions and alternate routes, promotion of retail sales and the coordination of community events.

Space to help grow and foster new businesses could be generated through a municipally led program targeting the rehabilitation of existing, underutilized buildings aimed at re-purposing these structures as shared incubator and business start-up spaces.

Renovation Programs to Improve Energy Efficiency

Improving the energy efficiency of housing is an important step towards conserving local energy resources and maintaining housing affordability for residents. A municipally led program encouraging the retrofit of existing houses along the corridor could help to contribute to the stabilization of existing neighborhoods and support strategies aimed at preventing neighborhood displacement.

Involving local partners

Meeting the long-term objectives of the Victoria Station Area Plan will require coordination with many local partners.

District 7 Planning Council and Summit-University Planning Council

District Councils will review development applications coming forward, promote and work towards quality development projects and meet with residents, institutions, business and property owners to discuss and document evolving community concerns and objectives for new development.

Greater Frogtown CDC, Aurora Saint Anthony CDC, Selby Area CDC, Model Cities, and University UNITED

Local CDC's will set high standards for redevelopment in the community, strengthen stable neighborhoods through rehabilitation and infill and through development of larger parcels as they become available.

Midway Chamber of Commerce, University Avenue Business Association and other business groups

These business groups will ensure the interests of area businesses and property owners are adequately represented through comprehensive policy framework reviews.

Central Corridor Funders Collaborative

The Funders Collaborative will assist in securing resources for community improvement projects.

Frogtown Gardens

Frogtown Gardens can assist in the utilization of vacant/underutilized green space throughout the community through the creation of community gardens and urban agriculture demonstration projects.

Asian Economic Development Association (AEDA)

AEDA will assist in retaining, promoting and strengthening businesses along University Avenue.

The Saint Paul Public School Board

The City of Saint Paul will prioritize streetscape improvements around Jackson elementary with input from the School Board.

The Central Corridor Design Center

The Central Corridor Design Center will be a champion and advocate for the principles and vision of the Central Corridor Development Strategy as they guide public and private investment in the corridor. The CCDC will be involved in design review and guidance of the Central Corridor LRT and other public realm improvements; design development conversations with large and small property owners; technical assistance to small businesses to redesign their facilities to take advantage of the LRT and proposed public improvements; providing leadership in energy and environmental design; and education and training of City staff, consultants, developers and property owners in maximizing transit-oriented design opportunities along the Corridor and in the neighborhood.

Public Art Saint Paul

Public Art Saint Paul will advocate and support new and existing public art in the station areas, as well as along the Corridor with the Central Corridor Public Art Plan.

FORECAST Public Art

FORECAST Public Art will support the public art goals by using its existing network of local artists and community members to facilitate projects, connect to the public, and advocate for artists.