



March 26, 2015

To: City Council and County Board

The I-35W Transit Access Project Advisory Board (PAC) has been meeting for four years to help design a project that works well for the community as well as for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and freeway drivers. As the project transitions into the next phase of design and work, we would like to take this opportunity to communicate with you as the local policy makers.

We are proud of the work we have done at the PAC. The design of the transit station will be iconic. The green crescent connecting Lake Street with the Midtown Greenway will be a landmark. And the design of the 24th Street pedestrian bridge will be markedly better than the structure that stands today. A summary of our decisions and input is attached for your reference.

All of this work has been the result of creative and dedicated work by PAC members. It has been done in partnership with staff and consultants who made every effort to respond to the needs and concerns raised in the process. Concerns and issues remain, but at this stage, the input gathered by the PAC has been without opposition (there have been abstentions). This is a remarkable outcome and we take great pride in the work we have done to make the I-35W Transit Access Project an asset to all.

In agreeing to send this letter, we are reaffirming our previous actions. We strongly encourage our policy makers to appreciate the time and effort the PAC has put in to the process and use our input to guide the process of Municipal Consent and the development of Interagency Agreements.

There are issues that remain unsettled. These include: public art; landscaping; design of the tot lot; and most of all, maintenance responsibilities for the multiple components of the project. We also anticipate that construction will bring new issues and will benefit from good channels of communication.

We request that our policy makers, MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council continue the dialogue and agree to continue a community engagement process as the project is designed and built. We are very aware that the details will make all of the difference in the outcome, and many PAC members are motivated to stay engaged with the process.

We recommend that:

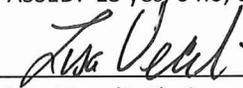
\*current PAC members be polled to assess their willingness to remain engaged in a continued public input process agreed upon by MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council, local elected officials and neighborhood organizations

\*regular meetings be scheduled 3-4 times a year to maintain the process (but cancelled if there are no agenda items to avoid wasting time)

\*a process be established to allow the convening of special meetings to respond to issues that arise during the process and cannot wait for the next regularly scheduled meeting

We have worked hard to contribute to the I-35W Transit Access Project and appreciate the opportunity Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis have provided to encourage community engagement. We encourage you to continue this dialogue as the project moves into the next phase of design and construction.

MOTION PASSED: 13 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain

SIGNED:  Date: March 26, 2015  
Lisa Vecoli, Chair



**SUMMARY OF FORMAL ACTIONS TO DATE  
PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
I-35W TRANSIT/ACCESS PROJECT**

8/25/11

Maintain vertical access to the transit station on the south side of Lake Street.

No tunnel access to the transit station – a strong preference was expressed for an open space entrance.

9/22/11

Not consider further the Greenway and Midway options and to focus on moving forward with a station location near Lake Street, using the best elements of Option A and/or Option B (with a preference toward Option B – Lake Street Proximate).

3/22/12

Preferred an option that retained the parking on 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and that preserved as much green space as possible on the residents' side of the street, not the freeway side.

Supported the dimensions of Lake Street under the bridge from Stevens to 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, i.e. an increase from the current 64 feet to 68 feet.

4/26/12

Supported the haunched or arched girder type of bridge for the Lake Street level ceiling of the transit station.

7/26/12

Curved arch form is preferred and transit station should be a place or destination with a unique identity.

8/23/12

“Site identity elements” elicited the following preferences (in rank order): neon arch, solar panels, green roof, sparkle roof.

9/26/13

Approves the overall architectural design concept proposed for the transit station, acknowledging that the issues of the I-35W footprint and adequate plans for security, maintenance, and operations need to be addressed, and are yet to be approved by this Committee.

10/24/13

Supports the Public Art Framework for the I-35W Transit/Access Project, acknowledging that issues related to funding, design details and maintenance need to be resolved.

2/27/14

Supports Design Concept 8 for the 24<sup>th</sup> Street pedestrian/bicycle bridge with the following priorities: (1) Width at least 14 feet, (2) Public art, (3) Move stairs at each end to align with the bridge, (4) Slightly curve the inside corners.

8/28/14

Favors the one-way option on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and Franklin Avenue based on input from adjacent property owners, the Franklin Avenue Business Association, and the neighborhood.