



Selection of Cedar/4th Street Alignment For L.R.T. in Downtown Saint Paul

HISTORY: A wide variety of alternatives have been considered for a downtown alignment, including every north/south street between Jackson and St. Peter Streets and every east/west street between 11th Street and Shepard Road. On several separate occasions where an alignment decision has been made (mid 1980s, early 1990s, 2002, 2006, and 2008) by either the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority or by the Metropolitan Council, the Cedar/4th Alignment was selected. In 2008, subsequent to public hearings before Ramsey County and the Saint Paul City Council, the Cedar/4th Alignment was selected, with the modification of cutting diagonally through the Athletic Club Block. In all those occasions, Ramsey County, the City Council, Greater St. Paul Chamber of Commerce, the Building Owners and Managers Association, the Capitol River Council, the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, and downtown property owners were deeply involved in the decision-making processes, through extensive public meetings and hearings.

RATIONALE: There are literally scores of reasons as to why the Cedar/4th Alignment was selected. The most compelling reasons include:

1. The Cedar/4th Alignment penetrates the heart of the downtown business core, which is the overwhelming **ridership focal point** in downtown;
2. Cedar St. has a **wide bridge crossing** over I-94;
3. With a three-block exception (10th St to 7th Place), Cedar St. has a wider cross-section than St. Peter, Wabasha, or Minnesota;
4. Cedar St. carries slightly **less traffic** than Minnesota, and substantially less than Wabasha, Robert or Jackson Streets;
5. Cedar St. is **NOT a major downtown access street** as opposed to Jackson (which has direct freeway access to I-94 and I-35E and is one of two primary access points from Shepard Road), Robert (which has a major river crossing to the West Side), and Wabasha/St. Peter (which terminate in a major river crossing to the West Side, and has direct freeway access from/to I-35E and I-94);
6. Cedar St. has **no more or fewer property access issues** than other north/south streets;
7. The east side of Cedar St. alignment **avoids conflicts** with parking ramps and loading docks, while **creating conflicts** on the east side with parking ramps and curb side loading/funerals/weddings;
8. The east side alignment **allows for operations of Metro Transit bus service and for maneuvering of large delivery trucks**;
9. The east side alignment **minimizes disruption to vehicular and pedestrian traffic** flow at 5th Street;
10. 4th St. has **substantially fewer property access issues** than Kellogg Blvd., 5th, 6th or 7th Streets;
11. 4th St. carries substantially less traffic than Kellogg Blvd., 5th, 6th or 7th Streets; and
12. 4th St. allows for **direct access to the Union Depot**, scheduled for resumption of passenger rail service in the near future.

