

TOPICS



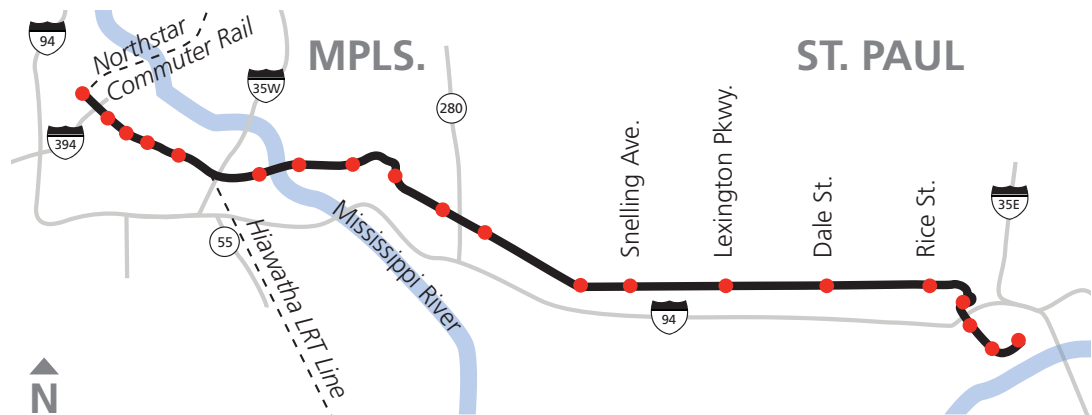
May 2008

As LEED Moves from Buildings to Neighborhoods, Central Corridor Presents New Opportunities

The U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program has become an international benchmark for sustainable design and construction since its inception almost ten years ago. While LEED has become well known for its focus on green buildings, it has more recently expanded to address the design of whole communities. The LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) rating system is currently in its pilot phase, with two mixed-use developments providing representation in Minnesota: Excelsior & Grand, a 17.5-acre combination of housing, retail, and public space in St. Louis Park, and Library Green, an 8.9-acre brownfield revitalization being planned for Moorhead.

The LEED-ND criteria that characterize the Minnesota projects, such as location on previously developed sites in dense urban areas and proximity to public transportation, make the Central Corridor of the Twin Cities a prime candidate for developing new

Planned light rail route



LEED-certified neighborhoods. The Light Rail Transit line proposed for the Central Corridor would connect Minneapolis and St. Paul along University and Washington Avenues through the State Capitol complex, Midway area, and the University of Minnesota. Although light rail typically does not create market opportunities on its own, it does complement real estate markets and can become the launching pad for new initiatives. The vision St. Paul planners have for the Central Corridor includes corporate campuses, high-rise dwelling units, retail shopping centers, and community parks all within an existing urban area.

Although projects seeking certification under LEED-ND in the future will need to follow the criteria of the finalized rating system, the components of the pilot version indicate certain areas of emphasis. As with other LEED rating systems, a combination of performance-based prerequisites and credits in different categories provides opportunities to meet minimum requirements and earn points toward certification:

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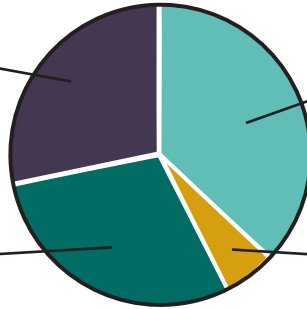


Smart Growth & Linkage:
encourages development within and near existing urban areas with good transit access and diverse uses nearby

Neighborhood Pattern & Design:
promotes community connectivity within and beyond the development

Green Construction & Technology:
includes innovative "green" practices reaching beyond site location and layout

Innovation & Design:
recognizes exceptional performance



Applying LEED-ND to your next project can be a way to attain the combination of environmental, social, and economic benefits that buyers and tenants are starting to expect from the current attention to all things "sustainable." Truly holistic neighborhood designs provide affordable, accessible places for people to live, work, play, and shop. Taking an integrated approach helps achieve public support, which in turn can prevent roadblocks to securing approvals and minimize the holding costs of real property. Whether you're interested in the investment and development opportunities of the Central Corridor or elsewhere, it is worthwhile tracking the development of LEED-ND and its influence on neighborhood design.



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