

**ULI Minnesota/Regional Council of Mayors  
Connecting Transportation and Land Use Systems (CTLUS)**

Summary of Work 2008–2009

**Introduction**

In September 2008, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) selected ULI Minnesota (ULI MN) and its Regional Council of Mayors (RCM) as one of four ULI District Councils (along with Chicago, Seattle, and SE Florida) to participate in ULI's Curtis Regional Infrastructure Project. The ULI MN/RCM Connecting Transportation and Land Use (CTLUS) Initiative was established to conduct research and to raise awareness of emerging transportation and land use issues in the Twin Cities metropolitan region and to foster cooperation and action at the local, state, regional, and national levels. The overarching mission is to advance the region's understanding of the importance of the connection between transportation and land use in support of mobility, livability, sustainability, and job growth.

The sustainable future of our region depends on a new reality. Winning regions will maximize human capital and innovation, invest in infrastructure, and create quality places to attract and retain talent and investment. Given changing consumer preferences and environmental and energy pressures, there will be more demand for new options in compact living and transportation choices. (*Brookings Institution: Blueprint for American Prosperity*)

**Convening the Resources of the Public, Private, and Non-Profit Sectors**

The CTLUS Initiative is guided by an advisory committee representing the real estate development community, public officials, and nonprofit institutions. With support from the McKnight Foundation, the CTLUS Initiative partners with the Center for Transit Oriented Development (CTOD), Reconnecting America, Strategic Economics, the Brookings Institution, and Citiventure Associates, LLC, to implement an action-oriented agenda focused on metropolitan centers and corridors and walkable urban places.

**Connecting Regional Transportation Systems to the Local Land Use Context**

In just the early phases of work, the CTLUS Initiative has already identified several innovative concepts that are shaping cutting-edge thinking on transportation and land development. These include:

1. ***Coordinate regional mobility and personal mobility.*** To integrate transportation and land use, we need to think of transportation operating on two levels—regional mobility on corridors that connect centers and personal mobility within the centers and neighborhoods.

2. **Connect employment centers with multimodal transportation networks.** Employment centers are not only important economic generators, but they also contain great potential to boost the overall sustainability of a region by developing as walkable, high-quality places connected to multimodal transportation systems and residential centers.
3. **Make walkable and transit-ready places.** Changing demographics and consumer preferences as well as quality-of-life concerns are boosting market demand for walkable places connected to transit.
4. **Build regional transit faster and better.** The Twins Cities metropolitan region has ambitious plans for a regional transit system of commuter rail, light-rail, and bus rapid transit, but there are insufficient resources to meet the demand. We must accelerate development of transit ways that connect with land use performance objectives. Innovative funding solutions—including alternatives such as public/private partnerships—must be found that will build the system in years, rather than decades.
5. **Change the rules and offer more choices.** In order to do all of the above, the metropolitan region needs to go beyond cobbling together individual transit lines and land uses to building a connected sustainable region. A new approach is needed that requires a comprehensive, aligned, and integrated set of strategies and actions that leverage resources, capacity, and leadership from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors acting at all levels, from the most local to the national. Our rules must allow communities to add “proximity” and more choices.

### CTLUS Action Strategies

CTLUS action strategies include the following:

1. **Regional collaboration.** The CTLUS Initiative is a model of collaborative regional partnerships. A public/private advisory task force was established to guide the CTLUS Initiative and is cochaired by Mayor Bill Hargis, Woodbury and Jay Lindgren, Dorsey & Whitney, and includes leaders representing the private, public and nonprofit sectors.
2. **Identifying and evaluating regionally significant walkable urban places.** The Center for Transit Oriented Development (CTOD), along with Reconnecting America, Economic Strategies, the Metropolitan Council, and Transit for Livable Communities (TLC), identified, mapped, and evaluated the region’s significant employment clusters connected with existing and planned transitways; and outlined an approach for transforming existing activity centers into walkable places. Next steps include identifying design indicators and mapping employment center future growth.

In defining “walkable urban places,” the CTOD considered several measures:

- whether a place has a multimodal transportation system and how well it performs;

- the “employment gravity” of job clusters and the mix of uses—to determine how many hours out of the day people actively use a place;
- the intensity of uses—how many people use the area;
- the area’s “walk score”—a measure of the amenities within walking distance;
- a connectivity index that measures the connectedness or “permeability” of the street network;
- block sizes and intersection density;
- origin mode split and destination mode split;
- land opportunity and the potential for walkability

(See Twin Cities CTLUS Initiative: Identifying and Evaluating Regionally Significant Walkable Urban Places for the complete report

<http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/stories/723>).

3. **Public/private financing tools and public/private partnerships.** Public/private partnerships are being closely examined by many regions throughout the country. CTLUS is in discussions with County and Metropolitan Council leadership to support a ULI workshop that would explore the possibilities of public/private financing tools to accelerate the construction of the SW Corridor.
4. **BRT (bus rapid transit).** The Twin Cities is familiar with LRT; however, less is known about the development, land use implications, and community impact of BRT. CTLUS will host a half-day workshop on December 15 to develop a better regional understanding of BRT, with a particular focus on its potential to stimulate community development and transit-oriented development. Participants will learn from a national speaker as well as from local leadership about their experiences, challenges, and lessons learned implementing BRT.
5. **What needs to change.** Rules affect outcomes. ULI MN/RCM is participating in national dialogues and is working with our regional partners to identify “what needs to change” to enable the connection between transportation and land use at the federal, state, metropolitan, county, and local levels.
  - There is a historic opportunity to implement federal reform at the regional level following the lead of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, a new interagency partnership between the DOT, HUD, and the EPA.
  - The Minnesota legislature has directed the Metropolitan Council to submit a report by January 15, 2011, to identify and assess the effectiveness of local-level and regional-level land use and transportation planning strategies and processes for reducing air pollution, mitigating congestion, and reducing costs for operation, maintenance, or improvement of infrastructure.
6. **Raise awareness.** CTLUS is well positioned to inform the development of transportation policy at both the national and regional levels.

- At the request of Congressman Oberstar, CTLUS provided a briefing paper to outline mechanisms for connecting land use and transportation.
- In partnership with the Itasca Project (business CEOs), ULI MN/RCM is developing a PowerPoint that can be used broadly, titled *Back to the Future*, outlining the opportunities to align the Twin Cities to a new economy.
- In partnership with the Brookings Institution and PBS, ULI MN/RCM is exploring the possibility of being a host city for a *New American Dream* series. This local documentary will explore the process of designing and implementing walkable, quality places through an intense design process where constituents, citizen planners, and professional designers create a sustainable vision for their community. The final design will be fully rendered as a high-definition animated walk-through and will include a televised competition and interactive TV/Web distribution that will bring thousands of people into the process.

### Integrated Work Plans

The CTLUS Initiative and ULI MN/RCM Housing Initiative are integrating their work plans to support the following:

1. ***Land use policies and performance-based objectives.*** ULI MN/RCM will demonstrate how to implement model land use policies along a corridor across municipal boundaries. With funding support from Minnesota Housing, Ken Greenberg, urban design consultant, will facilitate a one-day work shop on September 15, along with SW corridor representatives, to develop a process that will demonstrate holistic planning with performance objectives that support a mix of uses and a full range of housing choices connected to jobs and transportation options.
2. ***Develop a Twin Cities housing + transportation + energy efficiency cost calculator*** in partnership with the Center for Housing Policy, the Center for Neighborhood Technology, and the ULI Terwilliger Center.
3. ***Explore opportunities to build on St. Louis Park's "Live Where You Work" program to support a regional model.*** With financial support from Minnesota Housing, a regional Live Where You Work program will be developed to strengthen the connection between homeownership, employment, and transportation, with the goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled and promoting healthy living. This effort ties key regional employment centers and effective transportation systems to the benefits of driving less and living closer to the primary place of employment.