

# Community Conversation #1 – Summary

## Summary

On Tuesday, July 25, 2017, approximately 175-200 people attended the first community conversation for the Edina Passenger Rail Engagement Study. Attendees were invited to view informational display boards about the study, participate in a “Question Wall” exercise, and discuss additional questions at conversation tables. Comment sheets were also available.

This document summarizes feedback by general themes. Full versions of all comments received will be available as an appendix to the final project report.

### Overall Feedback

Generally, most attendees at Community Conversation #1 were negative towards the idea of a light rail or commuter train on the Dan Patch Corridor. A majority of these comments addressed concerns about the decline of home and property value along the corridor and increased safety concerns in neighborhoods if passenger rail were to be implemented in this corridor. The following summarizes comments from the 67 comment sheets received at the meeting:

- No further study of passenger rail/keep gag rule: 60%
- Yes to further study of passenger rail: 24%
- No preference stated, questions/more info requested: 16%

The following summarizes these comments as well as the notes placed on the question wall.

### Comments About Passenger Rail

- Positives
  - Sustainable option, planning for future
  - Environmental benefits (reduce car use, less pollution)
  - Another transportation option (for employees and older residents noted specifically)
  - Help reduce traffic on current highway system
  - Economic benefit to the City of Edina – create hubs for development
  - Attractive to young/potential residents
  - Connects to other cities
  - Increase overall use for entire system
  - Create longer-term residents in Edina (“age in place”)
  - Support increase in population and employment
- Negatives/concerns
  - Decrease in property values



- High cost, low benefit
- Noise and vibration
- Traffic congestion at neighborhood level
- Proximity to homes/safety issues
- Pedestrian safety and grade crossing issues
- Increased crime
- Benefits neighbor cities (Northfield, mostly) more than Edina
- Stations not in convenient locations
- Not a significant improvement over current bus/rapid bus system
- Lack of ridership

### Questions/Important for City to Know

- Housing, properties, and neighborhoods
  - Density
  - Property values
  - Noise
  - Direct impacts/potential property takes
  - Increased traffic
  - Parking demands around stations
- Canadian Pacific's plans for rail, increased freight traffic
- Safety along rail line
  - Speed of a potential rail line (current freight goes very slow)
  - Grade crossings
  - Emergency vehicle access to surrounding neighborhoods
  - Nearby parks and recreation areas
- Benefits directly for Edina residents, versus benefits for surrounding areas (Northfield, Savage, etc.)
- Consider other options
  - Bike/walk trail instead of transit
  - Transit route along major highways
  - Rapid bus lines instead of passenger rail
  - Consider Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) rail technology
- Overall timeline/steps for implementing a passenger rail project
- Existing conditions
  - Current usage of bus routes/light rail in twin cities area
  - Rider projections for future usage – what is demand?
- Station locations
- Status of Green Line Extension, usage data from other train lines in Metro area

