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Partnerships Unlock the Door to Progress in the Twin Cities: The Central Corridor Light Rail Project.

This case study examines the strategy employed by the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota) as they undertook a major transportation initiative – the Central Corridor light rail project, to connect their downtowns. The set of far reaching partnerships that have enabled this project, along with the leadership roles played by city officials, the philanthropic community, and the civic organizations all provide a template and examples that other cities might find instructive.

The initial catalyst for the Central Corridor project was the desire to maximize opportunity for the region and to help move people between the job centers in the downtown areas of the Twin Cities, which would help the region to be more competitive. As the vision for the project evolved, city officials began to appreciate that providing mass transit along the Central Corridor could help revitalize the neighborhoods through which the light rail would pass, and make these communities more attractive and better places to live as a result of better transportation access.

This project has helped orchestrate community redevelopment along the train route and created an environment intended to support mixed income communities and thriving local commerce along the line. The new light rail line, which is scheduled to open in mid-2014, will also provide cost effective transportation to connect residents to jobs in both cities and in the region, and in general strengthen the appeal of living in these communities. As the project falls into place, the communities surrounding the new line will have hundreds of new homes and stronger businesses, and brighter cultural and artistic installations along the major street.

Read the entire case study »