

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A Slow Track to Nowhere

St. Paul's Downtown People Mover

MATT GOFF, PAGE 13

*From a Star on the
Ball Diamond to a
Star at the Minnesota
State Capitol*

Billy Williams

FRANK M. WHITE, PAGE 1



By the Numbers . . .

Historian Johannes R. Allert has written multiple articles about Ramsey County citizens who served in one way or another during World War I. Below are a few general facts to consider before you explore Allert's newest article, "Faith, Advocacy, & Service: A Snapshot of Ramsey County's Welfare Workers in the Great War," which begins on page 22.

Number of men in the US Armed Forces during WWI:
4,800,000

Number of men serving in the US Army during WWI:
4,000,000

Number of Minnesotans serving in WWI:
99,116

Total deaths in the US Army in WWI:
115,660 (50,280 battle, 57,460 disease, 7,920 other)

Number of Ramsey County residents (Armed Forces and service workers) who died overseas during and shortly after WWI:
358

SOURCES: Col. Leonard Ayres, *The War With Germany: A Statistical Study* (Washington, DC: US Gov. Printing Office, 1919); Gold Star Roll Index, Minnesota Public Safety Commission; "List of WWI casualties—Memorial Hall Veterans," Ramsey County Minnesota War Memorial, <https://data.ramseycounty.us/stories/s/6r2q-8miu>.

ON THE COVER



Billy Williams, who served as aide to fourteen Minnesota governors over fifty-two years, welcomed the press to his home on occasion of his eighty-sixth birthday in October 1963. *Photograph by William Seaman, Minneapolis Star Tribune, October 24, 1963, Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

Contents

- 1 *From a Star on the Ball Diamond to a Star at the Minnesota State Capitol*
Billy Williams
FRANK M. WHITE
- 13 *A Slow Track to Nowhere*
St. Paul's Downtown People Mover
MATT GOFF
- 22 *Faith, Advocacy, & Service*
A Snapshot of Ramsey County's Welfare Workers in the Great War
JOHANNES R. ALLERT

Message from the Editorial Board

This issue, we share remarkable examples of commitment and purpose by ordinary men and women from Ramsey County. Despite loss and hardship, criticism, racism, and sexism, nothing diminished their beliefs in the importance of their service.

Frank White paints a compelling picture of Billy Williams, a Black St. Paulite who juggled multiple jobs while making a name for himself playing baseball for mostly white regional teams at the turn of the twentieth century. His leadership on and off the field did not go unnoticed by John A. Johnson, who tapped Williams as his messenger when becoming Governor of Minnesota in 1905. That was the beginning of Williams' remarkable tenure at the Capitol.

During and immediately after World War I, dedicated volunteers with welfare organizations endured the deprivations of war to serve at home and abroad. Despite hardships, they prevailed in their commitment to pray for and comfort weary soldiers and tend to their basic needs. Johannes Allert scoured dozens of service records to offer a glimpse of six of these devoted souls.

Another story of commitment and purpose is an urban development and transportation concept that was, perhaps, ahead of its time. The mostly forgotten Downtown People Mover overcame many obstacles before voters put an end to the introduction of a shuttle transit system in St. Paul in 1980.

To serve a greater cause isn't always popular or successful. Yet, sometimes determined people devoted to the tasks at hand create many ripples of good—often unnoticed and often extending far into the future. *Ramsey County History* is pleased to bring you these stories of dedication this spring.

Anne Field
Chair, Editorial Board

The Ramsey County Historical Society thanks former Board Member James A. Stolpestad and affiliate AHS Legacy Fund for supporting the design of this magazine. Publication of Ramsey County History is also supported in part by a gift from Clara M. Claussen and Frieda H. Claussen in memory of Henry H. Cowie Jr., and by a contribution from the late Reuel D. Harmon.

St. Paul's Downtown People Mover

MATT GOFF

The 1979 session of the Minnesota State Legislature was one for the history books. Minnesota's House was split perfectly between Independent Republicans (IR) and the Democratic-Farmer-Labor (DFL) Party. Gridlock set in, a speaker could not be elected, committee chairs could not be appointed, laws could not be passed. Eventually, both parties agreed to a deal in which Republicans chose the speaker while Democrats controlled key committees. Still, House members operated under intense divisiveness.¹

That May, the *Pioneer Press* covered the chaotic final days and hours of that legislative session:

Independent Republicans in the House had proposed trading the people mover

project, which [was] in the bill, for a change in election laws allowing [Robert] Pavlak [a representative ousted the week prior] to run for his old seat. Democrats objected to the trade, and the deadlock was not resolved before the midnight adjournment time.²

A one-day special session followed that would bring the contentious matters to a close.

Twin Cities' citizens were well aware of the drama in the legislature *and* surrounding the downtown people mover (DPM)—a planned shuttle transit system meant to alleviate traffic congestion and help transform St. Paul's city center. In fact, from 1976 to 1980, the local news ran hundreds of stories on the subject. It seemed almost everyone had an opinion.



An early rendering of a proposed view of the people mover from Wabasha to St. Peter Street in *A Proposal for a Downtown People Mover System* compiled by the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC). The concept would have integrated shops beneath the transit line to create an open mall and entertainment district. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

Nearly half a century later, the intense legislative session has faded from memory. So, too, has talk of St. Paul's once propitious transportation project. Today, its history exists mostly in institutional archives.

Moving Toward Progress: The UMTA

The story of the St. Paul downtown people mover began gathering speed in 1975 when the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) under the US Department of Transportation announced "a project to demonstrate the benefits of fully automated people mover systems in urban downtown areas."³ US cities were encouraged to submit a proposal to be chosen as a select demonstration city. The DPM idea would:

[s]how whether simple automated systems can provide a reliable and economical solution to the local circulation problems in congested downtown areas. 'Such systems have proven effective in controlled environments such as airports. . . . We want to test their feasibility and public acceptance in the harsher and more demanding environment of a real city.'⁴

Thirty-five cities submitted proposals; nineteen were selected for further consideration.⁵

Although these DPM initiatives launched in 1975 were rolled out in the Nixon and Carter Administrations—and built in the Reagan administration—the history dates back to Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. In a 1962 message to Congress, Kennedy acknowledged a small sum of money received for mass transit, but he wanted more:

I have previously emphasized to the Congress the need for action on the transportation problems resulting from burgeoning urban growth and the changing urban scene. . . .The ways that people and goods can be moved . . . will have a major influence on their structure, on the efficiency of their economy, and on the availability for social and cultural opportunities they can offer their citizens.

. . . [T]he problems of urban transportation have been studied . . . I recommend that long-range Federal financial aid and

technical assistance be provided to help plan and develop the comprehensive and balanced urban transportation that is so vitally needed. . . .⁶

Kennedy pushed again for more ambitious mass transit action from the 88th US Congress, but his work was left unfinished upon his assassination in 1963.

President Johnson took up his predecessor's initiative, and, in July 1964, signed into law the Urban Mass Transportation Act, creating the Urban Mass Transportation Administration mentioned above. Its purpose: focus on housing and urban renewal affected by traffic congestion and inefficient transportation systems, create jobs, encourage closer cooperation between all levels of governments, and reduce overall energy consumption.⁷

First, the UMTA identified companies that could develop new transit technology using federal grants. Its next mandate was to implement this technology in cities. Early research culminated in the Morgantown Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) system, designed by Boeing Aerospace Co. This PRT was one of the earliest automated, driverless, and electric urban transit systems, eventually serving as a model for similar transports worldwide. It began operating in 1975 (with substantial fits, starts, and controversy early on), connecting to locations around the University of West Virginia campus and into central Morgantown.⁸

Despite seeing the Morgantown PRT project in action, other cities were reluctant to embrace a transportation system that could cost between \$50 and \$100 million. So, UMTA announced it would select a few cities to receive federal money to implement a "downtown fixed-guideway transit system." Minnesota State Senator John Chenoweth brought this news home from Washington, DC, announcing that the Twin Cities were early leading candidates.⁹

Coming to a Station Near You

Through spring 1976, both Minneapolis and St. Paul prepared bids. Either city would need the support of the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC). As the governing transit body in the Twin Cities, federal money passed through the MTC.¹⁰

Town Square

In the last half of the twentieth century, US cities struggled with lost population and aging infrastructure. St. Paul was no different. The way civic and business leaders responded was in keeping with other cities: using mostly federal money, local governments (typically a Housing and Redevelopment Authority) purchased land, cleared buildings from it, then worked with the private sector to redevelop it. Case in point: in an attempt to modernize and revamp St. Paul's city center in the 1960s, twelve blocks were purchased and almost all of the structures demolished.^a

In a history of Twin Cities' urban renewal, Judith Martin and Antony Goddard observed: "An especially trying problem was the 'hole in the doughnut,' a four-block-area bounded by Wabasha, Minnesota, 5th and 7th streets." The redevelopment of two of these blocks would play a crucial role in the people mover story.^b

In February 1975, Canadian-based Oxford Development unveiled a plan—eventually named Town Square—seemingly ambitious enough to fill part of the donut hole in the downtown landscape. Town Square became a mixed-use development straddling the blocks between Cedar, Minnesota, Sixth, and Seventh Streets, capped by two office towers and a hotel. Retail shops filled the lower floors, with a parking lot beneath the complex. Its most distinctive feature was a third-floor atrium that served as an interior park filled with live plants and a waterfall and stream all under a glass roof.^c

Oxford's proposal made St. Paul a stronger candidate for a people mover. In turn, the transit system helped push Town Square from concept to reality. David Thompson with Oxford Development remarked, "If we had a commitment for a people mover system, we could secure the [Town Square] tenancies required within eight weeks."^d A US Federal Transportation Administration release made it clear that the development was a win for the city:

St. Paul . . . presents the best opportunity to evaluate the role of a DPM in stimulating new downtown investments. The city is rebuilding its central core and is committed to a major transit/pedestrian mall and to "skyways" that will connect existing and proposed new buildings.^e

The two Town Square towers included in the complex plans were redesigned to accommodate the people mover so the system could pass between them in a diagonal direction.



St. Paul Mayor George Latimer, standing in Town Square around 1980, worked to bring this complex to fruition. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*



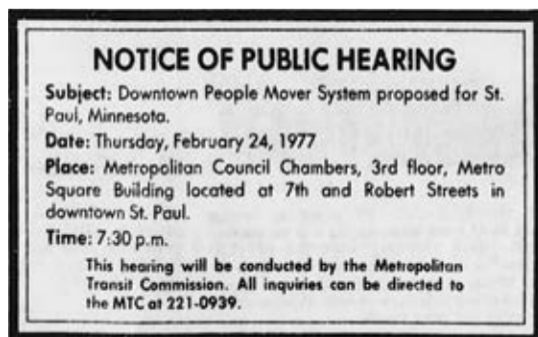
Original Town Square plans were revised to incorporate the downtown people mover, as it was intended to be the transit hub where two lines would connect. A model illustrates what might have been had the transport system been built. *Courtesy of Ramsey County Historical Society.*

The question was: Which city would the MTC choose as home for a downtown people mover? The question answered itself when Minneapolis withdrew from the race, citing lack of an approved financial plan, concerns with the DPM's economic viability, less room downtown for redevelopment, and other issues. The MTC thus supported St. Paul's bid, forwarding it to the UMTA.¹¹

With St. Paul a leading candidate and with a vague idea of what a people mover might look like, Bill Farmer at the *St. Paul Dispatch* suggested that simply choosing sixty people to receive a million dollars to move downtown would be a better use of the expected \$60 million from the government:

St. Paul is an easy town around which to move. We need a people mover the way

The Metropolitan Transit Commission held many public hearings about the DPM. There, citizens learned about alternatives and new ideas and voiced opinions for and against the project. *In Minneapolis Star Tribune, February 22, 1977, 4.*



Meeting attendees learned about proposed guidelines and responded to mock ups illustrating possible affected views of downtown landmarks—including Union Depot, the McColl Building (Merchants National Bank or Brooks Building), the Hamm Building, and Landmark Center—if the people mover system were to pass near them. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

Kansas needs a ski tow. What downtown St. Paul needs is people. The richer the better.¹²

On December 22, the UMTA announced that St. Paul, Cleveland, Houston, and Los Angeles would receive federal funding as demonstration cities for a downtown transit system. Detroit also received funding but from a previous grant. The *Pioneer Press* predicted, “People-mover may trigger Loop boom.”¹³ Journalist Aron Kahn described the technology succinctly, “If you were forced to categorize the People-mover, it would be better to call it a development tool than a transportation one.”¹⁴

And development was important to new St. Paul Mayor George Latimer, who, along with many city leaders, believed the DPM would “complement existing development and be a catalyst for new development.” Council Member Leonard Levine hoped it would “bring everybody together. . . . We need something like this to get people to live downtown.”¹⁵

Why such concern for development? In the 1970s, US cities—St. Paul included—were struggling. Among other issues, the country was still reeling from the fallout over the 1973 oil embargo; manufacturing jobs had moved overseas, and companies locally were closing, meaning cities were losing their tax base; unemployment was high; bond debt was high; and more and more people were vacating cities for the suburbs. The people mover, along with several bigger development projects, could help turn things around.

Questions & More Questions

Just weeks after the win, an MTC steering committee that included Mayor Latimer, Metropolitan Transit Commission Chair Doug Kelm, City Council Member Robert Sylvester, Metropolitan Council Chair Tom Boland, and a representative of MNDOT, held the first of many public hearings. Attendees learned that an early plan (which would change later) would include 2.6 miles of fixed guideway on two intersecting routes. The first 1.9 miles would connect the major city centers in St. Paul, another .7 miles would serve the capitol complex. Ten stations would host an expected 13 million riders per year. The UMTA was to cover 80 percent of the projected costs—at the time, \$56 million (up from \$45 originally stated), and the city and

MTC would split the remaining 20 percent or \$11.2 million.¹⁶

From the initial meeting came questions. First, should there be alternatives to the proposed route? One configuration looked like a loop on a stick with a line running to the capitol. Another was shaped like a shamrock with three loops jutting out from the center. A route that included the capitol building was almost always assumed, and, from early on, Cathedral Hill was to be included. City Council Member Patrick Roedler called for the DPM to extend east to Payne Avenue, and Victor Tedesco, who represented the West Side, insisted the transit system cross the river into that neighborhood.¹⁷

Throughout 1977 and well into the following year, the steering committee (now with additional members), the Capitol Architectural Planning Board, engineers, citizens, and journalists asked questions, created plans, nixed ideas, and slogged along. If only the city could look at similar transit systems for comparison, but of the fifteen existing, nine operated at amusement parks, four at airports, one at a shopping center, and one at a university. It was impossible to compare apples to oranges. Many were leery. After all, Minneapolis had dropped its quest to participate. Some skeptics could see why. One news headline begged the question of the DPM, “Can it Revitalize Downtown?” followed by a second question, “Boon or Boondoggle?” There was much to consider: effects on environment, safety, ridership (projected numbers dropped substantially), potential development, and, of course, cost, cost, cost.¹⁸

Farmer, the journalist who made his disdain of the DPM known early on, continued his written assault. In the summer of '78, the estimated project cost had skyrocketed, and exactly what the MTC would contribute was yet to be determined by the Minnesota Legislature. Farmer balked, “Anyone have change for \$130 million?”¹⁹ Worries about who would pick up these additional costs—St. Paulites, Ramsey County residents, or even folks in counties throughout the state—hit a community nerve.

The final MTC plan presented that August dropped the price to a projected \$90 million. One line connected the capitol building through Town Square to Lowertown, and another line spurred off from Town Square to the Civic Center (now Xcel Energy). Other options were scrapped.²⁰

Next Stop: The Minnesota Legislature

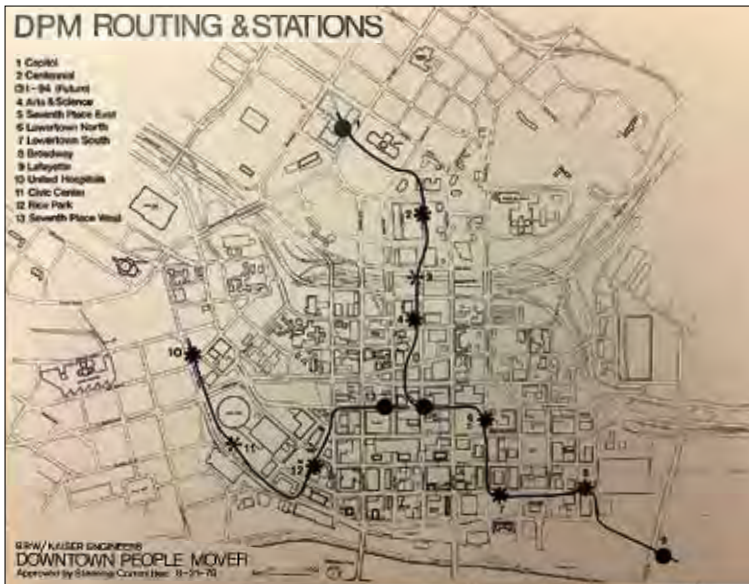
When the steering committee finalized the route, details began to fall into place. The Minnesota Transit Commission submitted a new report—*Preliminary Engineering and Related Studies for Saint Paul Downtown People Mover* in February 1979. This would be helpful for Metropolitan Council approval (which it gave) and useful when state lawmakers prepared to authorize funds for a portion of DPM construction costs.²¹

In the months before the legislative vote, a Citizens League Transportation Task Force prepared a detailed memorandum favoring the DPM as a transportation and development tool working in conjunction with skyways, parking facilities, buses, and public land development programs and managed and financed cooperatively by the city, the MTC, and downtown businesses. But in April, the local Farm Credit Banks of St. Paul Board of Directors voted to oppose bills that would appropriate funds for the DPM. This was followed by letters from Bank for Cooperatives, Federal Land Bank, and Federal Intermediate Credit Bank to legislators in early May with concerns the project would “open businesses and citizens of Minnesota to liability of cost overruns and operating deficits.”²²

Still, on May 18, as part of a larger transportation bill, the Senate approved \$9 million in bonds that the MTC (state) would contribute to the DPM project (in addition to \$9 million from the city).²³ But when it came time for the House to vote on a separate bill in the final hours and minutes of its long and divisive legislative session on May 21, chaos erupted:

House Independent-Republicans were holding the St. Paul ‘people mover’ transit system hostage, hoping to force DFLers to allow ousted West St. Paul rep Robert Pavlak to run in a special election. . . . all of the Democrats filed out of the exits leaving the Republicans with themselves and not enough votes to approve anything.²⁴

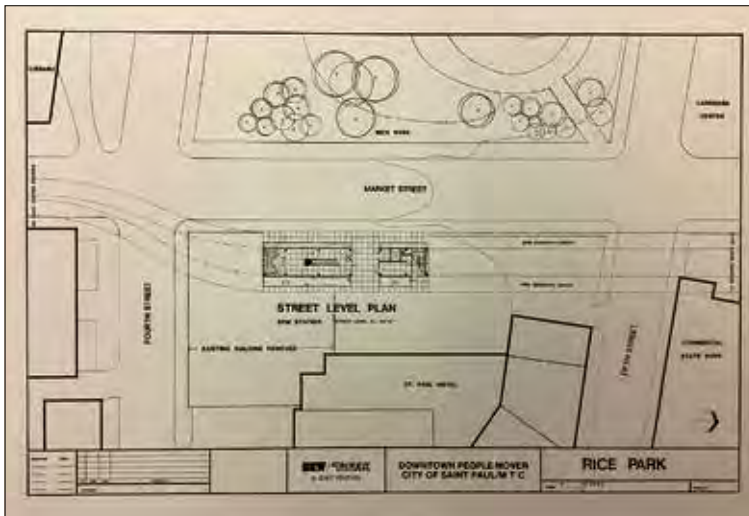
Disappointed and frustrated supporters held out hope that legislators would ultimately include the people mover in its transportation bill, passing the legislation during a special one-day session set by Governor Al Quie for May 24. It wasn't to be. That day, in a whopping 103 to 26 vote, the Minnesota House kept the



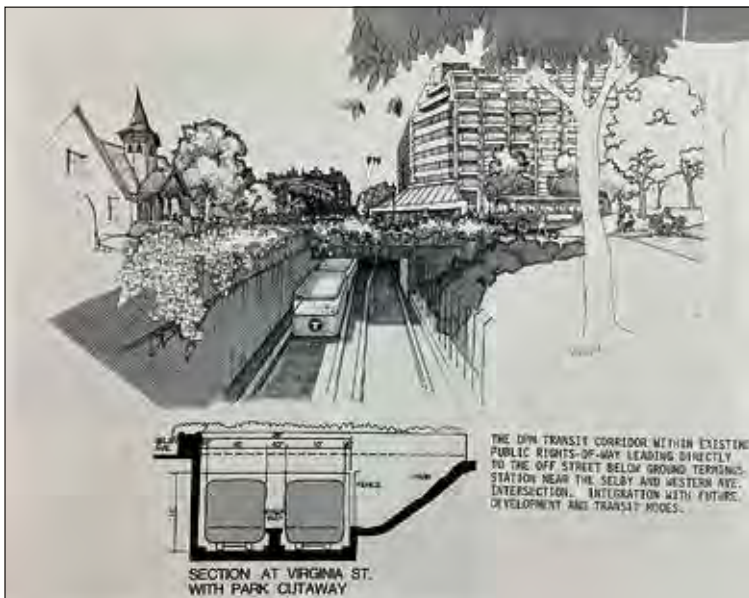
authorization for the people mover out of its transportation bill. The *St. Paul Dispatch* quoted Mayor Latimer, “I learned a long time ago that the people mover had no public support. The House vote reflected the feelings of St. Paul residents very accurately.”²⁵

One Last Ticket to Ride?

Still—in the remaining months of 1979, the St. Paul City Council approved a request for a three-month study by DPM supporters, including an organization of downtown businesses called Operation '85, to look into other finance options (including private funds) to resuscitate the defeated project. In October, the Metro Transit Commission authorized previously approved unused planning funds as the group moved ahead to bring the fight back to the legislature. Operation '85 hired four lobbyists, and a rebranding effort changed the transport system's name to “shuttle transit,” although it appears most everyone continued to call it the people mover.²⁶



The 1980 legislative session was the last hope for St. Paul's DPM. Robert Van Hoef, a banker and spokesperson for Operation '85 fretted, “It's go for broke this year or there isn't even a ball-game.” The legislation bounced from committee to committee. Ultimately, DPM supporters managed to get the legislative sanction necessary to keep the federal money for the program, but St. Paul and downtown businesses would now have to come up with twenty percent of the construction cost (which was creeping back up over \$100 million) and all operational expenses.²⁷



Now it was time for the city council to weigh in. Most members favored moving ahead with the project on May 22, but council minutes note the opinion of Council Member Ruby Hunt, “. . . she is going to vote no because she does not feel the DPM has the support of the community.”²⁸ Plans moved forward.

At a council meeting September 2, the downtown people mover was addressed yet again. A resolution to order an advisory referendum on the DPM was unanimously approved. Such

The final route presented by the MTC and plans for the DPM Rice Park station between Fourth and Fifth Streets. One location that didn't make the cut was a proposed route on Selby Avenue past the Virginia Street Swedenborgian Church, pictured on the left. *Images courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*

a referendum allows citizens to weigh in on an issue to inform lawmakers, in this case the city council, of their will on a particular matter. Supporters welcomed the prospect of putting the issue directly before voters. Council Member Tedesco “. . . suggested that a good selling job be done on this issue and then let the people vote.”²⁹

The actions of the city council became moot soon after this meeting, however, when a group of mostly college-educated women called Stop the People Mover Committee obtained 5,340 signatures to get *their* referendum on the election ballot. The council dropped its efforts and, after signatures had been verified, directed the city clerk to add the new ordinance to the November 4 ballot.³⁰

Supporters and opposition groups urgently made their cases in the media and at public forums, discussions, and info sessions. Those in favor of continuing to fund the project spoke of the benefits of new development downtown, less traffic congestion, and job creation. Those against pointed to ever-escalating costs and the fact that St. Paul was a walkable city and didn't need this white elephant, as some called it.³¹

The DPM Has Left the Station

November 4, 1980, was a turning point in the history of the United States. Ronald Reagan trounced incumbent President Jimmy Carter, winning nearly ten times as many electoral college votes, although Minnesota's electoral votes supported Carter. The US Senate became majority Republican for the first time since 1955. However, Democrats held the majority in the US House. The DFL Party won the majority in Minnesota's Senate and House, which would continue to be led by IR Governor Al Quie, who assumed office in 1978.³²

In local elections, St. Paul's downtown people mover finally met its match—despite a last-ditch mail and telephone campaign by DPM advocates. In the end, over 66,300 people voted *for* a St. Paul city ordinance “prohibiting the city from spending any money to acquire, build, or operate a People Mover System.” About 26,000 voted against it.³³

Minnesota State Senator David Schaaf, who, among others, had fought tirelessly for the success of the public transit system, summed up the final outcome: “A couple of years from now

when cars still clog the streets of St. Paul, maybe some of those who voted against the People Mover will get the message. . . . Certainly there is no hope anytime soon.”³⁴

Schaaf's “no hope anytime soon” prediction was spot on. Iterations of local transit systems continued to be studied for two more decades. Finally, in 2001, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority initiated a transportation impact study. Nearly fifteen years later, an eleven-mile light rail transit line—METRO Green Line—that connects Minneapolis to St. Paul opened to passengers in 2014.³⁵

Of the three other people mover cities selected in 1976 by UMTA, Cleveland dropped the project in 1977 after Mayor Dennis Kucinich objected to rising costs and other factors. In 1979, Houston pulled out. Finally, in 1981, the Reagan Administration put the kibosh on the LA people mover. A few other cities (not part of the original four-city demonstration program) did build versions of people mover systems—Miami Metro-mover (1986), Detroit People Mover (1987), and the Jacksonville Skyway (1989)—which continue to operate today with varying success.³⁶

And what about Town Square? The author remembers visiting the indoor mall with his father on weekends in the 1980s—with its bustling shops, restaurants, dining areas, and the magnificent atrium. Eventually, though, many retail businesses shuttered, and the facility morphed into more of an office complex. The city sold the indoor park in 2002. A buyer turned it into a wedding venue, but it has been closed for years. Today, there are few reminders of what was and what could have been, other than the two Town Square Towers in the complex built diagonally to accommodate the DPM. In 2023, Town Square houses a smattering of retail businesses and fast-food restaurants and several government offices, including the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management. The facility remains a node for pedestrians traveling across downtown via the city's Skyway System.

Matt Goff is an archivist for Kraus-Anderson, a Minneapolis-based construction and real estate company. He is also a part-time librarian for Hennepin County.

NOTES

1. Tim Walker, "The year the House was tied, and how the two parties made peace . . . until they didn't," *Session Daily*, May 11, 2020, <https://www.house.mn.gov/sessiondaily/Story/15307>.
2. Gerry Nelson, "Special session will deal with three bills," *Pioneer Press*, May 24, 1979, 25; "Pavlak Sr., Robert Leo 'Bob,'" member record, Minnesota Legislative Reference Library, <https://www.lrl.mn.gov/legdb/fulldetail?id=10510>. Robert Pavlak beat Arnold Kempe for a House seat in the 1978 state election. The results were contested. In May 1979, the House voted to remove Pavlak in a 67-66 vote, as he was charged with unfair campaign practices. Pavlak ran in a special election that June but lost to DFL candidate Frank Rodriguez Sr. by 321 votes.
3. Urban Mass Transportation Administration (hereafter UMTA), "Project to Demonstrate Benefits of Fully Automated People Mover Systems in Urban Downtown Areas," news release, April 5, 1975, <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/338>.
4. UMTA, "Project to Demonstrate."
5. Ibid; UMTA, "Selection of 19 cities for further evaluation," news release, September 20, 1976, <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/339>. Cities included Anaheim, Atlanta, Baltimore, Bellevue, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami, New York, Norfolk, Sacramento, St. Louis, St. Paul, and Seattle.
6. John F. Kennedy, "Special Message to Congress on Transportation," The American Presidency Project, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/236338>.
7. "Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964—Statute 78, Public Law 88-365, July 9, 1964, 302-308; Lyndon B. Johnson, "Remarks Upon Signing the Urban Mass Transportation Act," The American Presidency Project, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/239017>.
8. UMTA, "Excerpts from External Operating Manual," August 1972, IIA 1-3; *UMTA Transcript* 1, no. 5 (December 12, 1975); "Morgantown PRT," Advanced Transit Association, <https://www.advancedtransit.org/advanced-transit/applications/morgantown/>.
9. Aron Kahn, "City eyed for transit project," *Pioneer Press*, February 25, 1976, 1-2.
10. "Metropolitan Transit Commission, Minnesota Legislative Law Library, <https://www.lrl.mn.gov/agencies/detail?AgencyID=1066>; "Metropolitan Public Transit," Chapter 892 H.F. no. 359, 1967, <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/1967/o/Session+Law/Chapter/892/pdf/>.
11. Dan Wascoe Jr., "City withdraws people mover plan, favors St. Paul," *Star Tribune*, June 10, 1976, 13, 15; Aron Kahn, "City lone 'people mover' entry," *Pioneer Press*, June 10, 1976, 1; Aron Kahn, "MTC okays transit plan, readies bid," June 13, 1976, 1.
12. Bill Farmer, "\$60 million alternative to move the people—up," *St. Paul Dispatch*, June 23, 1976, 43.
13. George Beran, "People-mover may trigger Loop boom," *Pioneer Press*, December 23, 1976, 1.
14. Beran, 1; "Four Cities Named 'Winners' in UMTA's People Mover Project," *Indianapolis Star*, December 28, 1976, 5; Aron Kahn, "The People Mover: Can it revitalize downtown?" *Pioneer Press*, February 27, 1977, 1, 4.
15. Paul Nelson and George Latimer, "Mayor for Life: George Latimer," *Ramsey County History Podcast* #5, Spring 2016, <https://rchs.com/publishing/catalog/ramsey-county-history-podcast-5-spring-2016-mayor-for-life-george-latimer/>; Kahn, "City lone 'people mover' entry," 1; Various US Census Records, US Department of Commerce, 1950, 1960, 1970, and 1980, online search. According to US Census records, the city's population peaked in 1960 at 313,411 residents; it fell 0.1% to 309,980 in 1970; and dropped another 1.4% to 270,230 in 1980.
16. "Notice of Public Hearing," *Star Tribune*, January 20, 1977, 47; Steve Brandt, "Money is spent to watch money," *Star Tribune*, April 28, 1977, 17.
17. *Proposal for a Downtown People Mover System* (St. Paul: Metropolitan Transit Commission, report, August 1976), in published records and reports, Minnesota Historical Society (hereafter, MNHS); John Kelly, "Councilmen push choices for people-mover terminus," *St. Paul Dispatch*, April 2, 1977, C1.
18. "At the Capitol: Friday's Meetings," *Star Tribune*, February 3, 1977, 14; Brenda Ingersoll, "Cost questions key to people-mover plan," *Star Tribune*, April 4, 1978, 9; Kahn, "The People Mover: Can it revitalize downtown?"
19. Aaron Kahn, "Transit plan threatened by cost hike," *Pioneer Press*, July 18, 1978, 1; Bill Farmer, "Anyone have change for \$130 million?" *St. Paul Dispatch*, July 19, 1978, 33; Farmer, "What if people mover is unmoving," *St. Paul Dispatch*, October 27, 1978, 21; Farmer, "City doesn't need federal gravy train," *St. Paul Dispatch*, February 14, 1979, 31.
20. Dorothy Lewis, "Cost of people mover trimmed," *Pioneer Press*, August 22, 1978, 13.
21. *Preliminary Engineering and Related Studies for Saint Paul Downtown People Mover* (St. Paul: Metropolitan Transit Commission, final report MTC-TD-79-01, February 1979), in published records and reports, MNHS; Charles Whiting, "People mover edges ahead," *Star Tribune*, March 13, 1979, 16.
22. Citizens League Transportation Task Force, memorandum to members and board of directors, March 21, 1979, 1-4; Tom Davies, "Bank group opposes people mover," *Star Tribune*, May 8, 1979, 13; Aron Khan, "People mover survives Senate stop," *Pioneer Press*, May 19, 1979, 1.
23. "Senate approves 'people mover,'" *St. Cloud Times*, May 19, 1979, 3; Khan, "People mover survives," 1.
24. Betty Wilson, Jim Shoop, and Suzanne Perry, "Chaos at the Capitol: It's not over yet," *Star Tribune*, May 22, 1979, 1.
25. George Beran, "'Mover' vote not a surprise," *Pioneer Press*, May 25, 1979, 7; Tom Davies, "Session ends; people mover dies," *Star Tribune*, May 25, 1979, 1;

James Walsh, "George Latimer chats St. Paul politics and humanity," *Star Tribune*, April 19, 2022; "George Latimer," Crystal Globe Award, Macalester College, <https://www.macalester.edu/geography/about/cglobe/george-latimer/>; George Latimer served as St. Paul's second "strong mayor" (1976-1990). While the people mover project didn't materialize, by the time Latimer left office, he was hailed for his development work and his faith in public/private partnerships, and had become a leading authority on urban issues. He served as dean of Hamline University's law school and assistant to Secretary Henry Cisneros with US Housing and Urban Development. One newspaper called him the most "well-liked politician" in the city. Central Library was renamed in his honor in 2014.

26. Roberta Walburn, "Group is putting people mover back into gear," *Star Tribune*, November 6, 1979, 25; Bill Farmer, "New name, same familiar odor," *St. Paul Dispatch*, December 17, 1979, 21; "People mover gets new name," *St. Cloud Times*, December 13, 1979, 2; Jack Rhodes, "Stops pulled out to push for transit," *St. Paul Dispatch*, January 28, 1980, 1. The four lobbyists were Robert Goff, John Boland, Tom Newcome, and James Weiler.

27. Jack Rhodes, "Push made to save people mover," *Pioneer Press*, March 29, 1980, 4; Gary Dawson, "Quie vetoes by 'line item' authority," *St. Paul Dispatch*, April 25, 1980, 50; Jack Rhodes, "Stops pulled out to push for transit," *St. Paul Dispatch*, January 28, 1980, 1.

28. Ruby Hunt, (1980, May 22), Minutes of the Saint Paul City Council, St. Paul, MN, 58148; Linda Kohl, "People mover issue OK'd despite Hunt opposition," *Pioneer Press*, May 22, 1980; "Dennis Lien, "Small businesses cool to some big-time projects," *Pioneer Press*, May 23, 1980, 23; Elected in 1972, Ruby Hunt was the third woman in St. Paul history to serve on the city council, and in 1980, she helped defeat the people mover project for good. She also served as Ramsey County Commissioner (1983 to 1995). In that position, she had a role in the very earliest planning of what would become today's Metro Green Line.

29. Victor Tedesco, (1980, September 2), Minutes of the Saint Paul City Council, St. Paul, MN, C.F. No. 275552, 58311; Dennis Lien, "People mover facing vote test," *Pioneer Press*, September 3, 1980, 19.

30. "Petitioners hope to vote on people mover," *St. Cloud Times*, September 11, 1980, 20; Saint Paul City Council, (1980, September 25), Minutes of the Saint Paul City Council, St. Paul, MN, C.F. No. 275712, 58356; "St. Paul voters will decide on 'people mover,'" *Winona Daily News*, September 26, 1980, 19.

31. "9 metro districts have house races Tuesday," *Star Tribune*, September 5, 1980, 4-5; "St. Paul voters will decide on 'people mover,'" *Winona Daily News*, September 26, 1980, 19.

32. "1980 Electoral College Results," National Archives, accessed <https://www.archives.gov/electoral-college/1980/>; "Statistics of the Presidential and Congressional Election of November 4, 1980," US Government Printing Offices, April 15, 1981; Joan

Anderson Growe, "Minnesota Election Results 1980, Office of the Secretary of State, <https://www.lrl.mn.gov/archive/sessions/electionresults/1980-11-04-g-sec.pdf>.

33. "St. Paul: Proposed ordinance," *Star Tribune*, November 5, 1980, 8; Tom Davies, "Voters apparently kill St. Paul people mover," *Star Tribune*, November 5, 1980, 19; Mike Kaszuba, "People Mover halted—but is issue dead?" *Star Tribune*, November 5, 1980, 24; Dennis Lien, "People mover scrapped," *Pioneer Press*, November 5, 1980, 1.

34. Kaszuba, 24.

35. "The METRO Green Line Project Timeline," Metropolitan Council, <https://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Projects/Light-Rail-Projects/Central-Corridor/Project-Facts/History.aspx>; Aaron Isaacs, "The Long Road to Light Rail in the Twin Cities," <https://streets.mn/2017/04/10/the-long-road-to-light-rail-in-the-twin-cities/>.

36. Natalie Neale, "How Cleveland Returned a \$41 Million Federal Grant," Cleveland Historical, <https://clevelandhistorical.org/items/show/798>; Shelby Grad and Scott Harrison, "The long tortured journey to bring rail back to Los Angeles," *The Los Angeles Times*, November 1, 2016; US General Accounting Office, "Better Justifications Needed for Automated People Mover Demonstration Projects," report to the Congress of the United States, August 19, 1980, 4; Gene Holle, "Two of a Kind: Miami's Metrorail and Metromover," *Rail Magazine* (2007): 35-38; "History of the Detroit People Mover," GMRENCEN, <https://gmrencen.com/history-of-the-detroit-people-mover/#:~:text=The%20Detroit%20People%20Mover%20finally,full%20speed%20of%2056%20mph>; Larry Hannan, "After 20 Years, Jacksonville Skyway remains a punchline," *The Florida Times-Union*, September 5, 2010; "JTA Skyway Modernization Program," Jacksonville Transportation Authority, December 8, 2016.

Notes for Sidebar on page 15

a. *Urban Renewal Programs* (St. Paul: The Housing and Redevelopment Authority of the City of St. Paul, 1967).

b. Judith A. Martin, and Antony Goddard, *Past Choices/Present Landscapes: The Impact of Urban Renewal on the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, 1989); Stephen Alnes, *New Life for St. Paul* (St. Paul: Saint Paul Metropolitan Improvement Committee, 1961); *St. Paul, A Concept of its Development* (St. Paul: City of Saint Paul, 1963).

c. Laura Yuen, "St. Paul/Town Square verdict called 'great' outcome," *MPR News*, May 30, 2007.

d. Aaron Kahn, "Seventh Place Project could start soon," *Pioneer Press*, November 10, 1976, 35.

e. UMTA, "Demonstration Cities for UMTA's Nationwide Project to Assess Automated Downtown People Mover systems," news release, December 22, 1976, <https://rosap.nhl.bts.gov/view/dot/345>.

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORY

President & CEO

Chad P. Roberts

Editor

Meredith Cummings

Editor Emeritus (2006-2018)

John Lindley

Founding Editor (1964-2006)

Virginia Brainard Kunz

RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Board of Directors

Mari Oyanagi Eggum

Chair

Robert W. Mairs

First Vice Chair

Elizabeth J. Keyes

Second Vice Chair

Lorraine Griffin Johnson

Secretary

Marc J Manderscheid

Treasurer

Jo Anne Driscoll, Jo Emerson, Tim Glines, John Guthmann, John Hamburger, Judy Kishel, Debbie Lee, Joe Lutz, Peter Nguyen, Chad P. Roberts, Roxanne Sands, George T. Stephenson, Joe Twomey, July Vang, Glenn Wiessner, Helen Wilkie, Lee Pao Xiong

Directors Emeriti

W. Andrew Boss, George A. Mairs, Richard T.

Murphy Sr., Paul A. Verret

Editorial Board

Anne Field, *Chair*, Thomas H. Boyd, Anne Cowie, John Diers, Kate Dietrick, Renoir W. Gaither, John Guthmann, Lisa L. Heinrich, Kyle Imdieke, John Milton, Laurie M. Murphy, Paul D. Nelson, Richard H. Nicholson, Jay Pfaender, David Riehle, Chad P. Roberts, Linda Schloff, George T. Stephenson, Mark Taylor, Steve Trimble, Mary Lethert Wingerd, Matthew Wright

Honorary Advisory Board

William Finney, George Latimer, Joseph S. Micallef, Marvin J. Pertzik, James Reagan

Ramsey County Commissioners

Commissioner Trista MatasCastillo, *Chair*

Commissioner Nicole Joy Frethem

Commissioner Mary Jo McGuire

Commissioner Rena Moran

Commissioner Rafael E. Ortega

Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt

Commissioner Mai Chong Xiong

Ryan T. O'Connor, Manager, Ramsey County

Ramsey County History is published quarterly by the Ramsey County Historical Society, 323 Landmark Center, 75 W. Fifth Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102 (651-222-0701). Printed in U.S.A. Copyright © 2023, Ramsey County Historical Society. ISSN Number 0485-9758.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reprinted or otherwise reproduced without written permission from the publisher. The Society assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors.

RAMSEY COUNTY History

A PUBLICATION OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Preserving our past, informing our present, inspiring our future.

The Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) strives to innovate, lead, and partner in preserving the knowledge of our community, deliver inspiring history programming, and incorporate local history in education.

The Society was established in 1949 to preserve the Jane and Heman Gibbs Farm in Falcon Heights, which the family acquired in 1849. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974, the original programs told the story of the Gibbs family. In 2000, with the assistance of a Dakota Advisory Council, RCHS also began interpreting Dakota culture and lifeways, now telling the stories of the remarkable relationship between Jane Gibbs and the Dakota people of Ĥeyáta Othújwe (Cloud Man's Village).

In 1964, the Society began publishing its award-winning magazine *Ramsey County History*. In 1978, the organization moved to St. Paul's Landmark Center, a restored Federal Courts building on the National Register of Historic Places. An expansion of the Research Center was completed in 2010 and rededicated in 2016 as the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center.

RCHS offers public programming for youth and adults. Visit www.rchs.com for details of upcoming History Revealed programs, summer camps, courthouse and depot tours, and more. The Society serves more than 15,000 students annually on field trips or through school outreach. Programs are made possible by donors, members, corporations, and foundations, all of whom we appreciate deeply. If you are not a member of RCHS, please join today and help bring history to life for more than 50,000 people every year.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, & Inclusion

RCHS is committed to ensuring it preserves and presents our county's history. As we continue our work to incorporate more culturally diverse histories, we have made a commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion that is based on this core idea: RCHS exists to serve ALL who call Ramsey County home. To learn more, please see www.rchs.com/about.

Acknowledging This Sacred Dakota Land

Mnisóta Makhóche, the land where the waters are so clear they reflect the clouds, extends beyond the modern borders of Minnesota and is the ancestral and contemporary homeland of the Dakhóta (Dakota) people. It is also home to the Anishinaabe and other Indigenous peoples, all who make up a vibrant community in Mnisóta Makhóche. RCHS acknowledges that its sites are located on and benefit from these sacred Dakota lands.

RCHS is committed to preserving our past, informing our present, and inspiring our future. Part of doing so is acknowledging the painful history and current challenges facing the Dakota people just as we celebrate the contributions of Dakota and other Indigenous peoples.

Find our full Land Acknowledgment Statement on our website, www.rchs.com. This includes actionable ways in which RCHS pledges to honor the Dakota and other Indigenous peoples of Mnisóta Makhóche.



www.rchs.com

info@rchs.com



(651) 222-0701

It's Summer at Gibbs Farm!

Fridays—June 23–August 25, noon–3 pm
Saturdays—May 27–October 28, 10 am–4 pm

JOIN US FOR GIBBS FARM OPENING DAY 2023

May 27, 10 am–4 pm

- Meet furry and feathered farm animals;
- Learn about RCHS's book, *Grasshoppers in My Bed*, and meet the author and illustrator;
- Enjoy *Light of the Moon* band;
- Make a craft and taste homemade ice cream;
- Tour Gibbs Historic Farmhouse;
- Learn about the Dakota of Cloud Man's village.



Don't miss these upcoming events:

June 2, 10:00 am–noon	Friday Farm Chores
June 7, 5:30–7:30 pm	Farmhouse Tour
June 16, 10:00 am–noon	Friday Farm Chores
June 17, 11:00–11:45 am	Saturday Nature Tour
June 22, 5:30–7:30 pm	Early Summer Grounds & Gardens Tour
July 13, 7:00–9:00 pm	Minnesota Sinfonia Concert

Consider Membership!

Did you know an RCHS membership includes free admission to Gibbs Farm, discounts at the Gibbs Giftshop, a quarterly subscription to our member magazine *Ramsey County History*, and more! Visit <https://rchs.com/support-us/> to learn more and join.

Visit our website to learn about summer camps and other events for families and adults in 2023.

2097 West Larpenteur Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55113
www.rchs.com • gibbs@rchs.com • 651-646-8629



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Faith, Advocacy, & Service

A Snapshot of Ramsey County's Welfare Workers in the Great War

JOHANNES R. ALLERT, PAGE 22



Recognizing the growing crises for struggling and, sometimes, unhoused veterans following World War I, Adj. Charles Nelson and his wife, Adj. Anna Nelson, spearheaded the effort to open a local Salvation Army hostel at 317 Robert Street in 1919. They were among thousands of welfare workers who shared faith and hope with the nation's brave warriors through prayer, music, and service. *Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society.*