



*Rush
Line*

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May 28, 2020

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PHASE

Agenda

1. Virtual meeting procedures.
2. Welcome and introductions.
3. Recap of January Policy Advisory Committee meeting and March update.
4. Public engagement update.
5. Community Advisory Committee update.
6. Engineering update.
7. Environmental update.
8. Public comment on the Rush Line BRT Project.
9. Next meeting.



Virtual Meeting Procedures

- Mute your microphone when not speaking.
- All committee members and staff are panelists. Only panelists are able to speak and share video; attendees are only able to view and listen to the meeting.
- Attendees may submit comments by using the “raise hand” feature only during the public comment period. The host will unmute you in order of hands raised.
- Project staff is not recording this meeting. There will be a meeting summary as usual published at rushline.org. As with any in-person Policy Advisory Committee meeting, members of the public may attend and record this meeting.
- Email dmcniel@srfconsulting.com if you are having issues connecting.

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 13D.021 and 13D.04 Subd. 3, the Chair of the Policy Advisory Committee has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the declared state and local emergencies. Committee members will participate by telephone or other electronic means. In addition, it may not be feasible to have any committee members, staff or members of the public present at the regular meeting location due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the declared emergencies. The meeting broadcast will be available online and a link to view the broadcast can be obtained by registering [here](#). Members of the public and the media will be able to watch the public meeting live online.

Recap of January Policy Advisory Committee Meeting

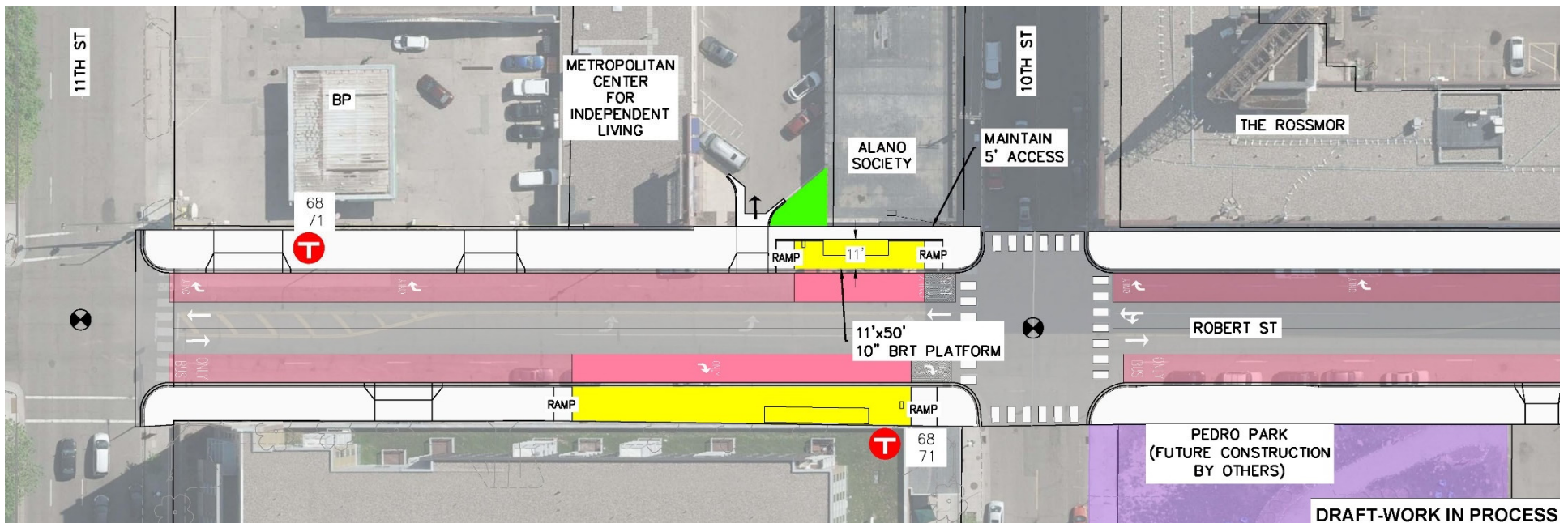
- Updates on recent and planned public engagement activities.
- Discussion of potential refinements to the 15 percent plans and ongoing coordination.
- Review of field activities.
- Overview of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and status of survey and evaluation efforts.
- Updates on 2020 and 2021 project milestones.

Recap of March Policy Advisory Committee Update

- Updates on:
 - Recent and planned public engagement activities.
 - Refinements to the 15 percent plans and ongoing coordination.
 - Municipal support of the 15 percent plans.
 - City station area planning guides.
 - Environmental schedule and field activities.
- Documents posted to the [project library](#):
 - [15 percent plans](#).
 - [Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Design Guide](#).

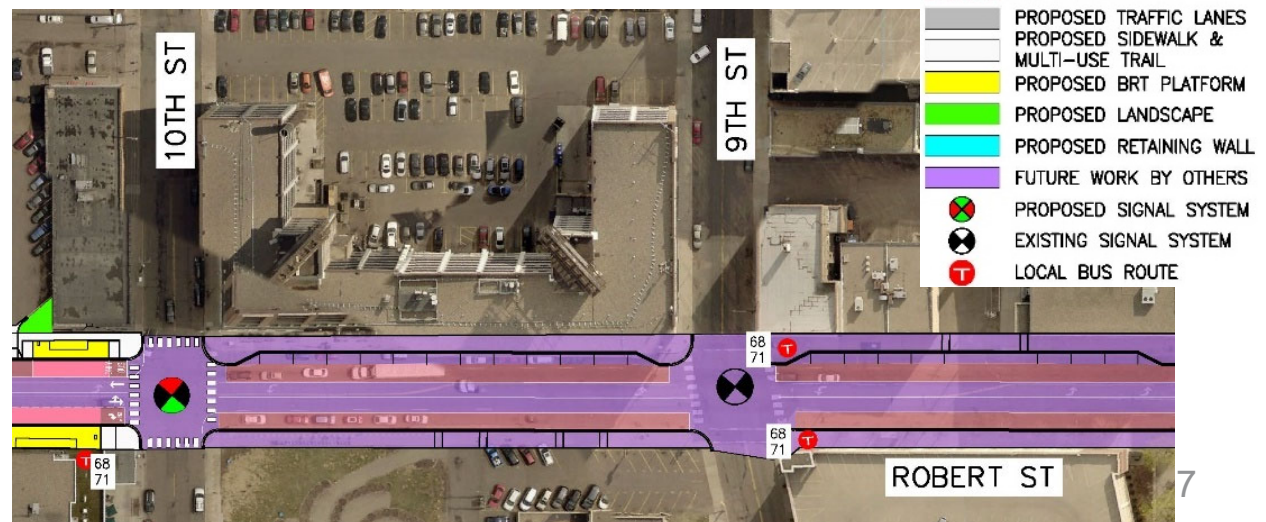
Additional Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Shifted 10th Street northbound platform location to avoid driveway access closure.



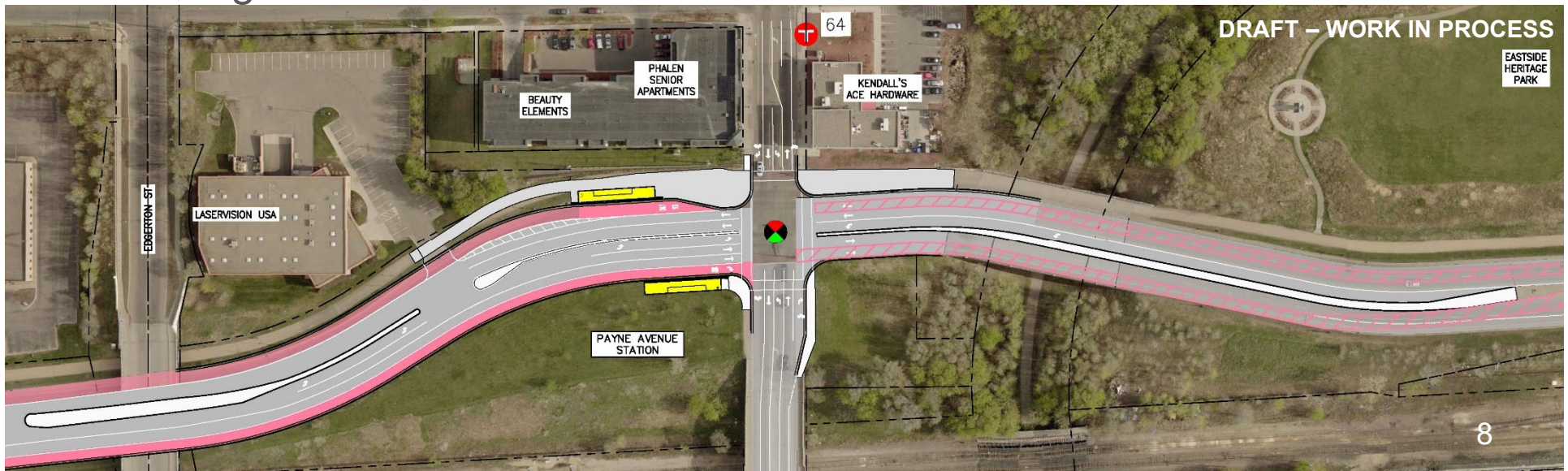
Additional Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Neighboring business expressed concern about loss of on-street parking in front of their business.
- Refined Robert Street design to retain some on-street parking spaces.
- Concept preserves the business access and transit lanes.
- Project staff met with neighboring businesses February 19 to share revised concept.
- Coordination is ongoing with the city of Saint Paul and Minnesota Department of Transportation.

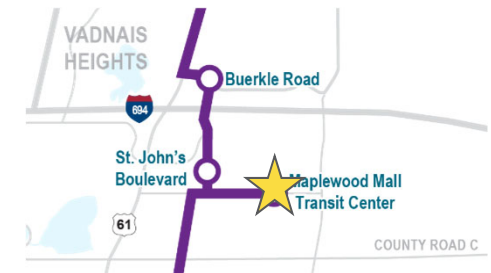


Additional Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Refined the Phalen Boulevard and Payne Avenue intersection to optimize the design for all modes. In the southbound direction, the business access and transit lane would begin west of Payne Avenue to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance and still retain the transit advantage.

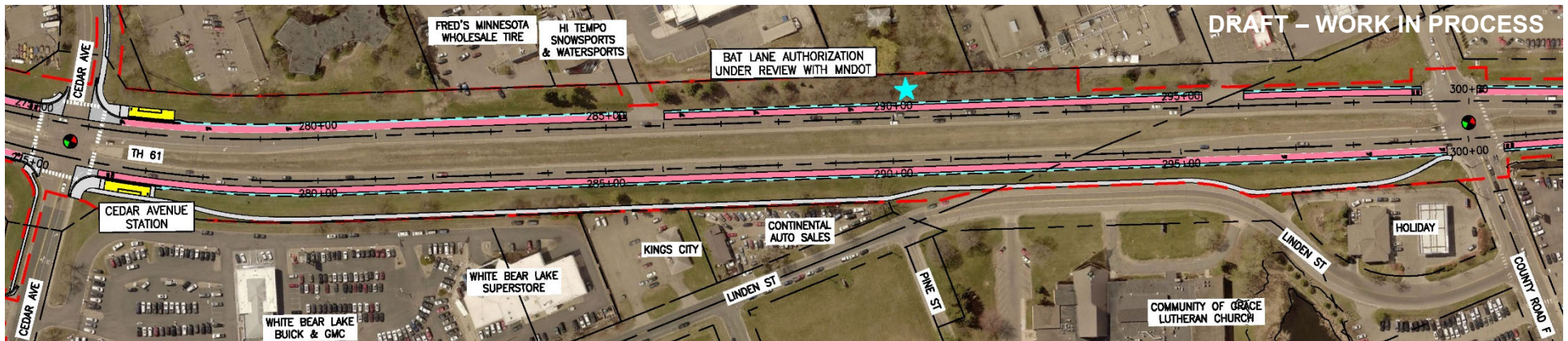
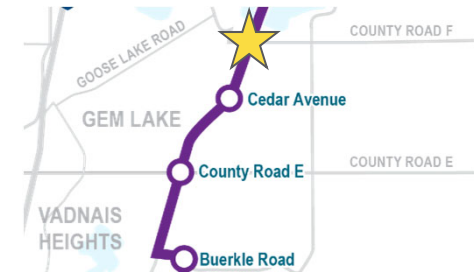


- Refined Maplewood Mall Transit Center improvements in coordination with Metro Transit (transit gates and platform configuration and improvements to customer waiting area).



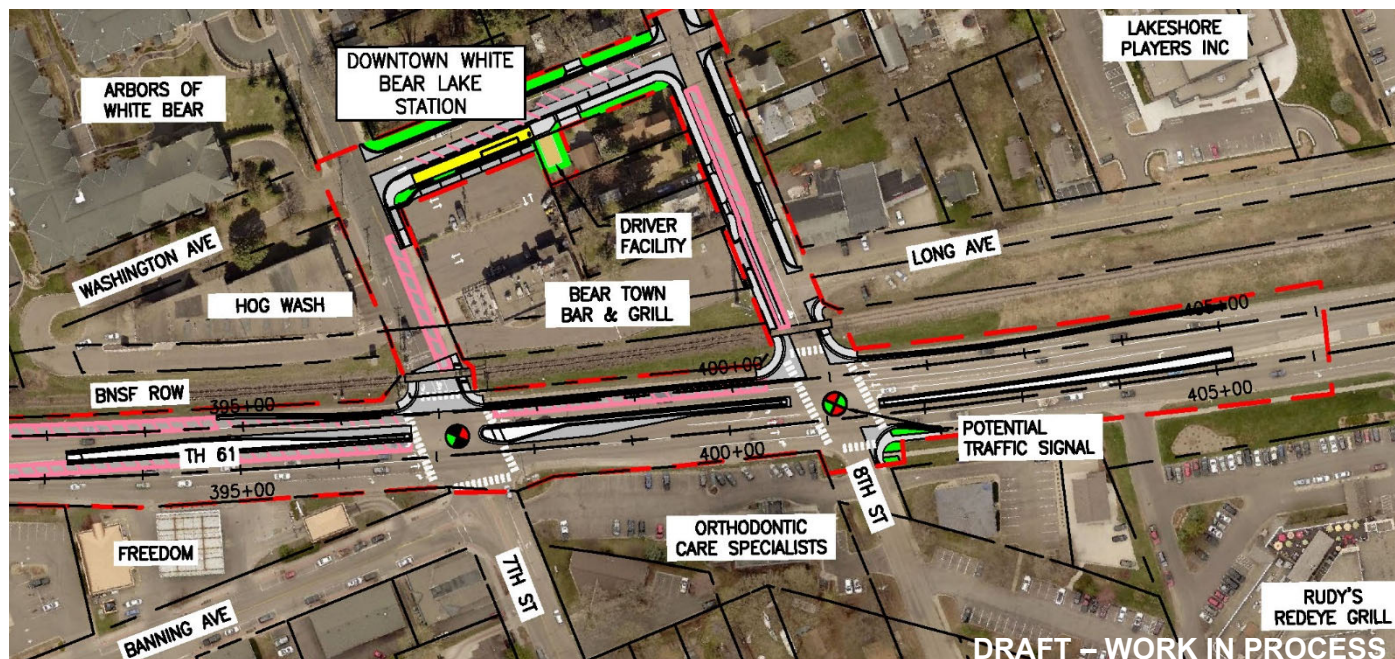
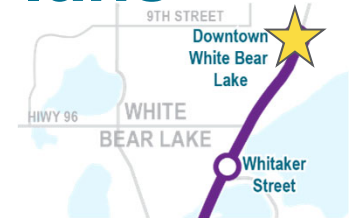
Additional Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Add trail from Cedar Avenue to County Road F on the east side of Highway 61.
- Trail will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment but ongoing coordination with project partners will be required to determine feasibility of this trail segment, identify potential sources for the non-federal funding share and develop a maintenance plan prior to including the trail segment in the project scope.



Additional Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Refined 8th Street and Highway 61 intersection design to include pedestrian improvements and a traffic signal at 8th Street and prohibits southbound left turns at 7th Street.
- Additional coordination needed with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and White Bear Lake Area Schools.



Summary of Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Platform locations to provide maximum transit accessibility for both local service and BRT, while minimizing potential impacts.
- Platform height (recommended 10 inches) to provide equitable, safe and efficient transit access.
- Dedicated guideway and intersection design to minimize parking and traffic impacts while providing efficient transit operations.
- Inclusion of additional pedestrian and bicycle facilities to improve station accessibility.

Summary of Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

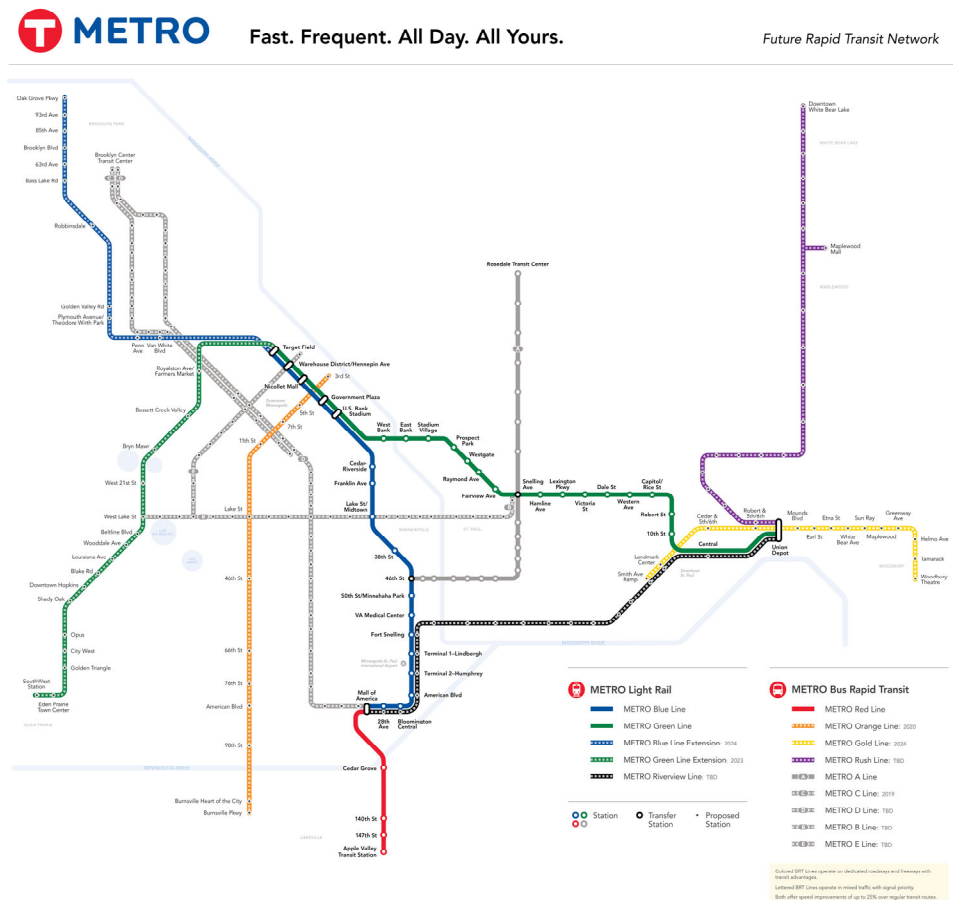
- Adjusted BRT and Bruce Vento Trail design within the Ramsey County rail right-of-way to improve safety and reflect public input.
- Design refinements to Maplewood Mall Transit Center facility to efficiently serve both existing service and Rush Line BRT and improve customer experience.
- Agreement to review the project with and without the Highway 36 park-and-ride in the Environmental Assessment.
- Commitment to continue coordination with cities, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Metro Transit to address as design advances.



Public Engagement Update

Rush Line BRT Planning During COVID-19

- Project meetings and public engagement focused online to limit in-person contact.
- Progress on engineering and Environmental Assessment remains on track.
- Other regional transit projects also proceeding while following public health guidelines.



Recent Public Engagement and Themes

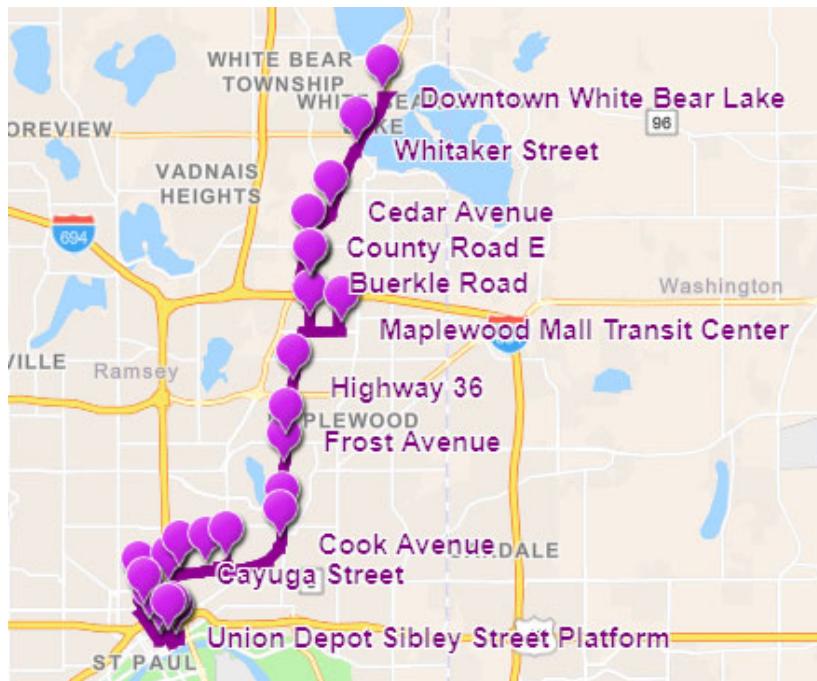
- Comments received via email regarding:
 - Proposed features of Highway 36 park-and-ride and concern about traffic.
 - Interest in improved bicycle and pedestrian connections on Pennsylvania Avenue.



Community Advisory Committee, February 5

Upcoming Public Engagement

- Social media and other online communications.
- Online station design survey.



In general, how will you access Rush Line BRT stations? Select all that apply.

☐ Walk

☐ Use a mobility device (e.g. wheelchair or walker)

☒ Bike

☐ Scooter

☒ Transfer from another transit line

☐ Drive and park

☐ Drop-off and pick-up

☐ Lyft/Uber/taxi

☐ Other

Online Station Design Survey

- Seeking input regarding:
 - How riders will access stations.
 - When riders will use Rush Line BRT.
 - Desired station amenities such as bikeshare stations and community wayfinding.
 - Ranking priorities for boarding, such as level boarding and offboard fare payment.
 - Promoted via social media and e-newsletters.
- Will be translated to Spanish, Hmong, Karen and Somali.



Bikeshare station (Thrive Design Studio)



Community Advisory Committee Update

Recap of May Community Advisory Committee Meeting

- Project updates.
- Station design overview:
 - Elements of station design.
 - Gold Line BRT station design process.
 - Survey review and discussion.
- Community Advisory Committee feedback:
 - Interest in implementing public art.
 - Importance of ongoing public engagement to see how attitudes might change throughout planning process.
 - Adopted statement on station design.

Community Advisory Committee

Statement on Station Design

- *As the design of Rush Line BRT stations advances in future project phases, the Community Advisory Committee supports a station design process that balances these two priorities:*
 - *Community engagement that gives communities along the route the opportunity to influence station design elements so Rush Line stations reflect the communities they serve.*
 - *Sufficient design consistency across Rush Line stations to facilitate efficient transit operations and maintenance and establish a recognizable transit system brand identity along the route.*



Engineering Update

Coordination Activities

- Saint Paul, Maplewood and Highway 61 Issue Resolution Team meetings.
- Minnesota Department of Transportation staff approved layout process.
- Federal Transit Administration coordination meeting.
- Federal Highway Administration overview meeting.

Resolutions of Support on 15 Percent Plans

- Received resolutions of support from:
 - White Bear Lake – April 14.
 - White Bear Township – April 20.
 - Maplewood – May 11.
 - Vadnais Heights – May 19.
- To be scheduled:
 - Saint Paul.
 - Presented to the Parks & Recreation Commission on May 14 and received resolution of support.
 - Next steps include presentation to the Transportation Committee and Planning Commission prior to City Council action.
 - Gem Lake.

Platform Height Update

- Metro Transit conducted platform height tests.
 - Goal:
 - To identify what platform height would allow a roll-on condition with the ability to deploy the ramp.
 - Results:
 - 10-inch platforms would require buses to kneel slightly for level boarding but would provide the desired customer experience.
 - Taller platforms would introduce complications with ramp deployment.
- Project staff recommendation:
 - Pursue 10-inch platform standard where feasible.

Maintenance and Ownership

- Discussed areas of focus with each issue resolution team (bridges, trails, signals, etc.).
- Topic-specific follow-up meetings related to:
 - Business access and transit lane maintenance.
 - Ramsey County Rail right-of-way section.
 - Highway 36 park-and-ride.
- Next steps:
 - Prepare maintenance and ownership technical report for review.
 - Convene broader group to discuss.

Ridership Workshop

- Virtual meeting held on May 6.
- Purpose was to review and provide input relative to model assumptions and opportunities to enhance ridership.
- Coordination with Federal Transit Administration.
- Participants included local and national experts on the Federal Transit Administration's STOPS model.
- Next step:
 - Refined ridership projection.

Risk Workshop

- Virtual meeting held May 26-27.
- Purpose was to identify and evaluate potential mitigation options for project risks.
- Draft risk register prepared based on:
 - Questionnaire.
 - Group interviews.

Upcoming Engineering Activities

- Refining capital cost estimate based on 15 percent plans.
- Advance stormwater analysis.
- Submit outstanding layouts to Minnesota Department of Transportation.
 - Highway 61.
 - Robert Street.
- Prepare preliminary bridge plans for Minnesota Department of Transportation review.



Environmental Update

Federal Transit Administration Coordination

- The Federal Transit Administration has provided comments on the following Section 106 Phase I/II reports:
 - Architecture.
 - Archaeology.
 - Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad Corridor.
- Next steps:
 - State Historic Preservation Office review of reports.
 - Assessment of effects.

Next Steps for Environmental Assessment

Timeframe	Review
March to June 2020	Ramsey County, Metro Transit and Minnesota Department of Transportation review
June-November 2020	Federal Transit Administration administrative and legal reviews
December 2020	Publish Environmental Assessment and begin 45-day public comment period
January 2021	Environmental Assessment public hearings
April 2021	Anticipated environmental decision



Public Comment

Public Comment

- Attendees may submit comments by using the “raise hand” feature only during the public comment period. The host will unmute you in order of hands raised.
- When commenting, please:
 - Be respectful.
 - Be brief. Limit comments to **3 minutes** to give others an opportunity to speak.
- Public comments will be included in the Policy Advisory Committee meeting summary.
- The Chair reserves the right to limit an individual’s comments if they become redundant, disrespectful or are not relevant to the Rush Line BRT Project.
- Submit additional comments or questions to info@rushline.org.




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Next Meeting

Next Meeting

- July 23.
- 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Virtual meeting.



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Thank you!



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651-266-2760