

August 24, 2020

### COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #9

## Agenda

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- 1. Virtual meeting procedures.
- 2. Introductions/icebreaker.
- 3. Project updates.
- 4. Station survey results.
- 5. Transit-oriented development grant.
- 6. Bikeshed and walkshed analysis.
- 7. Future agenda items.

# Rush Line

#### **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.
- Project staff is not recording this meeting and there will be a meeting summary as usual. However, as with any in-person Community Advisory Committee meeting, members of the public may attend and record this meeting.
- Email <u>dmcniel@srfconsulting.com</u> if you are having issues connecting.



### **Project Updates**



### **Coordination Activities**

- Saint Paul, Maplewood and Highway 61 Issue Resolution Team meetings.
- Began coordination with Minnesota Department of Transportation staff for approval of layouts.
- Capitol Region Watershed District coordination on Lower Phalen Creek daylighting.
- Resolutions of support for 15% concept plans received from Saint Paul, Maplewood, White Bear Township, Vadnais Heights and White Bear Lake.

**Engineering Update** 



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#### **Jackson Street Refined to Mixed Traffic**



**Engineering Update** 



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#### **Refinement to Gateway State Trail Crossing**







#### **Maintenance and Ownership**

- Coordinating with cities, Ramsey County, Minnesota Department of Transportation and Metro Transit.
- Addresses:
  - Roadways, curb lanes, BAT lanes, bridges, underpasses and the Highway 36 park-and-ride.
  - Sidewalks, trails, fences and retaining walls.
  - Co-located guideway and Bruce Vento Regional Trail within Ramsey County rail right-of-way.
  - Snow removal.
  - Stormwater facilities.
- Next steps: work toward maintenance and ownership agreements.

# Rush Line

### **Upcoming Engineering Activities**

- Refining capital cost estimate based on 15 percent plans.
- Advancing stormwater analysis.
- Submitting outstanding layouts to Minnesota Department of Transportation.
  - Highway 61.
  - Robert Street.
- Advancing design of bridge plans after Minnesota
   Department of Transportation review.



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#### **Environmental Assessment Update**

 Draft Environmental Assessment reviewed by Ramsey County, Metro Transit and Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Timeframe	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	



### **Station Design Survey**



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### **Online Station Design Survey**

- Available June 24-August 1.
  - Available in English, Spanish, Hmong, Karen and Somali.
  - Promoted via social media, enewsletters and signs on the Bruce Vento Trail.
  - 471 responses.
- Topics of interest:
  - Safety and security at stations.
  - Landscaping.
  - Bicycle access.
  - Enclosed shelters.
  - Parking.

What additional station amenities or features would improve your experience using Rush Line BRT? Select up to three features.		
Vehicle drop- off/pick-up zone	Bicycle share station	Bicycle tune-up station
Secure bicycle parking	Signs with directions to nearby destinations	Enhanced landscaping
Public art		
Other		
Station design su	irvey	

#### **Residence and Workplace**



- Home: Saint Paul, Maplewood and White Bear Lake.
- Work: Minneapolis, downtown Saint Paul, Maplewood and White Bear Lake.
- Some are retired and many work elsewhere in the metro.



Residence and workplace of respondents

### **Use of Rush Line BRT**

- Top features that would encourage Rush Line use:
  - Safety at stations.
  - Safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to stations.
  - Convenient locations for drop-off and pick-up.
- Other suggestions:
  - More development.
  - Convenience of use (easy access and frequent service).
  - Accessible parking.

#### Features that would encourage Rush Line BRT use





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#### **Frequency of Transit Use**

• Most respondents are infrequent transit users\*.

Frequency of transit use



\*Respondents were asked to answer this question as if the COVID-19 pandemic was not a factor.

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Station Design Survey

### Top Destinations to Access Using Rush Line BRT

- Downtown Saint Paul: work, restaurants and shopping, appointments and residences.
- East Side: work, restaurants and shopping, residences, Hmong Village and Lake Phalen.
- Maplewood: residences and medical appointments; Maplewood Mall Transit Center: shopping and transfers to other routes.
- Vadnais Heights: TCO Sports Center and nearby shops.
- White Bear Lake: residences, restaurants and shopping, and recreation.

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#### Accessing the Rush Line

• Walking, biking and park-and-ride most popular mode for access.



Mode of accessing Rush Line BRT



### Using the Rush Line



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• Special events, rush hours and weekend afternoons most popular times for use.



Expected time of use for Rush Line BRT

### **Additional Amenities and Features**

- B R Secure bicycle parking, wayfinding signage, public art and landscaping most desired.
- Other: park-and-ride and security.



Preferred additional station amenities and features



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#### **Boarding Experience**



• Cleaning, repair and snow clearance at stations is top priority for boarding, followed by level boarding and offboard fare collection.





#### Station Design Survey

#### **Station Area Characteristics**



- Saint Paul residents highlighted:
  - Proximity to downtown.
  - Bruce Vento Regional Trail, Lake Phalen and Hmong Village.
- Maplewood residents highlighted:
  - Proximity to Bruce Vento Trail.
  - Quiet atmosphere.
- Vadnais Heights residents highlighted:
  - Quiet neighborhoods.
- White Bear Lake residents highlighted:
  - Quaint/historic neighborhood character.
  - White Bear Lake (the body of water).

### **Other Comments**



- Interest in:
  - Potential private property impacts.
  - Changes to the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.
  - Desired pedestrian improvements.
  - Station size and siting.
  - Access to destinations including Hmong Village and the Gateway State Trail.



#### **Transit-Oriented Development Grant**



#### Federal Transit Administration's Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning

 Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit was awarded \$1,250,000 to plan for transit-oriented development at Rush Line stations.





#### **Station Area Planning Next Steps**

- Request for proposals expected late 2020.
- Partner agencies and community organizations will be asked for input on work scope.
- Four primary work scope tasks:
  - Public and Stakeholder Engagement.
  - Real Estate Market and Housing Gap Analysis.
  - Station Concepts and Development Plans.
  - Implementation Plans.
- Advanced station area planning expected to span roughly 2021 to 2023.



#### Walkshed and Bikeshed Analysis



- Area one can walk to in 755 seconds (time to walk one-half mile at 3.5 feet per second).
- Only using existing sidewalks and trails.
- Accounts for delays at arterial and collector roadway crossings.





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#### **Improved Walkshed**

- Area one can walk to in 755 seconds (time to walk one-half mile at 3.5 feet per second).
- Use existing sidewalks and trails <u>as well as planned</u> <u>improvements from</u> the Rush Line BRT Project.



<sup>\*</sup>This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using only the existing sidewalks and shared-use paths. \*\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using existing sidewalks, existing shared-use paths, and Rush Line BRT project improvements.



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#### **Improved Walkshed**

- Area one can walk to in 755 seconds (time to walk one-half mile at 3.5 feet per second).
- Use existing sidewalks and trails
   + planned improvements from the Rush Line BRT Project + projects by others (city, county, etc.).



\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using only the existing sidewalks and shared-use paths. \*\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using existing sidewalks, existing shared-use paths, and Rush Line BRT project improvements. \*\*\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using existing sidewalks, existing shared-use paths, Rush Line BRT project improvements, and improvements planned by others.



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#### Walkshed Gaps

• Additional projects to consider (red lines).



<sup>\*</sup>This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using only the existing sidewalks and shared-use paths. \*\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using existing sidewalks, existing shared-use paths, Rush Line BRT project improvements, and improvements planned by others.

#### White Bear Lake Walkshed Analysis Example Downtown White Bear Lake station



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#### **Analysis Results**

- Existing street grid pattern with sidewalks provides access (blue lines in tan area).
- Proposed Rush Line BRT Project improvements near station provide direct access (purple lines/blue area).
- Sidewalk gaps near station (red lines).



<sup>\*</sup>This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using only the existing sidewalks and shared-use paths. \*\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using existing sidewalks, existing shared-use paths, Rush Line BRT project improvements, and improvements planned by others.

#### Maplewood Walkshed Analysis Example Frost Avenue station



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#### **Analysis Results**

- Existing sidewalks and trails provide access (blue/green lines in tan area).
- Additional improvements near station (blue area).
- Additional sidewalks/trails could provide access to Bruce Vento Trail, Gateway Trail, Wakefield Park (red lines).



<sup>\*</sup>This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using only the existing sidewalks and shared-use paths. \*\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using existing sidewalks, existing shared-use paths, Rush Line BRT project improvements, and improvements planned by others.

#### Saint Paul Walkshed Analysis Example Payne Avenue station



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#### **Analysis Results**

- Existing sidewalks and trails provide access (blue/green lines in tan area)
- Additional sidewalks/trails could provide access to neighborhoods south of Phalen Blvd (red lines)



\*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using only the existing sidewalks and shared-use paths. \*This is how far you can walk in 13 minutes using existing sidewalks, existing shared-use paths, Rush Line BRT project improvements, and improvements planned by others.

### **Bikeshed Analysis Example** Maryland Avenue station



#### Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress

- Low-stress network (blue lines).
  - Low traffic speeds.
  - Low traffic volumes.
  - Trails / separated bikeways.
- High-stress network (red lines).
  - High traffic speeds.
  - High traffic volumes.
  - Shared lane / bike lane.



#### **Bikeshed Analysis Example** Maryland Avenue station



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#### **Existing Bikeshed**

- High-stress bikeshed.
- No existing low-stress access to Maryland Avenue station.



#### **Bikeshed Analysis Example** Maryland Avenue station



#### **Improved Bikeshed**

- Planned direct trail connection to station.
- Creates low-stress bikeshed.



#### **Bikeshed Analysis Example** Cedar Avenue station



- High-stress bikeshed.
- Create low stress
   bikeshed with:
  - Connections to the planned trails from the neighborhood.
  - Direct low-stress
     connections to
     the station along
     Cedar Avenue.





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- High-stress bikeshed.
- Three direct lowstress station connections.
  - Good access to jobs on Buerkle Road.
  - Lack of low stress connections to many residential areas (County Road D, Hazelwood Street, Midland Avenue).



#### **Bikeshed Analysis Example** Frost Avenue station



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- Low-stress bikeshed.
  - Multiple
     connections to
     Gateway State
     Trail and Bruce
     Vento Trail.
  - Grid network of low-stress residential streets.
- High-stress bikeshed
  - Collector/arterial roads.



#### **Bikeshed Analysis Example** Frost Avenue station



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- Low-stress bikeshed.
  - 3 miles all directions!
- High-stress bikeshed.
  - Interrupted grid (lakes, freeways, highways).
  - Lack of
     connections to
     Gateway State
     Trail and Bruce
     Vento Trail.



#### **Bikeshed Analysis Example** 14<sup>th</sup> Street station



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- Low-stress bikeshed.
  - Capital City
     Bikeway/Jackson
     Street.
- High-stress bikeshed.
  - Arterials/collector roads without bicycle facilities.
  - Interrupted grid (freeways, highways, topography).



#### **Questions to Consider**



- How comfortable are you walking along streets with no sidewalks? Is a lack of sidewalks a barrier to walking to specific stations?
- How comfortable are you biking along streets with high traffic speeds/volumes and limited bicycle infrastructure? Are such streets a barrier to biking to a specific station?
- Are there specific street crossings near future Rush Line BRT stations that are difficult to comfortably cross? Are there places with paths worn in the grass from people walking/biking to access existing sidewalks?
- How should pedestrian and bicycle improvements that enhance station access be prioritized?



#### Walkshed and Bikesheds Next Steps

- Address walkshed and bikeshed gaps through the station area planning process.
- Show how the walksheds and bikesheds could be expanded further as other pedestrian and bicycling projects are planned or programmed through advanced station area planning.



#### **Next Meeting**

- Future agenda items.
- A Doodle poll will be distributed for the next Community Advisory Committee in late fall 2020.



## Thank you!

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