



April 22, 2021

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PHASE

Agenda

1. Virtual meeting procedures.
2. Welcome and introductions.
3. Recap of project update distributed to the Policy Advisory Committee in March 2021.
4. Community Advisory Committee update.
5. Environmental update.
6. Cultural and historic resource process (Section 106) update.
7. Engineering update.
8. Landscape design approach.
9. Public comment on the Rush Line BRT Project.
10. 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.

Recap of Project Update Distributed in March

- Environmental Assessment:
 - Federal Transit Administration review and historic resource process are advancing.
- Engineering:
 - Coordination with Minnesota Department of Transportation on the layout review process and preliminary bridge plan review.
 - Advancing stormwater analysis and overall project engineering.
- Visual Quality Manual:
 - Technical Advisory Committee review.
- Public engagement:
 - [Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Design Guide video](#).
 - Environmental Assessment engagement planning.

Community Advisory Committee Update

- Met on April 13.
- Topics covered:
 - Project updates.
 - Cost and ridership.
 - Capital Investment Grants Program.
 - Environmental Assessment and advanced station area planning.
 - Section 106 process.
 - Tree inventory and landscape design approach.
 - Project next steps.



Community Advisory Committee, February 2020

Public Engagement Update

- Coordination meetings:
 - Metropolitan Council Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee – April 7.
 - SGU Veterans and Families of USA, Inc. – April 14.
 - Payne-Phalen District Council Meeting – April 27.
- Project e-newsletter sent out on April 15.
- Comments received via email regarding:
 - Interest in station locations (Mt. Airy Street and Downtown White Bear Lake).
 - Concern about long-term ridership impacts from COVID-19.
 - Interest in vehicle choice.
 - Concern about changes to the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.



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Environmental Update

Responsible Agencies and Accompanying Documents

- Joint federal/state environmental document.
 - Federal Transit Administration – lead federal agency.
 - Federal Highway Administration – federal cooperating agency.
 - Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority – Responsible Governmental Unit and local signatory to Environmental Assessment.
- Environmental Assessment includes:
 - Section 4(f) evaluation.
 - Draft Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement.

Environmental Assessment/Environmental Assessment Worksheet Schedule

Timeframe	Activity
June 2020 – April 2021	Federal Transit Administration administrative and legal reviews
May 11, 2021	Publish Environmental Assessment/Environmental Assessment Worksheet
May 11 – June 25, 2021	45-day public comment period
Early/mid June 2021	Public meetings
Summer 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concurrence from officials with jurisdiction on <i>de minimis</i> impacts to Section 4(f) resources. Finalize Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement.

Environmental Assessment/Environmental Assessment Worksheet Schedule

Timeframe	Activity
October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal Transit Administration issues environmental decision document (includes final Section 4(f) determination).• Ramsey County issues state environmental decision document.• Federal Highway Administration issues environmental decision document as cooperating agency (needed for interstate right-of-way use approval).
Fall/winter 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rush Line BRT Project transitions to the Metropolitan Council after environmental decision.

Environmental Assessment Publication Engagement

- Communication:
 - One-pager flyer and short video with information about the Environmental Assessment, its purpose and the comment process.
 - Available in English, Hmong and Spanish.
 - Social media posts.
 - Legal notice of availability.
 - Press release.
 - Mailing to directly adjacent property owners.
 - E-newsletter updates.
 - Project advisory committee members asked to share information about comment opportunity with communities.

Environmental Assessment Public Comment Period

- Environmental Assessment document will be:
 - Submitted to Minnesota Environmental Quality Board for publication.
 - Shared with partner cities, Metropolitan Council, state and federal agencies, and Environmental Conservation Library.
 - Available at Ramsey County Law Library and multiple local libraries and city halls where feasible due to COVID-19 safety protocols.
 - Published on rushline.org.

Environmental Assessment Public Comment Period

- Public meetings:
 - Two online meetings and one in-person, in accordance with public health guidelines due to COVID-19.
 - Meetings will include:
 - Project presentation.
 - Opportunity to informally ask questions.



Cultural and Historic Resource Process (Section 106) Update

Section 106

- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (now § 306108).
- Four-step process:
 - Step 1: Initiate the process.
 - Step 2: Identify historic properties.
 - Step 3: Assess effects.
 - Step 4: Resolve adverse effects, if any.



Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Consulting Parties

- Federal Transit Administration.
- State Historic Preservation Office.
- US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Federal Highway Administration.
- Metropolitan Council.
- Ramsey County.
- Minnesota Department of Transportation (to be invited).
- City of Gem Lake.
- City of Maplewood.
- Maplewood Heritage Preservation Commission.
- City of Saint Paul.
- Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission.
- City of Vadnais Heights.
- City of White Bear Lake.
- White Bear Township.
- Maplewood Area Historical Society.
- White Bear Lake Area Historical Society.

Identification Efforts

- Surveys and evaluation:
 - Archaeological survey.
 - Phase II evaluation of the Lake Superior & Mississippi (LS&M) Railroad Corridor Historic District.
 - Architecture/History survey.
- Identified 28 historic properties listed in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register.

General Assumptions for Rush Line BRT

- Advancing project design.
 - Preservation professional reviews of project plans at critical design stages (30, 60, 90 and 100 percent and any modifications).
 - Federal Transit Administration will assess the need to adjust the project's area of potential effects and/or the finding of effect for any historic properties due to design changes or proposed construction methods (i.e., pile driving).
- Planning for transit-oriented development.
 - Planning will consider nearby historic properties.
 - If plans are adopted by municipalities, Federal Transit Administration will assess adjustments to the area of potential effects and effects findings.

Assessment of Effects

The Federal Transit Administration has determined that the Rush Line BRT Project will have an **Adverse Effect** on historic properties.

In particular, the project will have:

- No Adverse Effect on 14 historic properties.
- No Adverse Effect, with conditions, on 9 historic properties.
- Adverse Effect on 5 historic properties.

No Adverse Effect

(downtown Saint Paul)

- Finch, Van Slyck & McConville Dry Goods Co. (RA-SPC-5462).
- Saint Paul Urban Renewal Historic District (RA-SPC-8364).
- First Farmers & Merchants National Bank (RA-SPC-3168).
- First National Bank of Saint Paul (RA-SPC-4645).
- Pioneer and Endicott Buildings (RA-SPC-3167).
- Manhattan Building (RA-SPC-3170).
- Golden Rule Department Store Building (RA-SPC-3171).
- Foot, Schulze & Co. Building (RA-SPC-3174).
- Produce Exchange Building (RA-SPC-6330).

No Adverse Effect **(outside downtown Saint Paul)**

- StPM&M Railway Company Shops Historic District (RA-SPC-4582).
- Theodore Hamm Brewing Company Complex (RA-SPC-2926).
- 3M Administration Building (RA-SPC-0455).
- Gladstone Shops (Site 21RA70).
- Polar Chevrolet Bear/Paul R. Bear (RA-WBC-0031).

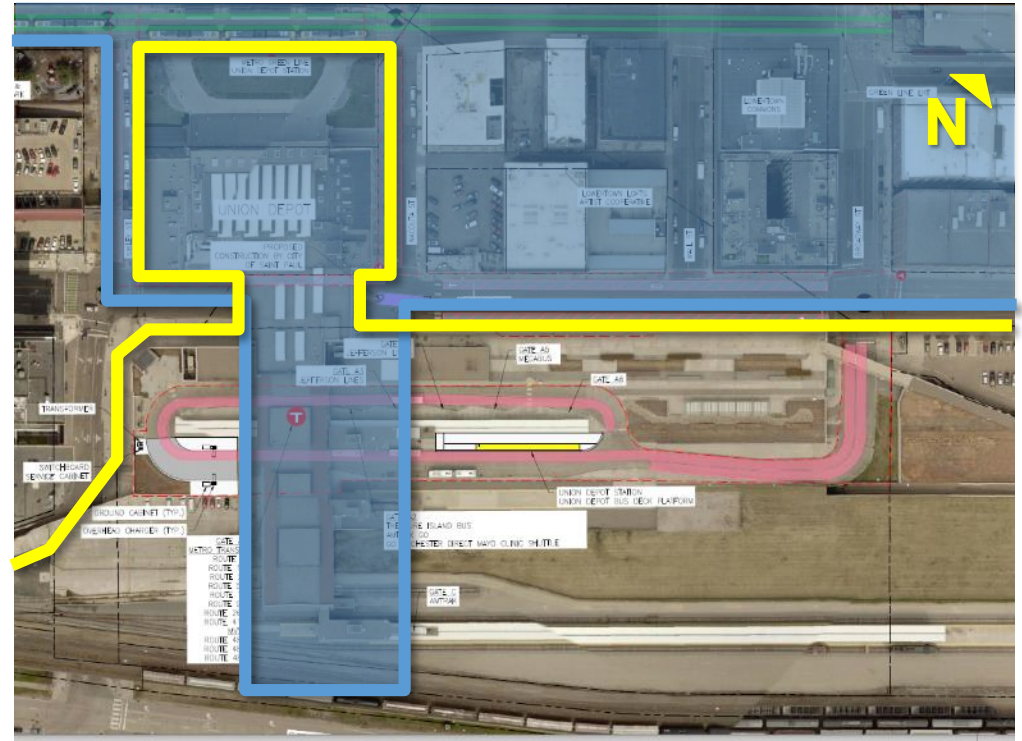
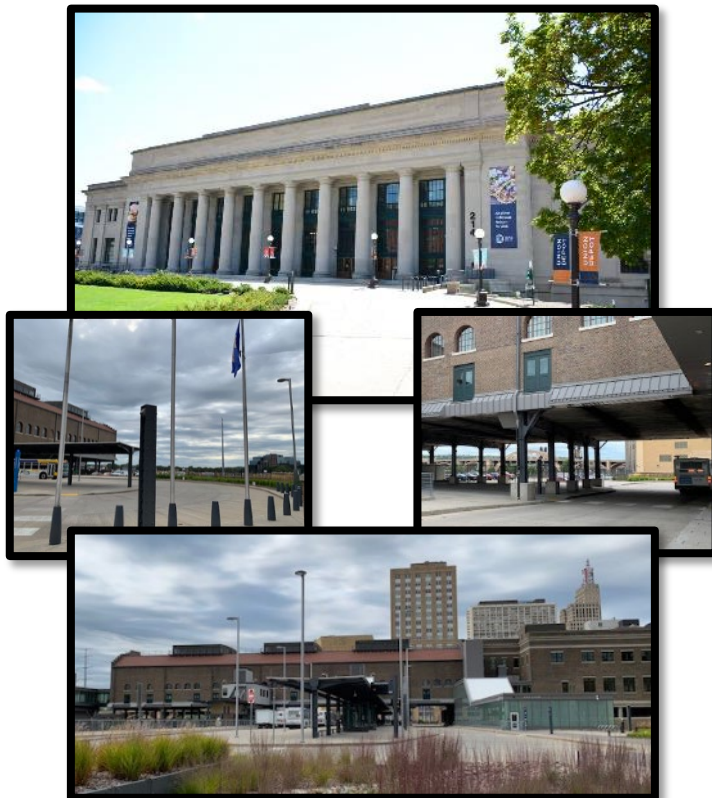
No Adverse Effect, with Condition(s)

- Enforcing the condition will result in No Adverse Effect to the historic property.
- Conditions are outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement.
- Types of conditions:
 - Design requirements.
 - Consulting party review according to Secretary of Interior Standards.
 - Construction Protection Plan for Historic Properties (CPPHP).

No Adverse Effect, with Condition(s)

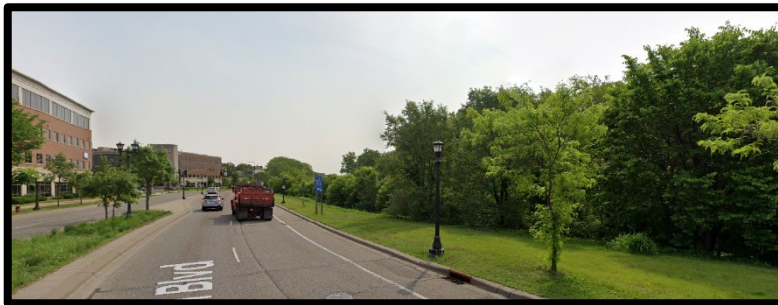
- Lowertown Historic District (RA-SPC-4580).
- Saint Paul Union Depot (RA-SPC-5225, RA-SPC-6907).
- Great Northern Railroad Corridor Historic District (RA-SPC-5918).
- Westminster Junction (RA-SPC-5618).
- StPS&TF/Omaha Road Railroad Corridor Historic District (XX-RRD-CNW01).
- Phalen Park (RA-SPC-10850).
- Johnson Parkway (RA-SPC-5685, RA-SPC-8497).
- Moose Lodge 963 (RA-MWC-0134).
- Madeline L. Weaver Elementary School (RA-MWC-0106).

Design Requirement: Project Elements at Union Depot Bus Deck Platform



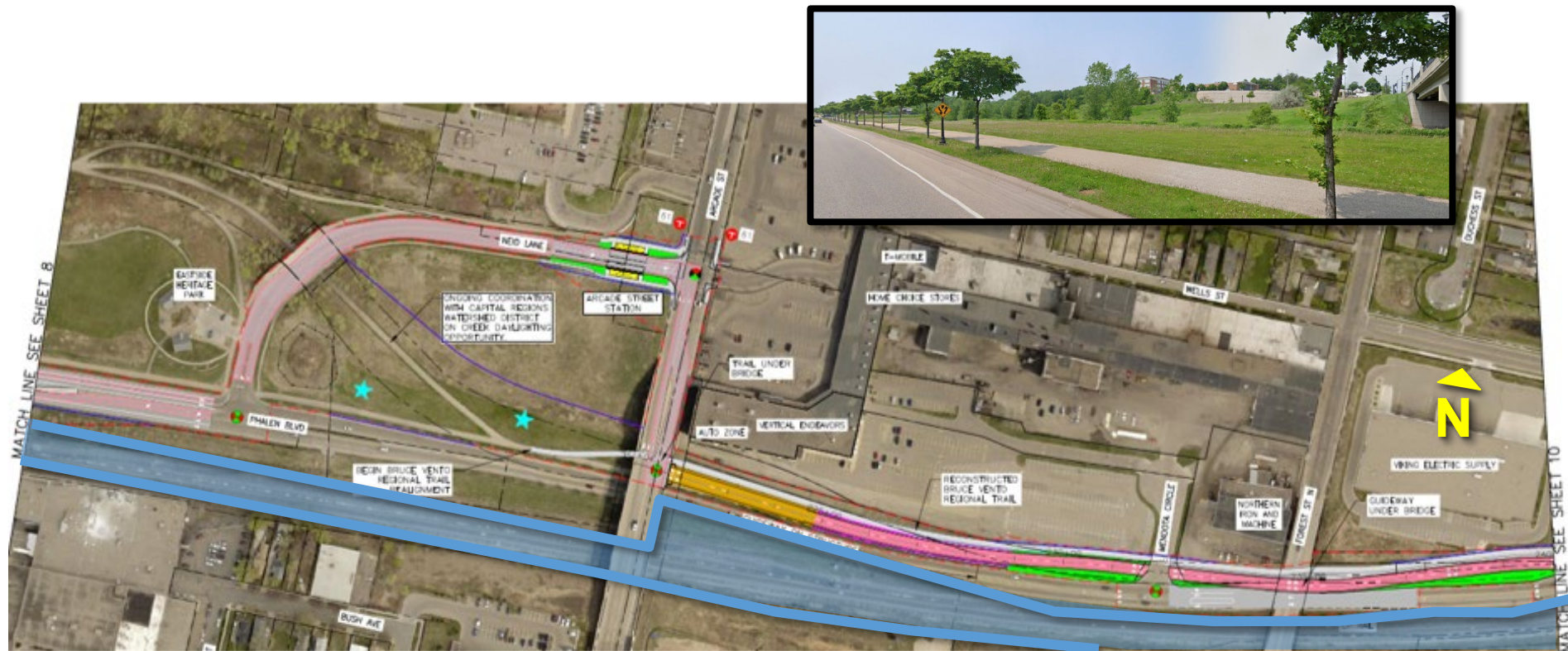
Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Consulting Party Review of Project Elements near Cayuga Street Station



Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Design Requirement: Vegetative Screening near StPS&TF/Omaha Road Railroad Corridor

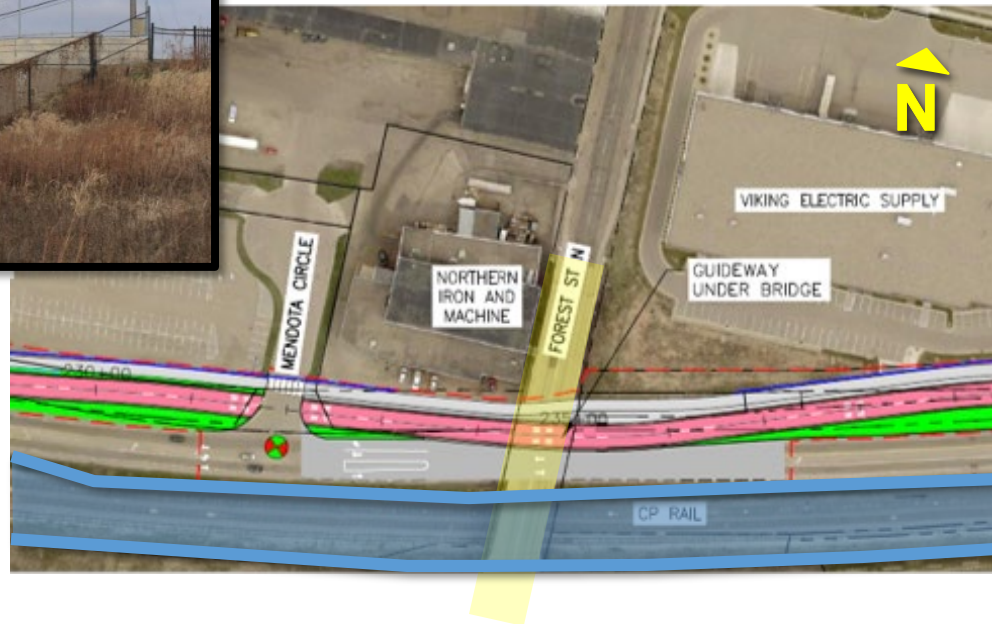


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Consulting Party Review of Physical Barriers at Forest Street Bridge

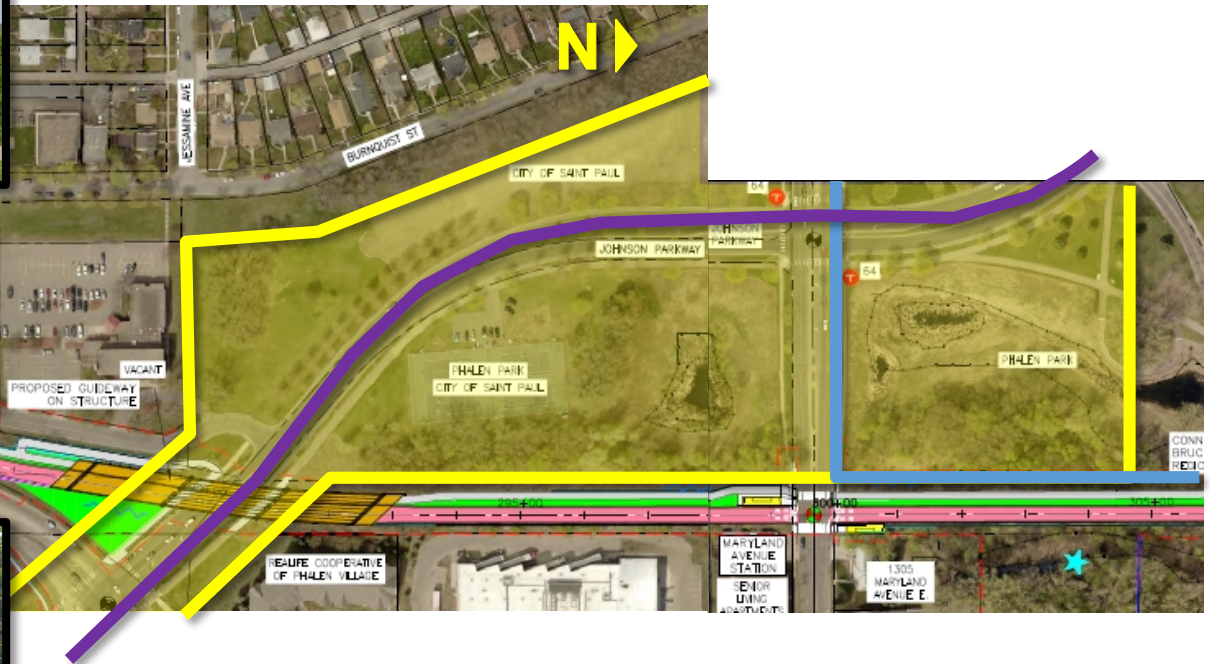
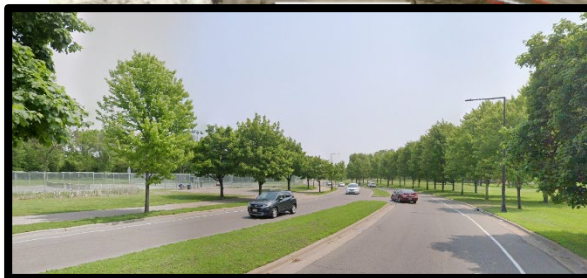
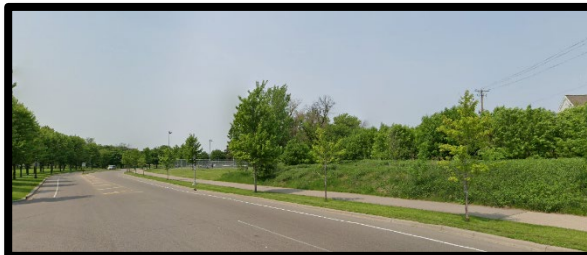


Forest Street Bridge
(Bridge No. 5962)



Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Consulting Party Review of Johnson Parkway Bridge



Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Design Requirements: Trail Connection and Vegetative Screening CPPHP for East Shore Drive



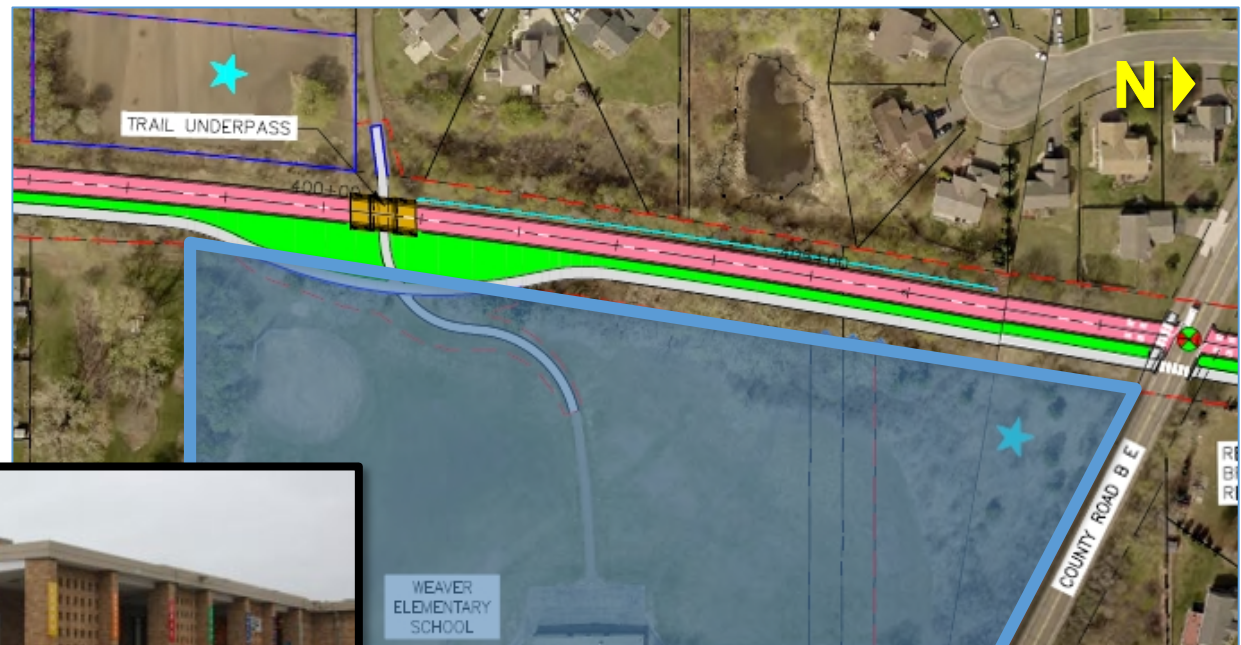
Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Design Requirement: Project Elements at Moose Lodge 963



Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Consulting Party Review of Project Elements near Weaver Elementary School



Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Adverse Effect

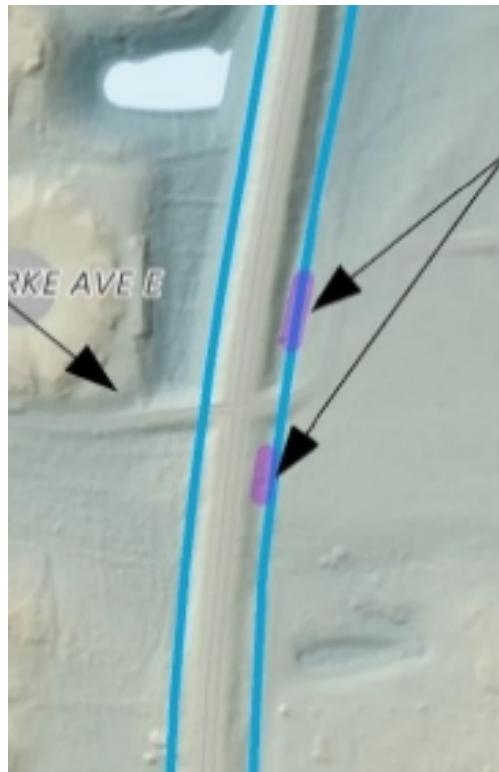
Resources Associated with the LS&M Railroad Corridor Historic District

- LS&M Railroad Corridor Historic District: Saint Paul to White Bear Lake Segment (XX-RRD-NPR001).
- 1868 Alignment of the LS&M Railroad between Eldridge Avenue East and County Road B East (XX-RRD-NPR004).
- 1868 Alignment of the LS&M Railroad between Gervais Avenue and County Road C (XX-RRD-NPR003).
- 1868 Alignment of the LS&M Railroad between Kohlman and Beam Avenues (XX-RRD-NPR002).
- LS&M Railroad Corridor Historic District: White Bear Lake to Hugo Segment (XX-RRD-NPR005).

Resolution of Adverse Effects

- Avoidance of two 1868 railroad roadway remnants, if it is feasible and prudent while still meeting the project's purpose and need; if avoidance is not possible, data recovery will be conducted.
- Phase III Data Recovery of one 1868 railroad roadway remnant and one other portion where the 1868 roadway is concealed by 1880s roadway.
- National Register evaluation of LS&M Railroad Corridor between Saint Paul and Duluth.
- Incorporation of interpretive elements at BRT stations.

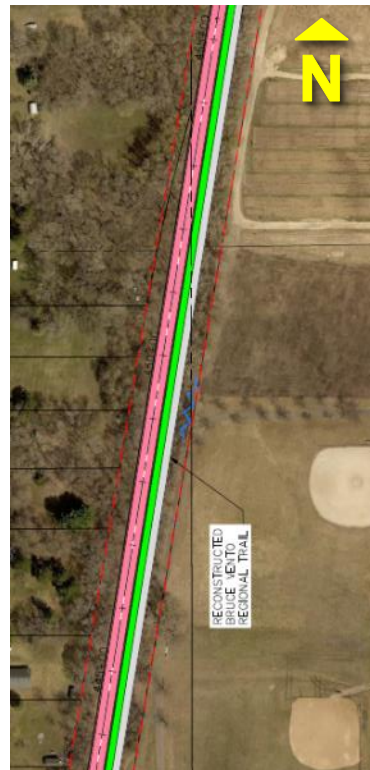
Data Recovery of 1868 Alignment between Eldridge Avenue East and County Road B East (XX-RRD-NPR004)



In addition, another location will be selected for data recovery.

Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Possible Avoidance: 1868 Alignment between Gervais Avenue and County Road C (XX-RRD-NPR003)



If avoidance is possible while meeting the project's purpose and need, consulting parties will review project elements near this historic property.

Project illustration is based on the 15 percent plans dated August 7, 2020 and is subject to change.

Possible Avoidance: 1868 Alignment between Kohlman and Beam Avenues (XX-RRD-NPR002)



If avoidance is possible while meeting the project's purpose and need, consulting parties will review project elements near this historic property.

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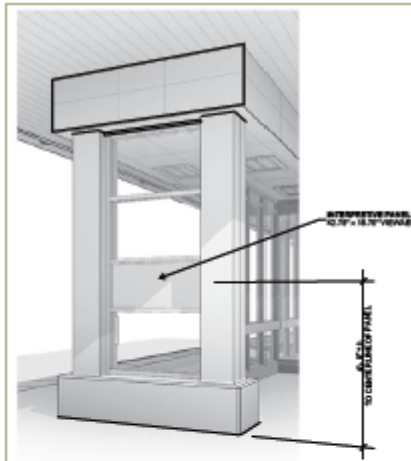
National Register Evaluation of LS&M between Saint Paul and Duluth

- Determine whether the corridor remains National Register-eligible after completion of the project.
- Determine whether any segments are individually National Register-eligible.
- Document associated properties at Phase I level and recommend individual evaluation, if appropriate.
- Requires evaluation to be completed two years after revenue service operations.

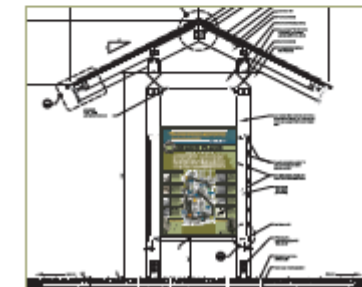
Incorporation of Interpretive Elements at BRT Stations

- Plan for interpretation includes type, number (at least three) and exact locations of the interpretation, as well as themes, schematic plans and draft text and graphics.
- Team includes historian and interpretive planner.
- Requires elements to be incorporated into 100 percent project plans and Metropolitan Council to incorporate content into their website one year after revenue service operations.

Incorporation of Interpretive Elements at BRT Stations



Graphic panels (19.5' high by 43.5' wide with a 18.75' by 42.75' viewable area) will be integrated into the station structure as part of the canopy support structure as shown above. The only exception is the panel included on the MPRB Kiosk at the Golden Valley Road station platform (shown below).



One panel for the GRHD: TWS resource will be incorporated into a MPRB kiosk at the Golden Valley Road station trailhead.



Calcutt motifs or messaging could be integrated into station fencing.



Vertical panels with brief images and meaningful statements can be integrated into fences or along walkways.

Examples of Interpretive Elements

Memorandum of Agreement Schedule

- Draft Memorandum of Agreement incorporated into Environmental Assessment publication: spring 2021.
 - Additional consulting party review.
 - Consulting party meeting, if necessary.
- Document updated based on public comments received and consulting party review.
- Finalized and executed: summer 2021.



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Engineering Update

Coordination Meetings

- Highway 61 Issue Resolution Team – January 8.
- Saint Paul Issue Resolution Team – February 11, March 28 and April 15.
- Hmong Village – April 3.
- White Bear Lake Area School District – April 4.

Minnesota Department of Transportation Staff Approved Layout Process Update

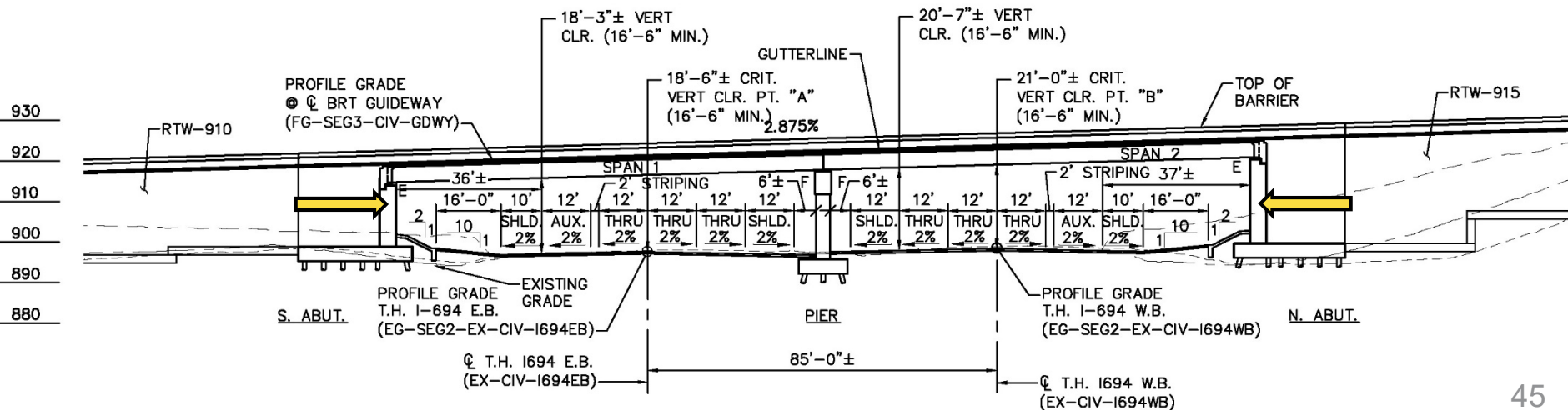
Layout Submitted	Status of Review
Arcade Street	Final signature in process
Highway 36 crossing	Signature process complete
Interstate 694 crossing	Updated layout submitted
Highway 61	Plans submitted in January 2021. Addressing comments received from MnDOT.

Minnesota Department of Transportation Preliminary Bridge Plan Review Update

Bridge	Status of Review
BRT to Arcade	Project staff addressing Minnesota Department of Transportation comments
BRT over Johnson Parkway	
Gateway State Trail underpass	
Weaver Elementary School area underpass	
BRT over Highway 36	
Fitch Road underpass	
BRT over Interstate 94	

Interstate 694 Bridge Crossing Redesign

- Reduces size of bridge.
- Reduces project costs.
- Minnesota Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration agree with approach.





Landscape Design Approach

Purpose

- Guide the advancement of landscape design.
- Find balance among consistent Rush Line BRT identity, recognizing local context, being cost effective and requiring lower maintenance.
- Design recommendations are tailored to complement:
 - Existing landscape character.
 - Natural environment.
 - Surrounding land use.

Document Contents

- Analyzes existing landscape conditions.
- Summarizes and acknowledges public engagement outcomes.
- Provides recommendations for the landscape design within specific project areas and zones.

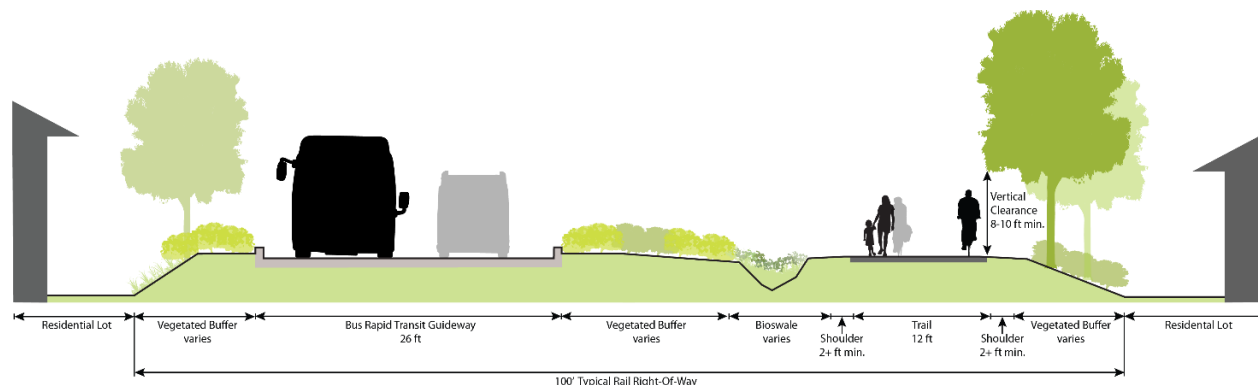
Overview of Project Categories

- Considers distinct and identifiable areas along the project route:
 - Downtown Saint Paul.
 - Mixed traffic.
 - Dedicated guideway – Phalen Boulevard.
 - Ramsey County rail right-of-way.
 - Beam Avenue corridor and Maplewood Mall.
 - Highway 61.
 - Downtown White Bear Lake.



Project Guidance

- Includes guidance from previous project studies:
 - Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Design Guide.
 - Visual Quality Manual.
 - Tree Inventory Summary.
- Considers Metro Transit design criteria, county standards and applicable requirements from municipal codes and ordinances.



Public Input

- Identifies public engagement responses that inform the landscape design.
 - Utilize native landscape features for buffers and screening.
 - Maximize green space.
 - Protect and enhance vegetation for screening and wildlife habitat.
 - Use natural methods of stormwater treatment, such as rain gardens and linear bioswales.
 - Safety and security.

Recommendations

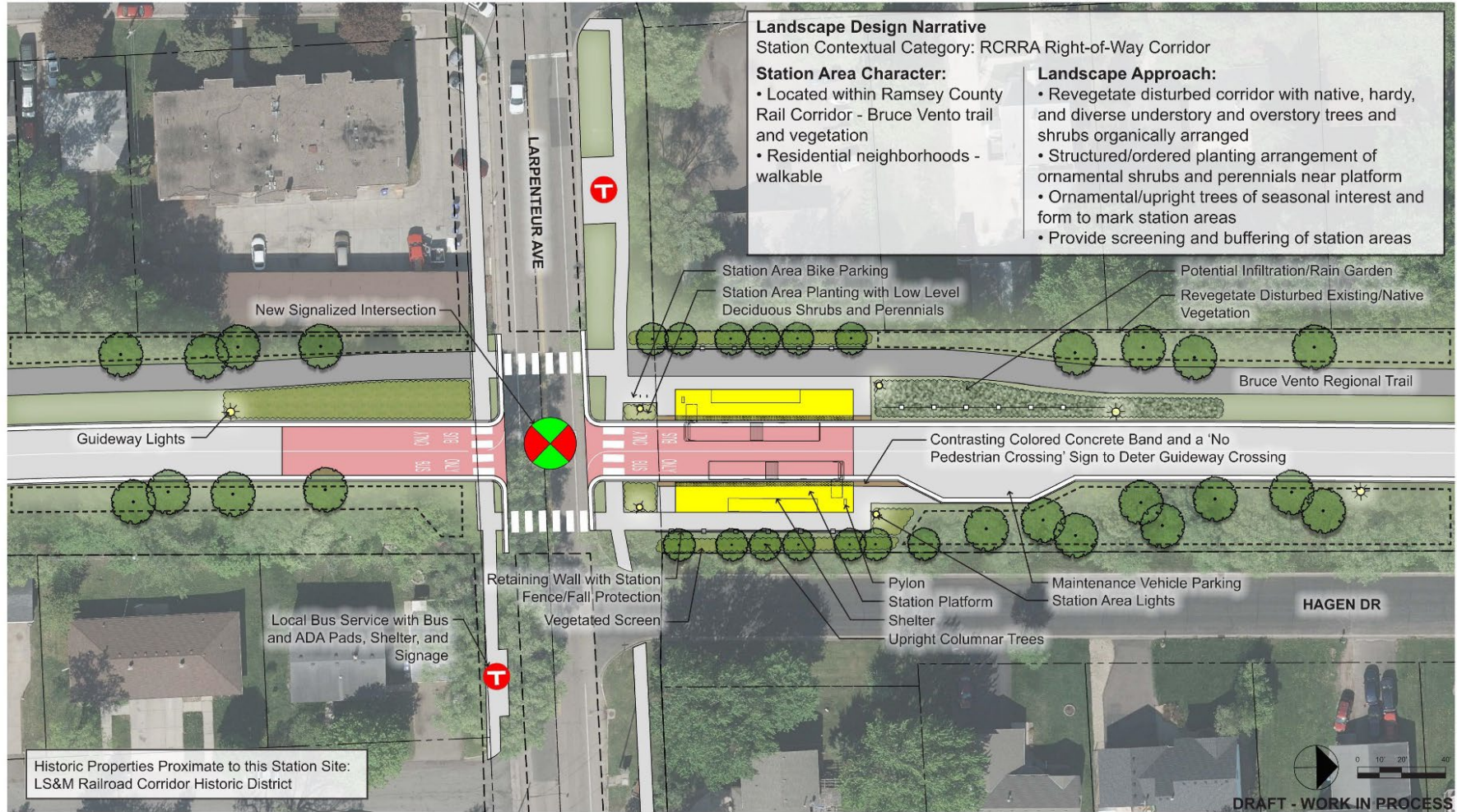
- Identifies existing conditions, context and character.
- Provides guidance for landscape within specific zones:
 - Stations.
 - At-grade crossings.
 - Stormwater facilities.
 - BRT and trail segments.
 - Grade separation.
- Includes landscape code summary, preliminary plant palette and preliminary station site plans.



Example Preliminary Station Site Plan



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Larpenteur Avenue Station Preliminary Site Plan

January 18, 2021

Kimley»Horn

SRE
Consulting Group, Inc.

RAMSEY
COUNTY 53

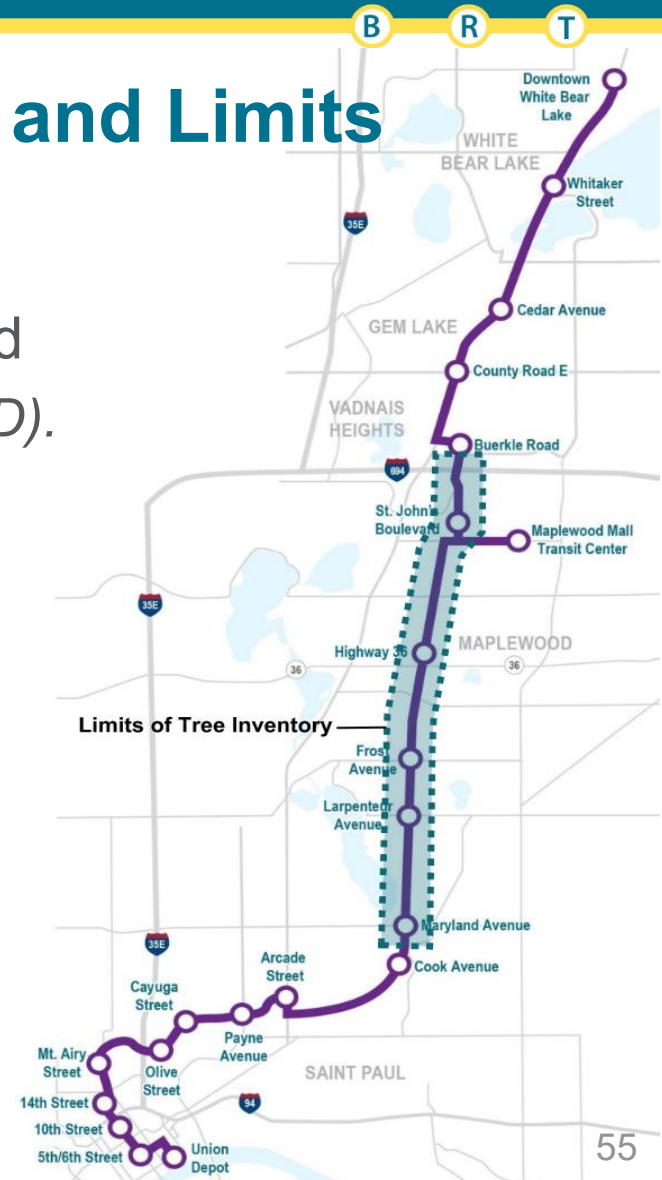
Tree Inventory Purpose

- Tree inventory purpose:
 - Identify and document the existing tree cover in the Ramsey County owned portion of the corridor.
- Summary document purpose:
 - Organize inventory data.
 - Identify how data has informed 25 percent design.
 - Provide guidance for advanced engineering.



Tree Inventory – Location and Limits

- Ramsey County rail right-of-way.
 - Johnson Parkway to Buerkle Road
(except for Beam Ave. to County Rd D).
 - 7-mile length.
 - Generally 100-foot width.



Data Summary

- Identifies lists and percentages of trees.
- Does not include quantities.
- Summarizes key information:
 - Categories (three types).
 - Condition.
 - Size ranking.

Category	Description	Percentage
Type A	Durable, slow growth, hard-wooded, seasonal interest	5.57%
Type B	Common, medium growth, seasonal interest	21.12%
Type C	Invasive, fast growth/weak wooded, pest susceptible	73.31%

Summary: Nearly three-quarters of the trees surveyed have characteristics suggesting long-term health, viability and maintenance concerns.

Data Summary

Species Summary:

Type A: Blue spruce, white oak and red pine are the dominant species.

Type B: American elm, cottonwood and aspen are the dominant species.

Species – Type C Trees	Percentage
Black ash	0.05%
Black locust	5.57%
Black walnut	4.91%
Black Willow	0.05%
Boxelder	20.67%
Common buckthorn	0.08%
Green ash (red ash)	7.47%
Siberian elm	34.51%

Summary: Siberian elm, boxelder and green ash are the three most represented Type C species in the corridor.

Condition	Percentage
Poor	4.80%
Fair	32.48%
Good	62.72%

Summary: Nearly two-thirds of the trees were determined to be in good health at the time of the survey.

Size	Percentage
6" - 11"	65.60%
12" - 17"	23.31%
18" - 27"	8.27%
28"+	2.83%

Summary: Two-thirds of all trees surveyed were within the smallest size category of 6-inch to 11-inch diameter at breast height (DBH).

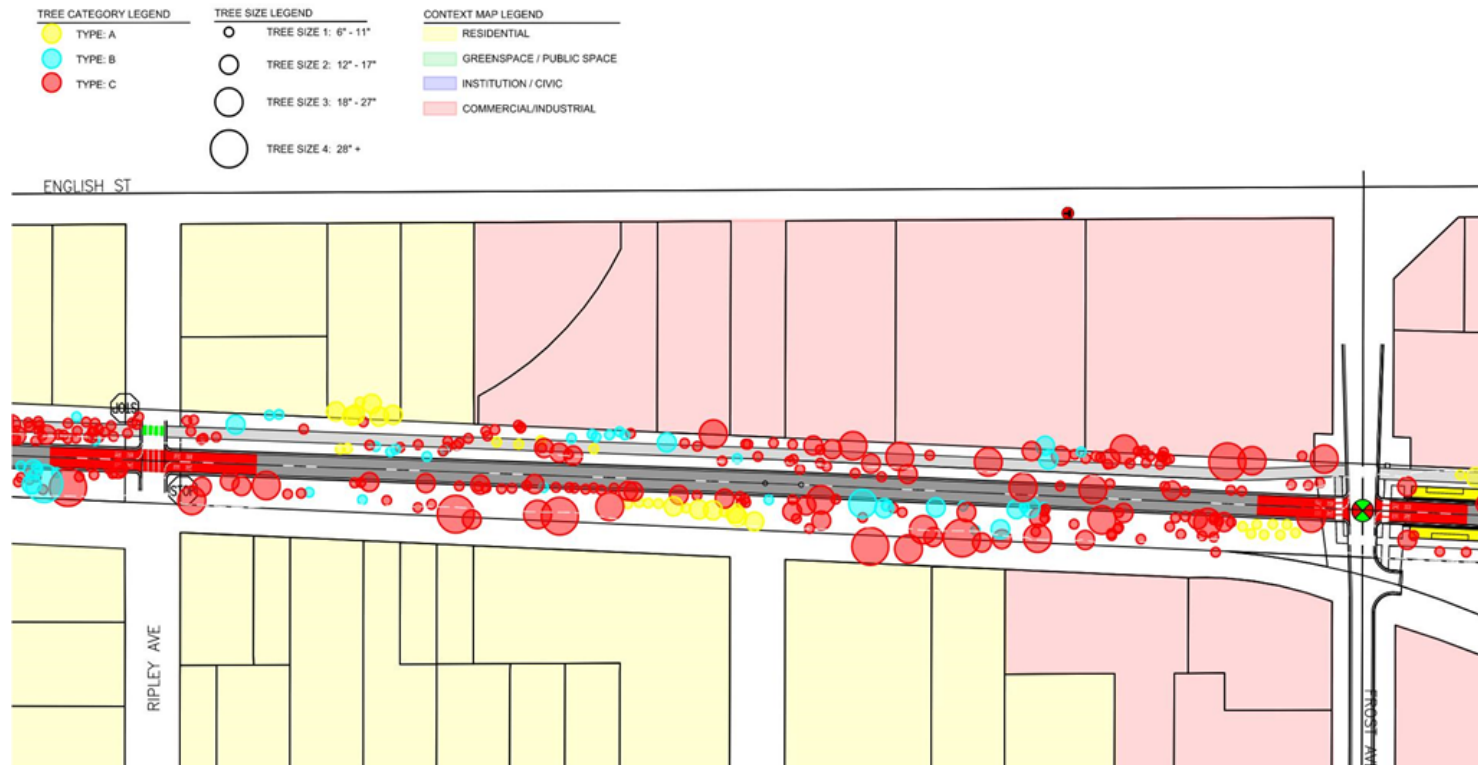
Guidance for Decision-Making

- Example segment – tree survey mapped.



Guidance for Decision-Making

- Example segment – tree survey at 15 percent design with land use.





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.



Next Meeting

Next Meeting

- July 15.
- 2:30-4:30 p.m.



Thank you!



rushline.org



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info@rushline.org



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651-266-2760