



*Rush
Line*

B R T

July 15, 2021

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING #16

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 avalenti@srfconsulting.com if you are having issues connecting.

Agenda

1. Virtual meeting procedures.
2. Welcome and introductions.
3. Recap of April meeting.
4. Environmental update.
5. Section 106 update (cultural and historic resources).
6. Engineering update.
7. Project development phase transition.
8. Public comment on the Rush Line BRT Project.
9. Closing and thank you.



Recap of April Meeting

Recap of April Meeting

- Engagement and coordination.
 - Community Advisory Committee update.
 - Preparation for release of Environmental Assessment.
- Environmental update.
 - Public review and comment period from May 11 – June 25.
- Section 106 (cultural and historic resources) update.
 - Overview of process and next steps.
- Engineering update.
 - Coordination with issue resolution teams and advancement of layouts and preliminary bridge plans through Minnesota Department of Transportation processes.
- Landscape design approach.
 - Overview of document purpose, content and application as the Rush Line BRT Project design advances.



Environmental Update

Environmental Assessment Public Meetings

- Online open houses on June 2 and June 3.
 - Total of 42 attendees signed in.
 - Closed captioning provided, along with Spanish, Hmong and Karen interpreters.
 - Summary of questions addressed:
 - Locally preferred alternative.
 - Decision-making process.
 - Route, stations and travel time.
 - Vehicle selection.
 - Ridership and cost.
 - Funding sources.
 - COVID-19 impact on ridership.
 - Highway 61 design and traffic impacts.

Environmental Assessment Public Meetings

- Summary of questions addressed (continued).
 - Operations and maintenance.
 - Snow removal.
 - Environmental process and analysis.
 - Water quality.
 - Noise.
 - Parking.
 - Right-of-way.
 - Outreach activities.
 - Ramsey County rail right-of-way and Bruce Vento Regional Trail.
 - Wildlife habitat, crossings and tree impacts/mitigation.

Environmental Assessment Public Meeting

- In-person open house on June 17.
 - 14 people signed in (others attended and did not sign in).
 - American Sign Language, Spanish, Hmong and Karen interpreters at meeting.



Environmental Assessment Public Meeting

- Verbal (court reporter) and written comments collected.
- Informal discussion with project team:
 - Clarification on location of proposed alignment and stations.
 - Overall project schedule.
 - Connections provided at stations.
 - Discussion on environmental analysis and mitigation.



Environmental Assessment Comments

- Agency comments:
 - Six received:
 - US Department of Interior (Section 4(f)).
 - US Environmental Protection Agency.
 - Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
 - Minnesota Department of Transportation.
 - Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.
 - Capitol Region Watershed District.
 - Individual responses.
- Public/community organization comments:
 - 184 received.
 - Thematic responses.

Environmental Assessment Comments

- Summary of preliminary comment themes:
 - Support for/opposition to Rush Line BRT.
 - Project purpose and need.
 - Locally Preferred Alternative process and definition.
 - Questions/concerns on ridership and COVID-19 impacts.
 - Project cost.
 - Transportation – traffic and parking impacts.
 - Natural resources – water quality, wildlife and tree impacts.
 - Lower Phalen Creek daylighting.
 - Bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including Bruce Vento Regional Trail.
 - Engagement activities and tribal consultation.
- Comments will be responded to in the environmental decision document.

Preferred Alternative Recommendation

- Build Alternative.
 - Option with Highway 36 park-and-ride:
 - 300-space parking structure, to be phased over time starting with approximately 170-space surface lot within the footprint of the facility as defined in the EA.
 - Decision provides for greatest flexibility as project advances.





Environmental Schedule Review

Activity	Timeframe
FTA administrative review	July 22 – August 5
<i>De minimis</i> concurrence from officials with jurisdiction	July/August 2021
Local legal review	August 12-19
Courtesy review of updated Memorandum of Agreement (FHWA, USACE, SHPO)	August 12-19
FTA legal review	August 26 – September 9
Execute Memorandum of Agreement	September 16-23
FTA regional administrator review/approval of environmental determination	September 23-30
Ramsey County issues state negative declaration	October 1, 2021
Submittal to and publication in <i>EQB Monitor</i>	October 4 and 11, 2021
Federal Highway Administration determination	Fall 2021



Section 106 Update (Cultural and Historic Resources)

Section 106 Process

- Consulting Party Meeting #5 – June 3.
- Memorandum of Agreement comments.
 - Federal Highway Administration.
 - US Army Corps of Engineers.
 - State Historic Preservation Office.
- Update to Memorandum of Agreement.
 - In process.
 - Anticipate being finalized and executed: summer 2021.



*Rush
Line*

B R T

Engineering Update

Coordination Activities on 25 Percent Plans

- Input from all issue resolution teams in 2021.
 - Saint Paul Issue Resolution Team meeting (April).
- Maintenance and ownership.
 - Saint Paul Parks meeting (June).
 - Saint Paul Public Works (July).

Minnesota Department of Transportation Staff Approved Layouts

Layout Submitted	Status of Review
Arcade Street	Final signatures in process
Highway 36 crossing	Signature process complete
Interstate 694 crossing	Signature process complete
Highway 61	Final signatures in process

Preliminary Bridge Plans

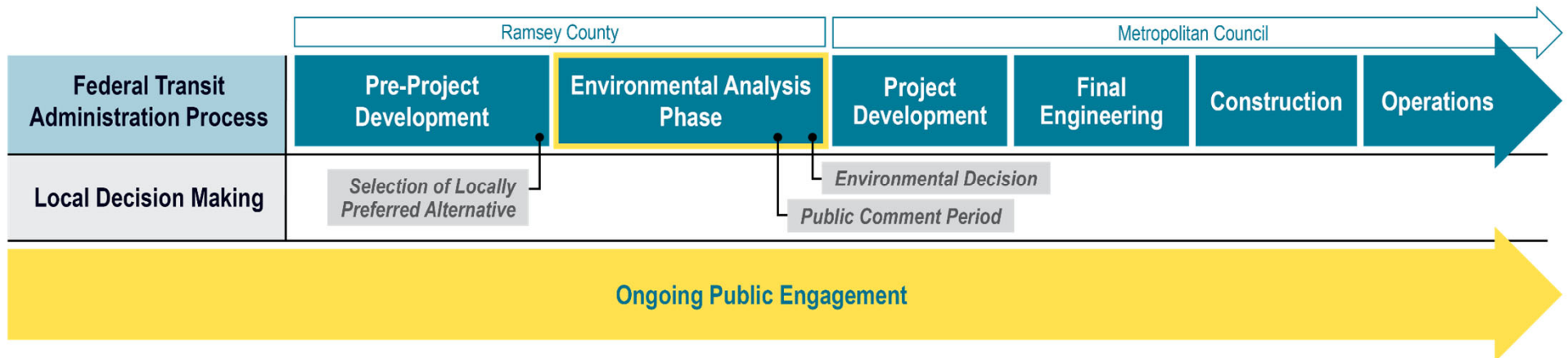
- Minnesota Department of Transportation conducting preliminary bridge plan review.

Bridge Plan Submitted	Status of Review
BRT to Arcade Street	Signed
BRT over Johnson Parkway	Signed
Gateway State Trail underpass	Signed
Weaver Elementary School area underpass	Signed
BRT over Highway 36	Signed
Fitch Road underpass	Signed
BRT over Interstate 694	Signed



Project Development Phase Transition Update

Overall Schedule/Process



- Next steps:
 - Transition to Metropolitan Council and rebrand corridor as METRO Purple Line.
 - Enter Project Development Phase of FTA's Capital Investment Grant Program.



Project Transition

- Local lead agency role transitioning from Ramsey County to Metropolitan Council.
 - Mirroring the process used for METRO Gold Line BRT in 2017 and past rail projects.
- Ongoing Ramsey County responsibilities:
 - Complete Environmental Analysis Phase.
 - Complete Minnesota Department of Transportation and municipal approval process (where applicable) for highway improvements.
 - Make funding commitment for Project Development phase.

Project Transition

- Initial Metropolitan Council responsibilities:
 - Continued coordination with county-led activities.
 - Initiate procurements to advance project.
 - Prepare for entry into the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant Program.
 - Submit request to enter Project Development in August 2021. Anticipated approval in October 2021.
 - Advance multiple interagency agreements.
 - Metropolitan Council, Ramsey County and Minnesota Department of Transportation.
 - Form project committees in early 2022.

Advanced Station Area Planning

- FTA Pilot Program for TOD Planning grant.
- County-led request for proposals expected late summer/early fall 2021.
 - Subrecipient grant agreement.
- Tasks:
 - Public engagement.
 - Real estate and housing gap analysis.
 - Station area concepts and development plans.
 - Implementation plan.







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.



***Rush
Line***

B R T

Thank you!



rushline.org



facebook.com/rushline



info@rushline.org



[@rushlinetransit](https://twitter.com/rushlinetransit)



651-266-2760