



DECEMBER 2023 BRIEFING PACKET

Review History and Past Decisions

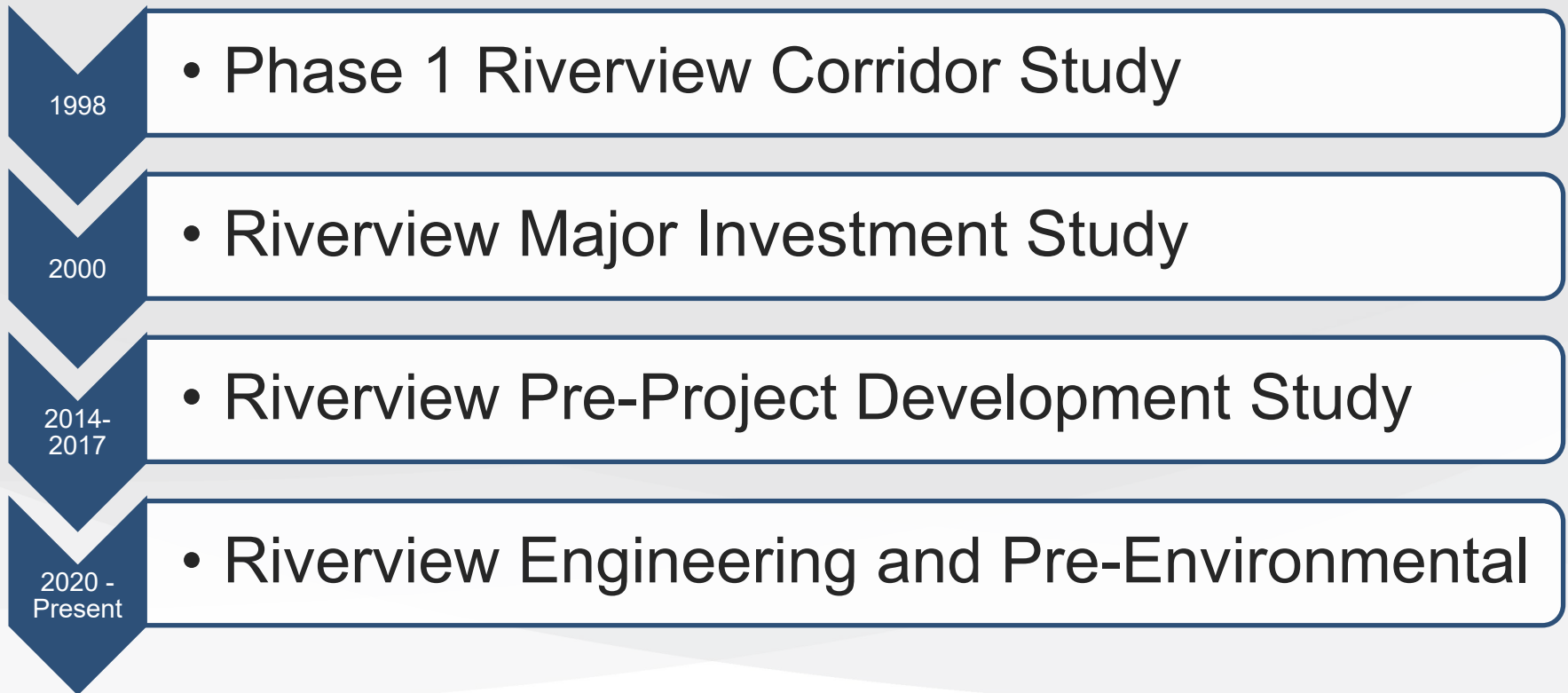


Who?

- Project partners across the various phases of the study and analysis included:
 - Minnesota Department of Transportation.
 - Metro Transit.
 - Hennepin County.
 - Cities of Saint Paul and Bloomington.
 - Metropolitan Airports Commission.
 - Tribal partners.

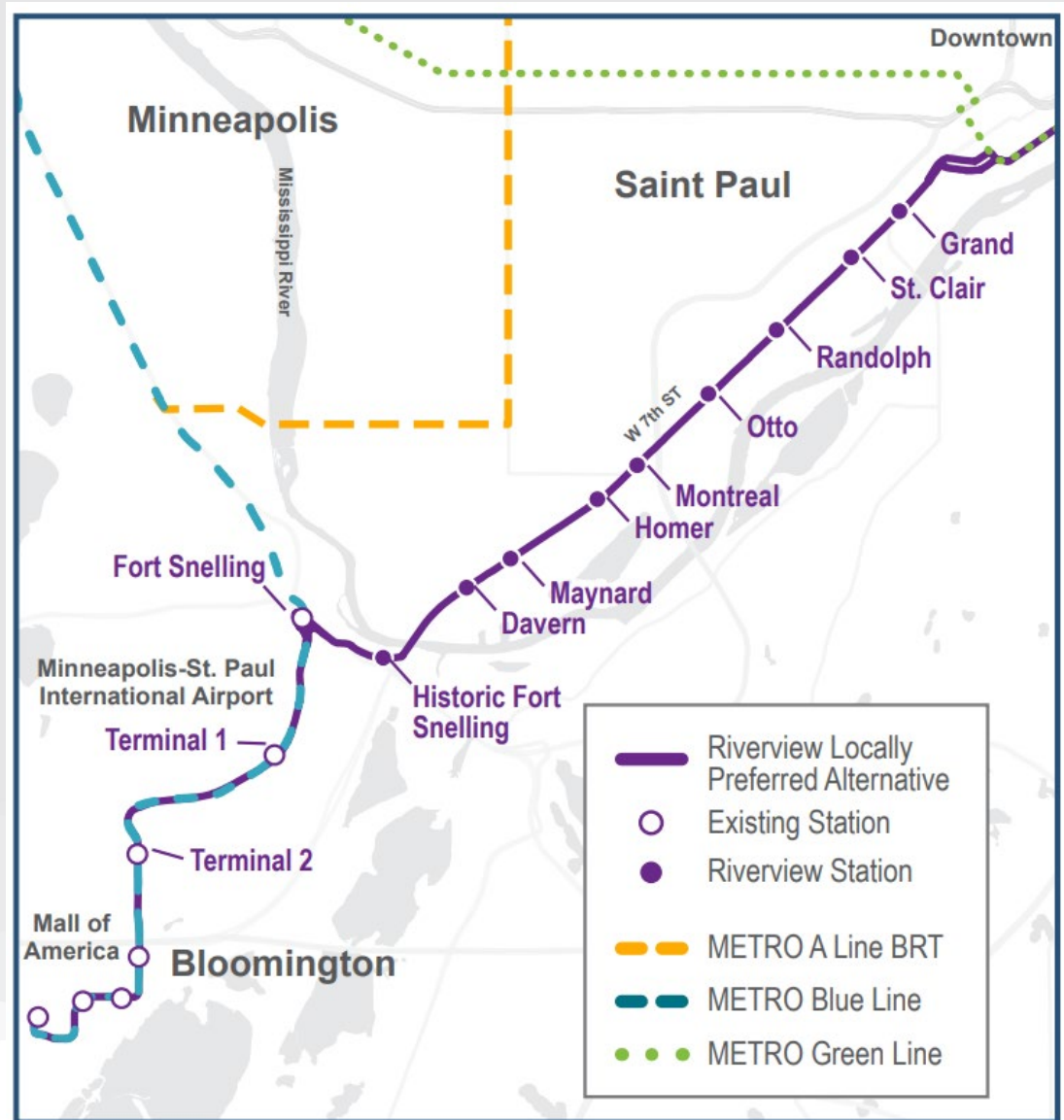
What?

Ramsey County has been studying transit improvements in this corridor for over 25 years.



Where?

Riverview Corridor is a transit investment that will enhance neighborhood connections and improve regional mobility between downtown Saint Paul, the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America.



Why?

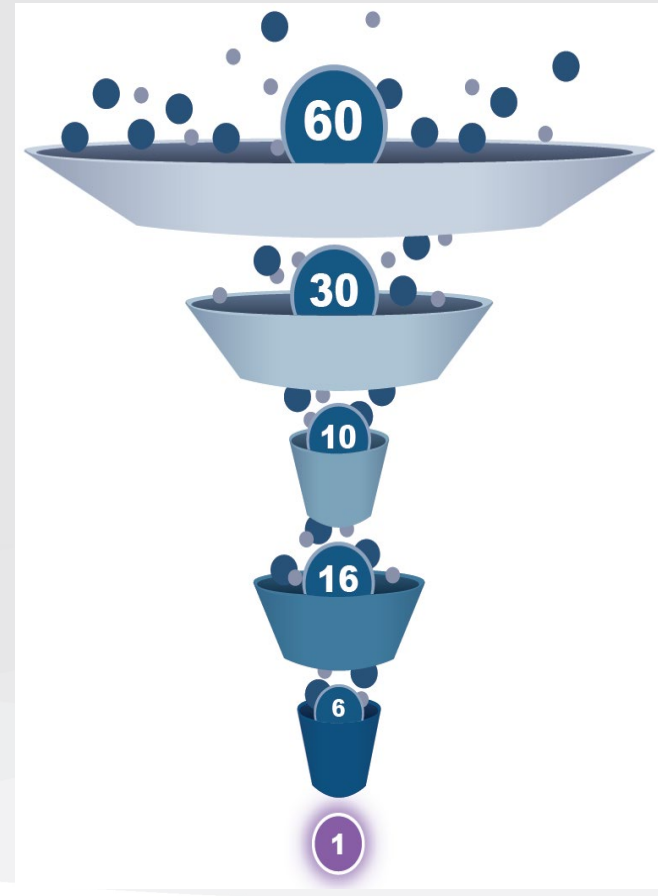
Purpose: To enhance mobility and access to opportunities for residents, businesses, and the region and to cultivate economic prosperity.

Updated (November 2022)

1. Meeting transit demand and the needs of people who rely on transit.
2. Improving connectivity and transit reliability.
3. Supporting community growth and development.

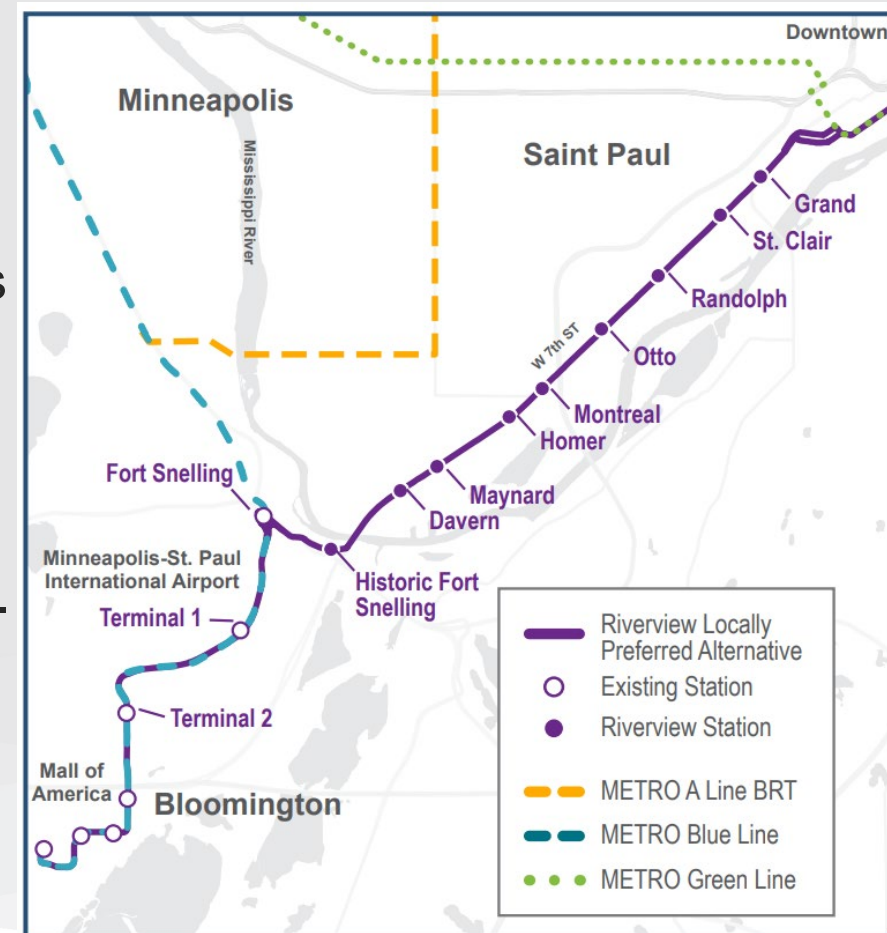
2014 - 2017: Riverview Pre-Project Development Study: Process

- Started with 60 route options and 6 modes.
- Eliminated routes and 2 modes through:
 - **Initial screening** based on whether it met purpose and need statement.
 - **Technical analysis** against 6 technical criteria.
- Resulted in modern streetcar as the Locally Preferred Alternative through the **focused evaluation** process.
- Decided to evaluate Best Bus due to stakeholder input and to provide another alternative for the environmental process.



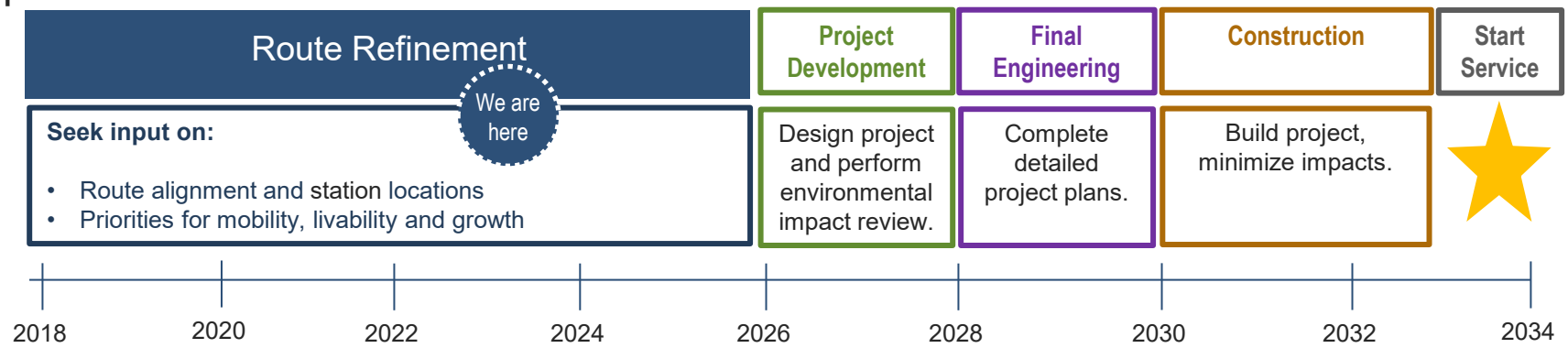
Riverview Engineering and Pre-Environmental Phase – Technical Analysis

- Modes
 - Streetcar (Locally Preferred Alternative).
 - Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).
 - No Build (continue existing bus service).
- Route
 - Provides LRT connections.
 - Seven Corners/Smith Avenue.
 - CP Spur parallel to West 7th St.
 - Highway 5 river crossing.
 - Bloomington South Loop/Mall of America.
- Operating Environment
 - Dedicated and shared use.
 - Center- or side-running.



Overview of Engineering and Pre-Environmental Phase Activities

Updated Schedule



Public Engagement and Station Area Planning Update



Engagement Activities 2022-2023

- In-Person.
 - Community meetings such as Highland Transportation Information Fair, MnDOT Hwy 5 Mill & Overlay Event.
 - Community events such as Sibley Manor Food Distribution and Shepard Park Concert.
 - Pop up events at Friedli Art Gallery and Mears Park.
- Virtual.
 - Periodic updates provided to district councils and other organizations.
 - Social media campaign.
 - Monthly/quarterly newsletters.
 - Website updates and 240 Comments via INPUTiD.™
 - Station Area Planning surveys.

What We Heard

Dedicated tracks are better.

Will the streetcar be in the **center** or **sides** of the street?

Riverview can **spur development**.

Needs intimate, attractive and welcoming urban landscape with stations.

Need connection to the river.

Concerned about **Highland Bridge traffic**, need transit connection

Redesign West 7th to **slow down cars**.

What will happen to the **route 54 bus**?

Concerned about loss of **on-street parking**.

Bus rapid transit is more **cost effective**.

This is an important **gateway** to Saint Paul.

Concerned about **pedestrian safety**.

Want better **bike and pedestrian facilities** on the Hwy 5 bridge and West 7th Street.

Concerned about **traffic impacts** from streetcar tracks.

Concerned about **safety and security** on transit.

Streetcar in **shared lanes** will get stuck in traffic.

What kind of **station amenities** will be built?

Concerned about **construction impacts** to businesses and historic buildings.

Station Area Planning

Station area planning is a collaborative process that identifies ways to promote safe and direct station access as well as transit-oriented development (TOD) near station stops.

- A station area includes approximately ½ mile around a station, or ten-minute walk.
- The goal of station area planning is to provide a vision for each station area to thrive because of the transit investment, supporting development policies, and specific implementation steps.
- Station area plans address short and long-term development opportunities and improved connections between stations and the existing neighborhoods.
- A Task Force has been meeting almost monthly until early 2023, to review existing land uses, access and circulation and redevelopment opportunities.

Station Area Planning Schedule

Spring 2021

Spring 2024

Riverview
Corridor
Background

Central
Segment
Station Area
Plans

East
Segment
Station Area
Plans

West
Segment
Station Area
Plans

Economic Development Assessment

Coordinate with the Riverview Station Area Planning process to assess the economic development potential that would come from the development of the Riverview Corridor transit alternatives.

- Using the 2013 MAPS3 OKC Streetcar Economic Development Assessment as a model, the team will analyze the future fiscal impact of four development scenarios along the Riverview Corridor.
 - *The first scenario is a base case in which future development will occur as if there was no streetcar or bus rapid transit.*
 - *The second scenario assumes that future development will occur with a streetcar present, using estimates from experiences in other cities.*
 - *A third scenario will assume an arterial bus rapid transit development.*
 - *Finally, a similar methodology will be used for an analysis of the proposed greenway.*

Modern Streetcar Update



What is Modern Streetcar?

- Can operate in dedicated track or shared lanes with cars.
- Shorter vehicles (~80 feet) than light rail and one car.
- Compatible operations with Blue & Green Lines.
 - Tracks, signals, stations, power.
 - Operations and maintenance.
- Station Features.
 - Level boarding.
 - Pay before you board.
 - High amenity stations.



Detroit

Source: Qline, M-1 Rail



Seattle

Source: Seattle Department of Transportation

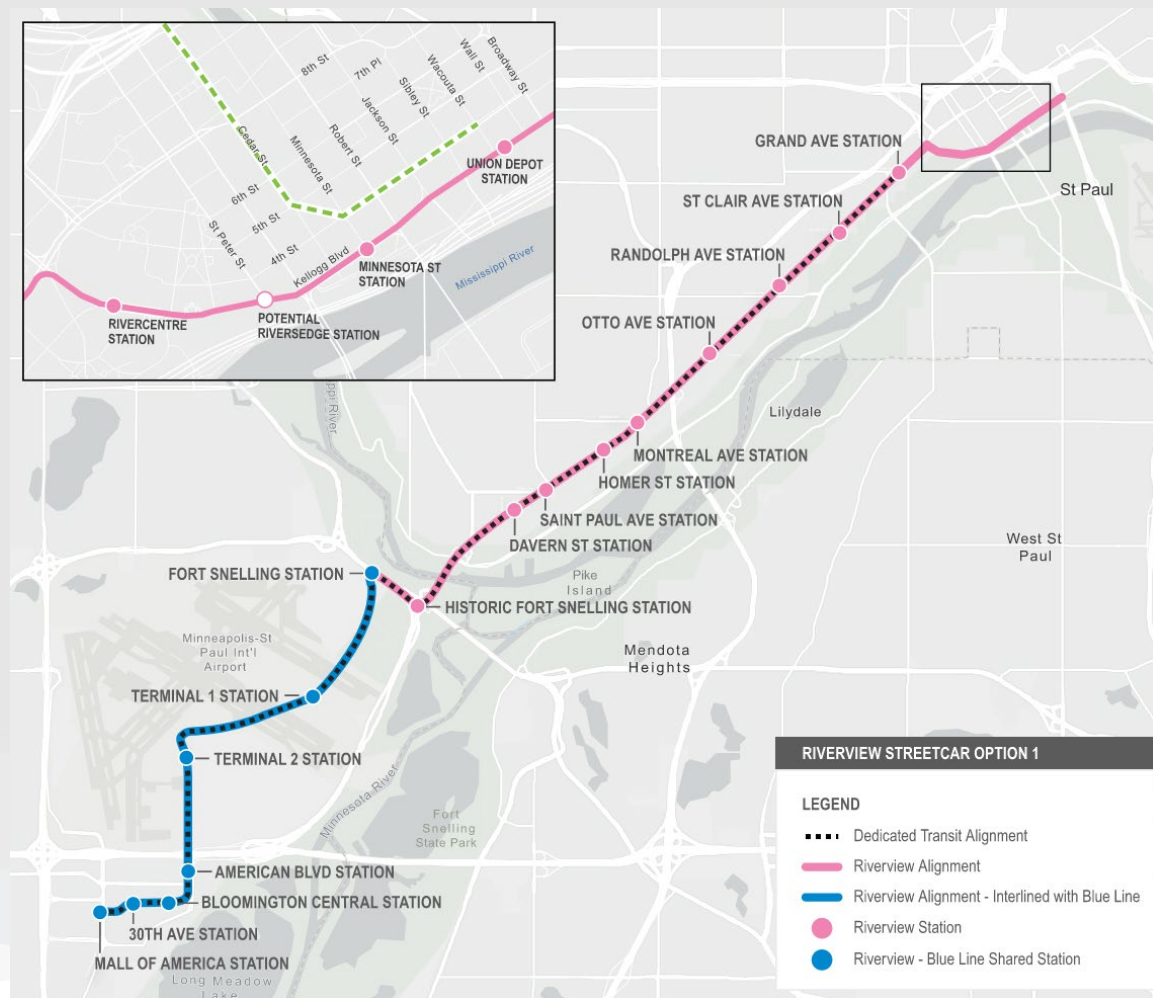
Where We Were in February 2022 PAC

- Airport/Bloomington.
 - 82nd Street alignment into Mall of America.
- Bdote/Fort Snelling.
 - Mixed traffic and single-track bridge crossing scenarios.
 - Initial visualization of bicycle/pedestrian accommodations.
 - Dismissed flyover.
 - Tribal position of avoiding impacts to rock = existing tunnel not expanded or modified.
- West 7th: Limited conversation.
- Downtown Saint Paul: PAC agreed with investigating other alignments.

Agreed next steps – continue Bdote/Fort Snelling, spend time on Saint Paul IRTs.

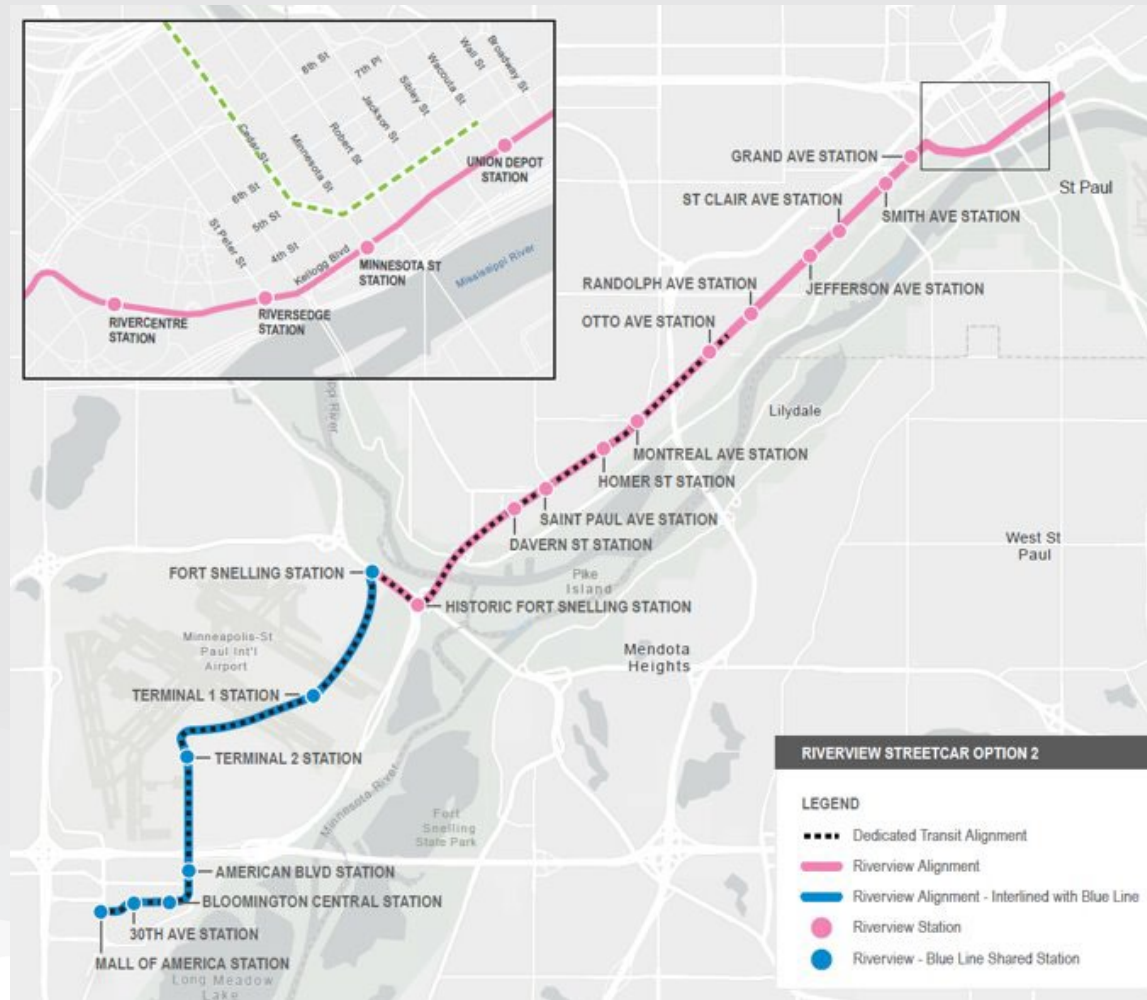
Streetcar Option 1

- 20 Stations.
- Dedicated transit lanes from MOA Station to Grand Avenue Station.
- Shared lanes from Grand Avenue Station to Union Depot Station.



Streetcar Option 2

- 22 Stations.
- Dedicated transit lanes from MOA Station to Otto Avenue Station.
- Shared lanes from Otto Avenue to Union Depot Station.



Streetcar Alignment Summary

- Kellogg Boulevard is the downtown route recommended by the IRT.
- Option 1: Dedicated center-running streetcar from MOA to Grand Avenue; shared to Union Depot.
- Option 2: Dedicated center-running streetcar from MOA to Victoria Street; shared side-running alignment from Victoria Street to Union Depot.
- New bridge over Mississippi River with pedestrian and bike facilities, tying into existing tunnel.
- Interline with Blue Line at Fort Snelling Station, use existing airport tunnel.
- Connect to Mall of America via a new alignment on 82nd Street for both streetcar and Blue Line.
- Three potential sites for operations and maintenance facility.

Arterial Bus Rapid Transit



What is Arterial Bus Rapid Transit?

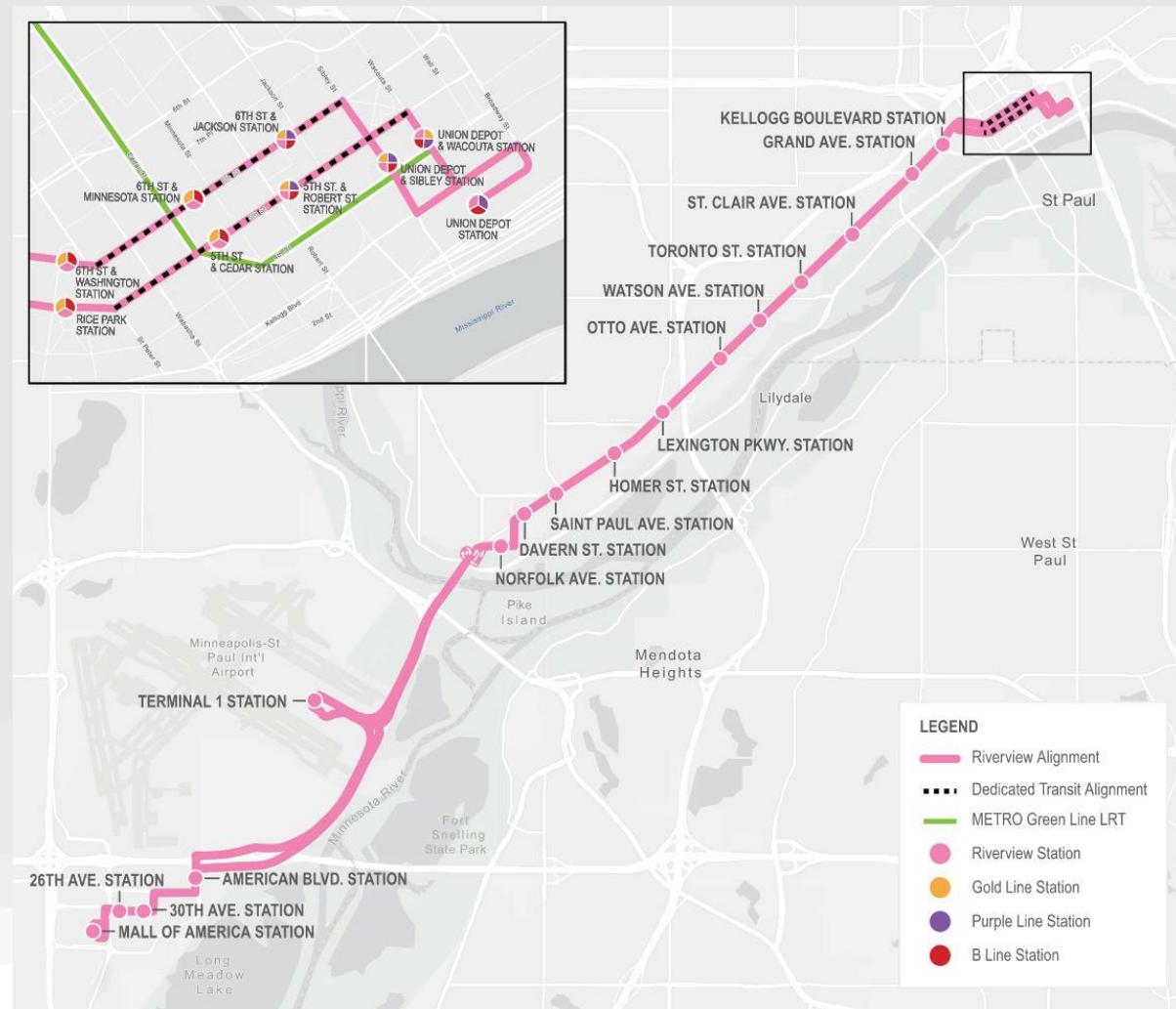
- Buses make fewer stops than regular route service.
- Station Features.
 - Near Level boarding.
 - Pay before you board.
 - High amenity stations.
- Low-floor 60' buses with wider bus doors and boarding from the front and back.



Photos: Metro Transit

Arterial BRT Route and Stations

- 16 stations MOA to Kellogg Boulevard.
- Buses share lanes with traffic.
- 9 downtown platforms.
- Uses Gold Line (dedicated) infrastructure downtown.



Arterial BRT Summary

- Buses would operate in mixed traffic along West 7th Street.
- Buses would operate in mixed traffic over Mississippi River bridge; no bridge improvements needed.
 - No new pedestrian/bike connections.
- No station at Historic Fort Snelling.
- Mixed traffic operations on existing Highway 5, connecting to MSP airport at Terminal 1 bus station.
- Assume operations and maintenance at existing bus facility.
- Buses would operate in mixed traffic on South Loop area roads.
- Use existing Mall of America station.

Next Steps

Next Steps

- **January 2024** – Present Streetcar and ABRT options to Community Advisory Committee and Policy Advisory Committee.
- **Spring/Summer 2024** – Public engagement.
- **Summer/Fall 2024** – PAC action on next steps.