Today’s Topics

• Project Update
• 2021 Engagement Overview and Takeaways
• Anti-Displacement Work Update
• Development of Route Modification Alternatives
• Route/Station Modification Selection Process
• Discussion and Next Steps
Project Update
Project Transition

- August 2020: After a multi-year effort to negotiate with BNSF that included many levels of government and offers including buying the corridor, it was time to move the project forward.
Project Update: BLRT Milestones

• Aug 3, 2020: Joint Met Council and Hennepin County statement on new direction for the Blue Line Extension

• Sept 2020 – Jan 2021: Reconvened advisory committees, contracted with community organizations for Phase I community engagement

• March 2021: Released initial LRT route modifications, Community Engagement Cohort and project staff begin Phase 2 community engagement

• July 2021: Released initial station and LRT alignment visualizations, community open-houses, released anti-displacement RFP

• August 2021: Station/alignment community engagement
2021 Community Engagement Overview and Takeaways
Community Engagement Cohort Contractors

• 14 community organizations that are trusted community partners with expertise on cultures and geographies
  ▪ Area 1: Focus of 4 community organizations
  ▪ Area 2: Focus of 2 community organizations
  ▪ Area 3: Focus of 13 community organizations

• Four groups focused on communications

• Collaborative and coordinated across the corridor

• 10-month contracts
## Community Engagement Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ange Hwang</td>
<td>Asian Media Access Inc</td>
<td>Area 1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekta Prakash</td>
<td>CAPI USA</td>
<td>Area 1, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tezzaree El-Amin Champion</td>
<td>Encouraging Leaders</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nichole Buehler</td>
<td>Harrison Neighborhood Association</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristin Murray</td>
<td>Juxtaposition Arts</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunny Chanthanouvang</td>
<td>Lao Assistance Center of MN</td>
<td>Area 1, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson George</td>
<td>Liberian Business Association</td>
<td>Area 1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren McLean</td>
<td>Northside Economic Opportunity Network</td>
<td>Area 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martine Smaller</td>
<td>Northside Residents Redevelopment Council</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Felicia Perry</td>
<td>West Broadway Business Coalition</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Spann</td>
<td>Jordan Area Community Council</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danecha Goins</td>
<td>Cleveland Neighborhood Association</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diana Hawkins</td>
<td>Hawthorne Neighborhood Council</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markella Smith</td>
<td>McKinley Community Neighborhood Association</td>
<td>Area 3</td>
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2021 Engagement Events/Activities

- Advisory Committee meetings
- 80 community meeting including three public townhall meetings: ~2,000 participants
- Open houses (5 in-person, 4 virtual): ~400 participants
- Community and business stakeholder check-ins
- Interactive map: ~500 comments
- Survey: 2,000+ responses
- General comments via online form/email
- 14 engagement contracts with community and cultural groups

Top Picture: TALK OUT LAO’D Facebook Live
Bottom Picture: Liberian Business Association Event
Takeaways: Feedback on Project Goals

• Equitable approach, focus on anti-displacement early

• Route through high-density, walkable, accessible, and highly visible areas

• Need for increased safety and cleanliness on transit

• Minimize disruption of existing traffic and neighboring communities

• Connect people to jobs, education, healthcare facilities, groceries and other destinations
Takeaways: Opportunities

• Improve access to/serve communities of color, lower-income communities, and those with limited mobility or limited access to a vehicle/other transportation options

• Support local business and economic development in communities along the line

• Improve transit experience

• Addresses climate-change goals
Takeaways: Concerns

• Gentrification and displacement were the top concern, including housing affordability and small business leasing affordability.

• Avoid negative impacts/disruptions to existing community assets.

• Ensure stations are easy and safe to access.

Top Picture: Met Council Member Chamblis Brooklyn Park Listening Session
Bottom Picture: NEON/W. Broadway Business & Area Coalition Discussion in Minneapolis
Public Comments on Station Locations
Anti-Displacement Work Update
Anti-Displacement Work Update

• In process of forming an Anti-Displacement Working Group
  ▪ Include agencies and community partners
  ▪ Recommend policy/programs to positively impact communities and minimize displacement

• July 2: RFP release to contract with an individual or group to convene, facilitate, and manage the work of the Anti-Displacement Working Group

• July 22: Hennepin County Commissioner Fernando and Met Council Chair Zelle discussed local and national anti-displacement activities with FTA Administrator Fernandez

• July 28: Contractor selected by review committee that included representatives of Hennepin County, Met Council, City of Minneapolis, Business and Community of Advisory Committees

• September: Introduce Contractor to BLRT Advisory Committees
Development of Route Modification Alternatives
Route Refinements

• Potential routes are based on:
  - Adopted Project Principles
  - Conceptual review of LRT right of way and operational needs
  - Applicable project work
  - Community and stakeholder input
Visualization: Existing Conditions on W. Broadway
Visualization: Center Running LRT

[Map showing locations like Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, Crystal, Robbinsdale, and Golden Valley]

[3D rendering of a street scene with a tram labeled "Center-Running Light Rail" and a lane labeled "One Vehicle Travel Lane"]
Visualization: Side Running LRT
Visualization: Elevated
Potential Station Study Areas

Based on:

• Project principles, project goals
• Previously planned stations
• Stakeholder and community input
• Key destinations
• Transit connections
• ½ to 1 mile spacing
• Engineering requirements
Brooklyn Park Planned Stations
Proposed Station Study Areas Crystal & Robbinsdale
Proposed Station Study Areas Minneapolis
Route/Station Modification Selection Process
Approach to Evaluation

1. BLRT Project Principles
2. Develop Initial Route Modifications
3. Evaluation Based on Initial Screening Criteria and Community Feedback
4. Refine Route Modifications
5. We are Here
6. Evaluate Based on Project Goals, Objectives, and Evaluation Criteria
7. Route Modifications Recommended for Evaluation in EIS

TIER 1: Qualitative Evaluation Grounded in Project Purpose and Need
TIER 2: Quantitative Evaluation
Route Modification Recommendation Report

- Report includes:
  - Purpose of report, history of BLRT, process overview
  - Summary of public engagement in 2020 and 2021
  - Route identification and evaluation process:
    - Initial potential candidate routes
    - Criteria used to make decisions
    - Assessment of routes based on application of evaluating criteria and Project Principles
  - Route recommendation(s) in final draft
Project Development Schedule/Next Steps

We're here

1 year

1.5 to 2 years

1.5 to 2 years

3 to 4 years

- Identify community supported route
  - Blue Line Extension Community Supported Route:
    - Best meets the Project Principles and Goals
    - Grounded in community feedback through collaboration with stakeholders
    - Supported by Project corridor communities and decision-makers

- Environmental review
  - Document benefits and impacts of the project

- Municipal Consent
  - Seek city support of the LRT design

- Engineering
  - Develop construction ready design plans

- Construction and Full Funding Grant Agreement
  - Federal funding

Goal — Line opens in 2028

Light Rail Transit projects are complex and unforeseen challenges arise. Schedules and timelines are subject to change.
Stay Connected!

• Project website: BlueLineExt.org
  ▪ Project news, maps, surveys, what we’re hearing
  ▪ Committee meeting materials: agenda, handouts, presentations, meeting minutes
  ▪ Sign-up for GovDelivery project updates
  ▪ Connect with staff for your questions or schedule a presentation

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