



Approach to Transitway Advancement

Metropolitan Council Committee of the Whole



May 29, 2024

Overview



Today's objective: Discuss general approach to transitway advancement deliberation before transitway-specific discussions

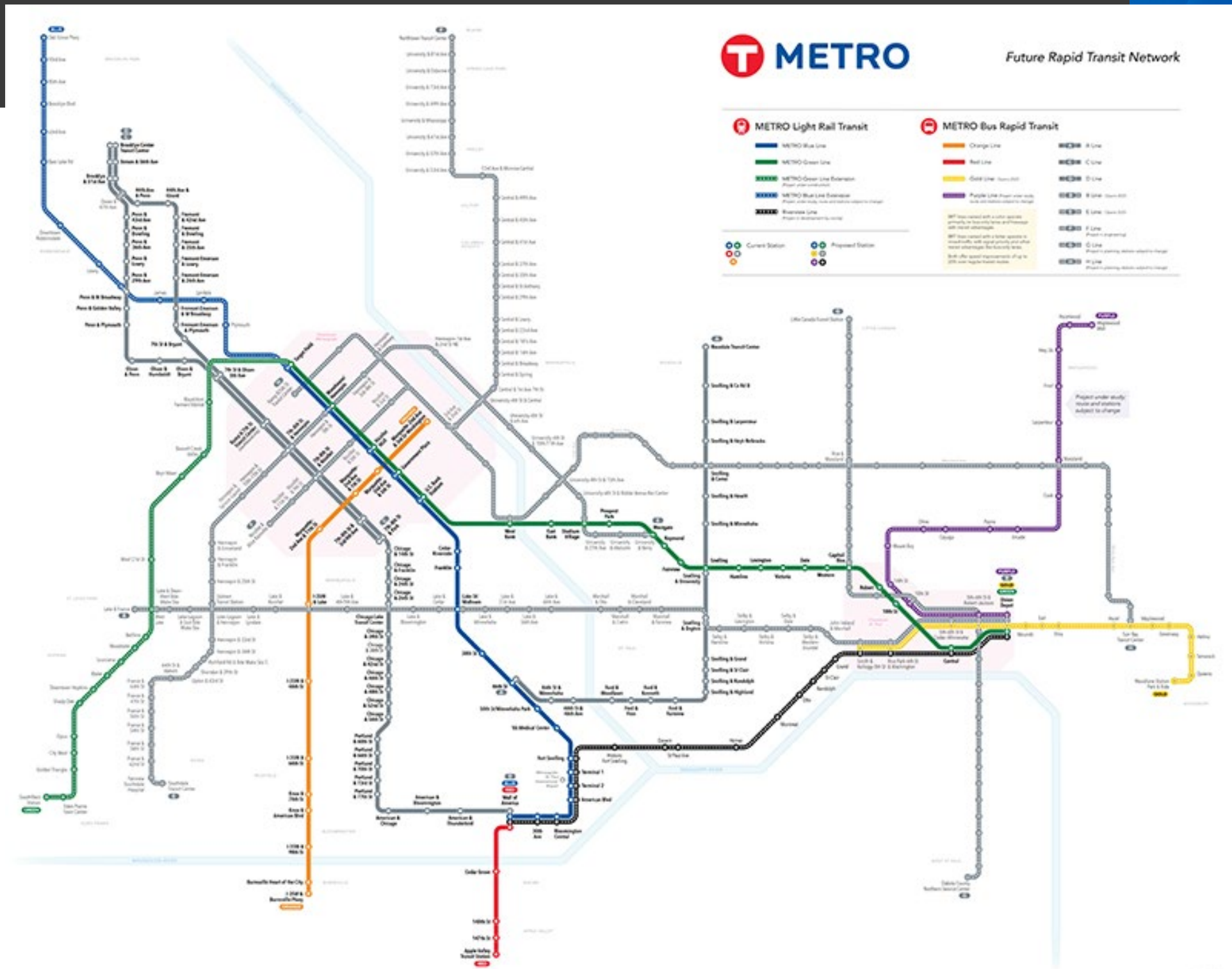
- **Context** - situate upcoming transitway decisions within broader context of other information and decisions coming this year and in early 2025, including
 - Updated 30-year forecast
 - Sales tax use policy
 - 2050 Transportation Policy Plan and amendments
- **Agenda** - three parts to today's presentation
 1. Review Transitway Advancement Policy adopted in 2022
 2. Review changes since adoption and timeline for upcoming discussions and decisions
 3. Share how we plan to provide information for these discussions and decisions, seek if we are on the right track, and identify what we are missing

Part 1

Transitway Advancement Policy

Transitway System

METRO line	Opened/Opening
Blue Line	2004
Red Line	2013
Green Line	2014
A Line	2016
C Line	2019
Orange Line	2021
D Line	2022
Gold Line	2025
B Line	2025
E Line	2025
Green Line Ext	2027
F Line	Engineering
G Line	Planning
H Line	Planning
Blue Line Ext	Engineering
Purple Line	Planning



Policy Overview

Adopted November 30, 2022. Policy summary:

- As the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Council requires and compares **information on critical aspects of a proposed transitway** with standards established by the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.
- At the point that Metro Transit is implementing the transitway, the Council and local project sponsors develop a risk register, establish roles and responsibilities that address project risks, and **reflect these in agreements**.



POLICY

Transitway Advancement Policy

RF 1-7

Category: Regional and Foundational Policies

Business Unit Responsible: Metropolitan Transportation Services & Metro Transit

Policy Owner: Executive Director of Metropolitan Transportation Services
General Manager of Metro Transit

Policy Contact: Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director, Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)
Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager, Capital Programs, Metro Transit

Synopsis: Provides a framework from which the Metropolitan Council can identify and manage risk and help ensure informed decisions when advancing major regional transitway investments.

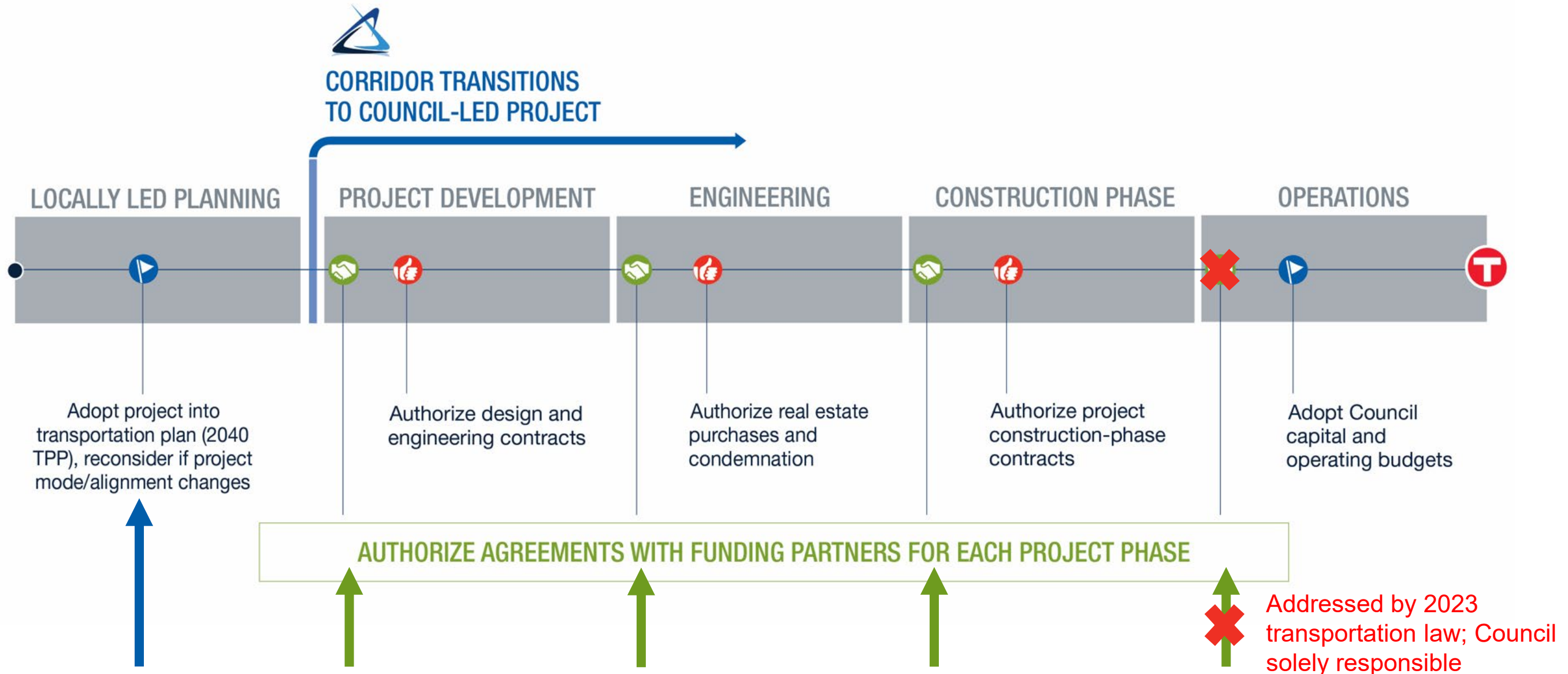
POLICY

The Metropolitan Council will plan effective regional transportation services and facilities, coordinate regional transportation priorities, and invest transportation resources in a cost-effective manner. Effective and coordinated planning and implementation of transitway services comprise key elements of the [Thrive MSP 2040](#) framework. The Council executes two primary functions in transitway projects: its role as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) leading regional transportation planning; and its role in transitway project implementation and operations. The Council's decisions are influenced by both roles as transitway projects advance.

When the Council or local project sponsors propose the adoption or amendment of a transitway project into the region's Transportation Policy Plan ("Plan"), the Council requires information from project sponsors on critical aspects of the project. These aspects must include, but are not limited to, planned costs and revenues (capital, operating, and lifecycle), ridership and service productivity, demonstration of local support, equity, and other key factors and risks expressed through the Plan. The Council compares project information to standards established within the Plan to aid its consideration of the project.

When implementing transitway projects, the Council will lead or participate in risk management activities at each phase of project implementation including the development and maintenance of a project risk register that considers both project-specific and system-level risks. The risk register must include, but is not limited to, implementation risks (construction, design, market, and requirements risks); stakeholder, legal, and contractual risks; and consideration of project effects on enterprise-level operations and maintenance risks. For key project risks, for and at each phase of project implementation and operations the Council and local project sponsors must establish partner roles and responsibilities and will reflect these in project partnership or grant agreements approved by the Council. The Council will also identify risks that must be reduced, mitigated, or resolved, including the work that must be completed and agreements that must be in place before the Council advances the project.

Policy applies at project phase agreements



Policy applied at plan amendment/adoption & at project phase agreements

2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)



Draft Plan Reflects Advancement Policy

- Continues 2040 TPP modification, adopted June 2023
- Defines information required to reflect projects in the TPP
 - Documentation of transitway type, alignment and station locations and the selection process
 - Resolutions of support from relevant government bodies and agencies
 - Documentation of fiscal constraint
 - Documentation of public engagement and feedback

Travel and Transit Trends in 2050 TPP

- Ongoing ridership and service recovery
- High proportion of regional development around transitways and high frequency transit
- Ongoing transit system decarbonization
- Transit workforce recruiting and retention

Part 2

Recent changes, upcoming decisions

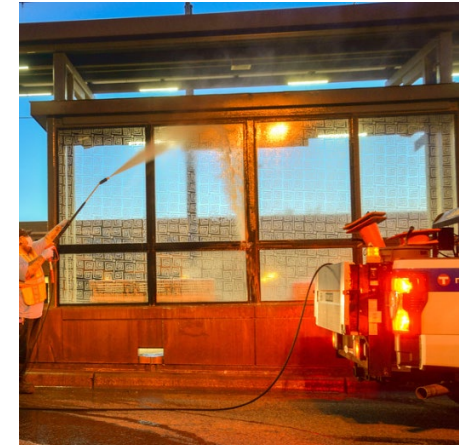
2022 Project Issues and Risks

Individual projects have faced **implementation challenges**

- Local community support
- Cost increases beyond project budgets and contingency plans
- Construction challenges
- Undefined roles or expectations for local partners

Cumulative system-level **operations and capital maintenance risks**

- Undefined roles for operations and maintenance of project assets
- Capital maintenance has emerged as a significant financial issue for the region, particularly for rail lines.
- Transitway operations require significant staffing additions



Major Changes since Policy Adoption

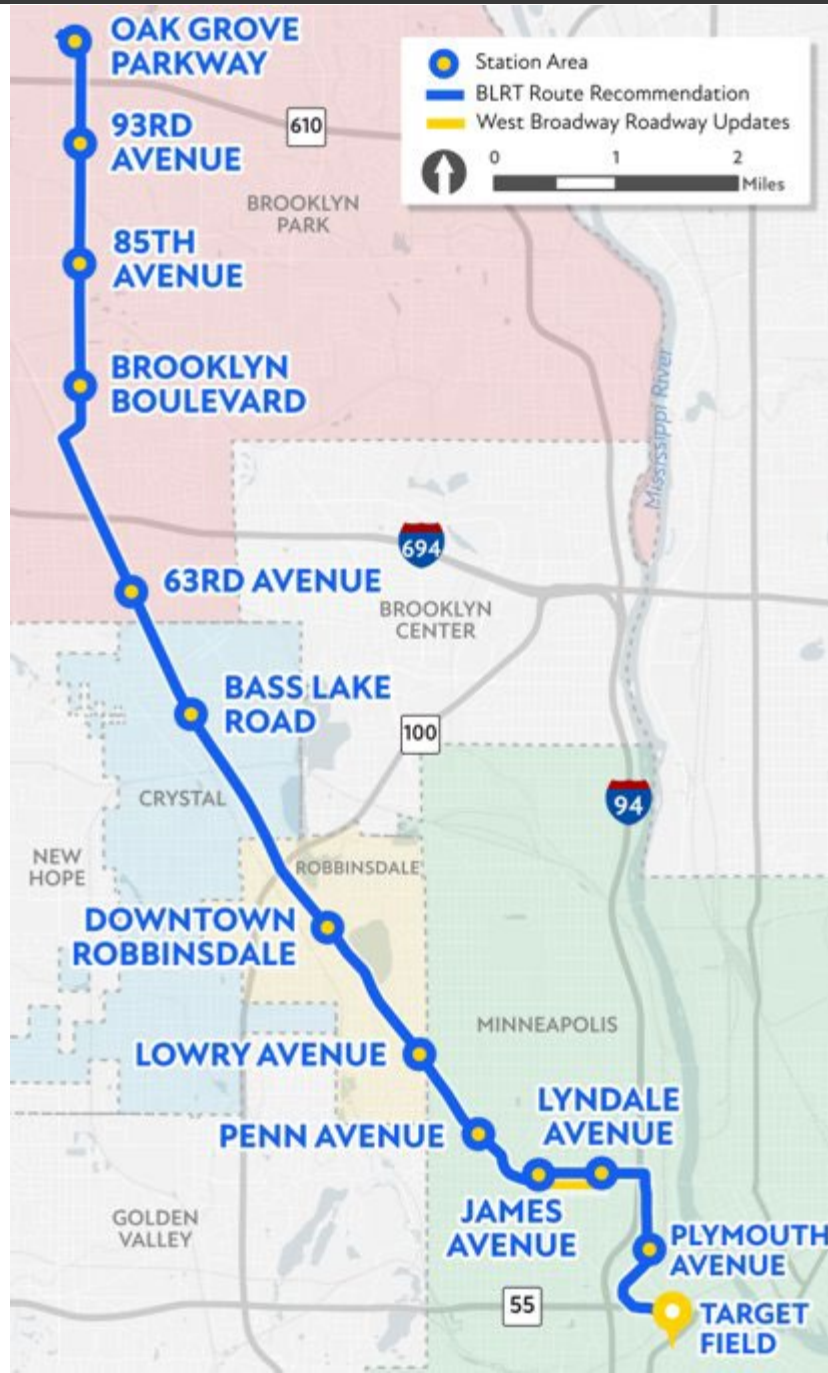
Organizational/Regional

- New regional funding that covers forecasted operations and capital maintenance needs
- Redefined responsibilities between local funders and Council
- Expanded authority to meet safety and security goals
- Legislation that protects sales tax from future capital funding risk for LRT
- Labor agreements that are leading to substantial improvements workforce retention and hiring
- Significant and continued growth in transit ridership

Projects

- New proposed alignments for Purple Line and Blue Line Extension
- Resolution of Green Line Extension Funding gap
- New governance model for capital projects
- Anti-displacement funding for Blue Line Extension
- Major progress on construction of four METRO transitways

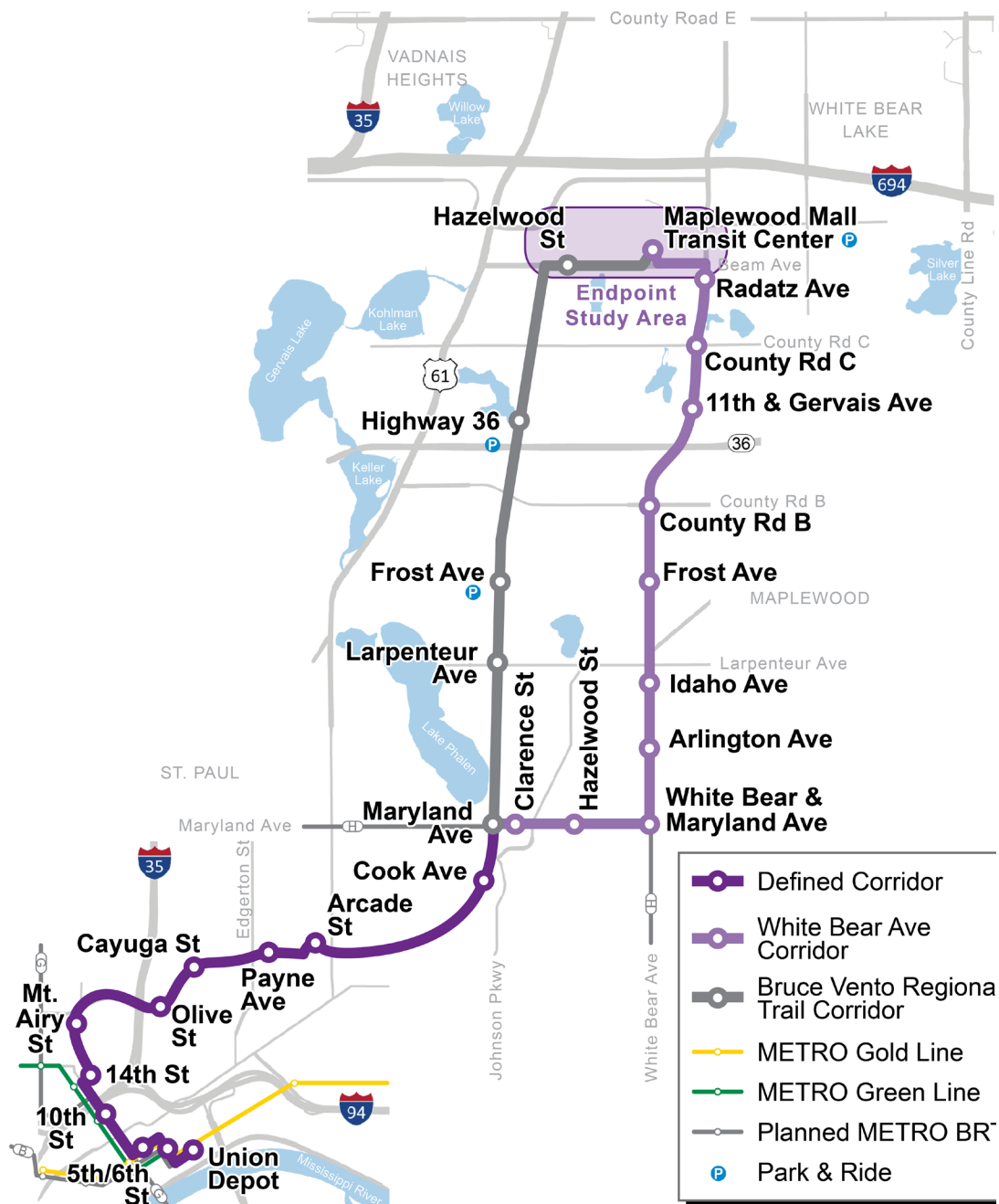
Blue Line Extension



Upcoming info and decision points

- Supplemental Draft EIS Info Item
 - June 24th Transportation Committee
- Blue Line Extension Project Overview
 - July 8th Meeting
- Authorization of Public Hearing for municipal consent process
 - July 22nd Transportation Committee
 - July 24th Council
- TPP amendment for revised alignment
 - Begin process in February 2025

Purple Line



Upcoming info and decision points

- Amendment of Capital Grant Agreement/Implement New Governance Model
 - August 2024
- TPP amendment for revised alignment
 - Begin process in February 2025

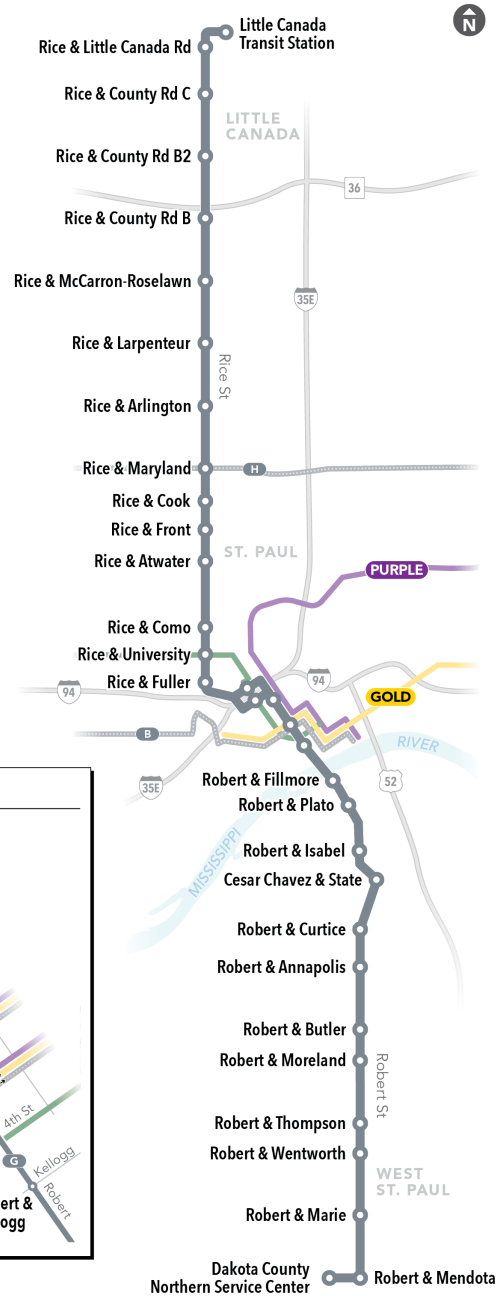
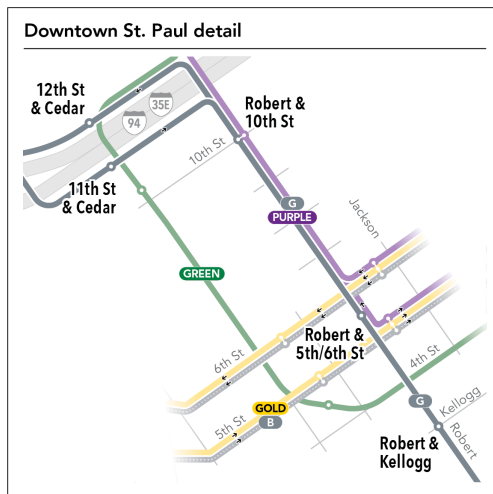
G Line



G Line

August 2023

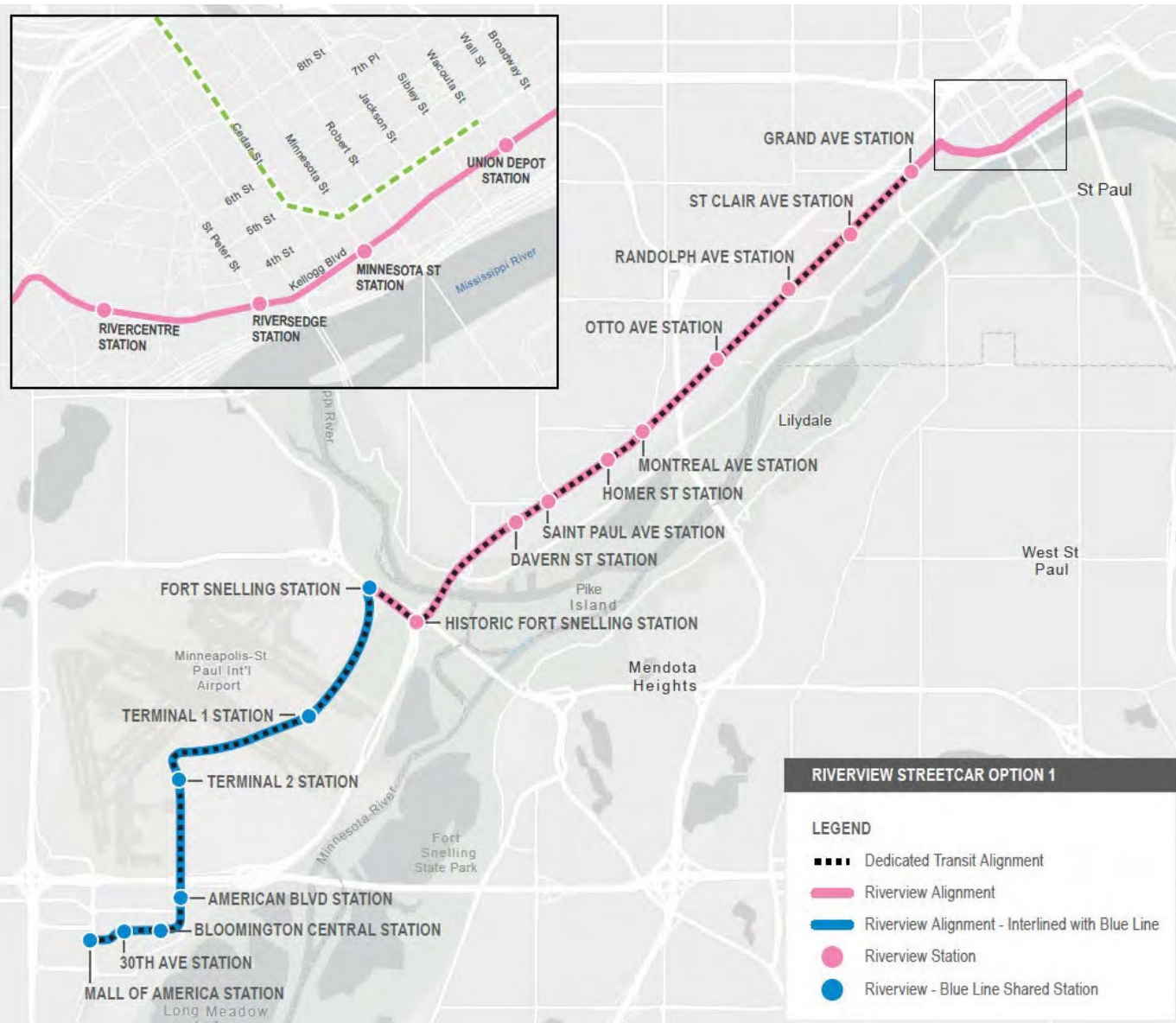
	METRO G Line (Bus Rapid Transit)
Current METRO line	
	Green Line (Light Rail)
Planned METRO lines	
	Gold Line (Bus Rapid Transit)
	Purple Line (Bus Rapid Transit)
	B and H lines (Bus Rapid Transit)



Upcoming info and decision points

- METRO G Line – Authorization to Release Recommended Corridor Plan for Public Comment
 - July 2024
- METRO G Line – Approval of Final Corridor Plan
 - October 2024

Riverview



Upcoming info and decision points

- Presentation by Ramsey County as Information Item at Transportation Committee
 - Transportation Committee Summer 2024
- Recommendation of Preferred Transit Mode at Project's Policy Advisory Committee
 - Anticipated in Fall 2024

Part 3

Information for transitway deliberation

Topics to inform transitway discussions

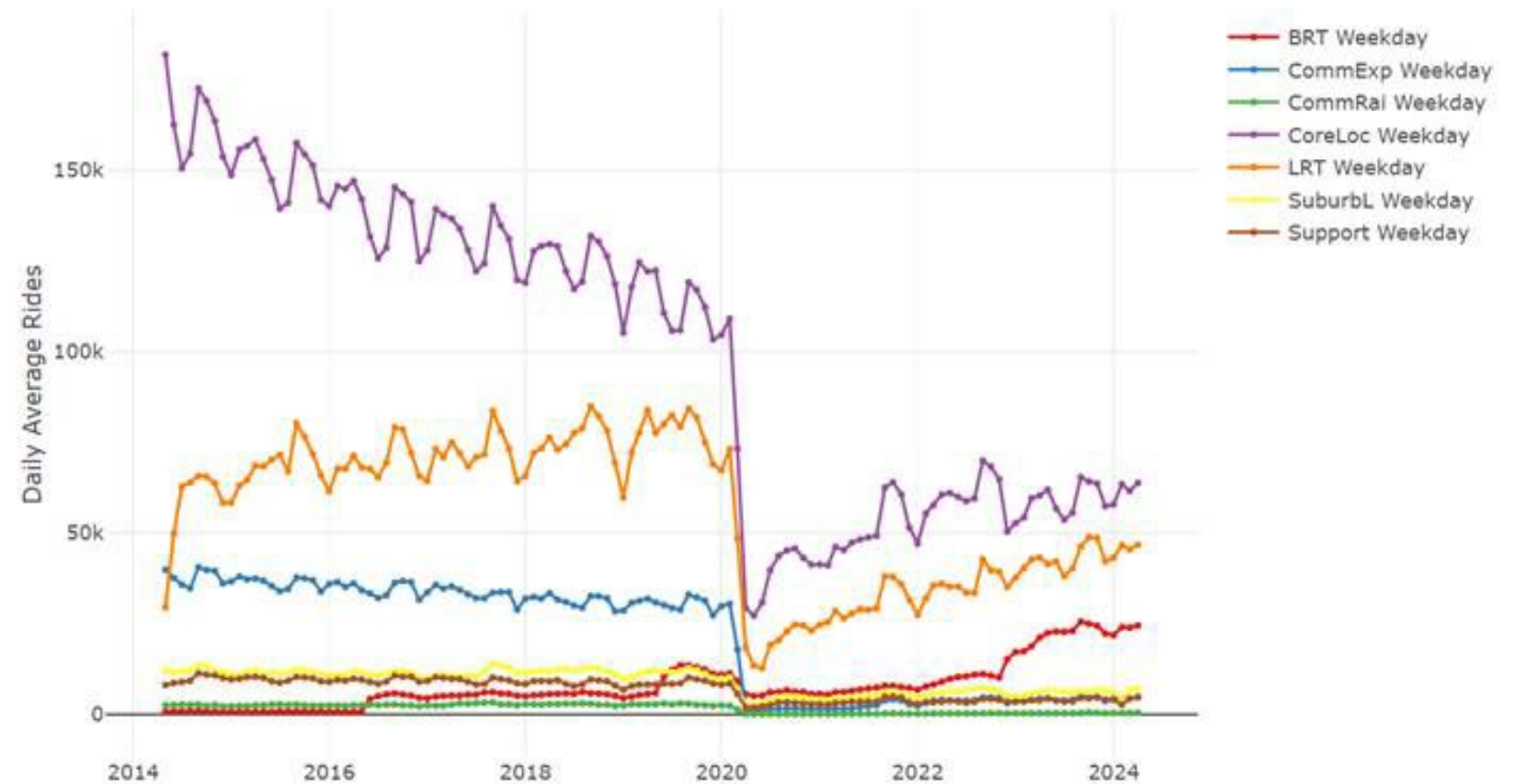


Based on what we've heard thus far, we will bring information on the following topics when transitway decisions are considered:

- History of the project, its mode and alignment, and anticipated timeline to complete the project
- Future workforce levels needed to support the project, including operations, public safety, and shared services (IS, HR)
- Economic development impacts along the planned corridor
- Displacement impacts of the final project as well as during construction
- Financial plan for building, operating, and maintaining transitway
- How the transitway advancement policy applies, including the implications of each vote

Consideration: Ridership Trends

- Ridership is growing
- Ridership in corridors with fast, frequent, all-day service is especially strong
- U of M Center for Transportation Studies study underway:
 - Document impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on regional transit
 - Forecast future trends
 - Final report due to Legislature in Fall 2024



Consideration: Council Workforce



Transitway growth is a driver of workforce growth

- Transitway expansion will require more Metropolitan Council employees in Metro Transit and Regional Administration
- Metro Transit launched our “Workforce Taskforce” in Q1 2024 to develop and implement a unified strategy towards recruiting, retaining, and developing employees
 - Includes forecasting expected FTE needs for future transitways
- As of 4/30/24, Metro Transit has about 400 open positions of nearly 3,500 total budgeted positions
- Good news: seeing an increase in applications in recent months

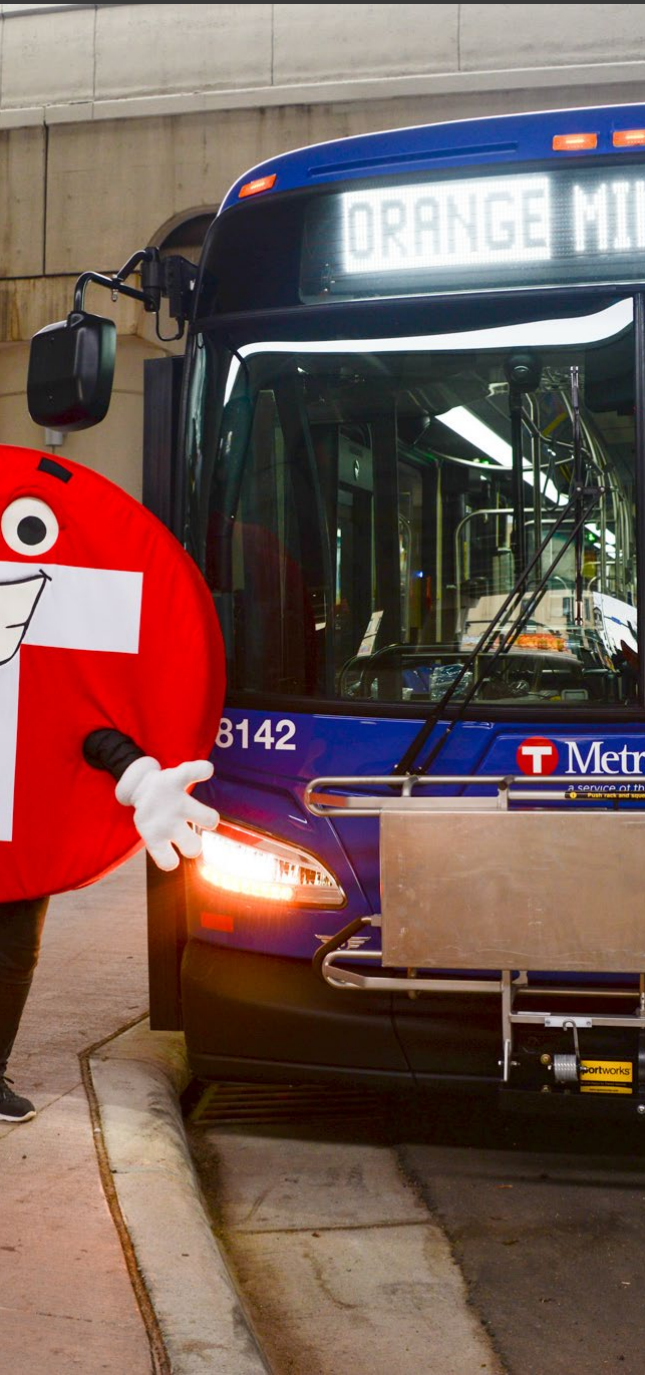
Consideration: Public Safety



Public safety concerns are raised often in the context of transitway investment

- Reported crime was lower in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023; ridership was higher in Q1 2024 compared to Q1 2023
- Metro Transit is expanding layers of official, visible presence as part of Safety & Security Action Plan implementation
 - Supplemental security officers deployed to several locations
 - CSOs began inspecting fares and issuing administrative citations for fare non-compliance in December 2023
 - Transit Rider Investment Program (TRIP) Agents launched in February 2024
 - Job posting for the first cohort of Metro Transit TRIP Agent employees will go live on May 31
 - Transit Service Intervention Project (TSIP) partners are connecting people riding light rail to resources
- Metro Transit Police Department continues to face significant personnel shortages
 - 105 full-time officers of 171 full-time officers budgeted

Discussion Questions



Is the approach we are outlining hitting the mark?

1. Which considerations/topics are important to you?
2. What are we missing? For example:
 1. What are the considerations you want information on prior to making transitway decisions?
 2. What benefits do you want presented when discussing risks and risk mitigation?
 3. Other topics or information you need as you make decisions about transitways?

