



# Equity Advisory Committee: August 17, 2021



Brooklyn Park | Crystal | Robbinsdale | Golden Valley | Minneapolis



# 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



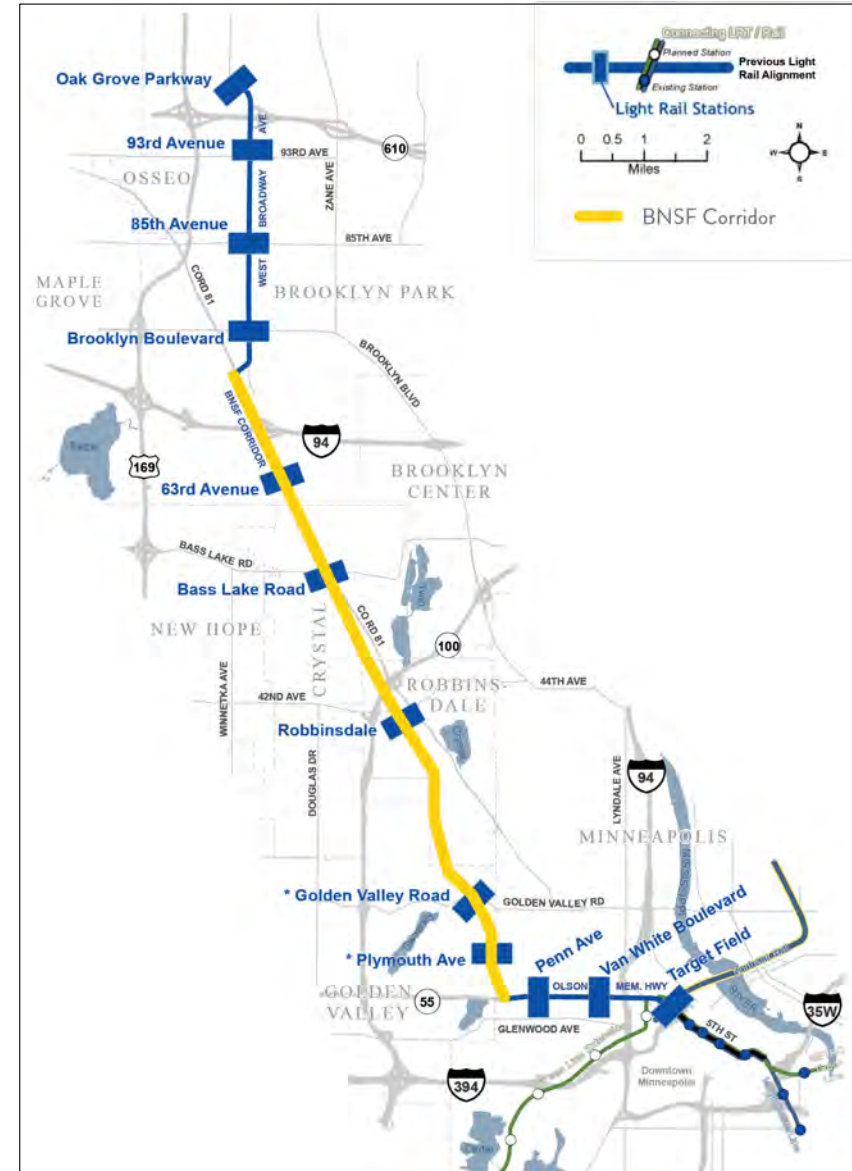
# Project Update





# 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

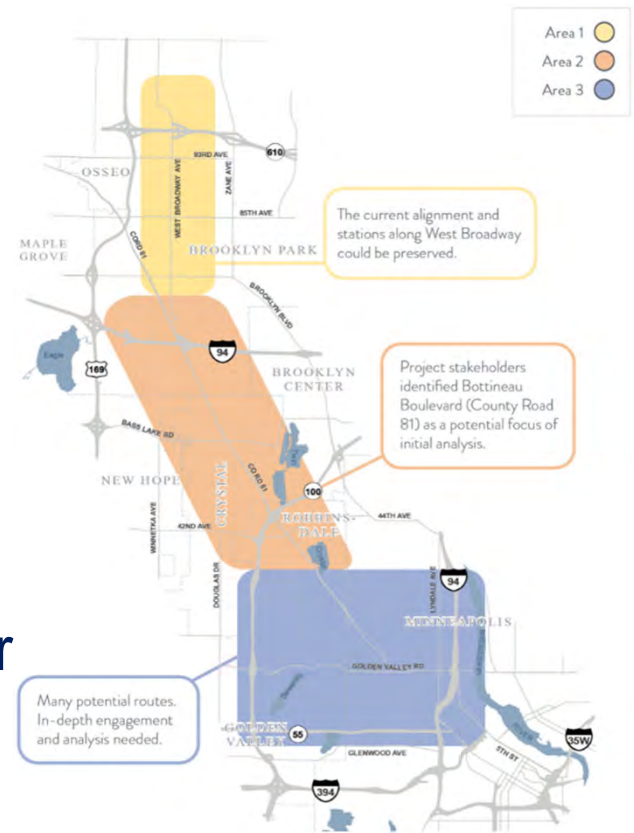


# 2021 Community Engagement Overview and Takeaways



# 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

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





# 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



Minneapolis Fresh Market

# 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



Hennepin County Commissioner Robbinsdale Driveway Talks





# 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

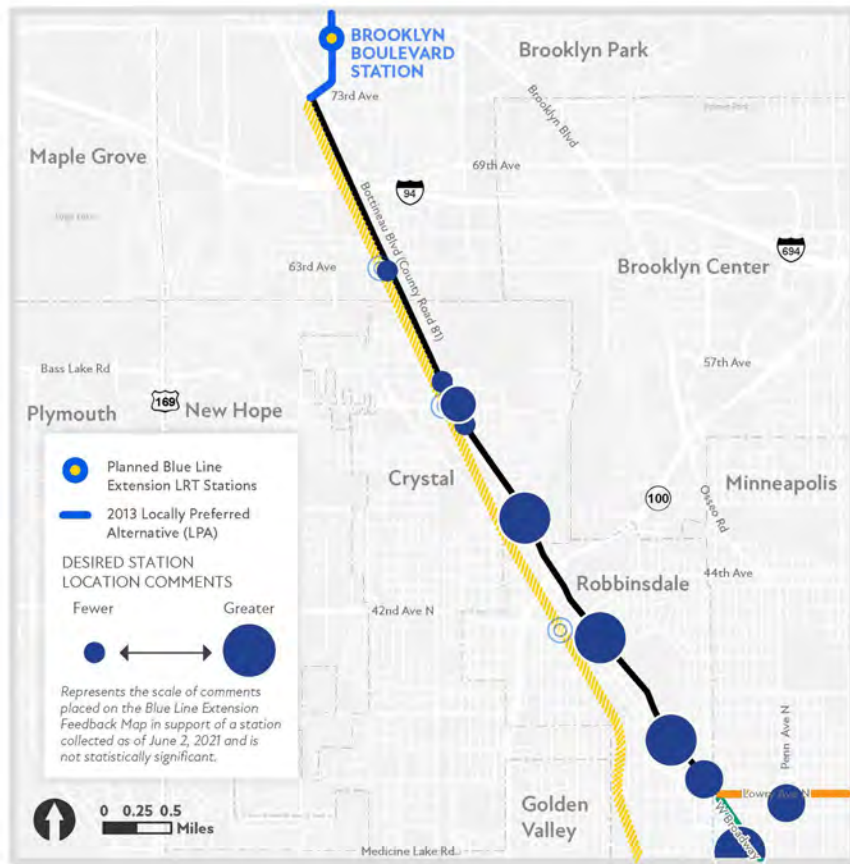


Top Picture: Met Council Member Chamblis Brooklyn Park Listening Session

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

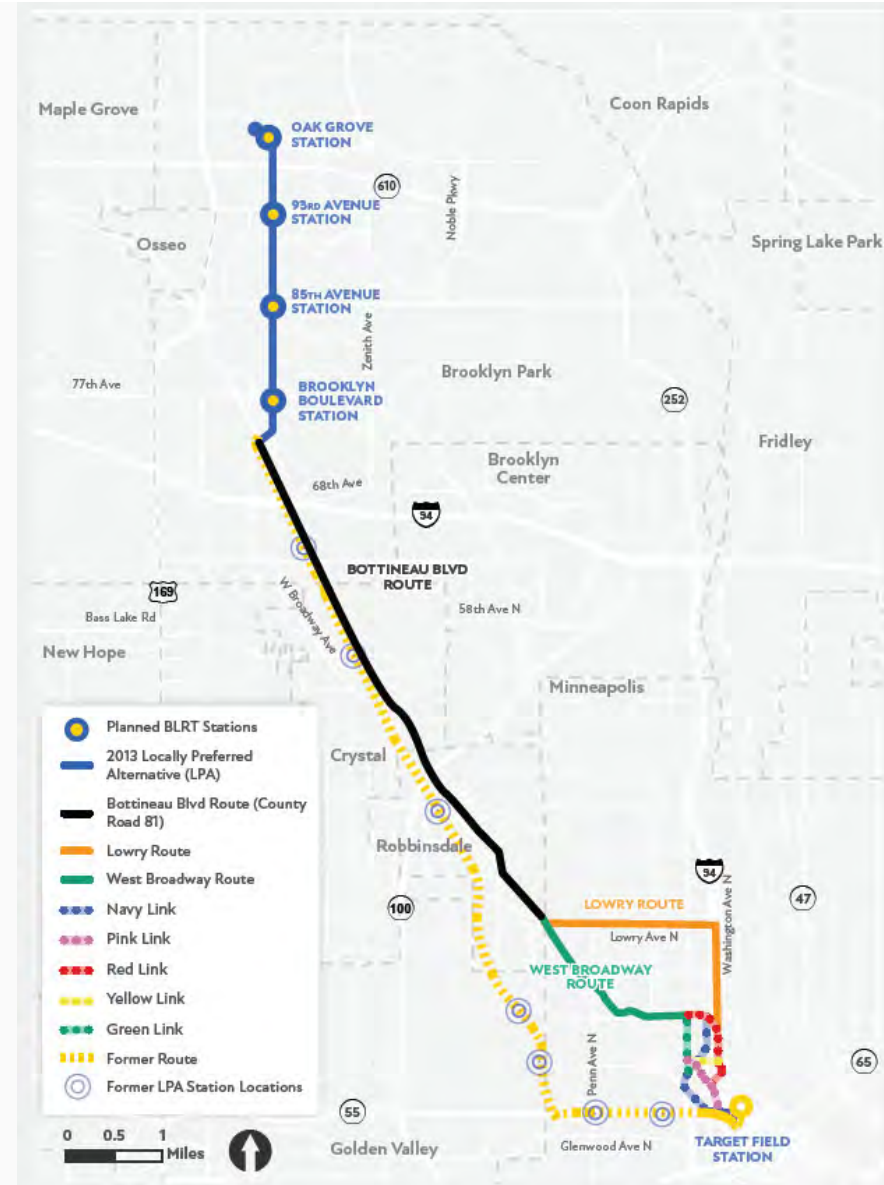


# Development of Route Modification Alternatives



# 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

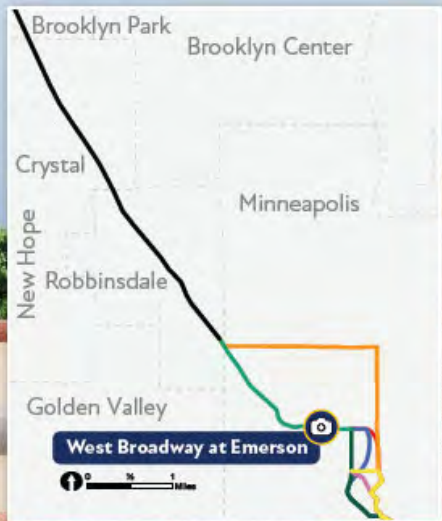


# Visualization: Existing Conditions on W. Broadway





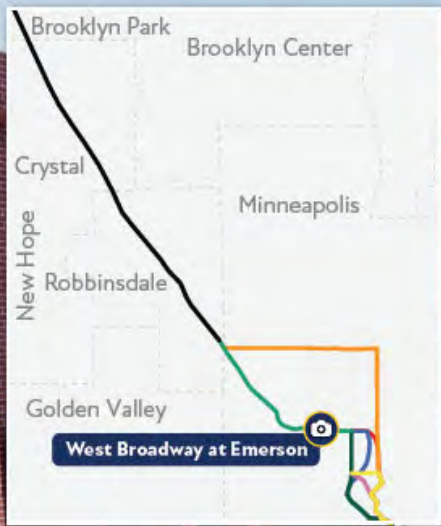
# Visualization: Center Running LRT



# Visualization: Side Running LRT



# Visualization: Elevated



**ELEVATED (AERIAL)  
LIGHT RAIL**

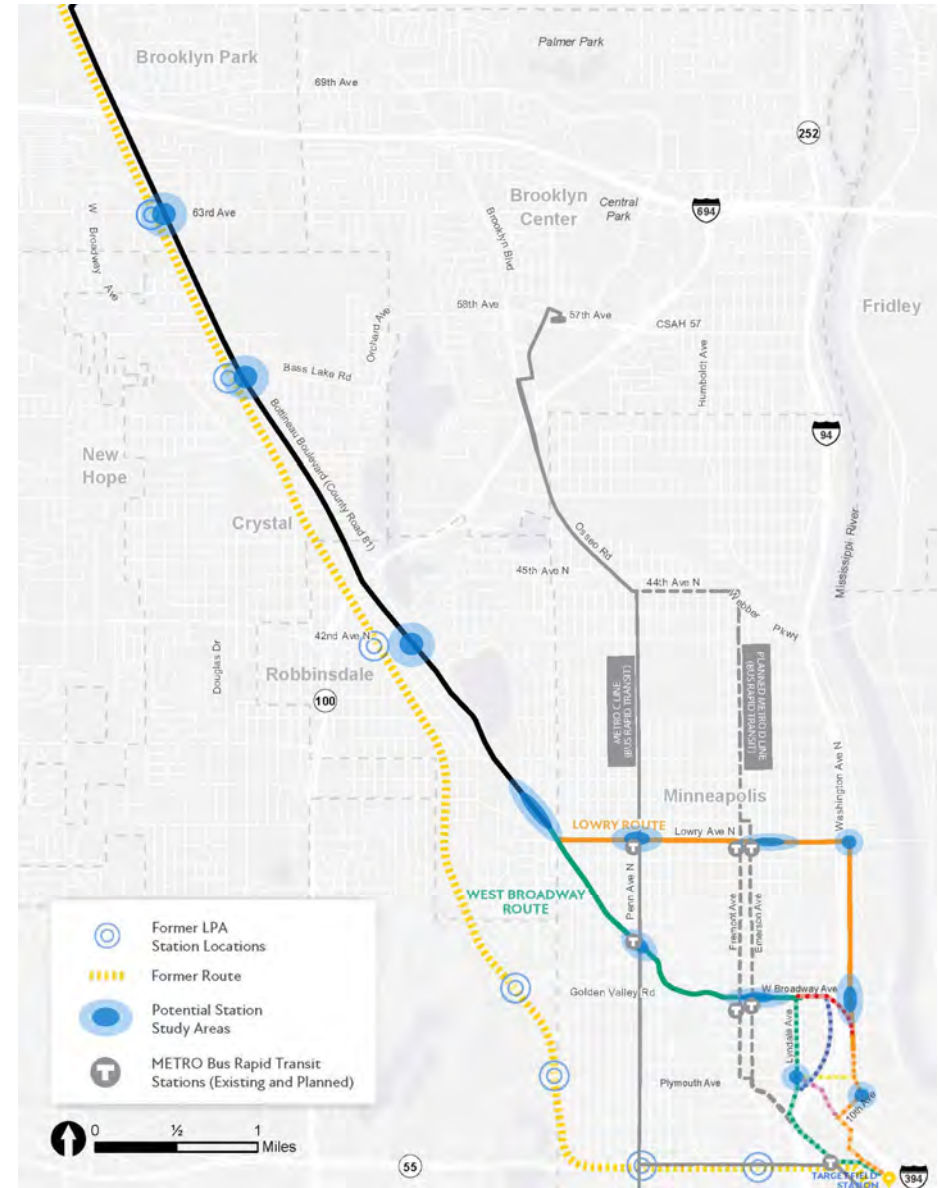




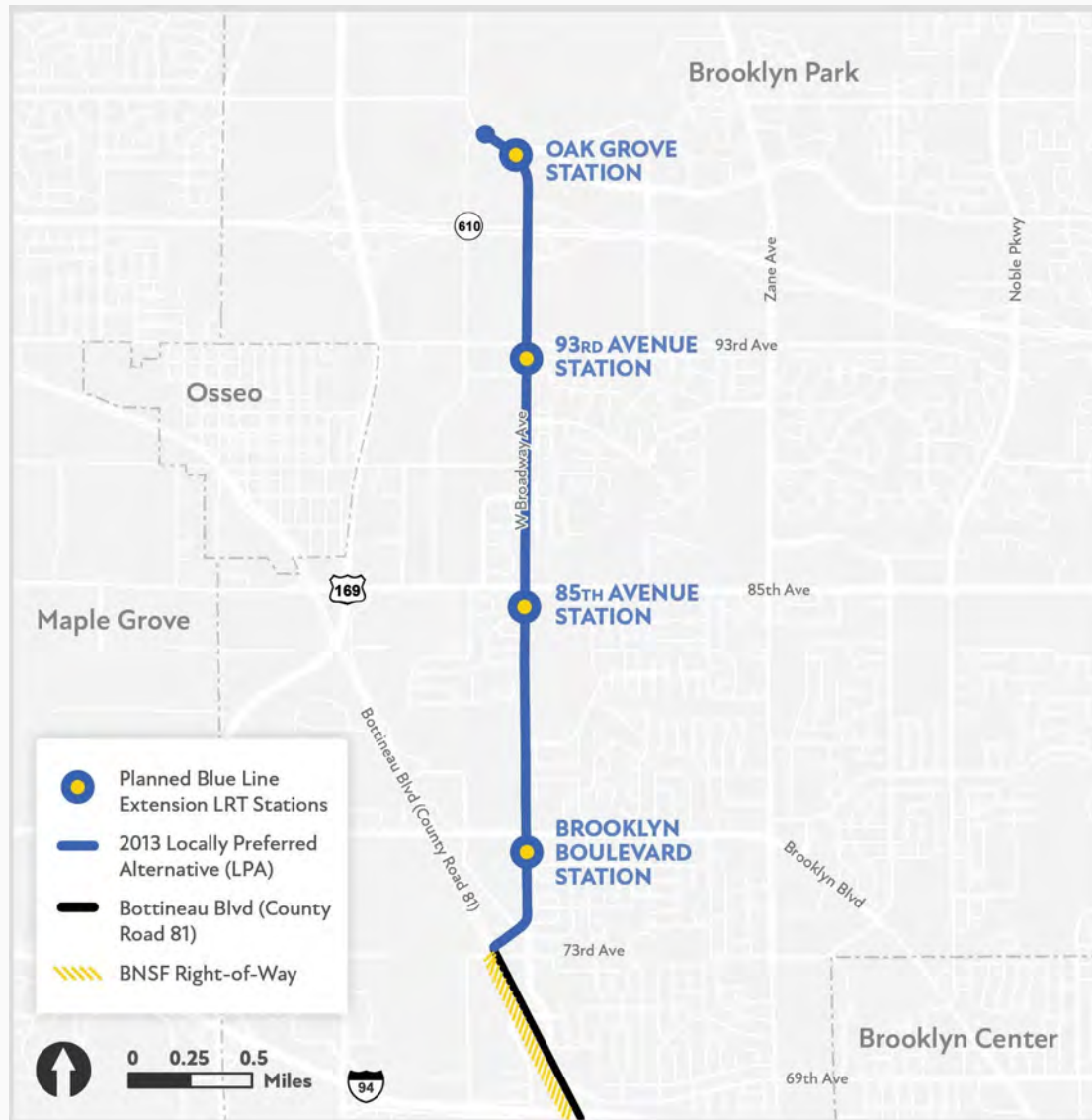
# Potential Station Study Areas

Based on:

- Project principles, project goals
- Previously planned stations
- Stakeholder and community input
- Key destinations
- Transit connections
- ½ to 1 mile spacing
- Engineering requirements

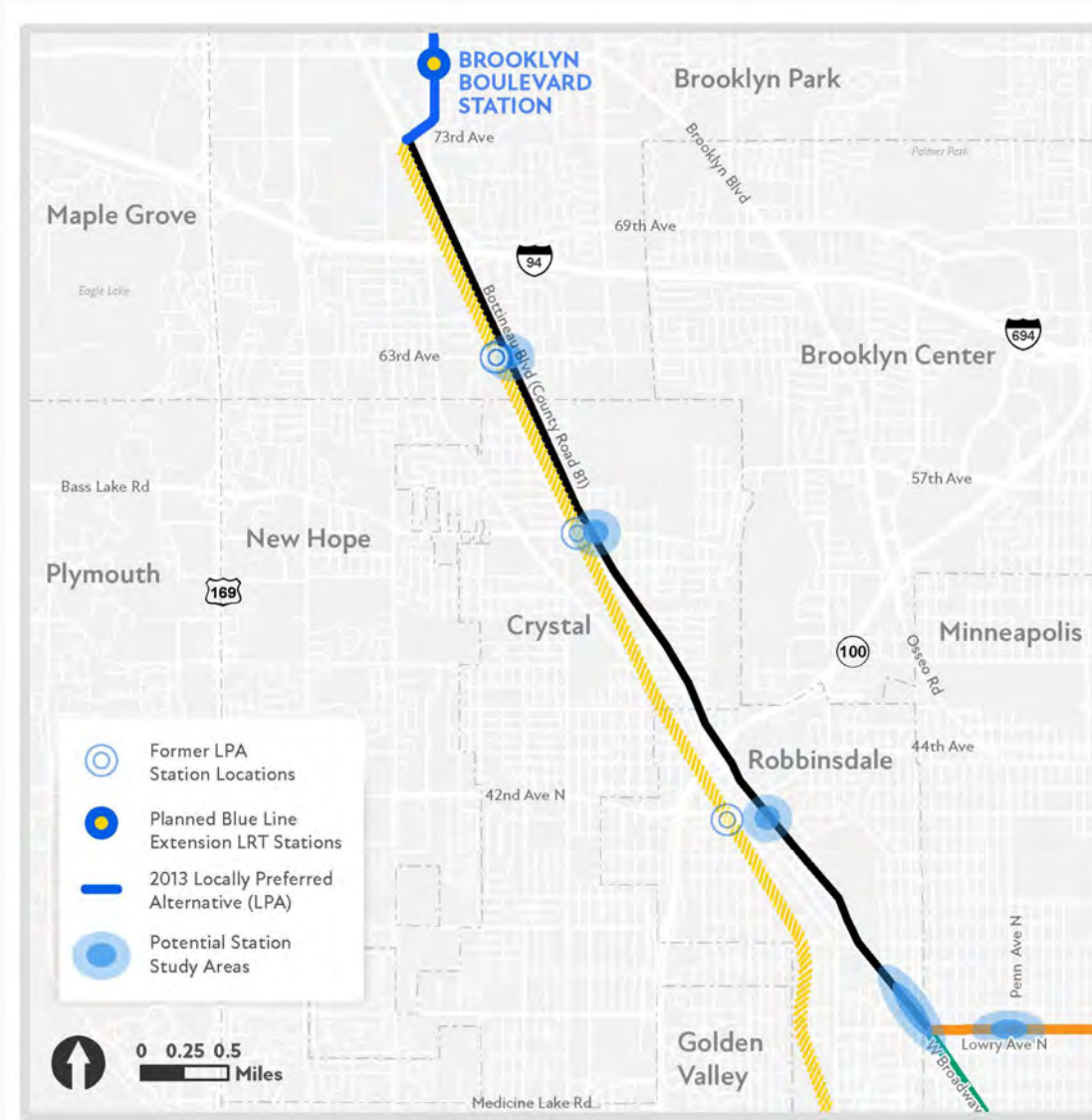


# Brooklyn Park Planned Stations





# Proposed Station Study Areas Crystal & Robbinsdale



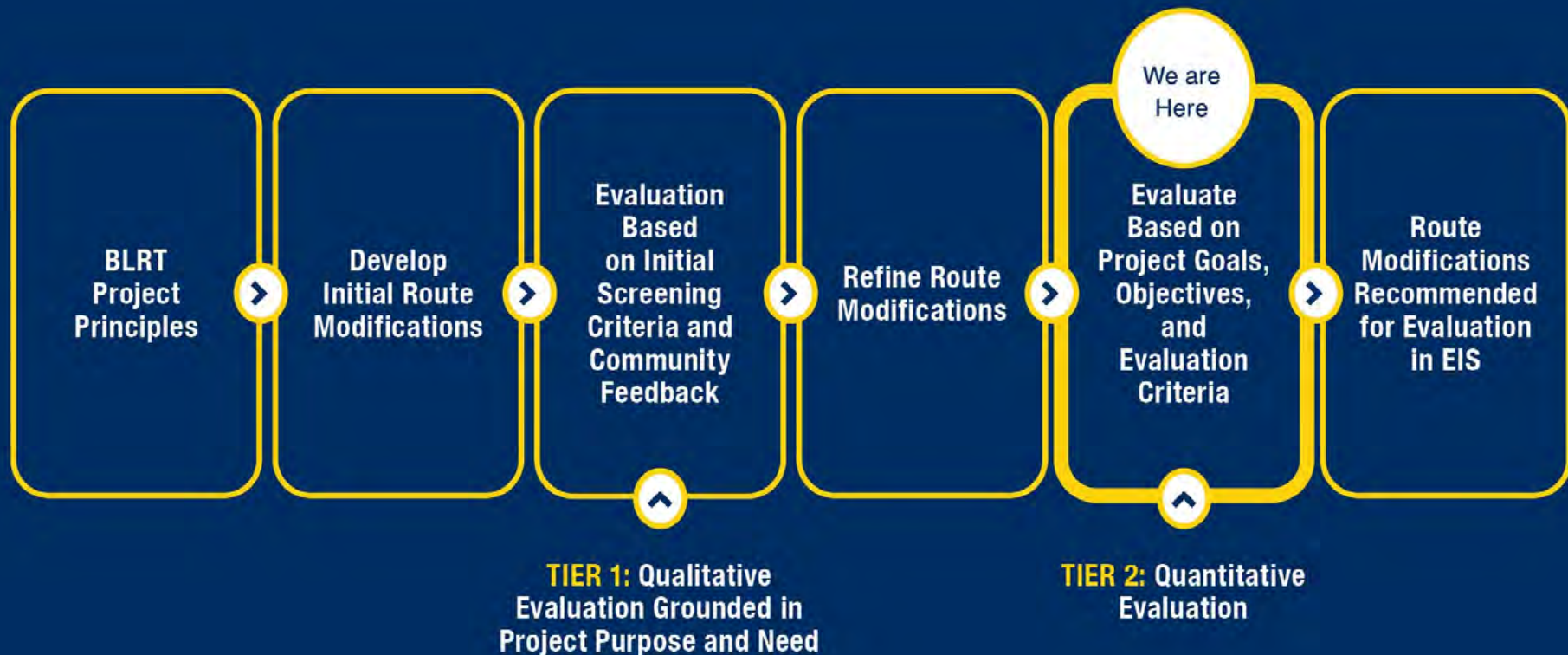
# Proposed Station Study Areas Minneapolis



# Route/Station Modification Selection Process



# Approach to Evaluation




# Route Modification Recommendation Report

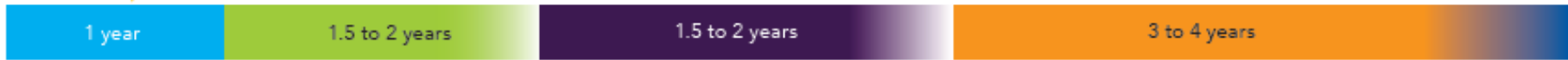
- Report includes:
  - Purpose of report, history of BLRT, process overview
  - Summary of public engagement in 2020 and 2021
  - Route identification and evaluation process:
    - Initial potential candidate routes
    - Criteria used to make decisions
    - Assessment of routes based on application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





# Project Development Schedule/Next Steps

We're here 



 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

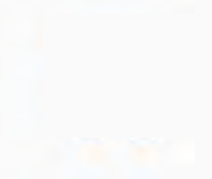
*Seek city support of the LRT design*

 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](http://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
- Follow us:
  - Twitter: [@BlueLineExt](https://twitter.com/BlueLineExt)
  - Facebook: [MetroBlueLineExtension](https://www.facebook.com/MetroBlueLineExtension)



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