

Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 22, 2020

Subject: METRO E Line Recommended Alignment

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve staff's recommended alignment for the METRO E Line.

The recommended alignment will run from the University of Minnesota area to Southdale Transit Center via 4th Street and University Avenue SE, Hennepin Avenue through downtown and uptown Minneapolis, 36th Street, Richfield Road, Sheridan Avenue, 44th Street, France Avenue, and 65th Street.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

There were two questions following the presentation:

- Committee Chair Barber asked about current and expected ridership levels in the corridor. O'Donnell Burrows said that like other arterial BRT corridors, ridership in this corridor is anticipated to increase.
- Committee Chair Barber asked which TPP update the alignment would go into. MTS Director Thompson answered that it would go into this year's 2040 update.

The motion was made by Sterner, seconded by Cummings.

The motion carried.

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: January 13, 2020

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 22, 2020

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Subject: | METRO E Line Recommended Alignment |
| District(s), Member(s): | District 5 (Cummings); District 6 (Atlas-Ingebretson); District 7 (Lilligren); District 8 (Muse) |
| Policy/Legal Reference: | Public Accountability Policy 2-1; Public Involvement in the Transportation Planning Process 1-3b |
| Staff Prepared/Presented: | Wes Kooistra, General Manager, 612-349-7510 Charles Carlson, Director, BRT Projects, 612-349-7639 Katie Roth, Manager, Arterial BRT, 612-349-7772 Kyle O'Donnell Burrows, Sr. Planner, BRT Projects, 612-349-7749 |
| Division/Department: | Metro Transit BRT Projects |

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve staff's recommended alignment for the METRO E Line. The recommended alignment will run from the University of Minnesota area to Southdale Transit Center via 4th Street and University Avenue SE, Hennepin Avenue through downtown and uptown Minneapolis, 36th Street, Richfield Road, Sheridan Avenue, 44th Street, France Avenue, and 65th Street.

Background

The recommended E Line alignment is the result of the recently completed E Line Corridor Study, which evaluated seven alignment alternatives on the southern end of the corridor and two alignment alternatives on the northern end of the corridor.

Rationale

Approval of the E Line alignment recommendation will confirm the alignment for future inclusion in the Metropolitan Council Transportation Policy Plan and allow more detailed station and corridor planning to begin in 2020.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This action advances the Thrive outcomes of Stewardship, Prosperity, Equity, Livability, and Sustainability. The recommended E Line alignment represents a transitway investment in an area with transit supportive development patterns, serving concentrated job and activity centers, and connecting lower-income areas to those opportunities. This investment will improve transportation options and promote to alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel.

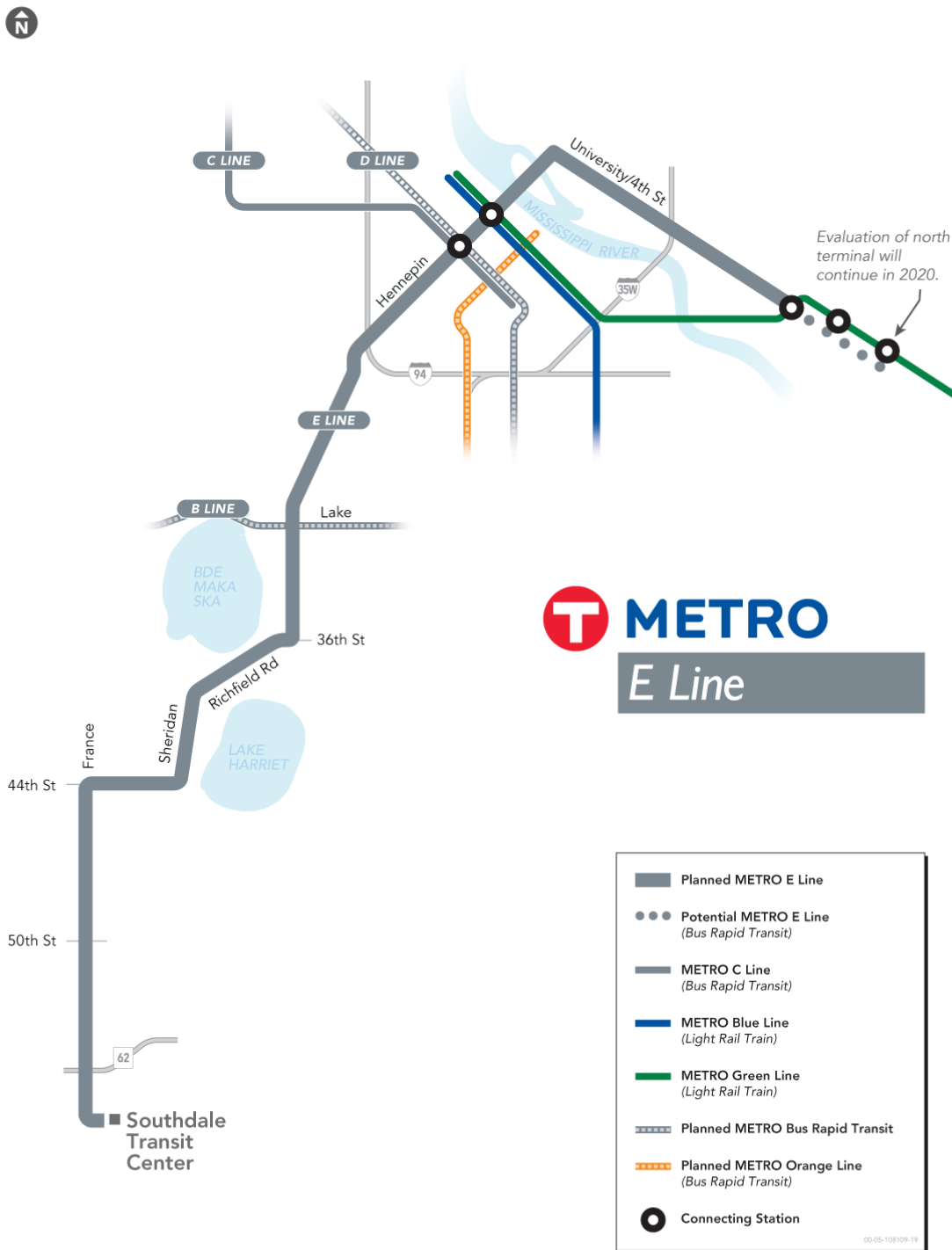
Funding

The E Line Corridor Study and supporting planning has been funded by Metro Transit operating resources.

Known Support / Opposition

The E Line Corridor Study included a significant community engagement process, which yielded strong support for the alignment recommendation. The City of Edina has also passed a resolution in support of the alignment.

Figure 1: Recommended E Line Alignment



METRO E Line Recommended Alignment

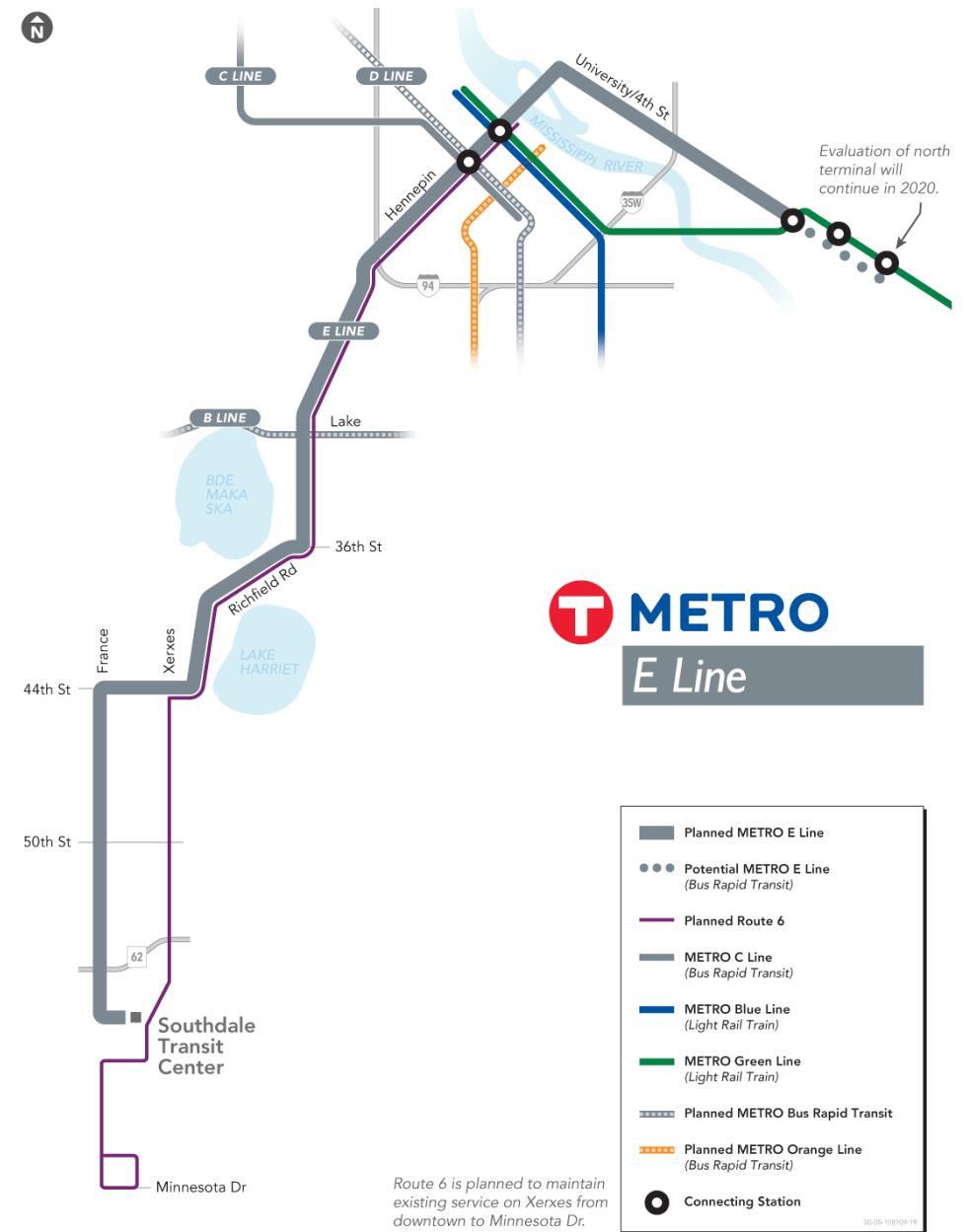
Business Item 2020-14

Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee
January 13, 2020

Kyle O'Donnell Burrows, Sr. Planner, BRT Projects
612-349-7749

E Line alignment recommendation

- Northern terminal:
 - Serve 4th Street and University Ave
 - Final terminal between Westgate and Prospect Park to be determined
- Southern terminal:
 - Southdale Transit Center
- Alignment:
 - 44th Street to France Avenue
- Concept service mix:
 - E Line:
 - 10 minutes all day
 - Route 6:
 - 20 minutes all day
 - Downtown to Minnesota Drive via Xerxes



Supporting rationale

- Little significant difference between alternatives on comparative quantitative metrics of potential benefit
 - Overall benefit/ impact to existing Route 6 riders
 - Population and jobs served
 - Benefit to populations of concern (race and income)
- Key difference between alternatives: *access to key regional destinations*
 - Alignment along France Avenue serves:
 - Commercial nodes at 44th St & France and 50th St & France
 - Fairview Southdale Regional Hospital campus
- Comparable resource requirements for concept capital and operating plans
- Aligns with public feedback

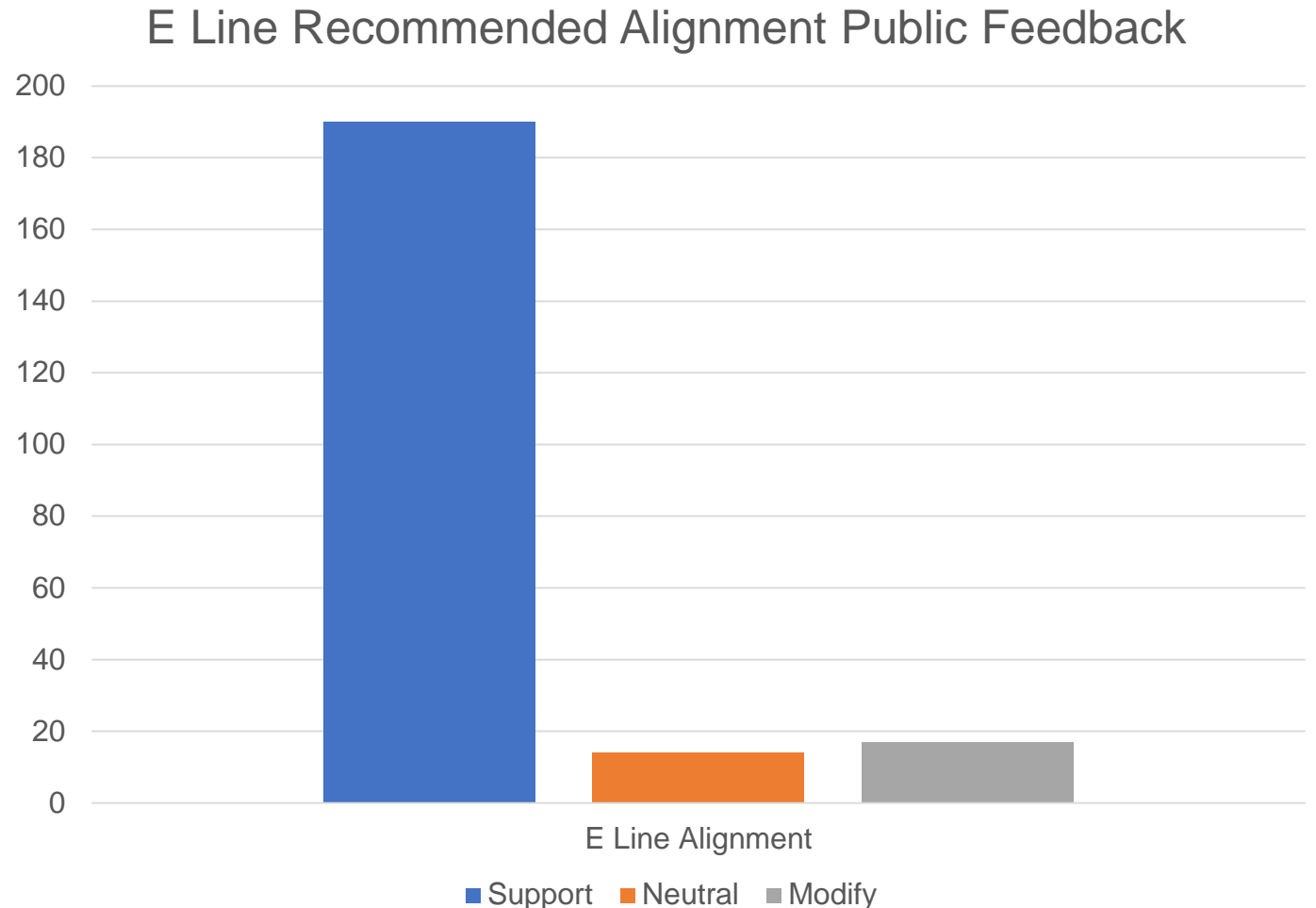
Outreach and engagement around recommended alignment

- Two open houses
- Online survey with interactive map
- Door knocking at businesses along corridor and meeting riders at stops
- Meeting with neighborhood organizations
- Communications
 - Corridor Mailing
 - Route 6 Electronic Rider Alert
 - Metro Transit Rider's Club
 - E Line Update Newsletter
 - Metro Transit Connect Newsletter



Public feedback on recommendations

- Strong support for the proposed E Line alignment (92 percent support or neutral)
- Resolution of Support from the City of Edina
- Key themes:
 - Support for connecting to major destinations along France Avenue
 - Support for extending to Westgate Station
 - Support for pursuing bus-only lanes and other transit advantages
 - Interest in additional stations at select sites
 - Concern about potential lack of service along Wooddale Avenue



Next steps

- Update Transportation Policy Plan to include final E Line alignment
- E Line project development
 - 2020 – E Line Corridor Plan Development
 - Corridor plan will finalize:
 - Station locations and platform layouts
 - Transit advantages along the corridor
 - North terminal location
 - Ongoing public engagement
 - Will be presented to the Metropolitan Council for consideration and approval
 - 2021-2022 – Engineering
 - 2023 – Construction (pending full funding), Detailed Service Planning

Proposed action

- That the Metropolitan Council approve the recommended alignment for the METRO E Line.

