

Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 13, 2021

Subject: METRO B Line – Approval of Final Corridor Plan

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the final METRO B Line Corridor Plan, to establish the number and location of stations in the project.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Metro Transit Senior Planner Adam Smith presented this item. Chair Barber expressed excitement for this line as it will connect with multiple other METRO lines, creating a well-connected transit network.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Zeran. Motion carried.

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: September 27, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 13, 2021

Subject:	METRO B Line – Approval of Final Corridor Plan
District(s), Member(s):	District 6 (Atlas-Ingebretson), District 7 (Lilligren), District 8 (Muse), District 14 (Fredson), District 13 (Lee)
Policy/Legal Reference:	PIC 2-2 - Accountability to the Public Policy
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Wes Kooistra, General Manager, 612-349-7510 Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager, 612-349-7507 Charles Carlson, Director, BRT Projects, 612-349-7639 Katie Roth, Assistant Director, BRT Projects, 612-349-7772 Adam Smith, Senior Planner, BRT Projects, 612-349-7160
Division/Department:	Metro Transit / BRT Projects

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve the final B Line Corridor Plan, to establish the number and location of stations in the project.

Background

On July 14, the Council authorized release of the recommended B Line Corridor Plan for public review and comment. The document functioned as a public report-back on previous planning efforts and was shaped by ongoing agency coordination and over 650 comments submitted in response to the draft B Line Corridor Plan published in February 2021.

Following release, public comments were accepted on the recommended B Line Corridor Plan through August 13, 2021. Comments on the recommended B Line Corridor Plan were solicited through the B Line project website, newsletter, social media posts, and direct communication with neighborhood and community organizations throughout the corridor. Staff also conducted direct outreach to businesses and residents immediately adjacent to stations in the recommended plan. A total of 164 comments were submitted during this additional comment period. These comments are included in the plan and will continue to guide the project development process alongside those comments previously received.

Station locations in the final plan are consistent with those in the recommended plan.

Rationale

Approval of the B Line Corridor Plan will establish B Line station locations at the intersection quadrant level, providing critical direction and focus to the detailed design and engineering phase beginning in Fall 2021.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The B Line will upgrade and substantially replace Route 21, Metro Transit's second-highest ridership bus route. Investment in high-quality transportation options in the Route 21 corridor will advance the Thrive outcome of Prosperity, by making the region more economically competitive through increased workers' access to employment, and support to employers by increasing available workforce with affordable, convenient transportation.

The B Line project advances the Thrive outcome of Equity by investing in a transit corridor serving communities of color. More than half of Route 21 riders identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC). Investment in the B Line will provide riders with faster service and a more comfortable waiting and riding experience.

The proposed action also advances the Thrive outcome of Stewardship by planning for B Line corridor improvements efficiently with regional partnership from Hennepin County, Ramsey County, Minneapolis, and St. Paul.

Funding

Approval of the Corridor Plan will establish the scope of the B Line project to include defined number of stations in determined locations, a necessary step to refining the project budget and delivering the project within that budget. Full funding for delivery of the B Line project has been secured through a combination of federal, state, and Metro Transit sources.

Known Support / Opposition

Public engagement throughout the planning process has identified strong support for the B Line and transit improvements in the Lake-Marshall-Selby corridor. Local partners have been supportive of the project and will continue to be closely involved as the project transitions into engineering.



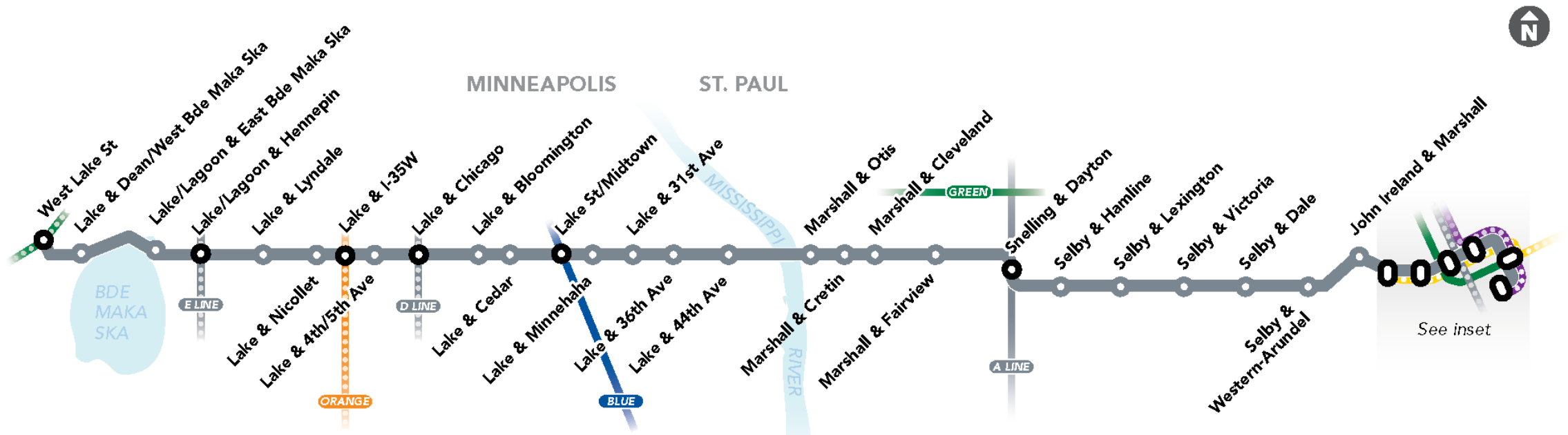
METRO B Line Final Corridor Plan

Adam Smith, Senior Planner, BRT Projects

September 27, 2021

Proposed Action 2021-244

- Approve the final METRO B Line Corridor Plan, to establish the number and location of stations in the project.

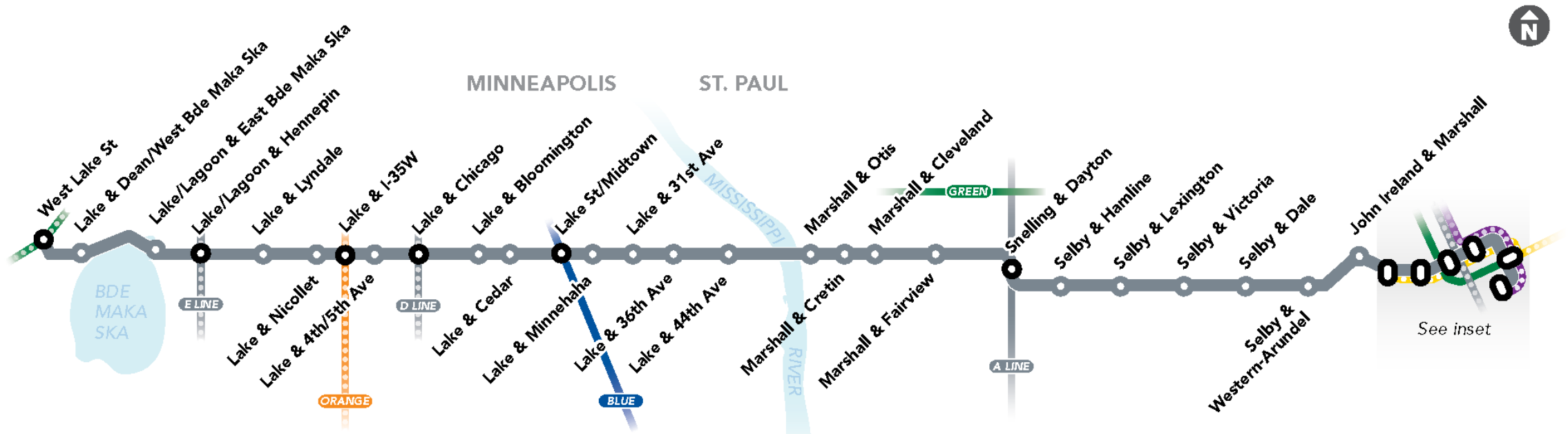


B Line Project Development Schedule

- Initial corridor recommendations and station planning: 2019 – 2020
- Corridor Plan
 - Release Draft Corridor Plan: February 2021
 - Recommended Corridor Plan: July 2021
 - **Final Corridor Plan (Council action to approve): October 2021**
- Engineering: Fall 2021 – Late 2022
- Construction: 2023 – 2024

Corridor Plan Contents

- **Locations: station intersections and locations of platforms within each intersection**
- Corridor context:
 - Concept bus service plan: local and limited-stop bus service within and along B Line corridor
 - Potential bus priority treatments to meet project speed and reliability goals



Recommended B Line Corridor Plan public engagement

- **Released July 14, 2021 (Business Item 2021-153)**
 - Comments accepted until August 13, 2021
 - Over 160 comments submitted
- Outreach and engagement
 - Project website with video, key information, and station concepts
 - Direct postcard mailing to station neighbors
 - Station-specific flyers
 - Door-knocking at station intersections
 - Email to subscribers, Rider Alerts
 - Project fact sheets in Spanish, Somali, and Hmong
 - Partnering with community organizations, neighborhood groups along corridor
 - Social media
- Ongoing agency coordination

**METRO B LINE BUS RAPID TRANSIT
MARSHALL & FAIRVIEW STATION**

Metro Transit is planning a new bus rapid transit (BRT) station at the intersection of Marshall Avenue and Fairview Avenue. Here is what you need to know about this station:

- Bus shelters and other features will be located at the northwest and southeast corners of the intersection.
- Metro Transit has chosen these locations because they provide space for station amenities, enable safe and convenient access to destinations.
- It is estimated that the station would remove 2-3 parking spaces at the northwest corner.
- The B Line is currently under construction and is scheduled to open in 2022.
- The plan for this station change will be finalized as the project progresses.
- Station design will continue at this station.

**METRO B LINE BUS RAPID TRANSIT
MARSHALL & FAIRVIEW STATION**

Proposed Marshall & Fairview Station Plan:

SCAN TO LEARN MORE
metrotransit.org

Para más información, escanee el código QR o llame al 612-373-3333.
Thaj tus khauj los sis hu rau 612-373-3333 los kawm paub ntsiv.
Koodhka iskaanka ah ama wac 612-373-3333 si aad wax badan uga ogaato.

MARSHALL & FAIRVIEW

SCAN TO LEARN MORE AND COMMENT BEFORE AUGUST 13
metrotransit.org/b-line-project

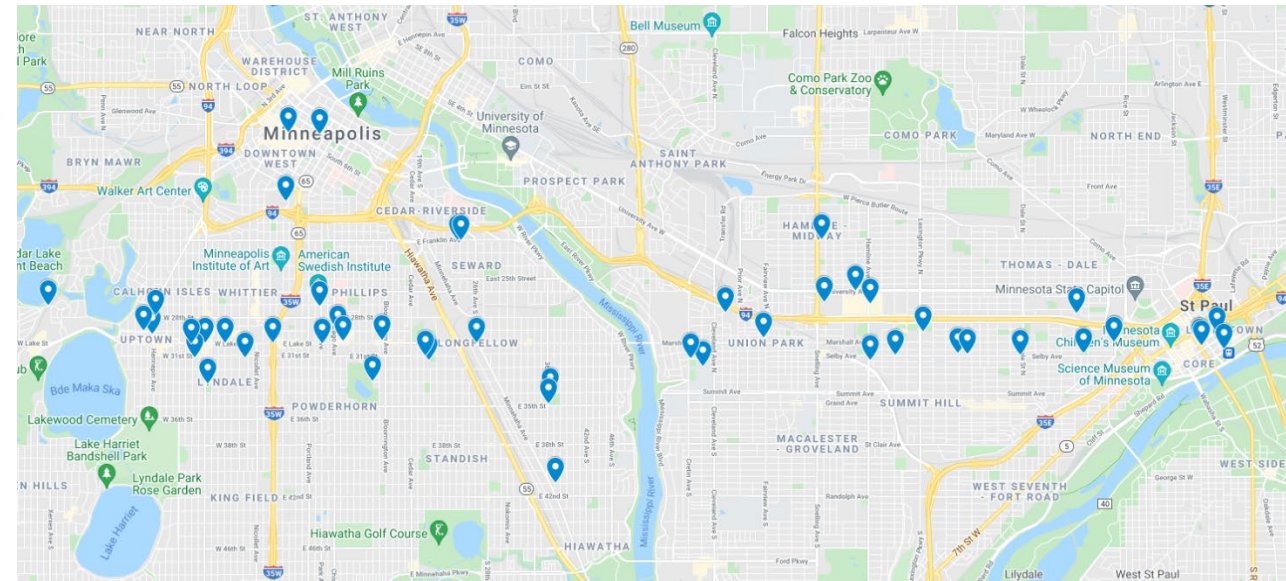
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PROJECT CONTACT:
Cody.Olson@metrotransit.org
612-248-0642

MARSHALL & FAIRVIEW **METRO B Line**

Recommended B Line Corridor Plan – comment demographics

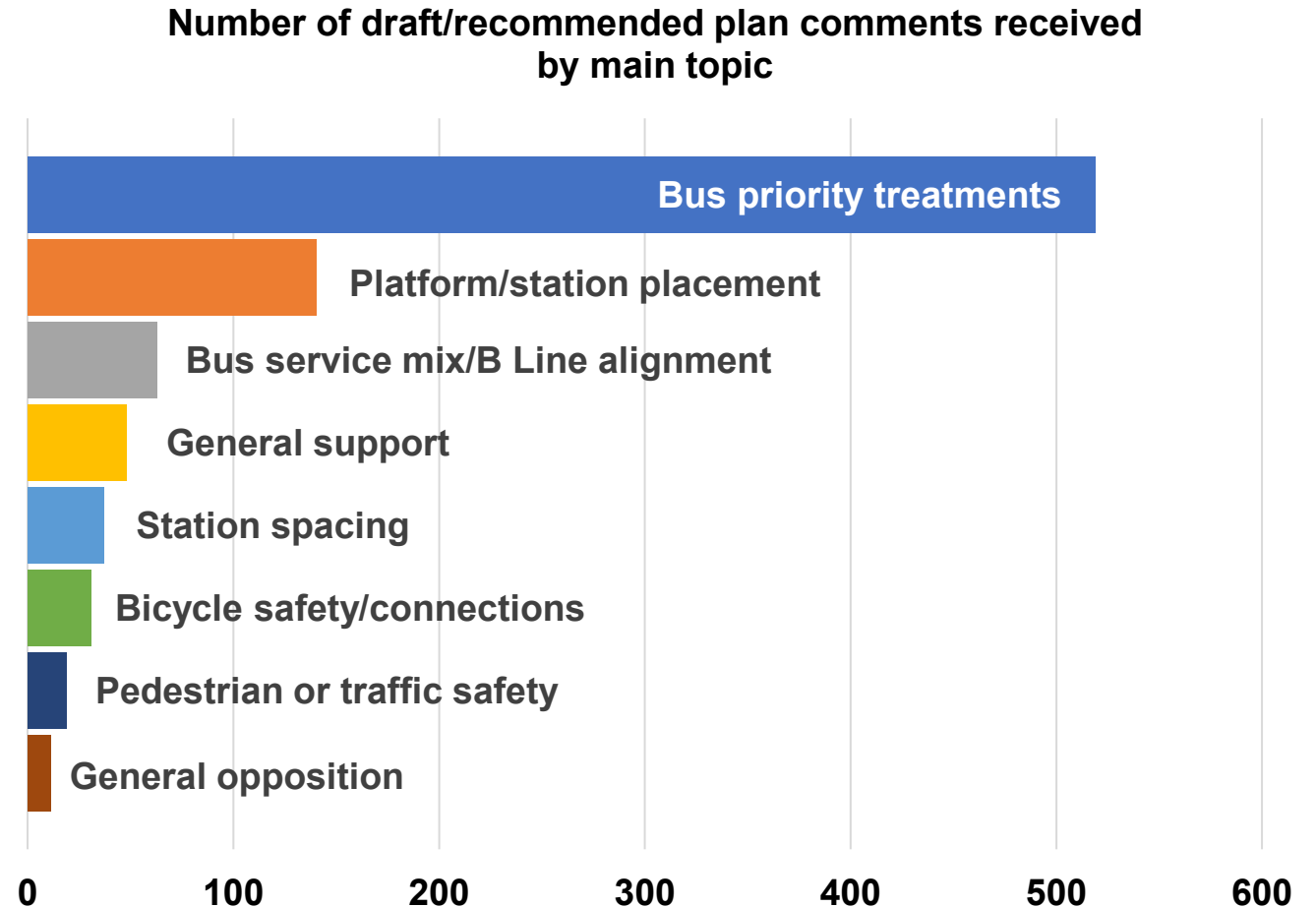
- Comments received from 164 individuals on recommended plan
- 44 individuals provided demographic information
 - Majority of respondents with home zip codes containing corridor
 - Majority white respondents at this step
 - Relatively wide distribution of age and household income
- Planning phase engagement across the B Line corridor
 - Project introduction
 - Corridor recommendations
 - Draft corridor plan



Map showing past B Line public engagement events

B Line Corridor Plan comment themes

- Transit speed and reliability
 - Support for bus lanes on Lake Street
- Station and platform locations
 - On-street parking
 - Traffic delays
 - Access to municipal services (garbage, recycling, snow clearance)
 - Turning movements and sightlines
 - Tree impacts
 - Bus/bike interactions
 - Size of shelters and stations
- Station spacing

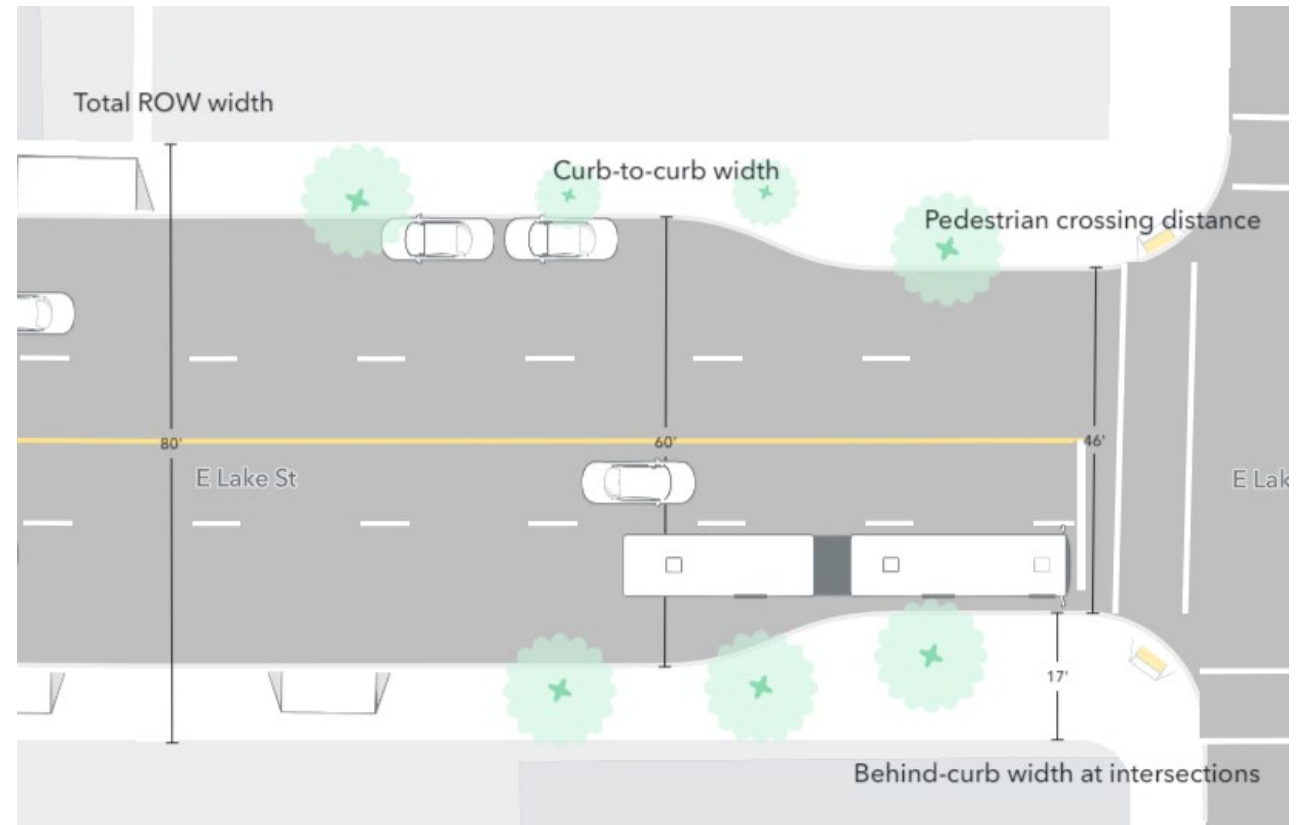


Revisions from recommended to final plan

- No changes to station or platform locations
- Responses to comments received regarding platform placement, including issues to address throughout engineering
- Text updates related to evaluation of bus lanes on Lake Street, including:
 - Additional background information around development and evaluation of alternative bus lane scenarios
 - Ongoing Lake Street study in partnership with Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis could potentially warrant future amendment to station locations at three intersections (Lyndale, Bloomington, and Cedar)

Ongoing exploration of bus-only lanes on Lake Street

- Bus-only lanes are a tool needed to achieve B Line speed and reliability goals
- Partnering with Hennepin County and City of Minneapolis to explore implementing bus-only lanes wherever possible on Lake Street
 - Limited by narrow curb-to-curb distance
 - Lake is a high injury street with traffic and pedestrian safety improvement needs
- County-led advanced technical analysis to be completed by end of 2021 with public communication to follow





More information: www.metrotransit.org/b-line-project

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Adam Smith, Senior Planner, BRT Projects
adam.smith@metrotransit.org