

Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 13, 2021

Subject: Adoption of the Network Next arterial BRT 2040 Candidate Corridors

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the Network Next recommendations for 2040 arterial BRT expansion corridors.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Metro Transit BRT Projects Senior Planner Kyle O'Donnell Burrows presented this item. Chair Barber added the next step will be an amendment to the TPP which will go out for public comment this fall and Council approval in February 2022.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Gonzalez. Motion carried.

Note: The slides presented with the business item for the September 27th Committee meeting contained an error which has since been corrected. The map on slide 3 incorrectly showed the Grand Ave corridor as mid-term and Randolph/East 7th as longer-term; the reverse is correct. The error does not affect the requested action, as both corridors are identified in the business item as candidates for 2040 arterial BRT expansion.

Additional Known Support / Opposition

Following Committee action, the City of Bloomington engaged Metro Transit staff further regarding this action, sharing concerns about the exclusion of American Boulevard from 2040 candidate corridors. Metro Transit staff reviewed the Network Next plan outcomes and recommendation with staff, and presented to the City's Planning Commission on October 7. The City of Bloomington submitted a letter requesting that the Council continue to include the American Boulevard corridor in 2040 transitway plans. The corridor ranked 18th of 19 corridors screened in summer 2020, and was not advanced for further evaluation. A response to the city's letter is in development, and staff will continue to engage with Bloomington during the upcoming TPP amendment process.

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: September 27, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 13, 2021

Subject: Adopt Network Next Arterial BRT 2040 Candidate Corridors

District(s), Member(s): All

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
Kyle O'Donnell Burrows, Senior Planner, BRT Projects, 612-349-7783

Division/Department: Metro Transit / BRT Projects

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the Network Next recommendations for 2040 arterial BRT expansion corridors.

Background

In 2020 and 2021, as part of the Network Next 2040 vision for the bus network, Metro Transit led a planning process to identify the region's next arterial BRT priorities. Staff conducted extensive technical analysis and engaged regional stakeholders and the public, resulting in 10 corridors identified for tiered-priority implementation before 2040.

In March 2021, the Council adopted recommendations for near-term expansions in the BRT network, naming the F, G, and H lines. At that time, additional coordination was needed to determine the approach to integrating the remaining mid-term and longer-term priority corridors in the Transportation Policy Plan. Staff recommend adoption of the arterial BRT corridors identified in Network Next in order to replace the corridors included in the current Transportation Policy Plan, including those that did not emerge as priorities through Network Next evaluation. This action adopts six new corridors as expansion priorities and would position three corridors to be removed from the TPP through upcoming amendment: North Snelling/Lexington, East 7th/White Bear Avenue, and American Boulevard. These corridors could be reconsidered in future BRT planning efforts.

Rationale

Council adoption of Network Next recommendations for the remaining mid-term and longer-term priority BRT corridors will establish the Council's vision for arterial BRT expansion through 2040. These priorities would be reflected in the Transportation Policy Plan through a future amendment, planned for fall 2021.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The Network Next process has advanced the equity outcome by engaging a full cross-section of the community in decision making and using equity as a lens to evaluate candidate corridors. The BRT lines recommended for expansion further address equity through significantly expanding transit access for BIPOC communities to jobs and opportunity. The plan recommendations advance prosperity, through considering the reach of the METRO network and balancing major investments across the region. Finally, the

recommendations advance stewardship by prioritizing expansion of the arterial BRT network in areas with infrastructure and development patterns to support a successful transit system, balancing transit ridership with added connectivity.

Funding

There is no funding attached to this action.

Known Support / Opposition

Recommendations were made following a robust process that included multiple rounds of community input and feedback, along with ongoing engagement with regional stakeholders.

