



Imagine 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment 1 – Project Background

Blue Line Extension and Gold Line Extension

March 2025

metro council.org





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Amendment Background



Amendment Timeline



- **Informational presentations & review**
(March into May)
- **Public comment release process**
(May through June)
- **Public comment period**
(July through August)
- **Adoption process**
(September through October)

Ask to Transit Planning Working Group



- **Today: Discussion and questions**
 - Project background
 - Amendment process
 - Impacts to TPP
 - Etc...
- **Inform your agency's TAB member**

[TAB Technical Advisory Committee - Metropolitan Council](#)

Proposed Changes



- 1. Incorporate changes to Blue Line Extension Project from Municipal Consent Process to fiscally constrained plan**
 - a. Remove West Broadway Modern Streetcar Project
- 2. Add Gold Line Extension project to fiscally constrained plan**
 - a. Show Gold Line as existing line to reflect March opening

Criteria for Adding Transitway Projects



1. Transitway type, alignment, and station locations
2. Selection process
3. Public engagement and feedback
4. Resolutions of support from relevant government bodies and agencies
5. Fiscal constraint

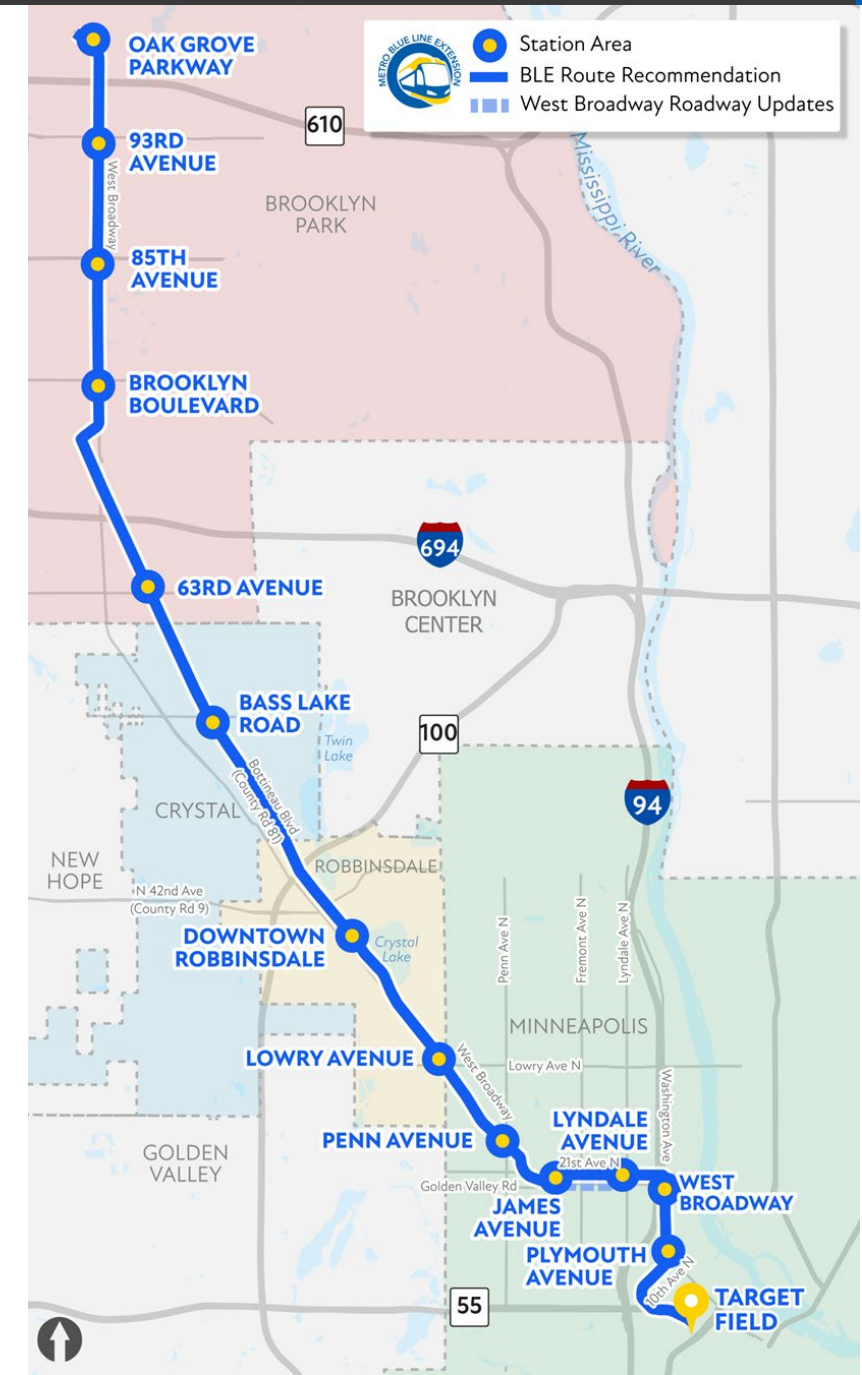
Blue Line Extension



Blue Line Extension - Overview



- 13.4 miles & 13 new stations
- Connecting Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park and surrounding communities to fast, frequent, all-day service across the METRO system
- Single seat ride to existing Blue Line stops downtown, MSP Airport and Mall of America
- Focus on building community prosperity through anti-displacement strategies before, during, and after construction
- Final Design: 2024-2026
- Major Construction: 2027-2030



Project Background

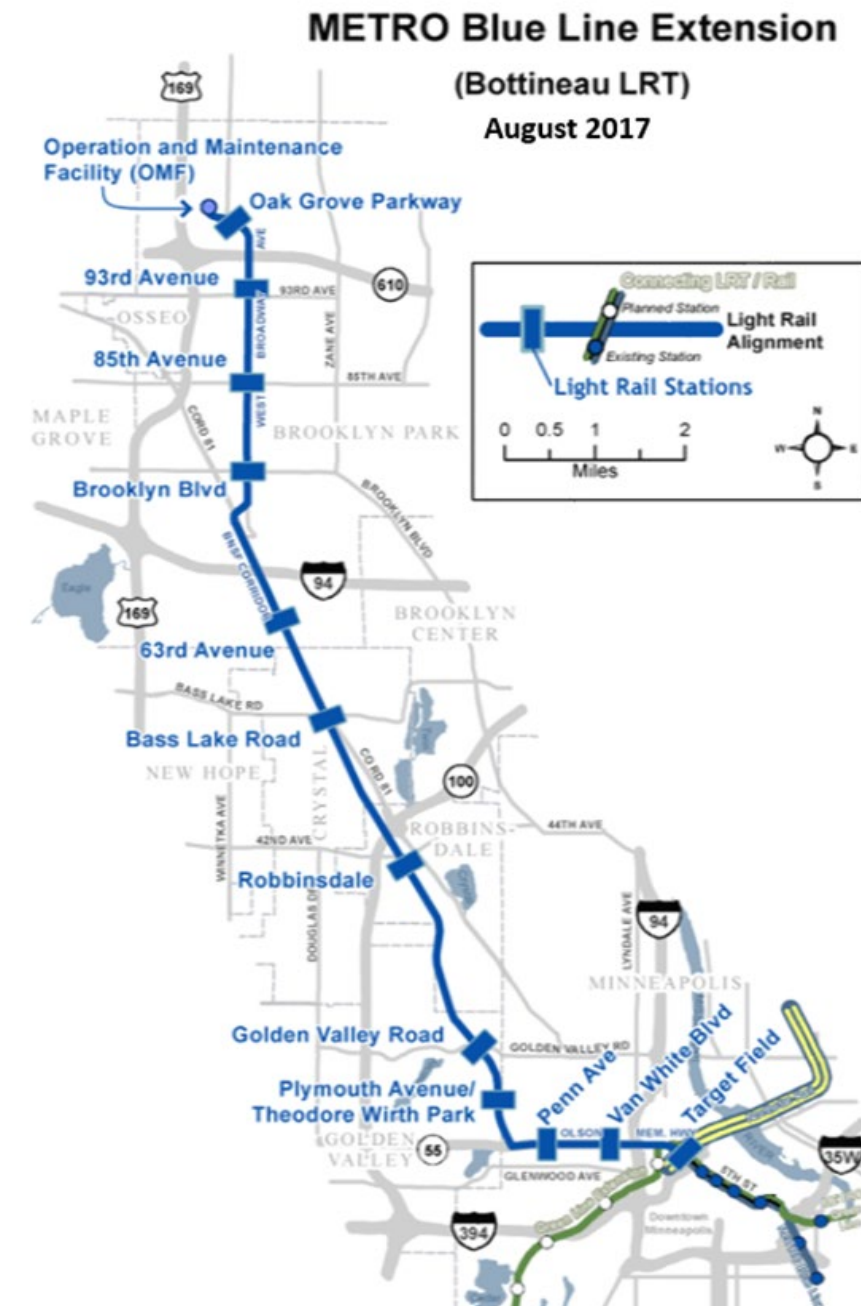
- Matches level of service as existing METRO Blue Line
- 10-minute service at peak periods on weekdays and weekends
- Projected ridership of 12,000 to 13,700 riders daily with total combine daily ridership of 30,000 at opening day
- Up to 50% of new riders on opening day from zero car households



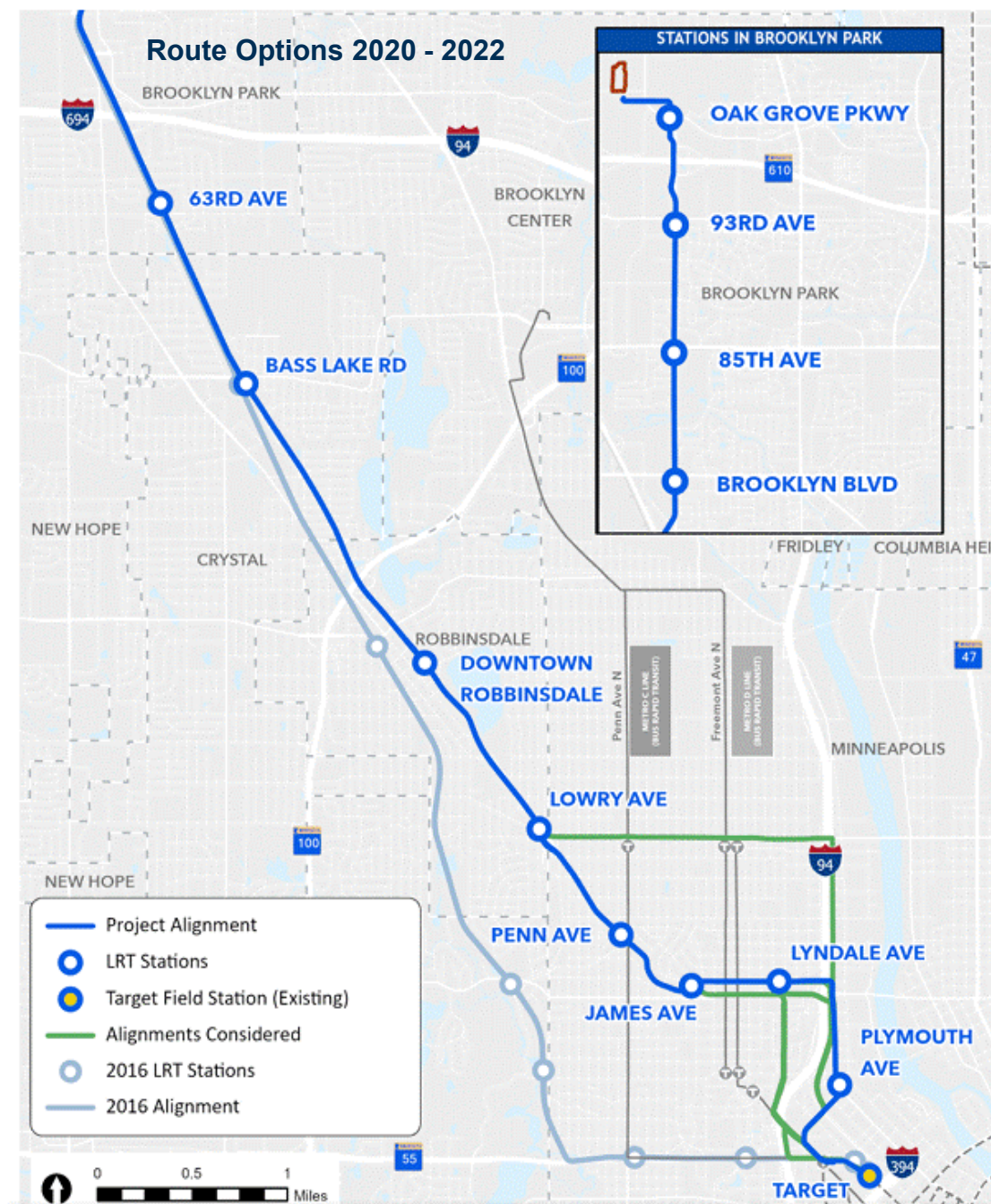
Blue Line Extension – Selection Process



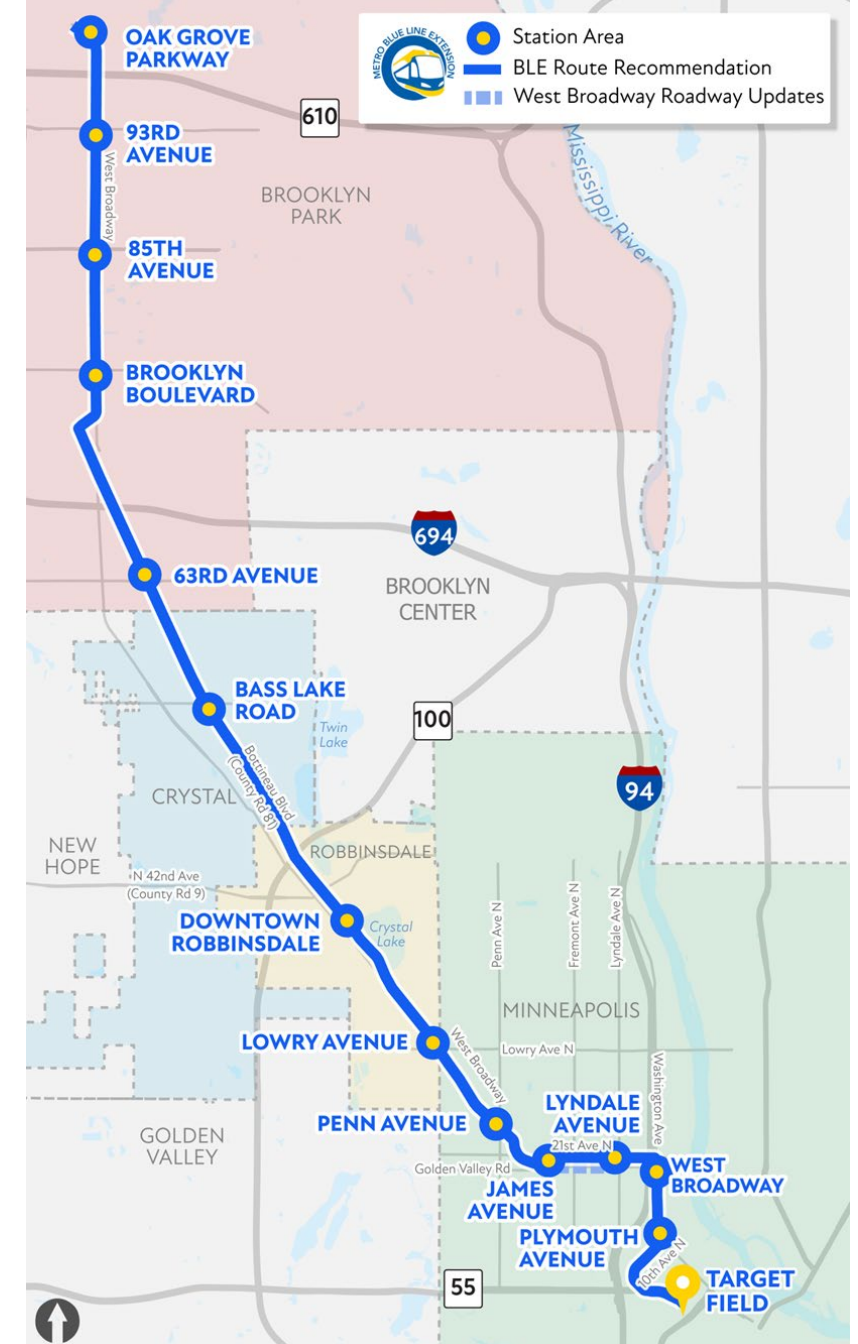
- METRO Blue Line Extension (Formerly Bottineau Transitway) technical analysis led by Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority (HCCRA) recommended the LPA for Bottineau Transitway in June 2012 traveling along the BNSF railroad corridor for most of the portion of the alignment, West Broadway Avenue and TH-55



Blue Line Extension – Selection Process



- In 2022, robust public engagement process informed modified alignment leading to adoption of new route and affirmation of light rail mode
- In 2023, continued engagement & policymaker input informed final route proposal including segment east of I-94 and tracks on 21st Avenue instead of West Broadway between I-94 and James Avenue



Blue Line Extension – Local Support

Municipal Consent Completed in October 2024

Municipal Consent granted for alignment and stations by all local governments:

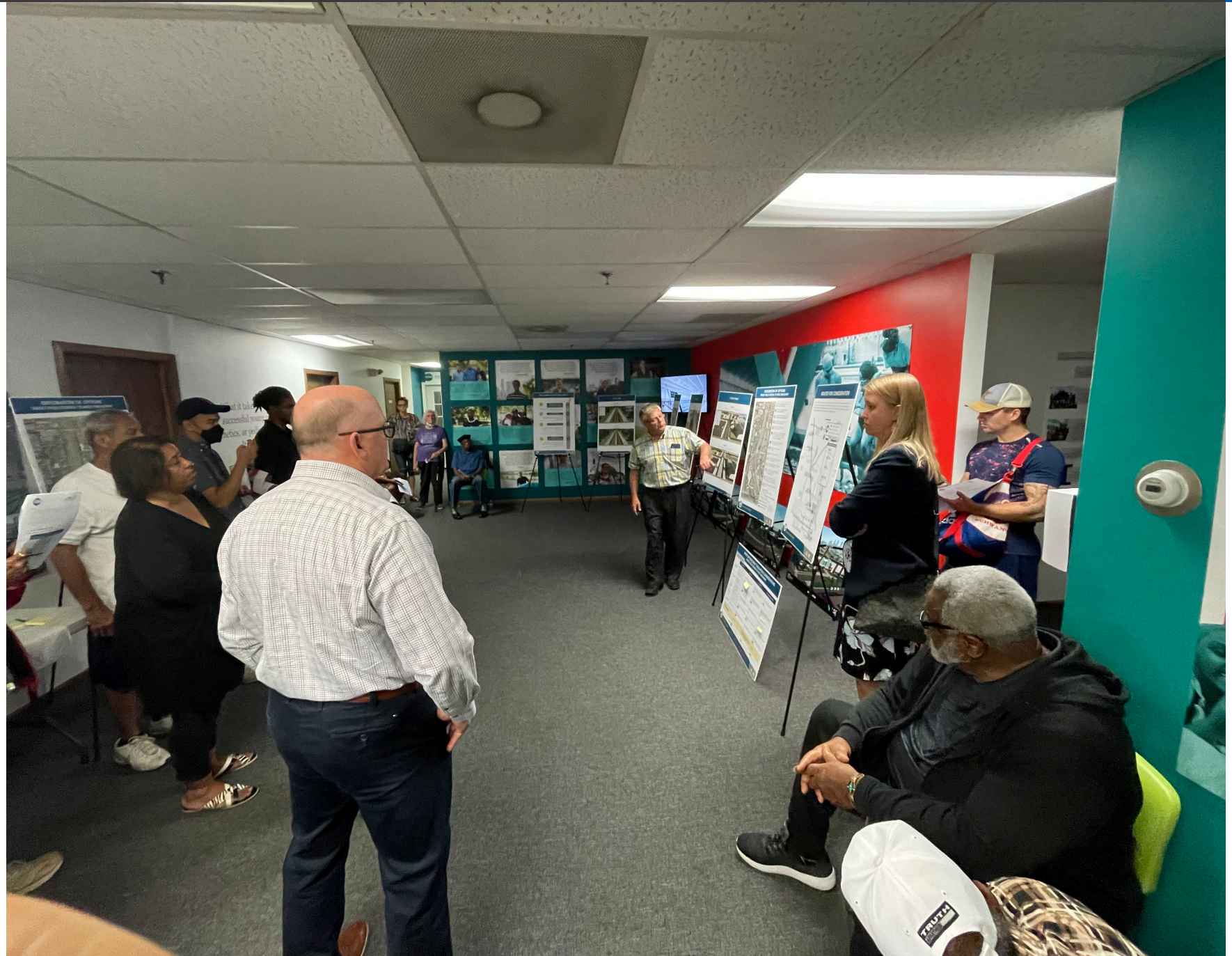
- City of Brooklyn Park
- City of Crystal
- City of Robbinsdale
- City of Minneapolis
- Hennepin County



Blue Line Extension – Public Engagement

Principles and Commitments

- Build on previous robust community engagement
- Tailor engagement practices to meet the needs of each community so all share in growth opportunities and are fully represented in engagement efforts
- Use community goals, priorities, and criteria for growth to inform decision-making



Blue Line Extension – Public Engagement



Engagement Metrics: Aug 2020-Feb 2025

- **929** events resulting in nearly **41,625** points of contact with the public
- **80,000** reach on social media and **10 million+** reach through newsletters and paid ads on community and cultural media
- Approximately **7,153** survey responses, written comments, and comments on the interactive map
- Corridor postcards mailed to **+40,000**
- Over **7,000** emails and phone calls

Gold Line Extension

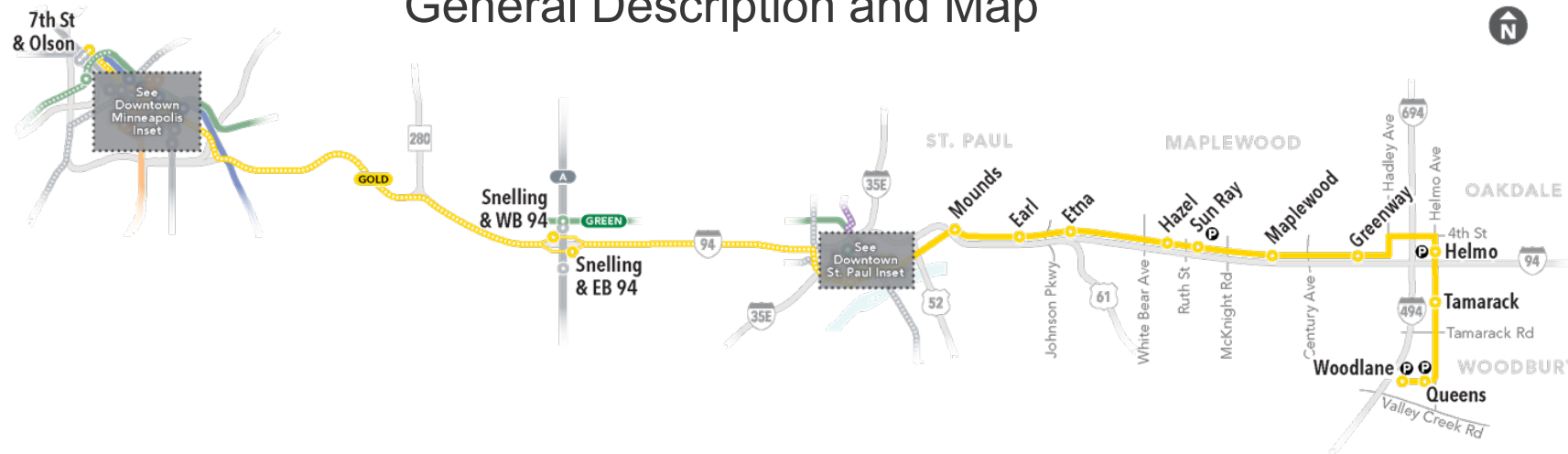


Gold Line Extension – Overview

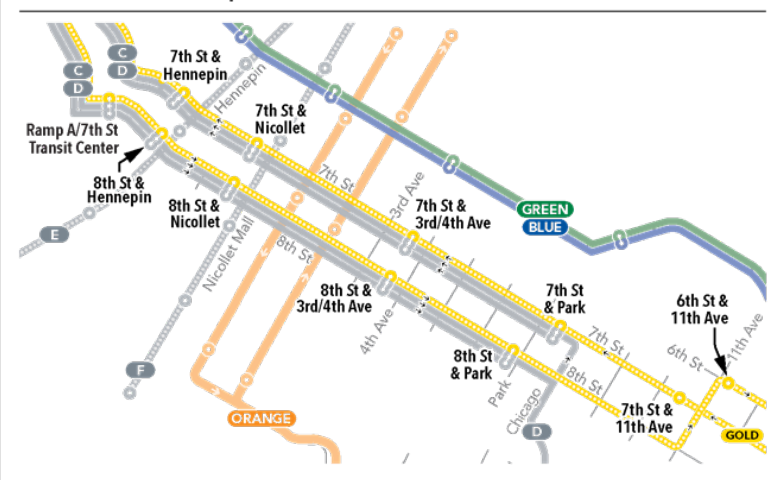


METRO Gold Line (Bus Rapid Transit)	Current METRO lines	Planned METRO lines
METRO Gold Line Extension (Bus Rapid Transit)	Blue Line (Light Rail)	Purple Line (Bus Rapid Transit)
Park & Ride Lot	Green Line (Light Rail)	B, E, & G lines (Bus Rapid Transit)
	Orange Line (Bus Rapid Transit)	
	A, C & D lines (Bus Rapid Transit)	

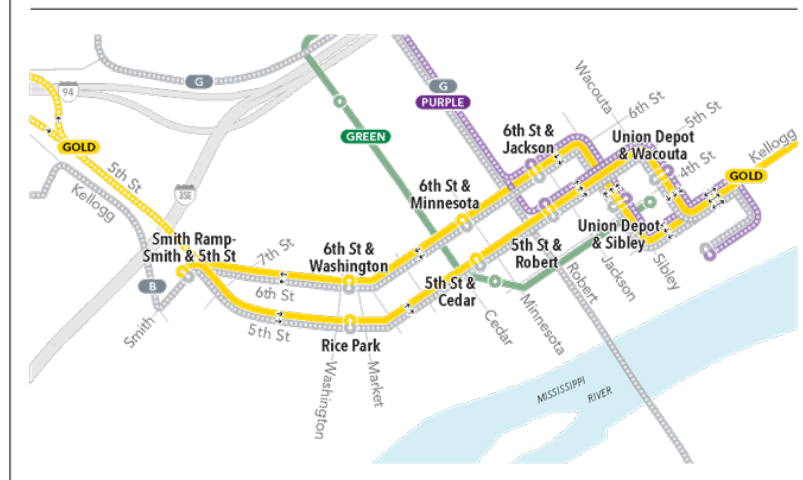
General Description and Map



Downtown Minneapolis



Downtown St. Paul



- Connecting Minneapolis, St Paul, Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale, and Woodbury and surrounding communities to fast, frequent, all-day service across the METRO system
- Two new stations, additional buses
- Construction starts: 2026-2027
- Frequent all day service
- \$25M Capital budget
- \$7.7M Annual operating

Gold Line Extension – Selection Process

I-94 Transit Study

- Evaluated 7 Alternatives
 - 1, 3, or 5 stops between downtowns
 - 100% bus-only shoulder
 - Managed lanes w/ transit

Option A.2 – 1 stop at Snelling, operating on 100% bus-only shoulder best combination of benefits without more extensive capital construction

- Travel Time between the downtowns
- Connectivity with other transit routes
- Ridership productivity



Gold Line Extension – Public Engagement

Metro Transit and MnDOT engagement efforts for Network Now and the Rethinking I-94 Transit Study both heard a desire from respondents for faster, more reliable, frequent and convenient transit service during more weekday and weekend hours on this corridor.

MnDOT Rethinking 94 Transit Study

- I-94 corridor between Highway 55 in Minneapolis and Marion Street just west of downtown St. Paul
- Outreach Summary
 - Desired Transit Service:
 - Faster Travel Times
 - Reliable
 - Convenient
 - Frequent

Metro Transit NetworkNOW

- vision for transit service that best meets the needs of the region through 2027
- Outreach Summary
 - Improvements to Route 94:
 - Expand daily service
 - Faster Travel Times



Network**NOW**



RETHINKING I-94



Gold Line Extension – Local Support



Anticipated by May 2025

Resolutions of support are anticipated for alignment and stations by all affected local governments:

- City of Minneapolis (received)
- City of Saint Paul (received)
- Hennepin County (received)
- Ramsey County
- Washington County
- Letter of support from MnDOT

Effects on TPP



Transportation Finance/Funding



Blue Line Extension Capital Funding

- **\$1,587M Funding identified in adopted 2050 TPP**
 - From federal, state¹, & local sources
 - Includes prior/current project expenditures
 - \$753M anticipated FTA capital investment grant funds, at entry to New Starts Engineering
- **\$1,667M Additional funding in proposed amendment**
 - \$831M anticipated increase in federal CIG, additional funding to the region
 - \$835.5M anticipated increase in participation from Hennepin County, allocated from existing funding identified in TPP local revenues

1. Includes \$30M state general fund appropriations available upon FFGA by September 30, 2027

Transportation Finance/Funding



Blue Line Extension Operations Funding

- **2031 First full year O&M costs - \$56.5M**
 - In adopted 2050 TPP - \$45.0M
 - Difference of - \$11.5M
 - Sources of difference – 25K Additional service hours (+74%) due to:
 - Higher assumed frequency
 - Longer run time – 2 more stations, slightly longer route
- **Net impact to operating costs \$328.6M over 19 years**
- **Funding allocated from existing sources identified in the TPP**
 - Fares and advertising
 - Sales and use tax

Transportation Finance/Funding



Gold Line Extension Capital Funding

- \$25M Additional costs in proposed amendment
- Allocated from existing Metro Transit funds

Gold Line Extension Operations Funding

- **2028 First full year O&M costs - \$7.7M**
 - Assumed double 2028 projected Route 94 O&M costs
 - Total 2028-2050 - \$256.4M
- **Net impact to operating costs \$128.2M over 22 years**
- **Funding allocated from existing sources identified in the TPP**
 - Fares and advertising
 - Sales and use tax

Other TPP elements affected



- **Equity & environmental justice impacts analysis**
- **Regional performance outcomes**
- **Map updates**
 - Transitways investments map
 - Maps affected by update of Gold Line addition
- **Long-range capital projects list appendix**

Amendment Schedule



Date	Committee/Event
TAB/TAC Committees Info Items	
Mar 27	Transit Planning Working Group
Apr 10	TAC Planning
May 7	TAC
May 21	TAB
Release for Public Comment	
May 8	TAC Planning
June 4	TAC
June 18	TAB
June 23	Transportation Committee
July 9	Full Council
July 10- Aug 24	Public Comment Period
Aug 13	Public Hearing @ Metropolitan Council Mtg
Aug 11 – Sept 19	Comment Report and Final Amendment
Adoption Process	
Sept 17	TAB (Info Item)
Sept 22	Transportation Committee (action item)
Oct 8	Full Council (action item)



Thank you!

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