



# Imagine 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment 1 – Project Background

Blue Line Extension and Gold Line Extension

April 2025

[metro council.org](http://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 TAC Planning



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

# 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

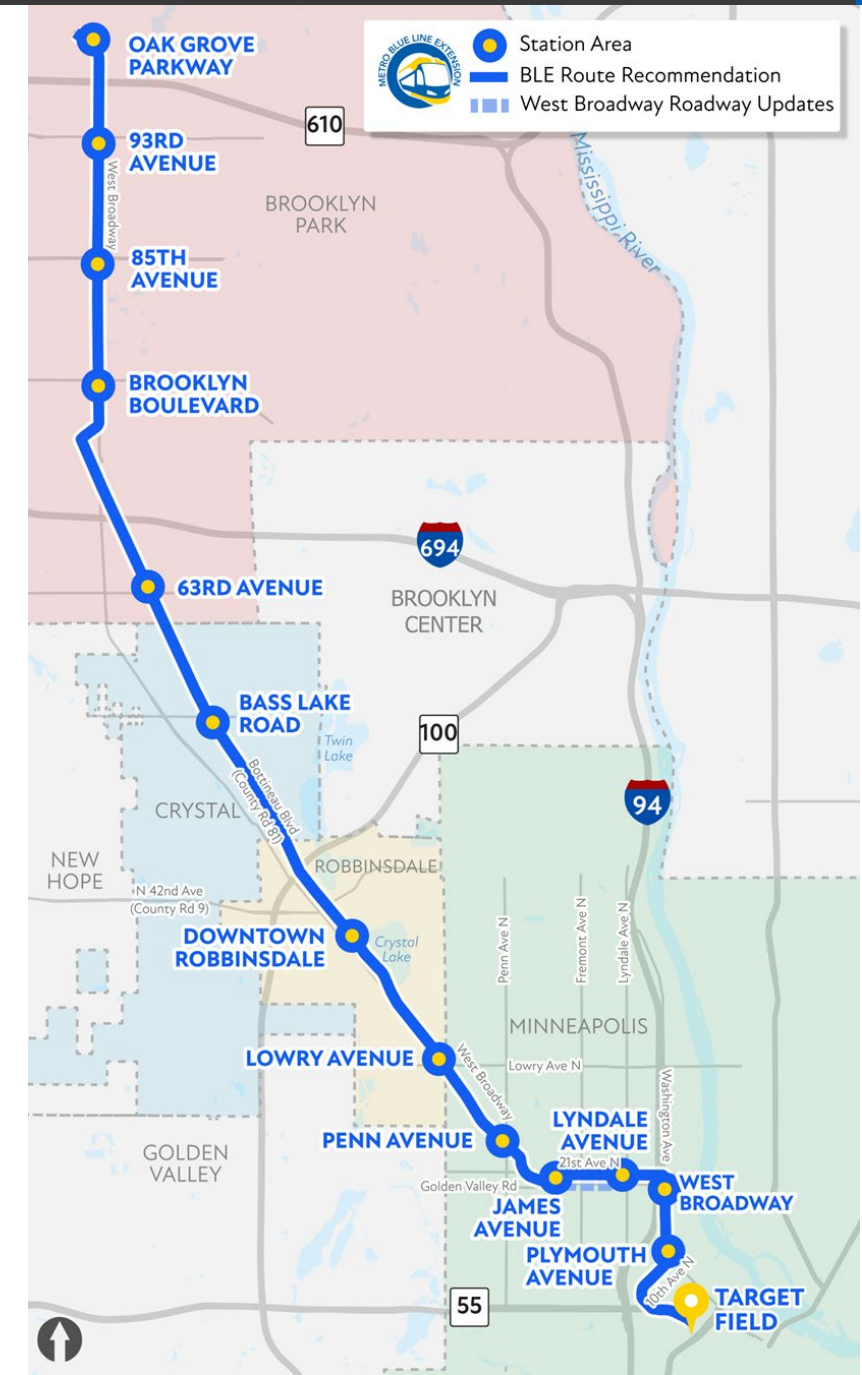




# Blue Line Extension - Overview



- 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



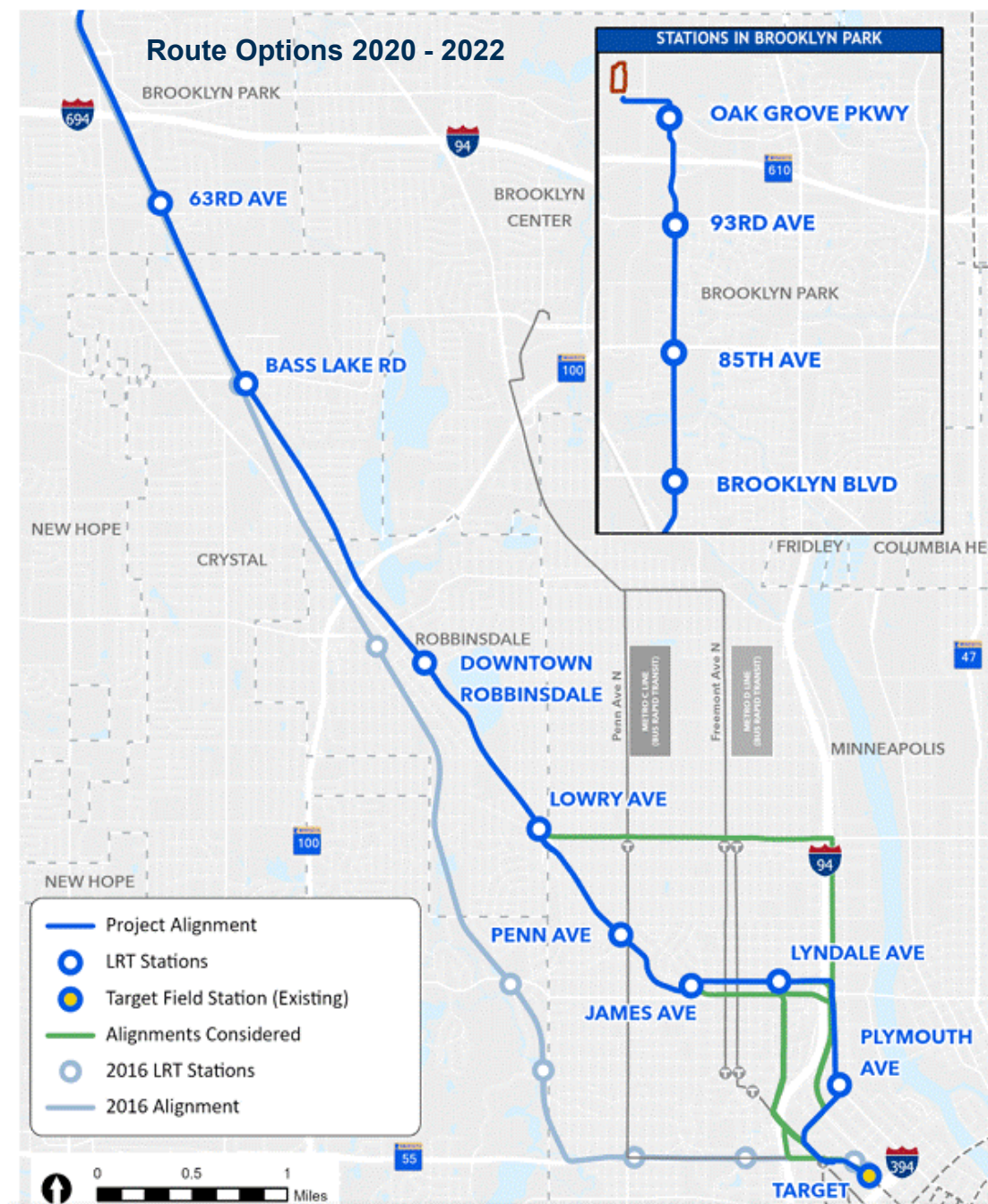
- METRO Blue Line Extension (Formerly Bottineau Transitway) technical analysis led by Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority (HCCRA) recommended the LPA for Bottineau Transitway in June 2012 traveling along the BNSF railroad corridor for most of the portion of the alignment, West Broadway Avenue and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





## Metropolitan Council

## 3



# 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



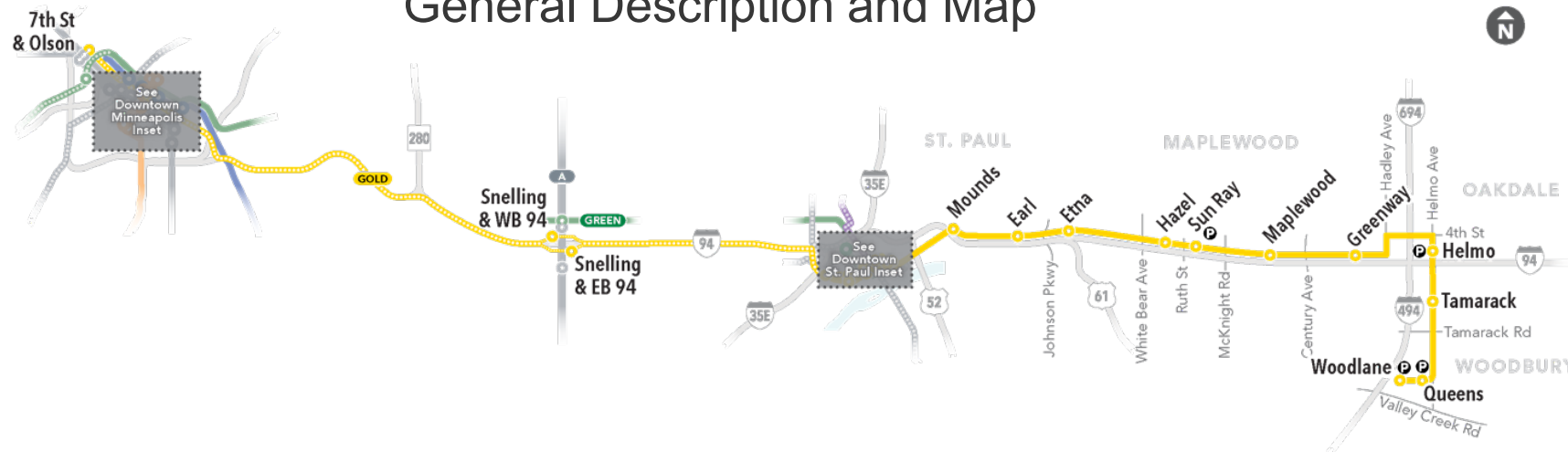


# Gold Line Extension – Overview

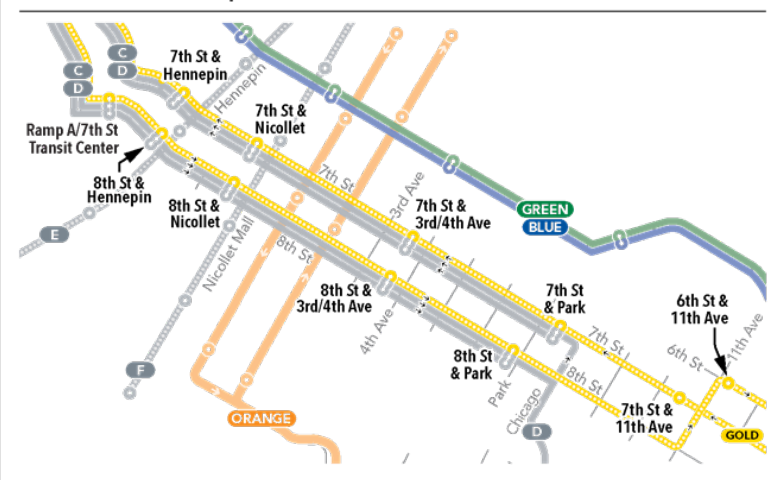


METRO Gold Line (Bus Rapid Transit)	<b>Current METRO lines</b>	<b>Planned METRO lines</b>
METRO Gold Line Extension (Bus Rapid Transit)	Blue Line (Light Rail)	Purple Line (Bus Rapid Transit)
Park & Ride Lot	Green Line (Light Rail)	B, E, & G lines (Bus Rapid Transit)
	Orange Line (Bus Rapid Transit)	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

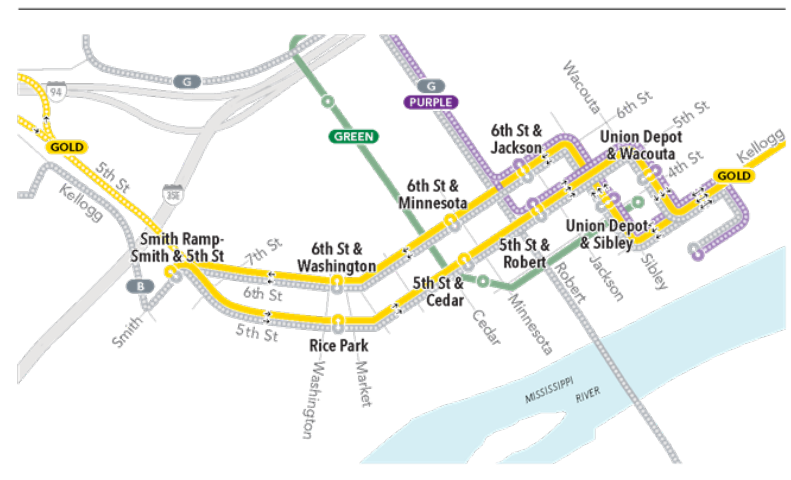
General Description and Map



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
- \$12M 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
- City of Saint Paul
- Hennepin County
- Ramsey County
- Washington County
- Letter of support from MnDOT



# Effects on TPP





# Transportation Finance/Funding Approach

## Blue Line Extension Capital Funding

- **\$1,587M Funding identified in adopted 2050 TPP**
  - From federal, state<sup>1</sup>, & 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 increased 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 Approach



## Blue Line Extension Operations Funding

- 2031 First full year O&M costs - \$56.5 million
- Funded from existing sources
  - Fares and advertising
  - Sales and use tax
- O&M Costs for previous Blue Line Extension alignment included in 2050 TPP



# 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
<b>TAB/TAC Committees Info Items</b>	
Mar 27	Transit Planning Working Group
Apr 10	TAC Planning
May 7	TAC
May 21	TAB
<b>Release for Public Comment</b>	
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
<b>Adoption Process</b>	
Sept 17	TAB (Info Item)
Sept 22	Transportation Committee (action item)
Oct 8	Full Council (action item)





# Thank you!

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