

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: September 27, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 13, 2021

<b>Subject:</b>	METRO B Line – Approval of Final Corridor Plan
<b>District(s), Member(s):</b>	District 6 (Atlas-Ingebretson), District 7 (Lilligren), District 8 (Muse), District 14 (Fredson), District 13 (Lee)
<b>Policy/Legal Reference:</b>	PIC 2-2 - Accountability to the Public Policy
<b>Staff Prepared/Presented:</b>	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
<b>Division/Department:</b>	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.