

# Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: October 24, 2022

For the Metropolitan Council: November 9, 2022

## Business Item: 2022-274

METRO B Line – Joint Powers Agreement with Ramsey County

**District(s), Member(s):** District 14 (Fredson), District 13 (Lee)  
**Policy/Legal Reference:** MN Statutes 117.012 and 473.405  
**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Wes Kooistra, General Manager, 612-349-7510  
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Frank Alarcon, Project Manager, BRT, 612-349-7692  
**Division/Department:** Metro Transit / Arterial BRT

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Joint Powers Agreement 22I031 (“Agreement”) with Ramsey County for right-of-way management authority needed for construction of the METRO B Line project.

### Background

The B Line project involves construction of BRT stations along a 13-mile corridor from Uptown in Minneapolis to Union Depot in Saint Paul, primarily along Lake Street in Minneapolis and Marshall and Selby Avenues in Saint Paul. Since 2018, Metro Transit has coordinated B Line corridor planning and design with Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

Through this Agreement, Ramsey County will grant permits and access to easements and rights-of-way owned or maintained by the County for B Line construction at no cost to the Council. Ramsey County will also exercise its right-of-way management powers necessary for the construction of the B Line, including but not limited to those powers pertaining to the relocation of utilities within County rights-of-way.

### Rationale

Council policy requires that all Joint Powers Agreements be approved by the Council. A Joint Powers Agreement with Ramsey County will make the necessary construction right-of-way interests available to award and advance the construction contract for the B Line project in a future Council action.

### 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 METRO B Line corridor improvements efficiently with regional partnership from Hennepin County, Ramsey County, the City of Minneapolis, and the City of Saint Paul.

### **Funding**

There are no funds exchanged through the execution of this agreement.

### **Small Business Inclusion**

There is no contracting, and therefore no small business inclusion, associated with this action.

