METRO F Line Recommended Corridor Plan

Transportation Committee, Business Item 2023-60

Jake Knight, Senior Planner, Arterial BRT | March 27, 2023
Proposed action 2023-60

• Authorize release of the METRO F Line Recommended Corridor Plan for public review and comment

• Direct staff to collect public comments through Sunday, May 14, summarize comments, and report the findings to the Metropolitan Council
Arterial BRT:
Designed to be faster, more reliable, and easy to use

- 2–3 stations per mile, designed for faster stops
- High-tech, high-amenity, secure stations
- Pre-boarding fare payment for faster stops
- Higher-capacity buses & boarding through all doors
- Bus priority signals & lanes
- Faster, frequent, all-day service
METRO F Line arterial bus rapid transit project

- Faster, frequent, all-day service
- 13-mile corridor from downtown Minneapolis to Northtown Transit Center
- Substantial upgrade to Route 10
- All-day, all-purpose ridership
- Improved speed and reliability
- Planned 32 stations with enhanced features
- $98 million project cost estimate, includes standard FTA contingency and escalation levels
**F Line project update**

- **Funding next steps**
  - $45.3 million FTA Small Starts funding recommended in Pres. Biden’s FY 2024 budget
  - Small Starts funding, together with secured state and federal funding would fully fund the project
  - Governor’s capital recommendations and bills in House (passed) and Senate include $72 million for arterial bus rapid transit investment, including G and H lines

- **Engineering and construction administration services contract award anticipated in May/June 2023**

- **Ongoing coordination with MnDOT Hwy 47 and Hwy 65 Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, examining broader alternatives for corridor changes**
Project schedule

- **F Line identified**: March 2021
- **Early project coordination**: 2021 – 2022
- **Draft Corridor Plan**: Comment period Oct. 24 - Dec. 5, 2022
- **Recommended Corridor Plan**: Comment period April 12 – May 14, 2023
- **Final Corridor Plan approved**: Summer 2023
- **Engineering**: 2023 – 2024
- **Construction**: 2025 – 2026

Community engagement

Planning phase

Seeking community input to establish station locations

We are here
Corridor Plan contents

• Station locations: station intersections and locations of platforms within each intersection

• Concept bus service plan

• Priorities for bus priority treatments to meet speed and reliability goals

• Project history and planning process to date
Draft Corridor Plan engagement: Strategies

- 13,000 email addresses received project information
- 12,900 postcards mailed to homes and businesses
- 683 people engaged at 27 events and meetings
- 129 properties visited, talking to station neighbors and leaving station-specific materials
- 64 bus stop poles signed with project information
- 20 newsletters, websites blurbs, and social media postings from agency partners
- 2 rounds of Metro Transit social media ads targeted by zip code; posts on Metro Transit and Council social media accounts
- 1 virtual open house presentation with Q&A
- Translation of vital documents in English, Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Oromo, and Arabic
Draft Corridor Plan feedback: Demographics

• 332 comments via survey, email, phone

• Majority of survey respondents:
  – Use Metro Transit at least a few times per month (71 percent)
  – Have home ZIP code within corridor (76 percent)
  – Identify as white alone (83 percent)
  – Have lower than average household incomes (63 percent under $100k)*

• 17 percent identify as having a disability

*Area Median Income for a family of four in the region was $118,200 in 2022 (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)
Draft Corridor Plan feedback: What we heard

- 74 percent of comments received were in support of the plan (survey, email, phone)
- One petition letter in opposition to Central & 1st Avenue/7th Street Station
- Key themes
  - Support for bus priority treatments
  - Importance of pedestrian safety and connections
  - Support for station designs that integrate bicycle facilities
  - Support for improved access to destinations
  - Suggested changes to route alignment
  - Concerns about the removal of on-street parking

Individual station feedback
- Stations receiving 9 or more comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Number of Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; 1st Avenue/7th Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; Lowry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; Spring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; 18th Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; Broadway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; 41st Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; 29th Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central &amp; 22nd Avenue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Comments
Revisions from Draft Corridor Plan

• No changes to station or platform locations are recommended

• Additional analysis and response to comments at several stations
  – Central & Lowry
  – Central & 22nd Avenue
  – Central & Spring
  – Central & 1st Avenue/7th Street

• Responses to comments received were often regarding platform placement, including issues to address throughout engineering
Additional analysis example: Central & 1st Ave/7th St - southbound

- Received petition letter from Otter’s Saloon in opposition to Central & 1st Avenue/7th Street Station southbound platform
- Concerns over removal of on-street parking spaces
- Staff compared two alternative locations to the baseline proposed location
Additional analysis example:
Central & 1st Ave/7th St – southbound (2)
Additional analysis example: Central & 1st Ave/7th St - southbound (3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Alt. A</th>
<th>Alt. B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green = Preferred</td>
<td>Yellow = Not preferred</td>
<td>Orange = Undesirable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Alt. A</th>
<th>Alt. B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safe pedestrian crossings</td>
<td>Encourages safe behavior [green]</td>
<td>Encourages safe behavior [green]</td>
<td>Encourages unsafe behavior [orange]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to destinations</td>
<td>Centrally located [green]</td>
<td>Centrally located [green]</td>
<td>Farther away [yellow]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Station spacing</td>
<td>Within standard [green]</td>
<td>Within standard [green]</td>
<td>Within standard [green]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available right-of-way (space)</td>
<td>Enough space [green]</td>
<td>Not enough space [orange]</td>
<td>Enough space [green]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed and reliability</td>
<td>Supportive [green]</td>
<td>Not supportive [yellow]</td>
<td>Supportive [green]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic operations</td>
<td>No or minimal impact [green]</td>
<td>Pedestrian and bicyclist safety concerns [orange]</td>
<td>No or minimal impact [green]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-street parking</td>
<td>3 to 5 total spaces removed [yellow]</td>
<td>0 spaces removed [green]</td>
<td>0 spaces removed [green]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Recommendation: Retain platform location from Draft Corridor Plan
- Continue engagement with stakeholders
- Seek to minimize impacts through station design
Recommended Corridor Plan engagement

• Collecting feedback
  – Public comment period: **April 12 – May 14**
  – Survey linked on project website [metrotransit.org/f-line-project](http://metrotransit.org/f-line-project)
  – FLine@metrotransit.org, 651-829-5305

• Sharing information
• Meeting people in community
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