

MOA to MN Zoo Transit Expansion



Submission for Award Consideration in the 2024 Regional Solicitation Program

About MVTA

Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) is the second largest transportation agency by ridership in Minnesota, serving seven cities throughout the south metropolitan area, including Dakota and Scott counties currently experiencing rapid population and job growth. MVTA operates 25 routes and approximately 169 buses, including a variety of service options ranging from micro transit to regional routes. MVTA also owns and operates several transit stations and park-and-ride facilities with a combined capacity of almost 6,500 spaces.

Route 474: MOA to MN Zoo

Public transportation fulfills various travel needs, especially when operated with strategic and meaningful connections in mind. A systemwide study conducted in 2021-22 proposed an entirely new route that provides connections between the Mall of America (MOA) and the Minnesota Zoo, with stops at Apple Valley Transit Station (AVTS) and Cedar Grove Transit Station (CGTS); Route 474.

MVTA has found great value in engaged conversations with the seven communities we serve to better understand what they find valuable in their service. Route 474 will raise ridership through increased mobility to desirable destinations in the metropolitan area.

MVTA is committed to providing safe, accessible, and reliable service to our communities and beyond. Along with this commitment comes a responsibility to build progressive partnerships and develop initiatives that effectively serve the public through increased accessibility and meaningful connections.



ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$5,683,268
REQUESTED FEDERAL AMOUNT \$4,546,614
LOCAL MATCH \$1,136,654

4FUN Route Service Expansion



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4FUN Service Expansion

Public transportation fulfills various travel needs, especially when operated with strategic and meaningful connections in mind. The 4FUN bus does exactly what you think it would - connects families and community members to places where they can have fun. The service currently serves locations such as the Mall of America, Valley Fair, Canterbury Park, and Mystic Lake during the summer and early fall, Thursday-Sunday. An expansion would allow the service to run year-round and seven days a week, furthering connections to landmark locations and entertainment venues across the metropolitan area.

MVTA has found great value in engaged conversations with the seven communities we serve to better understand what they find valuable in their service. In 2021, the 4FUN route carried 1,575 riders. In 2022, ridership grew to 3,523. In 2023, ridership more than doubled the year before with 7,873 passengers. To see ridership grow so intensely within the span of three years tells the agency that it is time for this route to expand to accommodate more riders looking 4Fun.



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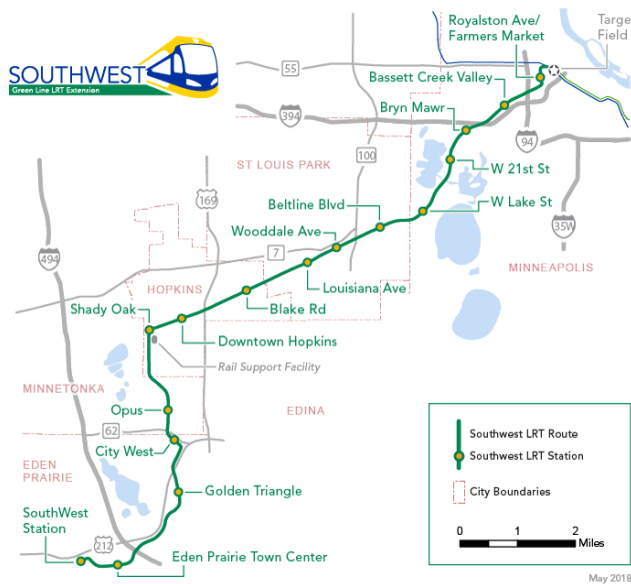
ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$3,696,375
REQUESTED FEDERAL AMOUNT \$2,957,100
LOCAL MATCH \$739,275

Metro Transit micro: Minnetonka Expansion Project Summary

Metro Transit is requesting operating and capital funds for an expansion of the on-demand transit service, Metro Transit micro, to the city of Minnetonka. Currently a pilot in North Minneapolis, Metro Transit micro allows riders to book rides between points within a set boundary using a smart phone application. Riders with similar origins and destinations are pooled together in an ADA accessible minibus and brought to their destinations.



An expansion of the service into Minnetonka would coincide with the opening of the METRO Green Line extension into the southwest metro, leveraging a \$2 billion investment and providing access for both the thousands of residents of the city as well as transit riders visiting Minnetonka for jobs, health care, or other services. Microtransit serves an area like the City of Minnetonka well because of its ability to overcome physical barriers, such as highways and major thoroughfares, as well as grant transit coverage to a large area.



An expansion of Metro Transit micro service to the City of Minnetonka would provide a new service that benefited the entire region, by increasing access to an area difficult to serve with fixed route transit, reducing congestion by providing alternatives to driving, and become an essential service for disadvantaged communities in and around the service area, particularly seniors and those with mobility challenges. The connection to the METRO Green Line would allow this benefit to be enjoyed by all users connecting in and out of the city.

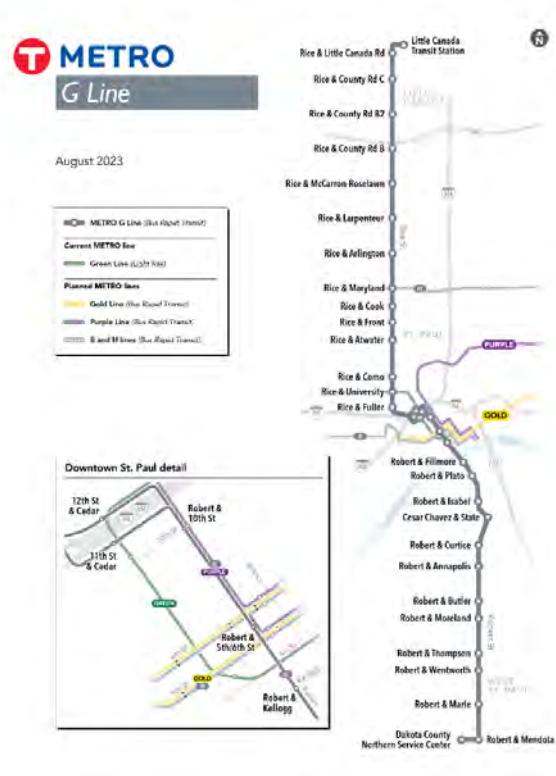
Project Budget

- Seven ADA-accessible microtransit vehicles: \$1,225,000
- Operating funds: \$4,200,000
- Project Total (minus fare revenue): \$5,317,000

Metro Transit micro: G Line Expansion Project Summary

Metro Transit is requesting operating and capital funds for an expansion of the on-demand transit service, Metro Transit micro, connecting to the terminus of the southern portion of the METRO G Line at the Dakota County Northern Service Center. Running today as a pilot in North Minneapolis, Metro Transit micro allows riders to book rides between points within a set boundary using a smart phone application. Riders with similar origins and destinations are pooled together in an ADA accessible minibus and brought to their destinations.

An expansion of the service connecting to the G Line would serve portions of the cities of West St Paul, Mendota Heights, Mendota, Lilydale, and Inver Grove Heights. The service would connect to the southern portion of the METRO G Line, which will run frequent, all-day service along Robert St to downtown St Paul. This microtransit zone will allow access for both the thousands of residents of the cities as well as transit riders visiting the area for jobs, health care, or other services. Microtransit will serve this area well because of its ability to overcome physical barriers, such as highways and major thoroughfares, as well as grant transit coverage to a large area.



An expansion of Metro Transit micro to these cities would provide a new service that benefits the entire region by increasing access to an area difficult to serve with fixed route transit, reducing congestion by providing alternatives to driving, and become an essential service for disadvantaged communities in and around the service area, particularly seniors and those with mobility challenges. The connection to the METRO G would allow this benefit to be enjoyed by all users connecting in and out of the city.

Project Budget

- Seven ADA-accessible microtransit vehicles: \$1,225,000
- Operating funds: \$3,900,000
- Project Total (minus fare revenue): \$4,983,166



Project Name: Blue Line Franklin Ave Station Renovation

Applicant: Metro Transit

Requested Award Amount: \$7,000,000

Total Project Cost: \$12,750,000

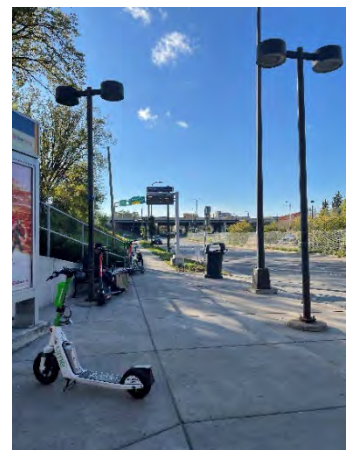
Located in the heart of South Minneapolis near the American Indian Cultural Corridor on East Franklin Avenue and in one of the most ethnically diverse areas of the region, the METRO Blue Line Franklin Avenue Station opened in 2004 with the METRO Blue Line and features an elevated platform spanning Franklin Avenue. The station had an average of 1,000 boardings each day in 2023 and has seen consistent all-day activity since its opening. The station is served by the local bus routes 2, 9, 22 and 67 which can be accessed on the busy street below. This project seeks to modernize the Franklin Ave Station with features that will improve the station platform, station area, and overall station access.

Customer feedback, police reports, and staff input have illuminated design challenges at the station. Currently customers access the station through stairs and elevators on both sides of the platform. Unfortunately, the elevators are ending their second decade of use, and frequent outages connecting to the LRT platform impact accessibility, resulting in an unreliable transfer experience for passengers. The buildings that house the elevator attract non-transit activity that impacts customer safety and further deteriorates the system's infrastructure. Platform shelters and furniture are a frequent target of vandalism, broken glass and impair the safety and experience of transit users. Renovation is needed at Franklin Station to maintain a state of good repair for this regional asset.

This project seeks to improve customer service and satisfaction by increasing the maintainability of the station and modernizing the design to meet today's challenges. The scope of this project includes:

- Replacement of the vertical circulation areas to restore ADA access and address underlying issues with the existing elevator buildings.
- Improved customer waiting areas with new heaters and other amenities.
- Updated lighting that improves energy efficiency and aids visibility in the station area for customers.
- Improvements to multi-modal connections to light rail and Hiawatha LRT trail including better bike storage and consideration of other features like charging stations.
- Improved cleaning facilities and shelter for staff to maintain and secure the station.
- Standardized design of platform shelters to allay cleaning and repairs of those areas.

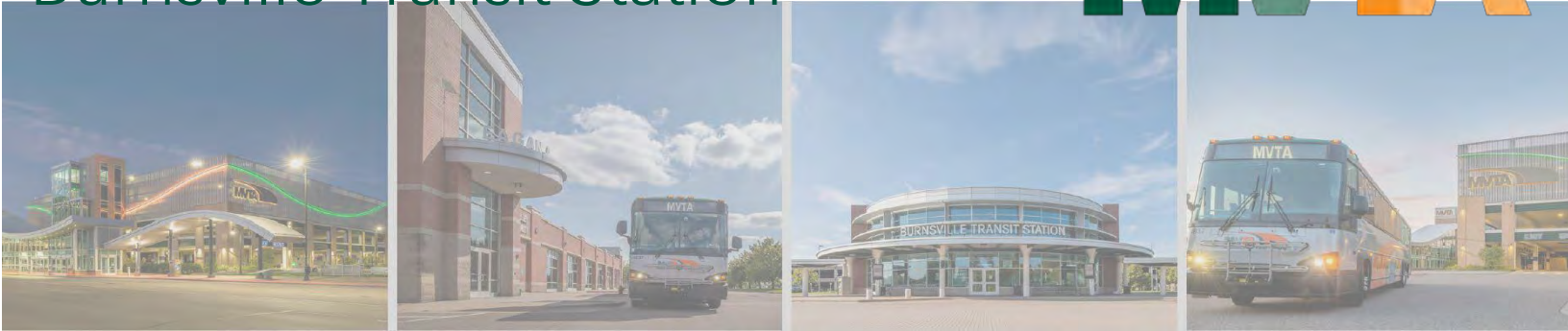
This project will improve on the existing design by incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles, the latest industry best practices, and insight from system-wide efforts to address safety, security, and other societal challenges on the METRO Blue Line. This project will continue to work with surrounding communities, stakeholders, and customers to create a station design that is responsive to community needs, adds value to the neighborhood, and increases the desirability of transit.



Photos Above (from top to bottom): Franklin Ave Station Platform, Elevator Building Entrance, Bus Stop below the Station on Franklin Avenue

MOBILITY HUB

Burnsville Transit Station



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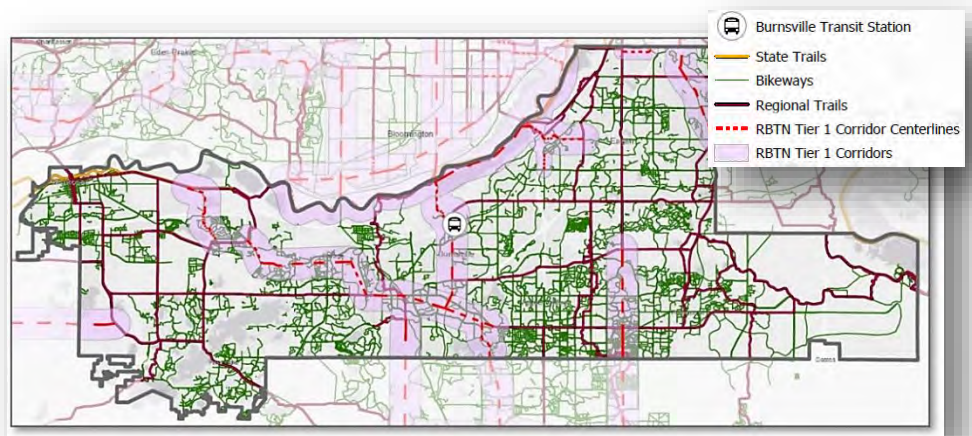
About MVTA

Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) is the second largest transportation agency by ridership in Minnesota, serving seven cities throughout the south metropolitan area, including Dakota and Scott counties currently experiencing rapid population and job growth. MVTA operates 25 routes and approximately 169 buses, including a variety of service options ranging from micro transit to regional routes. MVTA also owns and operates several transit stations and park-and-ride facilities with a combined capacity of almost 6,500 spaces.

Mobility Hub

MVTA Burnsville Transit Station is to be transformed into a mobility hub by creating a customer outreach and training center. A new state-of-the-art customer training center will allow community members the opportunity to learn about and test the on-bus and route amenities, such as securement devices and ticket devices.

Site accessibility and onsite circulation will be reconfigured to provide better connectivity from Highway 13, and onsite safety for all modes of travel. The concept includes an updated kiss-and-ride, designated areas for MVTA Connect (on-demand microtransit) and Jefferson Lines (intercity connections), Uber and Lyft, as well as enhanced connections to nearby pedestrian and bicycle paths with intentions to implement e-bikes and scooter rentals.



Transit Oriented Development

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) initiatives are intended to provide a welcoming transit hub dedicated to our community by providing new amenities at Burnsville Transit Station. MVTA intends to work with developers to create retail space (e.g., grab-and-go grocery, coffee shop, etc.) and a free-of-charge community event space.

Customer Amenities

Additional customer-oriented amenities at the BTS mobility hub include improved technology, safety, and comfort for all MVTA riders.

Technology



- wayfinding
- real-time signage
- customer EV charging
- community broadband access

Safety



- parking ramp elevator
- indoor customer waiting enhancements
- equipment storage
- safety/security and CPTED initiatives

Customer Experience



- bicycle lockers/racks
- benches
- outdoor heaters
- Amazon/USPS lockers
- training and education area

Sustainability Initiatives

All aspects of the BTS Mobility center project, transitway design, and amenities will be driven by sustainability initiatives in design, maintenance, and electrification. This focus will contribute to reducing GHG emissions and creating a more sustainable future for the region.

ESTIMATED TOTAL PROJECT COST \$25M
 REQUESTED FEDERAL AMOUNT \$7M
 LOCAL MATCH \$1.4M

Eagan Transit Station Modernization



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ETS Modernization

MVTA is submitting a request for funding to complete the modernization of Eagan Transit Station (ETS). Funding would be used to update customer amenities and create an MVTA Connect (microtransit service) drop-off zone. Other improvements include increased ADA accessibility for customers parking above ground level, electric vehicle charging for customers and Connect service vehicles, and the replacement of aging infrastructure to ensure continued safe operations.

This project stems from engaged conversations with the community and what they are needing from our transit stations.



MVTA Connect

MVTA Connect currently operates primarily out of the agency’s main transit hub, Burnsville Transit Station (BTS). Since the service’s inception, it has continued to grow and has seen record numbers in 2023, reaching over 100,000 riders. The addition of a designated drop-off zone at ETS will support the growing service and encourage more riders in more communities to take advantage of the convenient transportation option.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$2,231,000
REQUESTED FEDERAL AMOUNT \$1,784,800
LOCAL MATCH \$446,200

Eagan Bus Garage Modernization



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About MVRTA

Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVRTA) is the second largest transportation agency by ridership in Minnesota, serving seven cities throughout the south metropolitan area, including Dakota and Scott counties currently experiencing rapid population and job growth. MVRTA operates 25 routes and approximately 169 buses, including a variety of service options ranging from micro transit to regional routes. MVRTA also owns and operates several transit stations and park-and-ride facilities with a combined capacity of almost 6,500 spaces.

EBG Modernization

MVRTA is submitting a request for funding to execute the modernization of Eagan Bus Garage (EBG). This project includes the replacement of aging infrastructure to ensure continued safe operations, as well as site and building improvements to reduce collisions and minimize safety issues.

Expansion and updates to workspaces will strengthen collaboration among operations staff for improved function and operational effectiveness. An addition of a new mezzanine space for future Battery Electric Bus (BEB) infrastructure will pave the way for MVRTA's transition to a zero-emission fleet. Ongoing maintenance will be less costly and more efficient.



Supporting Sustainability

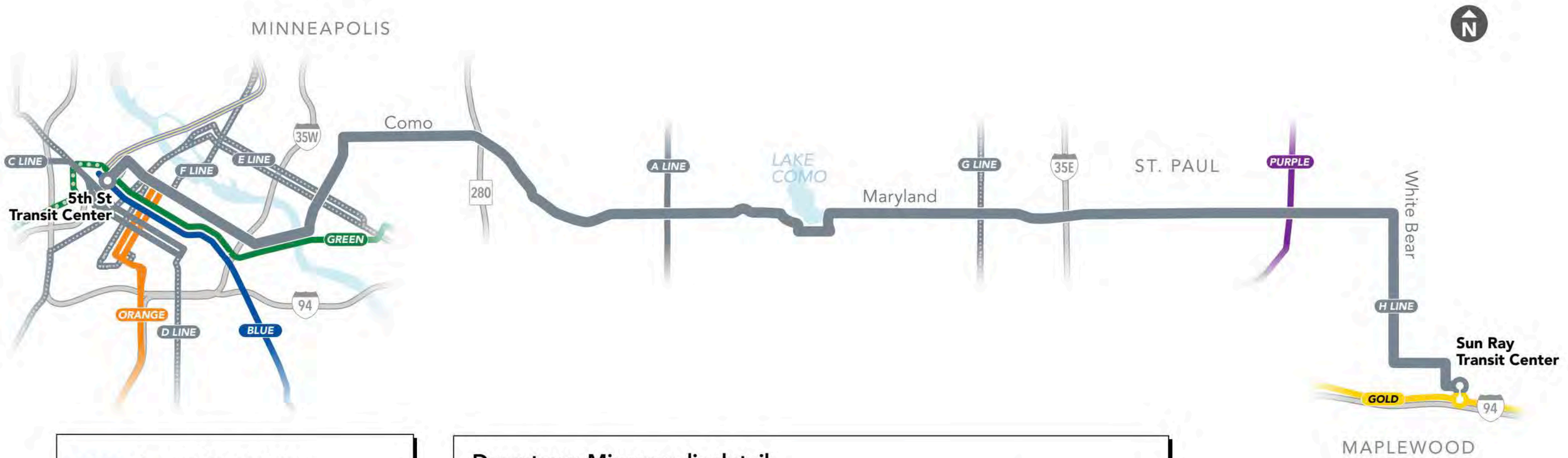
EBG Modernization will allow MVRTA to take great steps toward our zero-emissions goals. The addition of a new mezzanine space for future BEB chargers will pave the way for MVRTA's transition to zero-emission buses. The agency has been credited by the FTA for its "Most Transformative," Sustainability Plan and we intend to live up to that recognition.

The Importance of EBG

EBG is currently our main bus garage. Team members critical to the operation of MVRTA work out of this building, and this is the location where both operators and buses start their day. Updating this building will ensure safer and more reliable operations for all MVRTA buses and employees.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$2,795,602
REQUESTED FEDERAL AMOUNT \$2,236,482
LOCAL MATCH \$559,120

H Line



- Planned METRO H Line**
(Bus Rapid Transit)
- METRO Bus Rapid Transit**
(Bus Rapid Transit)
- METRO Orange Line**
(Bus Rapid Transit)
- Planned METRO Bus Rapid Transit**
- Planned METRO Gold Line**
(Bus Rapid Transit)
- Planned METRO Purple Line**
(Bus Rapid Transit)
- METRO Blue Line** (Light Rail)
- METRO Green Line** (Light Rail)
- Planned METRO Green Line Extension** (Light Rail)





Affordable
Accessible
Sustainable

PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Name: Expanding Access to the Benefits of Electrified Transportation

Applicant: HOURCAR

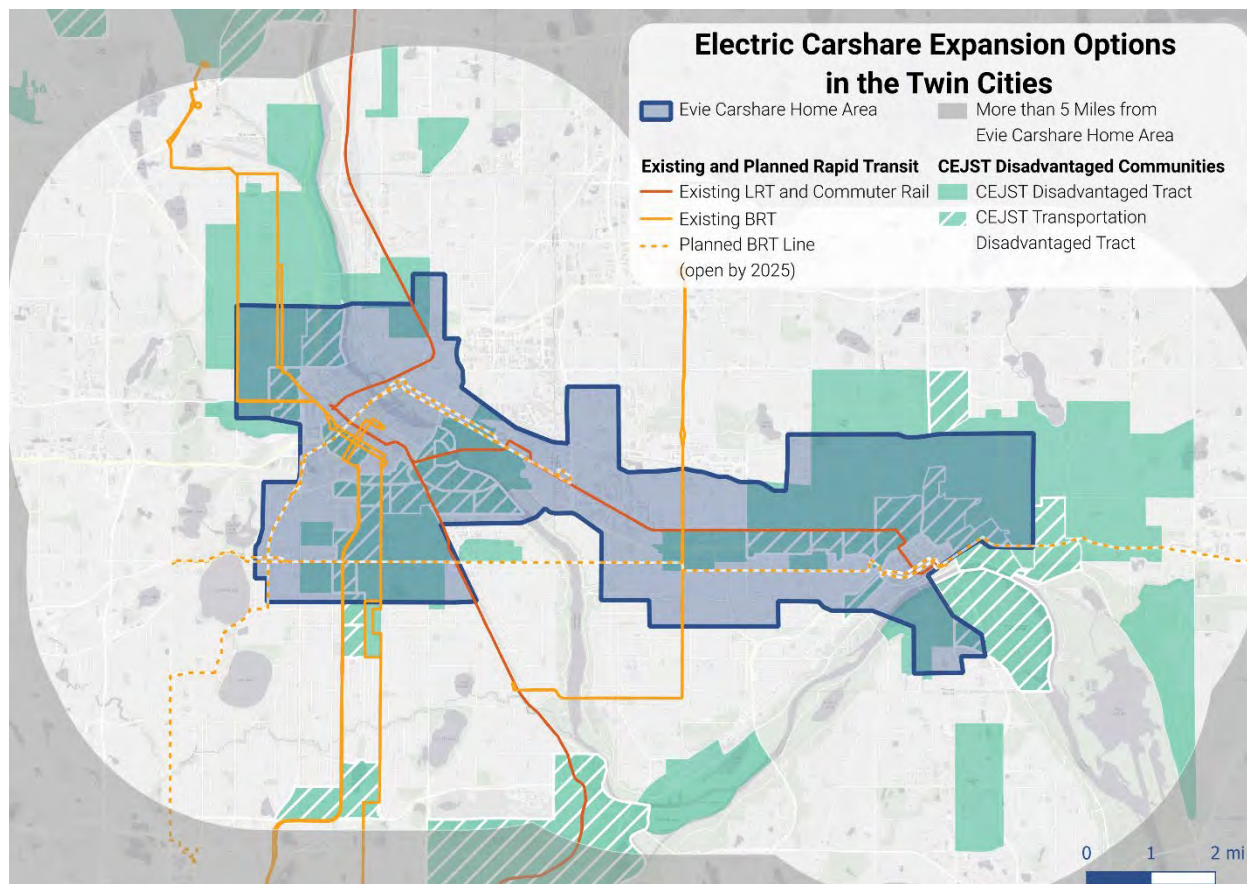
Project Location: 25 new sites within the project expansion area (see map below)

Requested Amount: \$500,000

Total Project Cost: \$625,000

Brief Project Description

HOURCAR is seeking to expand access to the benefits of electrified transportation for low-income and transportation-disadvantaged residents of the region. We are proposing to regularize and scale up the Multifamily EV Carshare Pilot Project, which is planned to grow to 25 sites with 50 electric vehicles by the end of 2025, by adding 25 additional sites and 50 more shared electric vehicles (i.e., growing to 50 EV carshare sites with 100 EVs) within the identified expansion area (including the Evie Carshare home area) in 2026-2027. We will focus on sites located in census tracts with high numbers of disadvantaged/transportation disadvantaged residents, high numbers of renters, and located near high-density housing and high-frequency transit. We are also expanding the Multifamily Pilot Project's original geographic area of focus to include the Evie Carshare service territory and the surrounding area within a five mile radius (see map below). When we launched the Multifamily Pilot Project, we focused primarily on first-ring suburbs outside the urban core, excluding the Evie Carshare service area. We have now opened up our focus area to include the Evie Carshare home area, with a goal of complementing our highly successful one-way service with a round-trip option.



Travel Training TDM Program



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Travel Training Program

MVTA continuously strives to make public transit accessible, comfortable, and easy to navigate. The Travel Training Program is designed to educate potential and existing riders on the ins and outs of the public transportation system, teaching them to effectively navigate transit to the places they need to move out of both necessity and for recreational purposes. The Travel Training program will help individuals understand how and where to ride, and the benefits of taking public transit on a personal and community level.

MVTA is ideally located to implement the program to support connections with other transit services as well, an advantage to the surrounding communities and businesses. Funding would support a robust program, including marketing, educational materials, engagement activities, tools and software programs, and other training resources. Additionally, it would support funding for the addition of bilingual/ADA-fluent Travel Trainers to educate community members on how to plan their trips and make connections throughout the region, including those whose first language is not English, and passengers who may need additional accommodations. The trainer could also collaborate with the public outreach team to develop materials catering to these riders' needs.



BTS Mobility Hub Alignment

The Travel Training Program aligns with the Burnsville Transit Station (BTS) Mobility Hub project, an initiative MVTA is actively seeking funding to implement. BTS is MVTA's core transit station and the transformation to a full mobility hub includes the construction of a separate building for community public transit training to make learning opportunities accessible and convenient.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$500,000
REQUESTED FEDERAL AMOUNT \$400,000
LOCAL MATCH \$100,000

Project Name: Embracing East Metro Transit Expansions Through Events
Applicant: Move Minnesota
Project Location: Events and communities in the East Metro connected by High Frequency Network lines
Requested Award Amount: \$492,349
Total Project Cost: \$615,437

Project Description & Benefits

Embracing East Metro Transit Expansions Through Events is an innovative TDM project to change the behavior of people attending events in the East Metro, using events and destinations as an entry point to encourage longer-term behavior change.

By bringing people aboard transit, we hope to reduce congestion around events and destinations in the East Metro. From there, we intend to use messaging and programming to transform one-time and infrequent riders into confident, regular transit users. Saint Paul is an emerging hub of the rapidly expanding METRO network. This is an opportunity to transform the travel patterns of communities not just within Saint Paul, but East Metro communities that have not previously had access to fast, frequent transit.

Transportation is often left outside the gate and the ticket line. In this 2-year project, Move Minnesota will partner with

publicly accessible event venues, festivals, and destinations to implement the following strategies:
 —Move Minnesota will use incentives and engagement to bring transit into the event experience—as communications before traveling to the event; at the event, highlighting the positives of taking transit to the event; and/or as guests depart, when there’s a crucial window to offer and inform people on transit options to ease their travel next time around.

—We will build relationships so venue owners, entertainment institutions, and their economic ecosystem understand the benefits of transit use and can take advantage of an infrastructure optimized for moving large groups of people and amplifying walkability. Through offering incentives, either direct (transit fares) or indirect (giveaways, prizes, or discounts), we will demonstrate the value of robust transit demand management for events large and small, as well as reach people who may not be touched by traditional TDM programming.

—We will collect contact information alongside incentives in order to engage with people who use these incentives post event, using a toolkit that combines incentives, communications, in-person education, and online education to support converting people to regular transit riders.

This project is innovative because (1) it reduces congestion and VMT at moments of maximum congestion and demand, including interactions between evening commute travel and event start times, which have overlapping evening windows, (2) it focuses on a regional geography where people are experiencing a dramatic increase in the speed, frequency, and quality of the transit options available to them, and (3) maximizes opportunities to incentivize long-term behavior change at a moment when people are inclined to be considering mode shift.



Move Minnesota engages the public about the benefits of shifting trips at a local event; staff will build on this experience and experience with other larger-scale events to shift trips