



# Nicollet Mall & Potential Downtown Transit Changes

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# Agenda

- Project Background
- Future of Nicollet
- North-south transit alternatives to Nicollet
- Engagement approach
- Next steps

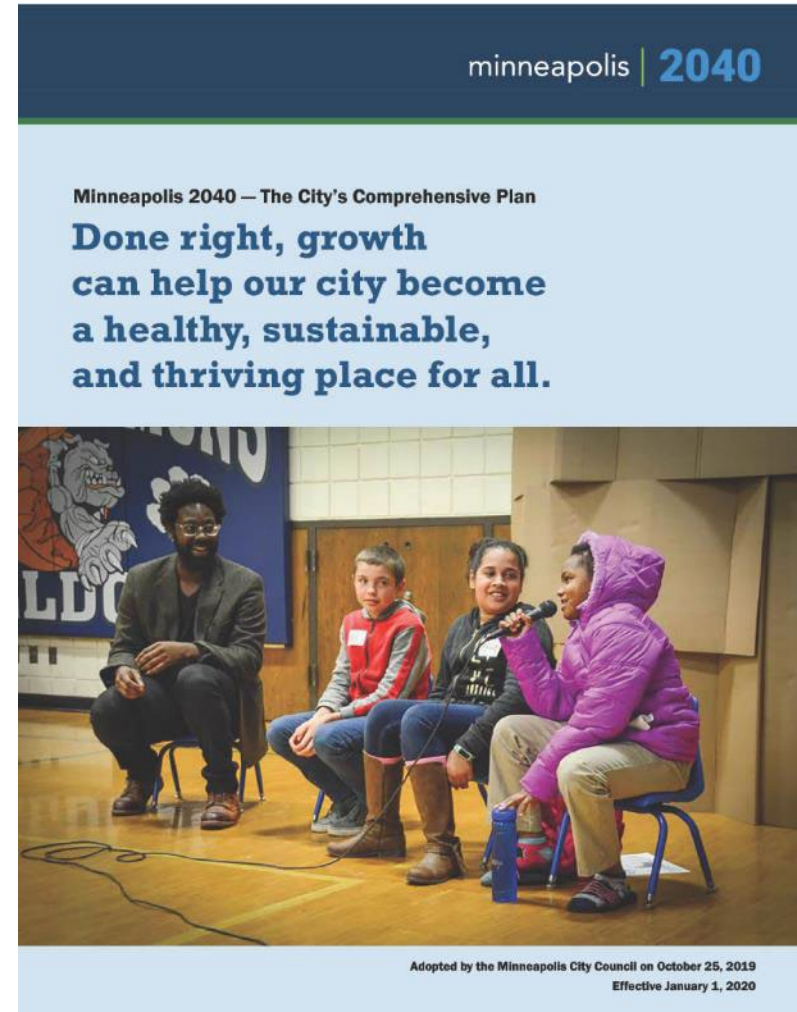
# Nicollet Mall Project Background

- Vibrant Storefronts Downtown Workgroup Report, June 2023
  - Evaluate the future of Nicollet Mall as a pedestrian-only zone
- Ongoing partnership between Metro Transit and City of Minneapolis
- Focus has been on possible transit alternatives to Nicollet Mall



# City of Minneapolis Policy Background: Minneapolis 2040

- Policy 7 [Public Realm](#)
  - Proactively improve the public realm to support a pedestrian friendly, high-quality and distinctive built environment.
- Policy 15 [Transportation and Equity](#)
  - Ensure that the quality and function of the transportation system contributes to equitable outcomes for all people.
- Policy 22 [Downtown Transportation](#)
  - Ensure travel to and throughout Downtown is efficient, understandable, reliable, and safe.



The image shows the cover of the 'Minneapolis 2040' report. At the top right, it says 'minneapolis | 2040'. Below that, the title reads 'Minneapolis 2040 – The City's Comprehensive Plan'. The main headline is 'Done right, growth can help our city become a healthy, sustainable, and thriving place for all.' Below the text is a photograph of four people sitting on a stage. From left to right: a man in a dark suit, a woman in a red vest, a woman in a black jacket, and a woman in a purple hoodie who is speaking into a microphone. The background of the photo shows a blue wall with a cartoon mascot and the letters 'LDC'. At the bottom of the page, there is a small caption: 'Adopted by the Minneapolis City Council on October 25, 2019 Effective January 1, 2020'.

minneapolis | 2040

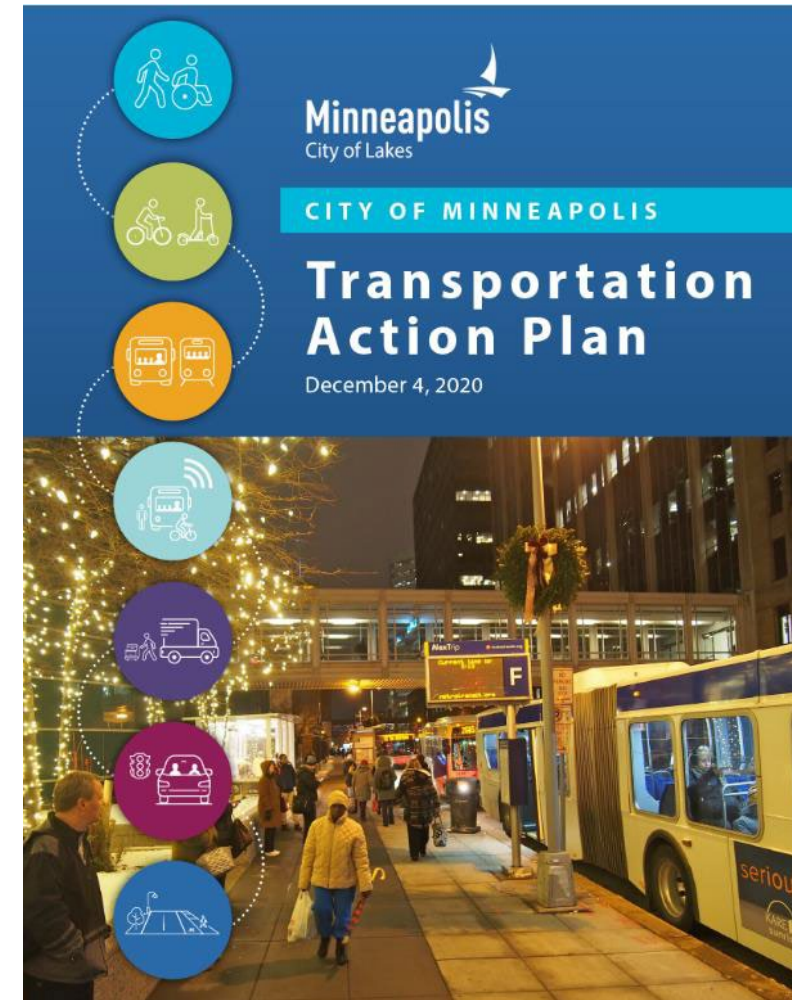
Minneapolis 2040 – The City's Comprehensive Plan

**Done right, growth  
can help our city become  
a healthy, sustainable,  
and thriving place for all.**

Adopted by the Minneapolis City Council on October 25, 2019  
Effective January 1, 2020

# City of Minneapolis Policy Background: Transportation Action Plan

- Transit [strategy 2](#): Increase the speed and reliability of transit
  - Action 2.4: Improve transit speed and reliability throughout downtown; focus on Nicollet Mall and Marquette/2nd Avenue operations first.
- Transit [strategy 4](#): Partner with Metro Transit and other agencies to pursue new transit projects of high impact.
- Design [strategy 2](#): Foster vibrant public spaces for street life



## Two project goals

1. Increase downtown vibrancy
2. Improve transit downtown



# Future of Nicollet Mall

- City staff and key stakeholders will plan for a fully pedestrianized Nicollet Mall, including:
  - A near-term, tactical plan for placemaking and programming.
  - Strategies for storefront activation.
  - Areas of opportunity and investment.
  - Marketing strategies.
  - Potential long-term infrastructure adjustments and public realm plan.



# Transit context of Nicollet Mall

- Nicollet Mall is one of the busiest transit corridors in the metro region
  - Each weekday 635 buses travel along the mall; more than any other corridor in the region
  - About 11,600 people get on or off the bus along Nicollet Mall
  - Buses carry about 4,700-6,100 people traveling along Nicollet Mall
- Nicollet Mall is the alignment of two planned METRO BRT lines





# Alternatives to transit on Nicollet Mall

- Metro Transit is open to moving transit off Nicollet Mall provided we can find a solution that:
  - is **as good as or better than existing** conditions for transit riders and operations, and
  - accommodates future planned transit investments



# Initial long-term alternatives to Nicollet Mall considered

## Hennepin Avenue

- Recently reconstructed with enhanced transit stations and off-street protected bike facility
- Existing BRT-ready corridor under consideration for F Line opening day but challenging for long-term network

## Marq2

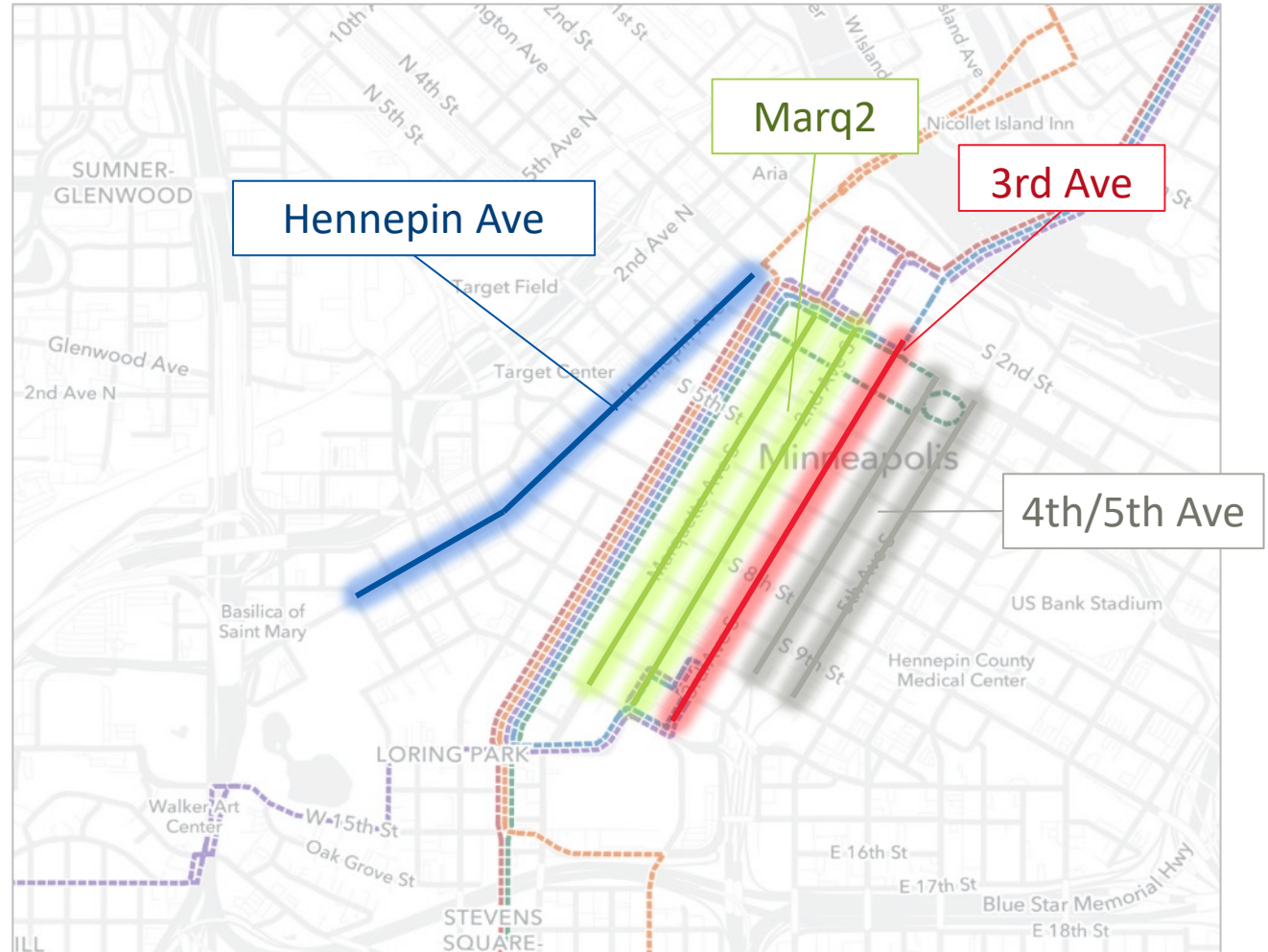
- Existing express corridor with dedicated lanes, stop groups, and Orange Line

## 3rd Avenue

- Currently four-lane two-way street with on-street protected bike facility

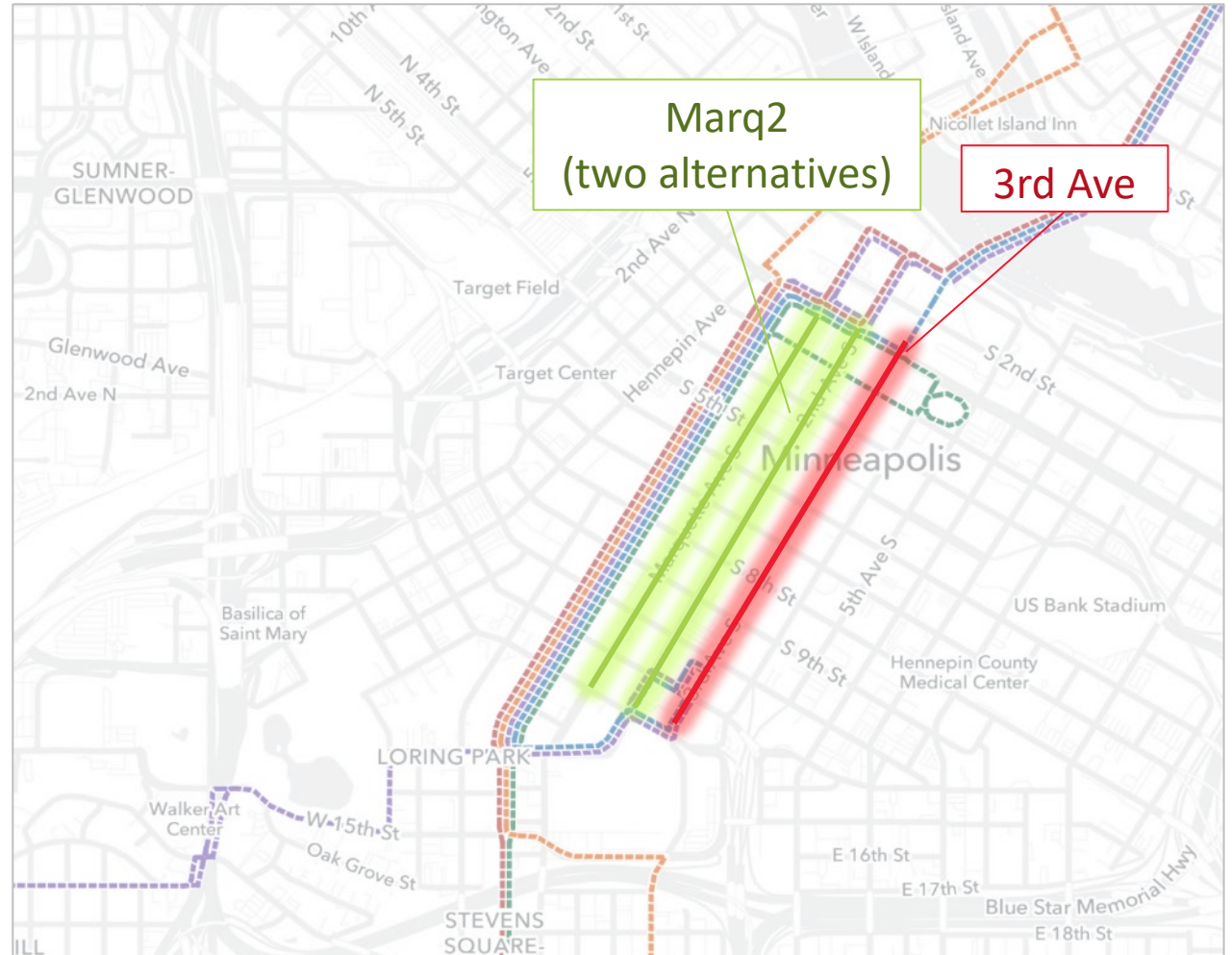
## 4th/5th Avenues

- Future Transit Priority Corridor in Mpls TAP
- Out of direction and difficult to access from existing north-south alignments into downtown



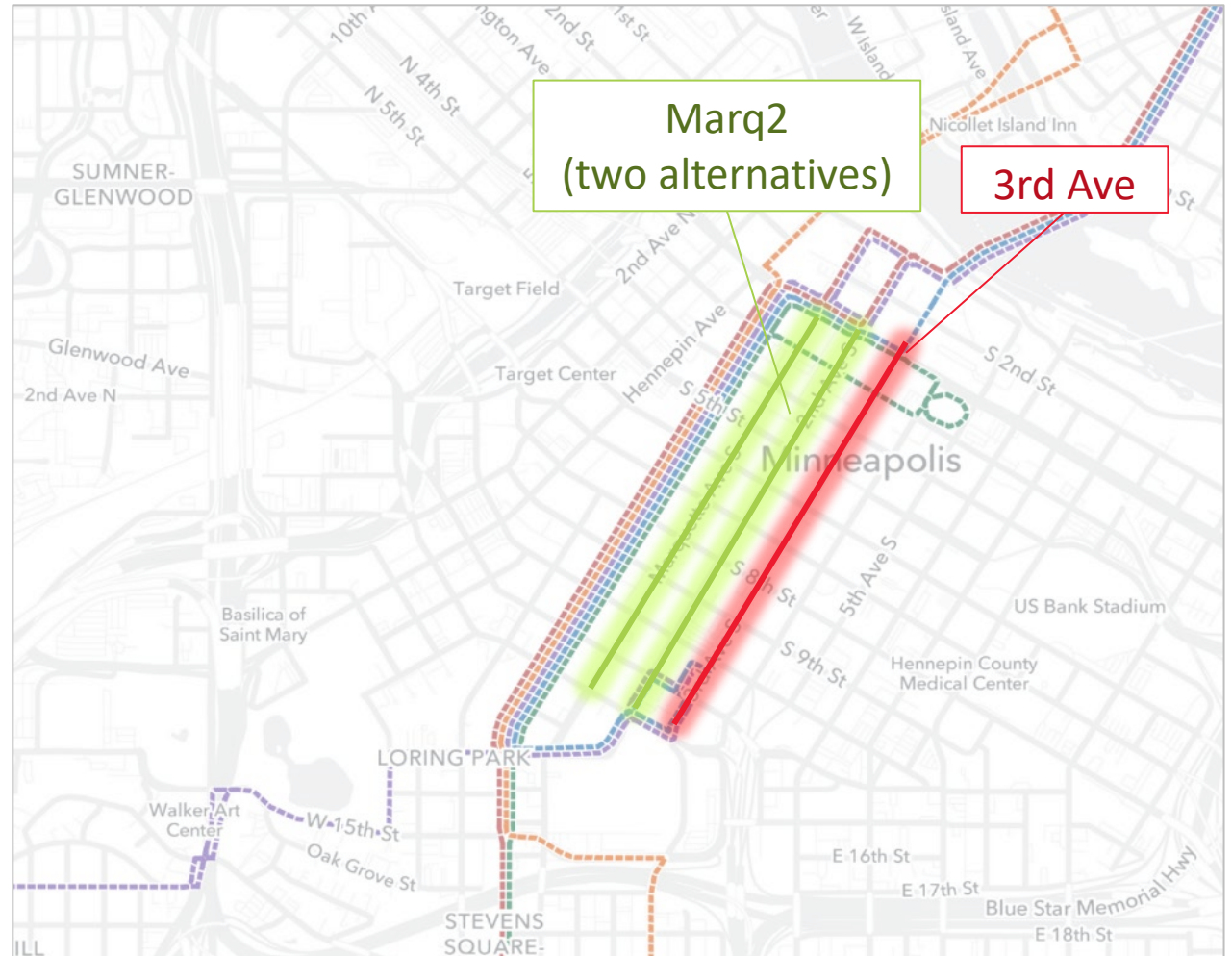
# Three long-term alternatives advanced

1. Marq2 one-way pairs
  - Southbound transit/ northbound traffic on Marquette
  - Northbound transit/ southbound traffic on 2nd Avenue
2. Marq2 two-way traffic
  - BRT/local on Marquette Avenue
  - Express service on 2nd Avenue
  - Two-way traffic on both
3. 3rd Avenue two-way traffic
  - BRT/local on 3rd Avenue with upgraded bicycle facility



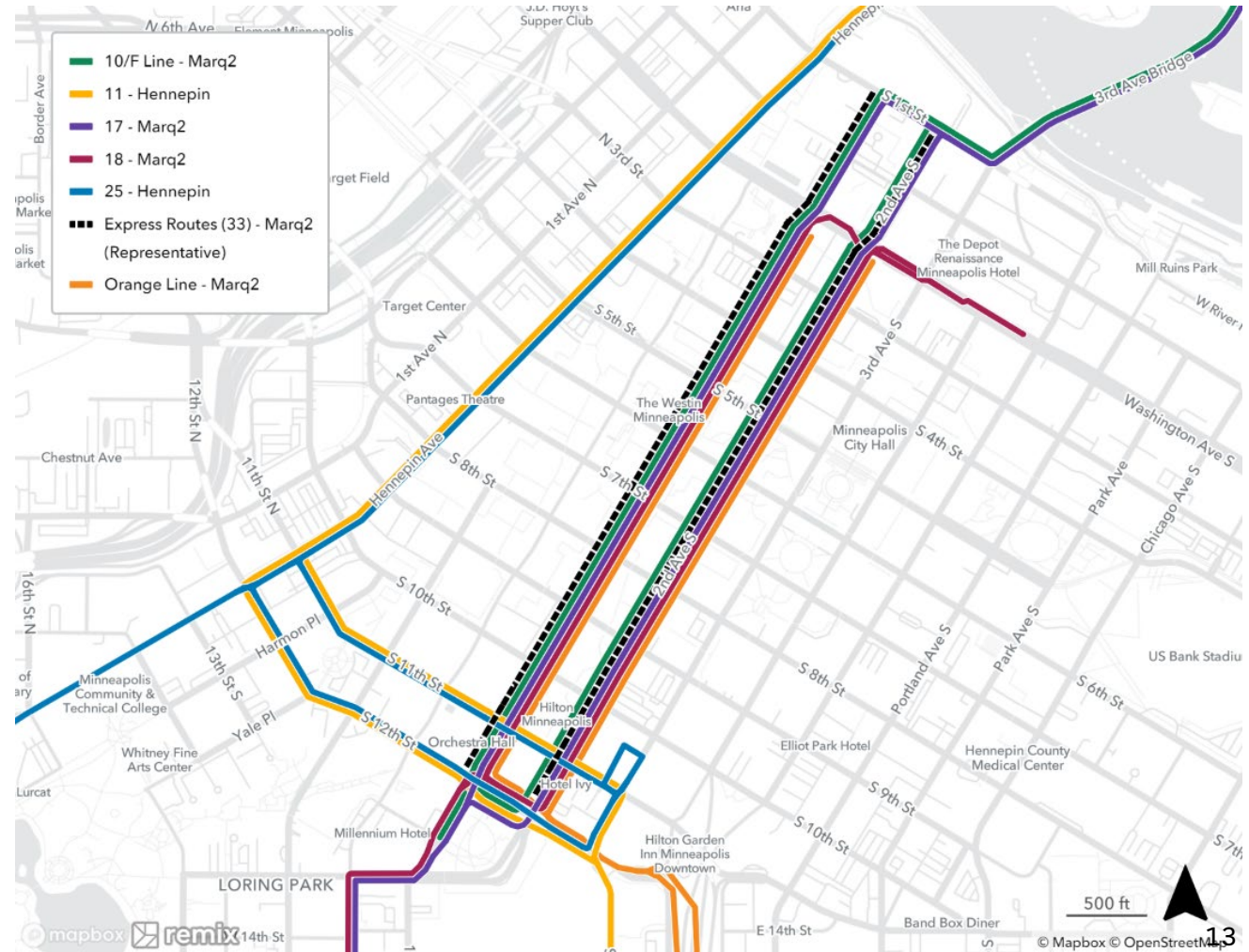
# Key transit considerations for alternatives

- Access to destinations
- Connections to other transit services
- Speed and reliability of transit service
- Legibility and simplicity
- High quality customer waiting facilities
- Ease and cost of implementation and construction



# Marq2 – one-way pairs

- Routes 11 and 25 use Hennepin
- Routes 10, 17, 18 and future BRT use Marquette
  - As today, southbound on Marquette, northbound on 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave
  - BRT and local routes use shared stations
- Orange Line stays on Marq2
  - Relocate Orange Line stops to the same stations built for future BRT/ local service
- 33 express routes stay on Marq2
  - Consolidate stops/rearrange service to accommodate new future BRT stations

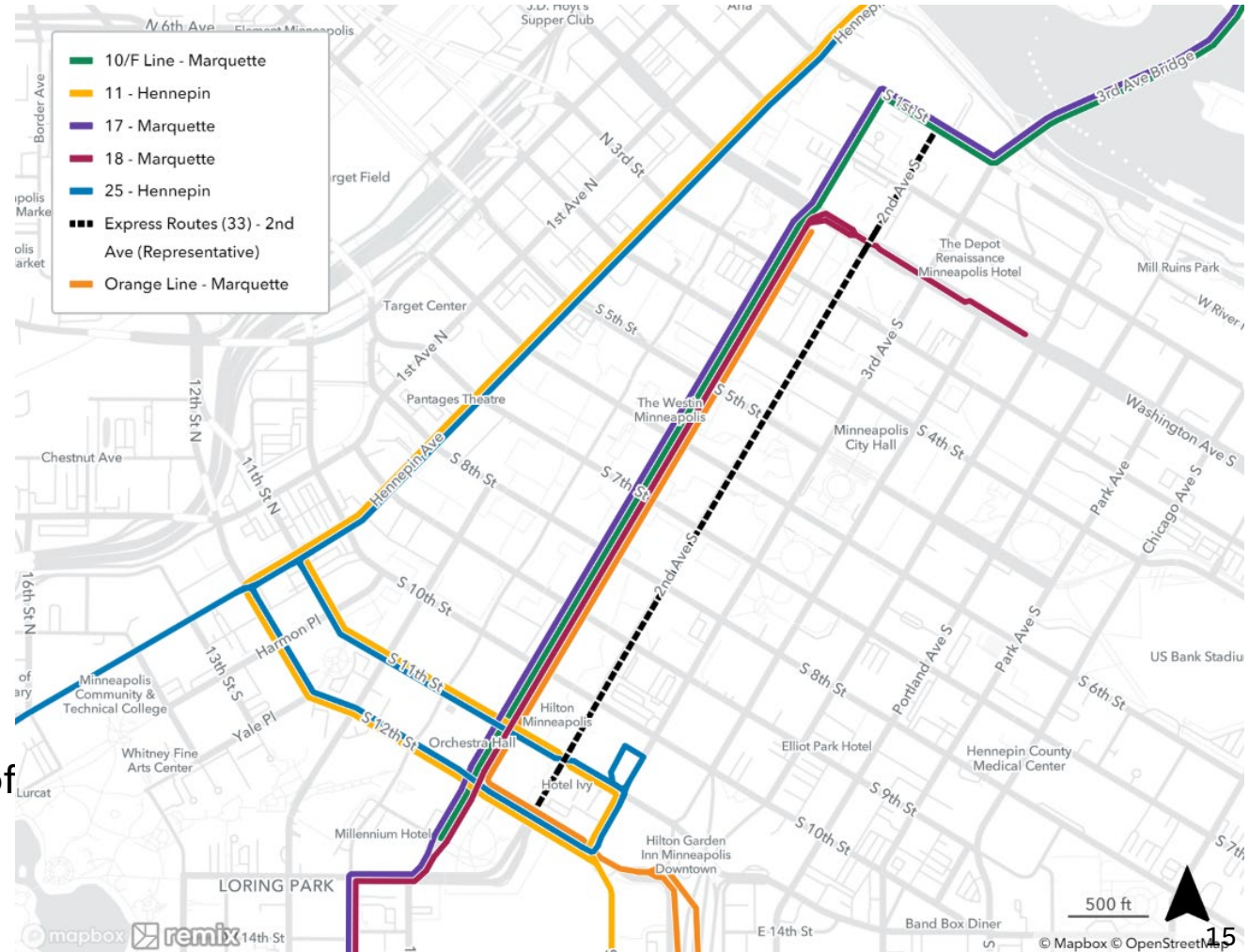


# Marq2 – one-way pairs: Draft concept

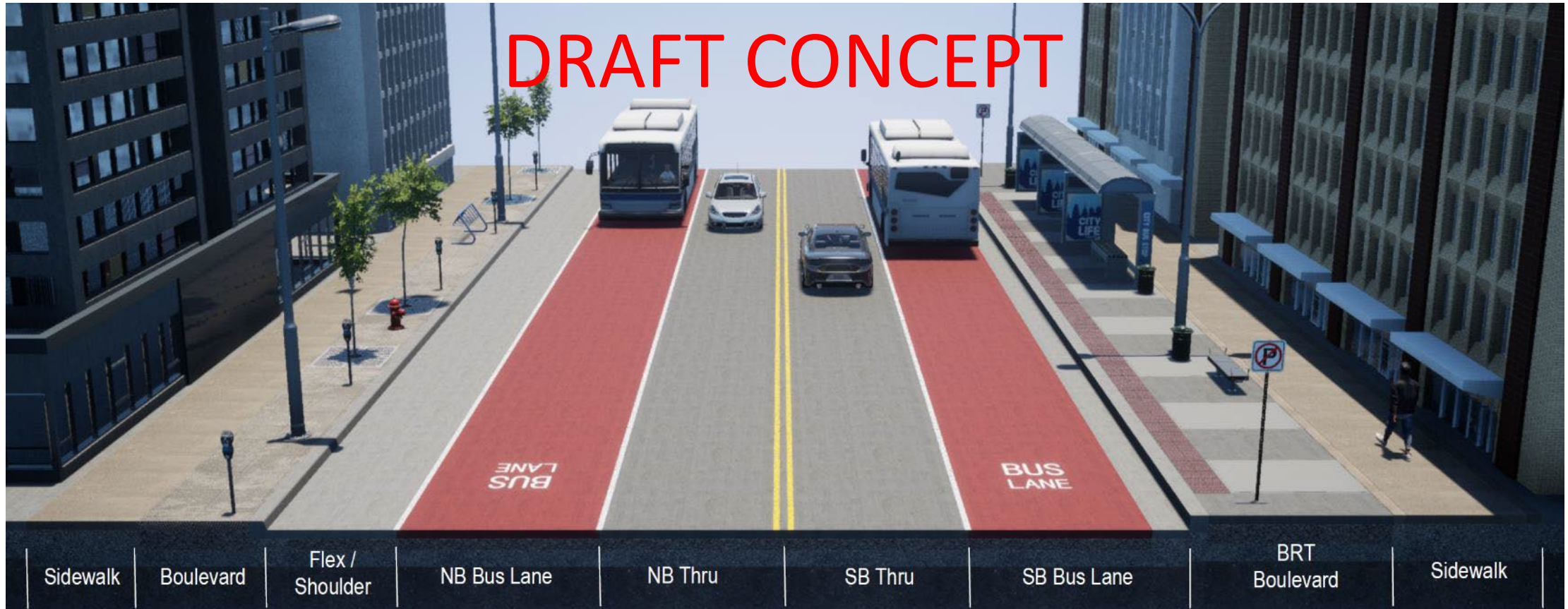


## Marq2 – two-way traffic

- Routes 11 and 25 use Hennepin
- Routes 10, 17, 18 and future BRT use Marquette (two-way)
  - BRT and local routes use shared stations
- Orange Line uses Marquette (two-way)
  - Relocate Orange Line stops to the same stations built for future BRT/local service
- 33 express use 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave (two-way)
  - Add southbound bus stops on west side of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave



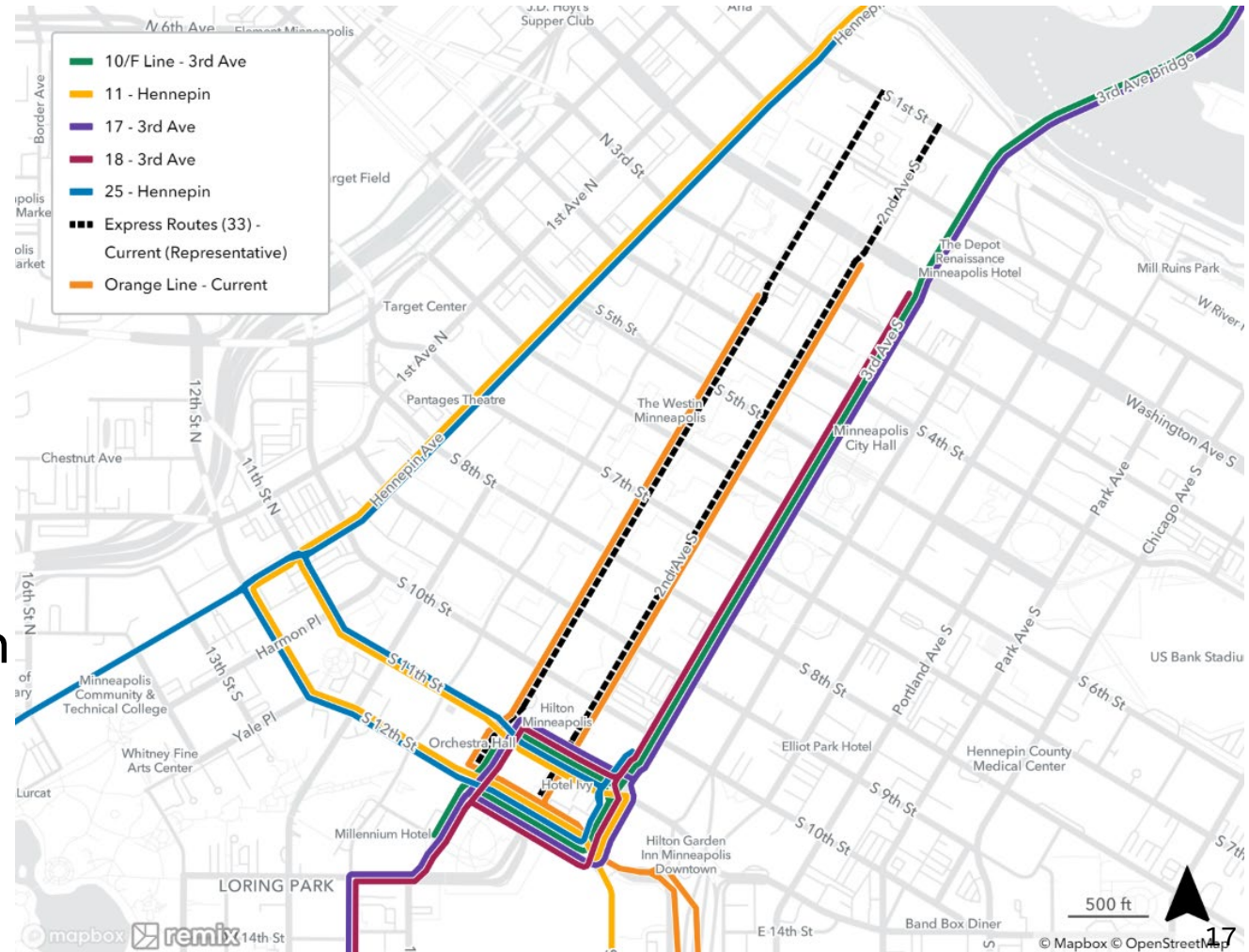
# Marq2 – two-way traffic: Draft concept





## 3rd Avenue – two-way traffic

- Routes 11 and 25 use Hennepin
- Routes 10, 17, 18 and future BRT use 3rd Ave
  - BRT and local routes use shared stations
- No change necessary to Orange Line or 33 express routes (stay on Marq2)



# 3rd Avenue – two-way traffic: Draft concept



# Engagement approach



- Coordinated engagement on transit alternatives to Nicollet Mall led by Minneapolis Public Works with support from Metro Transit
- Key stakeholders include:
  - Transit riders
  - Residents
  - Neighborhood groups
  - Downtown business community
  - Advocacy groups

## Engagement approach – Metro Transit focus

- Metro Transit supporting overall effort and leading engagement to transit customers, with a focus on amplifying transit rider voices within the City's process
  - Seeking feedback on three alternatives
  - Key questions focused on transit **experience** and **service**
- Expected tactics include:
  - In-person onboard and bus stop outreach
  - Subscription / Rider Alert to push City survey
  - Metro Transit social media channels

## Next steps

- Engagement begins summer 2024
  - Survey
  - Pop ups downtown and rider intercepts
  - Open house
- Winter 2024/25: identify preferred alternative for transit
- 2025 Q1/2: memorandum of understanding (MOU) on transit changes
- 2026: earliest move of transit off Nicollet Mall
- Ongoing: planning for future of Nicollet Mall
- Future: engagement, planning, design, and construction of preferred long-term alternative