

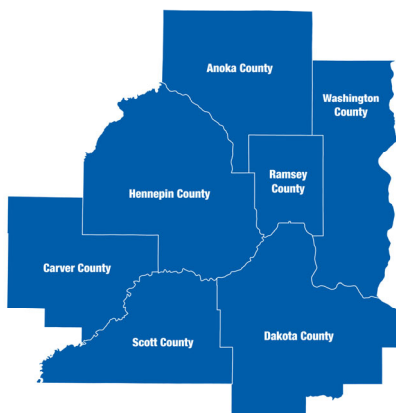


METROPOLITAN
COUNCIL

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efficient and economic growth for
a prosperous metropolitan region.

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Met Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

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Background

The Metropolitan Council sought public comments on 2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) Amendment 1, which modifies the preferred alternative route identified in the plan for METRO Blue Line Extension, adds the METRO Gold Line Extension to the plan, and documents effects these changes have on the 2050 TPP's Regional Transportation Finance, Transit Investment Plan, and Long Range Capital Project Lists sections.

The plan amendment was available for public comment between July 10, 2025, and August 27, 2025. The Met Council hosted a public hearing on the amendment on August 13, 2025. The Met Council advertised the availability of the draft amendment, comment period, and public hearing through social media, email, and notices on its website and in the Star Tribune newspaper.

The following report includes a spreadsheet of comments received, responses from Met Council staff, and any recommended changes to the amendment.

People engaged

- Total comments: 20
- Web page: 240 views
- Facebook posts: 2,026 views, 50 interactions
- GovDelivery emails:
 - Announcement: 3,439 unique opens, 152 unique clicks
 - Public hearing reminder: 3,433 unique opens, 242 unique clicks

Methods used

- Star Tribune ad (2 consecutive Saturdays)
- Web page notice
- GovDelivery email announcements
- Facebook
- BlueSky (no analytics available)

Comments received through

- Form submission
- Email

Engagement Themes

20 people provided comments during the comment period. Some comments covered more than one topic. The following themes were raised by the comments.

Blue Line Extension

- 12 commenters stated support for Blue Line Extension.
 - Reasons for support included increased access, connectivity, economic development, and winter reliability.
 - 1 supportive commenter preferred shortening the Blue Line Extension.
 - 1 supportive commenter stated concerns with construction impacts.
- 3 commenters stated opposition to Blue Line Extension.
 - Reasons for opposition included costs, federal funding availability, prior rail project delivery performance, increased remote work, construction impacts and displacement risk, specific station area concerns, and mode choice.

Gold Line Extension

- 15 commenters stated support for Gold Line Extension
 - Reasons for support included increased access, connectivity, and downtown-to-downtown connections.
 - 5 commenters offered specific suggestions about additional stations, route alignment, or transfer experiences.
 - 1 commenter raised concerns about ridership effects of Rethinking I-94 alternatives.
- No commenters stated specific opposition to Gold Line Extension.

General comments

- 2 commenters support more regional transitways generally.
- 1 commenter opposes transit citing costs and public subsidies.

Comments and Responses

Commenter	Comment	Response
Daniel Phillips	I would like both amendment to the 2050 plan to be added.	Thank you for your comment.
Dustin Nguyen	Very supportive and exited for more regional transitways. More transfers, concerting more people to frequent service 7 days a week.	Thank you for taking the time to comment. The Council agrees that greater connections between transit lines and access to frequent service throughout the week is beneficial to the region.
Nathan Bakken	Both the Blue Line Extension and Gold Line Extension will significantly improve my access to our region as someone who doesn't own a car. Wholeheartedly approve of this amendment to the our Transportation Policy Plan.	Thank you very much for taking the time to comment.
Amy Yoder	I am writing in support of the Draft 2050 TPP Amendment #1. Both the Blue Line Extension project and the Gold Line Extension project will benefit our region, connecting more people to high quality transit, jobs, recreation, and housing.	Thank you for taking the time to comment.
Paul Sponholz, City of Cottage Grove	Hello, Regarding the DRAFT 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment #1, the City of Cottage Grove supports any connectivity to the Gold Line that would benefit future connections from Woodbury to Cottage Grove via micro transit or other connections.	Thank you for your comment. We agree that increased access to transit and connectivity between transit services will be beneficial to the region.
Robert Liebhart	The plan on extend the Gold Line to downtown Minneapolis is a great idea and should be prioritized. The Blue Line extension is an important project, and I hope that impacts/closures related to its constructions can be aligned with the 'Renew The Blue' campaign as much as possible to minimize closures.	Thank you for taking the time to comment. We will share your concerns regarding construction impacts with the relevant project office staff. Please note, Renew the Blue projects are planned to be completed prior the start of construction for Blue Line Extension.
Catherine H Iliff	I am in full support for the blue line extension and the gold line. But think the blue line extension is more important than the yellow line because that Northside of town is needing better transportation. Northside seems neglected. The rail line brings jobs and opportunities to a section of metro where citizens are poorer and more likely can not afford a car.	Thank you for taking the time to comment. The Council agrees that the north side of Minneapolis is an important part of the region for investing in high quality transit service. Gold Line Extension is a smaller project that will be completed with existing Metro Transit funds. It will not affect the priority or timeline of implementing Blue Line Extension.
Eli Harvey	Please support these generational investments with the Blue Line Extension and Gold Line Extension! More BRT and LRT should be planned and added to the 2050 plan!	Thank you for taking the time to comment on this amendment. We will share your feedback with relevant planning offices at the Met Council and our regional transit partners. There are currently multiple planning studies looking at the possibility of adding more bus rapid transit lines to the region's transit plans such as the Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Plan Update and the Highway 55 Bus Rapid Transit Study.

Commenter	Comment	Response
Owen Young	As a Minneapolis resident, I fully support this amendment to the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan. I primarily use transit and bicycling to get around, and the Blue Line Extension is a project I'm very excited about. I believe projects like this are what make our metro an attractive place to live. I am also fully in favor of the Gold Line Extension, as the current green line is usually too slow to go between downtowns. This project allows for rapid, affordable, and efficient transit.	Thank you very much for taking the time to comment on this amendment.
Sunil Kancherla	I'd like to see a Gold Line station that serves the University of Minnesota at some point, but I'm fine with it opening per the current plan for now	<p>Thank you for taking the time to comment on the amendment. We will provide your feedback to the Gold Line Extension project office.</p> <p>The University of Minnesota campus is a very important regional transit destination. While the alignment included in this amendment does not directly stop there, it does have multiple existing and planned high-frequency transit connections to the campus from both downtowns of Minneapolis and Saint Paul such as METRO Green Line, METRO E Line, METRO B Line, and METRO H Line.</p>
Ben Lilliston	I support both amendments for the Blue and Gold Line. I am interested in how the Gold Line will navigate I-94, and how traffic and the infrastructure of 94 are projected out into the future. Currently, 94 has very narrow lanes. It is highly trafficked during rush hour. Traveling on the shoulder seems potentially challenging. Thanks for all the work put into this plan and amendments.	Thank you for taking the time to comment. The Twin Cities region has an extensive bus-only shoulder network along its highways supporting transit operations. Gold Line buses will be able to take advantage of bus-only shoulders on I-94 between downtown St. Paul and Highway 280. Bus operators will use these shoulders when traffic speeds are under 35mph, which provides a travel time advantage and better reliability for the route. Limiting shoulder use to when traffic is moving at these speeds or slower helps to address some of the challenges you mention. Bus operators are also trained to operate buses in these environments.
Peter Schleisman	I'm glad to see both projects added to the TIP. I'd like to suggest, however, that the METRO Gold Line extension include several stations in Saint Paul - in addition to Snelling Avenue - along its route. Eventually, these stations along 94 should be fully built out just like the 35W-Lake Street Station on the Orange Line. I realize that's like not feasible yet, but it should be added to the long range plan nonetheless. In the very long run, it would be valuable to decommission up to three Green Line stations and replace them with Gold Line stations. This would allow the Green Line to be speedier along University, where it currently stops too frequently.	<p>Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback. Please note, the proposed amendment is to Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) which is the region's long-range transportation plan, not the Transportation Improvement program (TIP) which describes all proposed federally-funded transportation projects within the metropolitan planning area over the next four years.</p> <p>We will provide your comments to the relevant project offices. This amendment would not preclude further improvements to the Gold Line in the future like you suggest. Metro Transit is actively coordinating with MnDOT regarding the Rethinking I-94 Project, which is a long-term effort to promote effective movement of people and goods and a high quality of life for neighboring communities. MnDOT is engaging communities that live, work, commute, and play along the I-94 corridor to inform decisions on that project.</p>

Commenter	Comment	Response
Benjamin Lester	<p>I support the Gold Line extension - what a great idea to connect the downtowns via highway BRT. This will improve and reinforce the already-useful service of bus #94! Please have the Gold Line extension continue past downtown Minneapolis to the Royalston/Farmers Market Green Line stop. I'd like if Met Council extends Gold Line further west along I-394, to West End in St Louis Park, with a stop at Penn Ave & 394.</p> <p>The Gold Line Extension amendment "Project Planning Process" section mentions that the Rethinking I-94 Transit Study only advanced A.2 (Express Bus on 100% Shoulder, One Station). Is it worth mentioning that the A.2 Alternative would decrease system ridership? In fact, the only alternative to actually increase system-wide ridership is the at-grade alternative (C.1, BRT on Dedicated Lane, At-Grade Roadway). Is that worth including in the amendment for future consideration?</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to provide your feedback. We will share your comments with relevant project offices.</p> <p>The proposed alignment for Gold Line Extension in this amendment ends at 7th and Olson just north of the Royalston Green Line station on its western end. This does not preclude future revision or extension, which would need to be part of another amendment.</p> <p>Regarding the A.2 alternative and system ridership, the Council expects that implementing the Gold Line Extension as proposed will positively impact system ridership compared to current service and I-94 layout. The Met Council appreciates the point that option C.1 would likely result in more transit ridership overall than A.2, however implementing Gold Line Extension as outlined in this amendment does not preclude a future at-grade facility. Met Council and Metro Transit will continue to be actively involved in the Rethinking I-94 Study and advocate for achieving the region's shared goals.</p>
Schurkey Swanke	<p>Every "Transit" route that cannot support itself in rider fees and VOLUNTARY donations should be IMMEDIATELY discontinued, the equipment sold, and the employees fired.</p> <p>This is not the burden of the Taxpayer, this should be wholly-funded by the USERS and no-one else except volunteer donations.</p> <p>END Taxpayer-funding of "Transit". Bus service, and "Light Rail" service has been a money-sucking BLACK HOLE for decades. Money goes in, nothing good ever comes out.</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to comment. The State of Minnesota's elected representatives, the Met Council members, and the Cities and Counties that we serve have provided clear direction that public transit is an essential part of our region's transportation system. The state recently passed a regional sales and use tax to fund transit operations and generational capital investments as well as investments in safety, walking, and biking. Transit is also a funded priority of the United States. All urbanized areas in the United States receive federal formula funds dedicated to transit operations and capital investment.</p> <p>Regarding transit's benefits, 56.8 million rides were taken on transit in the Twin Cities region in 2024. Transit connects people to their communities, economic and educational opportunities, and civic life while also making the highest demand roads in our region work more efficiently by moving more people in less space than private automobiles. Our region's transit system also connects members of our communities who cannot drive due to age, disability (~11%), economic circumstance (~8%), or lack of access to a car (~7%) and those who choose to reduce their reliance on cars. While the Met Council appreciates you sharing your views, we disagree in the strongest terms.</p>

Commenter	Comment	Response
Jody Hurlbut	<p>Forget about the blue line extension. The green line extension to Eden Prairie is years behind schedule and well over budget. Why do you think the blue line extension will be better? In the climate of reduced federal funding due to the Republican Party you can't guarantee any money to help defray the cost to the state and local governments.</p> <p>Gold line extension makes sense.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments.</p> <p>The current Blue Line route is being extended to expand access to public transit in the northwest suburbs. The extension will connect historically underserved communities with better access to employment opportunities, education, and essential services. The project represents a significant investment in addressing systemic inequities by providing better transit options to areas with high percentages of zero-car households.</p> <p>All large infrastructure projects face unique circumstances and challenges. Delays to the Green Line Extension project were caused by conditions unique to the route. Many major transportation projects encounter challenges during construction, and the Council has applied and will continue to apply lessons learned from prior experiences. To the greatest extent practicable, the Council has accounted for risks to Blue Line Extension's budget and timeline in the most recent figures.</p> <p>Some key differences between the Blue Line Extension and Green Line Extension include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major tunnels, which has been one of the major drivers of cost increases on Green Line Extension • No colocation with freight rail, which avoids need for costly crash walls and makes construction easier • Fewer structures like bridges and retaining walls, which can be costly • Most of project will be built within existing roadways owned primarily by Hennepin County. <p>Regarding federal funding, the region has historically been competitive for federal Capital Investment Grant funding on these large regional transitway investments. Met Council and its partners plan to continue pursuing this important source of funding.</p>

Commenter	Comment	Response
Matthew McCord	<p>I write in general support of these two projects being added to the 2050 TPP. In addition, however, in regards to the METRO Gold Line Extension, the utility of this project would be much stronger if there were a transfer stop for the METRO A Line (at University Avenue and I-94) added to its scope. The current walkshed "connections" between the proposed stations for the Gold Line Extension and today's nearest A Line stations are effectively not usable for realistic, regular transfers between the lines - between the A Line stations at both Snelling/University and Snelling/Dayton and I-94/Snelling, (a) there's a rather substantial distance (~1600 feet/about 8-10 minutes) to walk to change between the lines, with a walking connection that is (b) along a high speed road with (c) narrow sidewalks which are (d) directly on the road frontage that features (e) limited shelter from elements, (f) poor maintenance of the sidewalks, and (g) requires walking through a roadway design that requires crossing a fair amount of high-speed turning traffic. This collectively adds up to a transfer experience between the current Route 94 and A Line that is entirely unpleasant and therefore something that I use only as a last resort connection versus other alternatives. I personally would be much more likely to use the Gold Line Extension - i.e., could actually make it a realistic part of my regular commute instead of a nice-to-have fallback - if there were an A Line station at I-94 as well, instead of just those at University and at Dayton. Even adding an "informal" or "temporary" station along the A Line, like those along other aBRT lines, would be a great improvement.</p>	<p>Thank you very much for taking the time to provide feedback on the Gold Line Extension and connections with METRO A Line. We will provide your comments to the project office who is actively working with partners to address challenges like this. Metro Transit is actively coordinating with MnDOT regarding the Rethinking I-94 Project, as well as any future programed improvements to Snelling Ave as a cohesive way to incorporate transit improvements. Additionally, in 2026 Metro Transit will undertake a study of existing arterial bus rapid transit lines, like the METRO A Line, to evaluate if there are improvements that could be made to enhance service and connections. The connection between A Line and Gold Line Extension will be considered in that study.</p>

Commenter	Comment	Response
Connor Carroll	<p>I am writing in support of both the Blue Line Extension and the Gold Line Extension from downtown St. Paul to downtown Minneapolis.</p> <p>The Blue Line Extension will be a great way to improve public transit access along this corridor, one of the densest in the region and with a high share of driverless households. I used to live along the Blue Line in south Minneapolis for several years, one block away from the 50th St/Minnehaha Park station. It made it very easy to commute to work and run errands without needing a car. And, during the winter it was a super reliable way to get around, very rarely delayed or affected at all by ice and snow. I want the the people of north Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal and Brooklyn Park to have this same level of public transit access. I also really believe it will result in a lot of great business and residential development. A light rail train brings a sense of permanence and momentum to an area. I think a lot of business owners and builders will step up and invest in these communities, increasing tax revenue and increasing the number of much-needed homes to the community.</p> <p>The Gold Line Extension is also a great idea that will bring a lot of value to Minneapolis and St. Paul. The Green Line and the new METRO B Line are both great ways to travel between Minneapolis and St. Paul, but they take too long for riders who need to get from downtown to downtown quickly. The Gold Line extension will build on the welcome frequency improvements that have already been made to the Route 94 bus through Network Now. On a personal level, I live along the Orange Line in south Minneapolis, and the Gold Line extension plus continued improvements to Orange Line frequency will make it so easy and fast for me and my neighbors to get from my house to downtown St. Paul. This extension can't come fast enough!</p>	Thank you very much for taking the time to comment on this amendment.

Commenter	Comment	Response
Matt Brillhart	<p>I strongly support the Blue Line Extension project and its new alignment through Minneapolis. While the projected ridership is down from earlier estimates due to the impacts of remote work, this remains a critical component of our regional transportation network. This project could very well be the final segment of light rail built in the Twin Cities for most of our lifetimes, or certainly at least the next 20 years. Without any additional light rail projects on any metro county's drawing board, the Blue Line extension could very well be the last piece for the foreseeable future. As a supporter of light rail transit I don't see that as something to celebrate, but it is the truth and I don't see anything wrong with stating that publicly, especially if it helps to get the project across the finish line politically speaking.</p> <p>With regards to the Blue Line Extension's projected cost, the Met Council should be open to the idea of shortening the line if it helps get it built sooner and on budget. It would be absolutely reasonable to end the line at 85th Avenue North, indefinitely deferring the last 2 miles of track and the two very suburban, lower ridership stations at the end of the line. Ending the line at 85th Avenue would still accomplish nearly all of the project goals and serve all of the cities along the extension. There is county & state owned property at 85th Avenue that could accommodate a park & ride facility. It would be much more cost effective to serve the last two miles of the planned corridor with buses, micro-transit, etc. Please give serious consideration to ending the line at 85th Avenue to bring down the total project cost while retaining nearly all of the benefit of building the extension. The region needs the Blue Line Extension, but it will be just fine not going all the way beyond MN-610 to serve the Target campus. Please give serious consideration to shortening the line and delivering this critical project at a reduced cost and higher ridership per mile. Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment and your suggestion for shortening the project to 85th Avenue in Brooklyn Park to reduce costs. There are many factors that go into choosing a transitway alignment, including station locations and terminus, local stakeholder and community support, location of the maintenance facility, etc. These factors could also impact project rating that is used by the Federal Transit Administration to determine funding eligibility. Going through a de-scoping activity would require reconsideration of these factors, consideration of further environmental review, as well as Federal funding eligibility consideration. Project partners are currently not exploring shortening the line at this time.</p>

Commenter	Comment	Response
Matt Bruns	<p>Chair and council members, as a long-term Minneapolis resident, I want to recognize the council's commitment to equity, sustainability, and regional connectivity. These are values I too share. I stand before you not in opposition to progress, but in defense of thoughtful, equitable, and sustainable planning. The blue line extension, as proposed, falls short of those goals and risks diverting resources from more effective community-centered solutions and should not be included in the Met Council's 2050 plan.</p> <p>First, the financial implications of this project are significant. The extension's projected costs of 3.2 billion and growing, yet ridership estimates remain uncertain. With changing work patterns, remote employment, and constantly evolving transit preferences, we must ask whether this will yield the long-term value that the Twin Cities deserve. In an era of budget constraints, the 2050 plan should reflect fiscal prudence and adaptability, not legacy projects with questionable returns.</p> <p>Second, the equity impacts and risk of displacement are real. The alignment runs through communities that have historically faced underinvestment and displacement. While I appreciate the project's previous anti-displacement framework, history tells us that large-scale transit investments accelerate gentrification. Without robust protections, this extension will unintentionally price them out, undermining the very residents it aims to serve.</p> <p>Third, we must learn from our past experiences. Minnesota's track record with rail projects is troubling at best. The Northstar commuter rail is being phased out after years of underperformance and taxpayer subsidies. The Southwest Light Rail Extension is now nearly a decade behind schedule and 1.5 billion over budget. These aren't isolated missteps. They are systemic warning signs. We cannot afford to repeat them.</p> <p>Finally, let's talk about modern alternatives. The future of transit isn't just about laying tracks. It's about flexibility, accessibility, and innovation. Flexible microtransit, enhanced local bus service, and bus rapid transit can serve our communities faster, cheaper, and with less disruption. Let's invest in modern solutions that adapt to changing needs rather than locking ourselves into an antiquated rail system.</p> <p>In closing, I urge this council to pause and reconsider the inclusion of the Blue Line extension in the 2050 plan. This project may have merit in theory, but in practice, it risks becoming a costly, inflexible solution to a problem that demands community partnership and innovation. Let's prioritize forward-thinking transit that is community driven,</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to provide your comments. Responses are provided below organized around each of your points.</p> <p>1) Costs & Ridership</p> <p>The project team has run an initial ridership model analysis based on current FTA guidance, and Project staff will continue evaluating ridership for the proposed route options as they are refined. The Blue Line Extension project is expected to bring total daily ridership on the METRO Blue Line to 30,000. Initial ridership projections on other light rail projects in the Twin Cities have underestimated actual ridership levels.</p> <p>2) Equity and gentrification</p> <p>As much as 50% of these new riders are expected to come from households that do not own a car and rely on transit to move freely every day. In Spring 2024, lawmakers allocated \$10 million to support the new Blue Line Extension Anti-Displacement Community Prosperity program (ACPP board), with the intention of matching funds from other sources. This initiative is separate from the Blue Line Extension Project. The funding can be used for various purposes, including assisting local businesses, building affordable housing, and safeguarding and enhancing local homeownership. The 26-member community-led Anti-Displacement Work Group, responsible for developing and implementing anti-displacement recommendations, has been designated as the governing body for managing the new funding. This group is made up of community leaders, local business owners, representatives from the philanthropic community, government agencies, and individuals with firsthand experience of displacement. The ACPP board will soon announce how they intend to assist communities along the BLE alignment.</p> <p>Additionally, the Blue Line Extension project itself integrates an anti-displacement approach in its design and engineering phases, focusing on minimizing property impacts to prevent displacement. The environmental review document identifies additional project impact mitigation measures, including business assistance funds, community investment funds, workforce development, and other measures to support the communities served by the Blue Line Extension.</p> <p>3) Rail project delivery</p> <p>All large infrastructure projects face unique circumstances and challenges. Delays to the Green Line Extension project were</p>

Commenter	Comment	Response
	<p>environmentally responsible, modern, flexible, and fiscally sound. Thank you for your time and your continued service to this region. Thank you.</p>	<p>caused by conditions and requirements unique to the project route. Many major transportation projects encounter challenges during construction, and the Council has applied and will continue to apply lessons learned from prior experiences. To the greatest extent practicable, the Council has accounted for risks to Blue Line Extension's budget and timeline in the most recent figures.</p> <p>Some key differences between the Blue Line Extension and Green Line Extension include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major tunnels, which has been one of the major drivers of cost increases on Green Line Extension • No colocation with freight rail, which avoids need for costly crash walls and makes construction easier • Fewer structures like bridges and retaining walls, which can be costly • Most of project will be built within existing roadways owned primarily by Hennepin County. <p>4) Mode choice</p> <p>Project partners, including Hennepin County, Metropolitan Council, Federal Transit Administration, and corridor cities, analyzed a total of 9 light rail transit and 12 bus rapid transit route alternatives for the METRO Blue Line Extension corridor. Light rail has been continually reaffirmed by communities, local policymakers, and decision-making bodies as the right choice for this corridor.</p> <p>Light rail is the right choice for this corridor because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential ridership in this corridor is best suited for light rail's capacity • As an extension of the existing Blue Line, it will complete the missing northern leg of our light rail network • Light rail will have lowest operating subsidy and be more cost effective over the long-term • Less impact on general roadway traffic

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Nancy Johnson	<p>This BLE route is WRONG! 1. Anti-displacement fund. Question, if those that need these funds can't obtain a loan right now, how can they get a Matching \$\$\$? Honestly, how can a max of \$25,000 keep these businesses active if there is no parking and having customers navigate all the construction?? Nice idea but it's not the answer. Look at what happened along University Ave-the destruction still is happening-Target closing, Walmart closed, Cub closes this week!!! Check out all the vacant spaces...! and for those of you who think the areas along the routes increase in tax value, why are businesses closing?? Those neighborhoods are hurting.</p> <p>Lowry station not in the right space besides the present bridges that are rather new, needs to be re-constructed for additional \$50 Million to accommodate the train. This station is suppose to service North Memorial Hospital, but it's 1/4-MILE away. Consider MN weather-really?? This area also is needed for Emergency vehicles! Route wrong!</p> <p>Robbinsdale will have additional big changes IF BLE goes in. County Rd 9 will get a peanut-shaped Round About with an old business gone, due to needed space. A huge Parking Ramp goes into an already busy intersection as buses will also serve it. Not sure of other businesses will need to go away...really?? This is a small community that you are destroying.</p> <p>Who is going to ride this?? Estimates always come in low. Along highway 81, a rather new highway (2005), will be reconstructed to accommodate the 2-sets of tracks down the middle plus a station. Going north to 63 Ave there is a Metro Transit parking ramp that never has been used. Constructed 2005-NEVER USED in fact there has never been a single BUS using the 3rd lane on 81 (2005). So who is riding this??? Train turning right onto W Broadway in BP traveling north into a residential area with a cemetery on this road, fire station, churches and businesses-what gives here??? Further up on Brooklyn Blvd we have a closed CUB Foods and a block west- closed businesses-the Coming crime with the BLE?? I ask, is this progress??? NO!!!! Still going north, finally get to 610 and the Target Campus...the employees are required to work DOWNTOWN MPLS!!! Why will BLE go up there??? Looking at an Estimate of maybe \$4 BILLION now??</p> <p>We have success with BUS RAPID TRANSIT. It comes in at about ONE TENTH the cost of BLE. Hennepin Co. it seems is getting to be too expensive to live here with increasing taxes. Ever think of that??</p>	<p>Thank you for your comments. Please see below for responses organized around the topics you raised.</p> <p>1) Blue Line Extension Anti-Displacement Efforts</p> <p>In Spring 2024, lawmakers allocated \$10 million to support the new Blue Line Extension Anti-Displacement Community Prosperity program (ACPP board), with the intention of matching funds from other sources. This initiative is separate from the Blue Line Extension Project. The funding can be used for various purposes, including assisting local businesses, building affordable housing, and safeguarding and enhancing local homeownership. The 26-member community-led Anti-Displacement Work Group, responsible for developing and implementing anti-displacement recommendations, has been designated as the governing body for managing the new funding. This group is made up of community leaders, local business owners, representatives from the philanthropic community, government agencies, and individuals with firsthand experience of displacement. The ACPP board will soon announce how they intend to assist communities along the Blue Line Extension alignment.</p> <p>Additionally, the Blue Line Extension project itself integrates an anti-displacement approach in its design and engineering phases, focusing on minimizing property impacts to prevent displacement. The environmental review document identifies additional project impact mitigation measures, including business assistance funds, community investment funds, workforce development, and other measures to support the communities served by the Blue Line Extension.</p> <p>2) Route & Station Locations</p> <p>The proposed route and station locations were chosen based on project principles and goals, community and business feedback, engineering and design, population and job density, development opportunities, current and future land use, and available space.</p> <p>a) Lowry Avenue Station Location</p> <p>In the summer of 2024, feedback from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) highlighted concerns about the initial station design and at-grade crossing of the parkway and trail, as well as potential impacts to park property. Additionally, North Memorial Hospital expressed worries about potential delays for hospital vehicle access due to the proposed crossing gate at Oakdale Avenue. In addition to these</p>

Commenter	Comment	Response
	<p>The residents need public transportation. But, we need a Smart mode of transportation not some light rail train moving at 14-17 mph at a cost of an Estimate of \$4 Billion dollars. It is time to rethink all of this...sorry that you have spent all this time working on this but -YOU GOT IT WRONG!!!</p> <p>Need I remind you of the Boondoggle SW LINE??? We don't need another costly mistake with the BLE. There are too many people's lives that will be negatively affected with destruction, costs and wrong decisions by a few-especially when Bus Rapid Transit is so successful.</p> <p>I don't live directly along this line but my heart aches for the destruction of people's livelihood and our communities along the present route. Think people-the ROUTE and Yes, the BLE is all WRONG.</p>	<p>concerns, the cities of Robbinsdale and Minneapolis requested further analysis of the municipal consent design plans and exploration of alternative options for the Lowry Avenue Station as part of their official review and approval of preliminary design plans through municipal consent. In response to stakeholder concerns, the Blue Line Extension project evaluated multiple alternative potential design options and engaged institutional stakeholders and residents to address their questions, comments, and concerns regarding the future Lowry Avenue Station. This process ultimately resulted in a new design that is now being advanced. The current design of the Lowry Avenue Station will benefit multiple communities in both Minneapolis and Robbinsdale, including North Memorial Hospital. This design takes into account concerns that were raised during the engagement process and has been approved by policymakers to progress into further development. This new design has received support from both MPRB and the hospital.</p> <p>b) Robbinsdale CR 9 Interchange</p> <p>In order to mitigate traffic impacts, the Blue Line Extension project conducted a comprehensive traffic analysis of the Blue Line Extension Corridor, with a specific focus on the segment along County Road 81, including Bass Lake Road (CR-10) where an interchange is being proposed. The analysis specifically examined the existing traffic conditions and identified heavy traffic volumes at Bass Lake Road and County Road 81, highlighting the need to alleviate congestion and reduce potential vehicular/pedestrian conflicts. To enhance pedestrian connections and facilitate smoother traffic flow, the project team proposed a design that separates County Road 81 traffic, ultimately leading to the development of an interchange that elevates vehicular traffic over Bass Lake Road. This innovative interchange design was implemented to optimize both pedestrian and vehicular safety, addressing the identified traffic challenges effectively.</p> <p>c) Target Campus</p> <p>The proposed Oak Grove Parkway Station aims to serve over 1,000 residents living within a 10-minute walk from the station. Additionally, it is estimated that around 300 employees working for major regional employers will be served by this station. Furthermore, these numbers are projected to increase</p>

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		<p>due to planned developments and anticipated job additions in the area.</p> <p>3) Ridership Estimates</p> <p>The project team has run an initial ridership model analysis based on current FTA guidance, and Project staff will continue evaluating ridership for the proposed route options as they are refined. As of May 2024, the Blue Line Extension project is expected to bring total daily ridership on the METRO Blue Line to more than 30,000 when completed. As much as 50% of these new riders are expected to come from households that do not own a car and rely on transit to move freely every day. Initial ridership projections on other light rail projects in the Twin Cities have underestimated actual ridership levels.</p> <p>4) Mode – Light rail vs. bus rapid transit</p> <p>Project partners, including Hennepin County, Metropolitan Council, Federal Transit Administration, and corridor cities, analyzed a total of 9 light rail and 12 bus rapid transit route alternatives for the METRO Blue Line Extension corridor. Light rail has been continually reaffirmed by communities, local policymakers, and decision-making bodies as the right choice for this corridor.</p> <p>Light rail is the right choice for this corridor because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential ridership in this corridor is best suited for light rail's capacity • As an extension of the existing Blue Line, it will complete the missing northern leg of our light rail network • Light rail will have lowest operating subsidy and be more cost effective over the long-term • Less impact on general roadway traffic <p>a) Cost</p> <p>The Federal Transit Administration agreed to a federal share of \$750 million to this project during the previous phase when the project used the freight railroad corridor at an estimated cost of \$1.5 billion in 2016. Since that time, there have been major changes to the project and major changes to the economic landscape causing the overall projected costs to rise to the current preliminary cost estimate of \$3.2 billion. In response, Hennepin County plans to increase its financial commitment to 51% of the new estimated overall project cost. We expect the FTA to similarly increase their share.</p>

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		<p>b) Speed</p> <p>The Blue Line Extension project is designed to run in an urban setting; this entails running alongside vehicular traffic and obeying traffic signals along the way. This infrastructure is designed to provide meaningful connections to education and employment opportunities. The speed of the light rail will vary depending on the local traffic and geography, but average speeds throughout the corridor are expected to be 25-30 miles per hour.</p>



390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1805

651-602-1000
TTY 651-291-0904
public.info@metc.state.mn.us
metro council.org

Follow us on:
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