

# WELCOME

Welcome to the  
**METRO Blue**  
**Line Extension**  
Open House

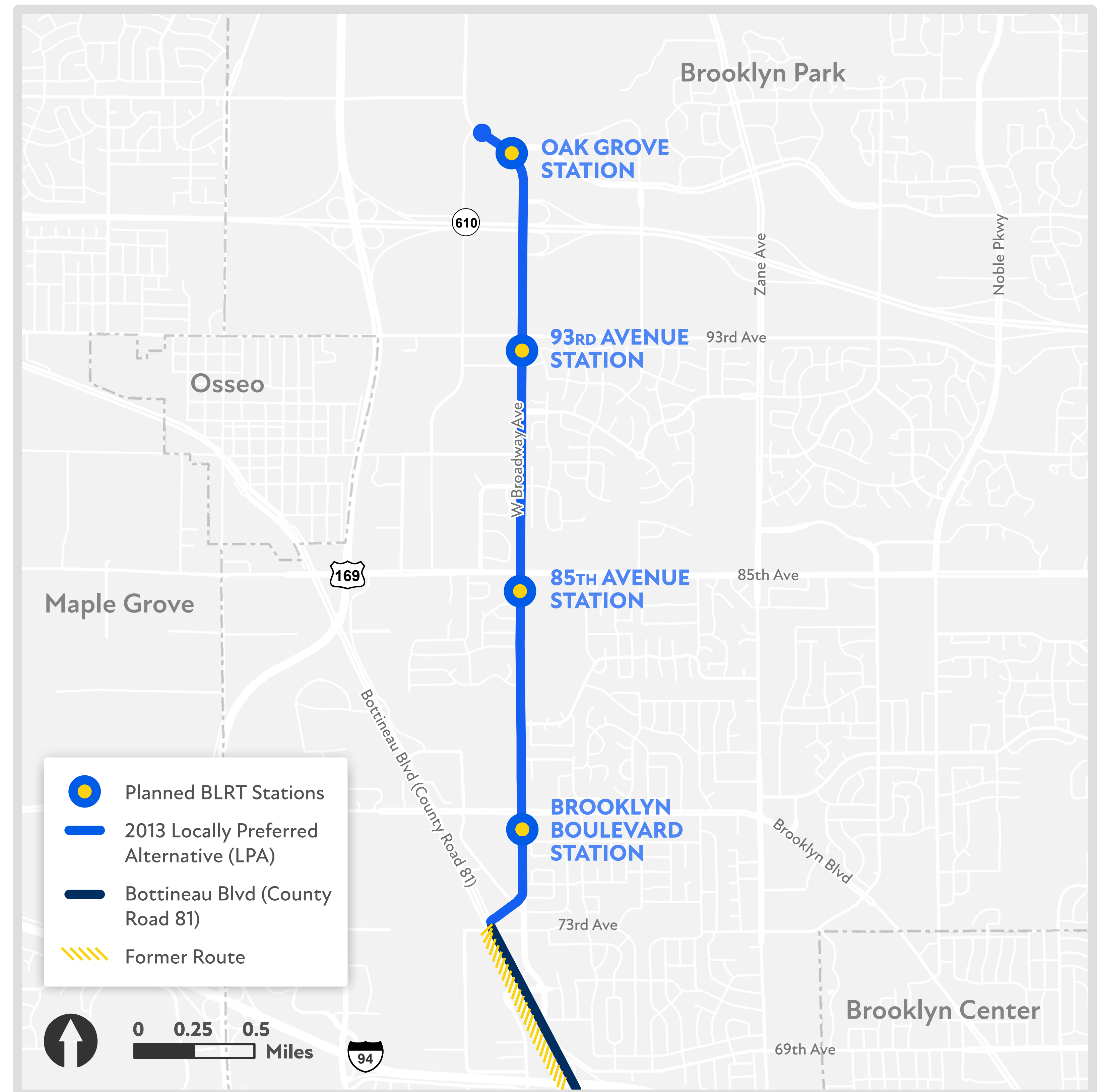


METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



# AREA 1: BROOKLYN PARK

- No changes have been made to the route in Area 1. Stations remain on West Broadway Avenue at Oak Grove, 93rd Avenue, 85th Avenue and Brooklyn Boulevard.
- This recommendation is consistent with the Project Principle of maintaining the existing alignment as much as possible, along with the project goal of improving transit access and connections to jobs and regional destinations.
- Maintaining the existing route provides the opportunity to continue to advance transit-oriented development opportunities.



# SUMMARY MATRIX

## Route Assessment

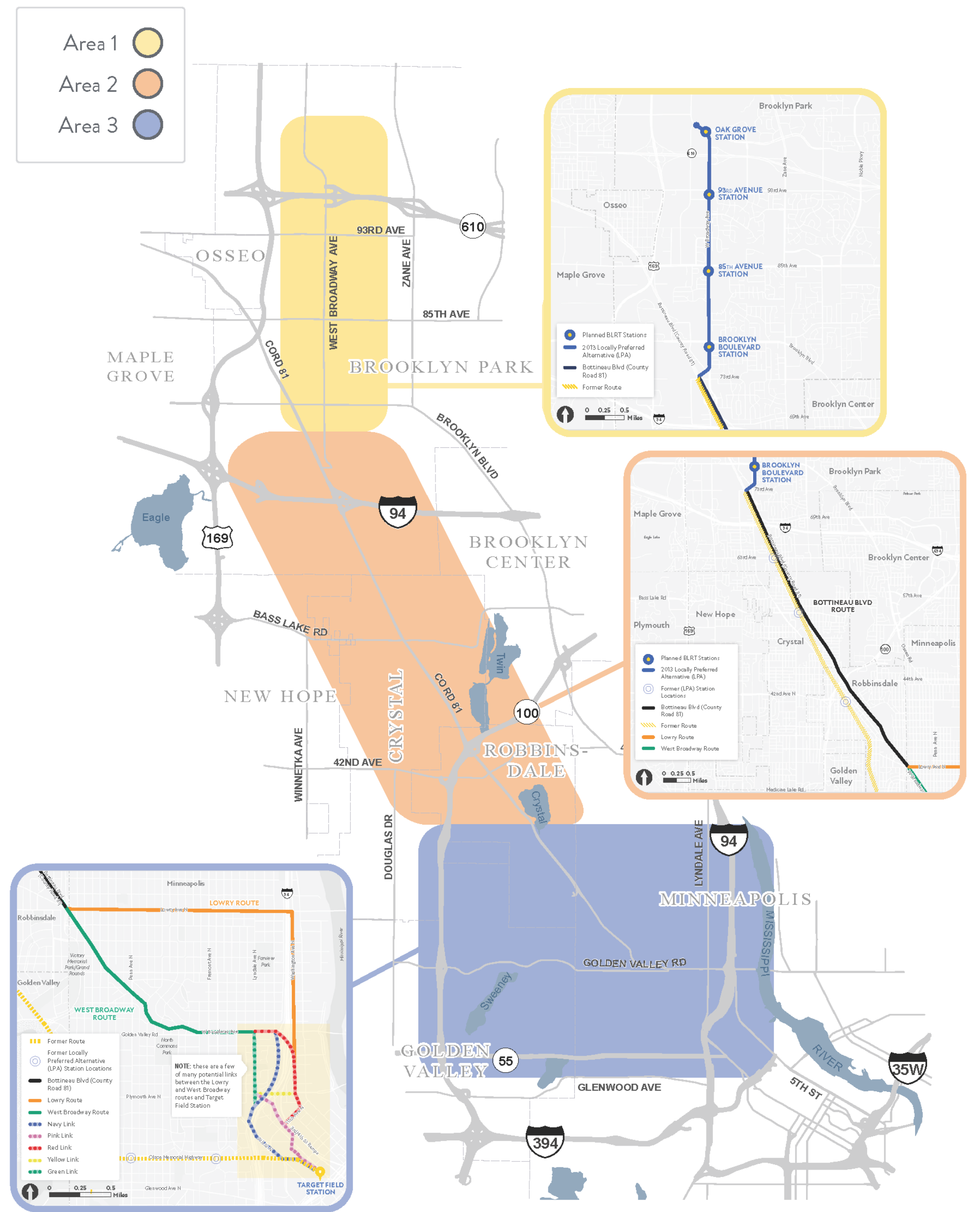
Each route option was reviewed for its ability to achieve the Project Principles and Project Goals and received an assessment of Poor, Good or Excellent.

**POOR** Did not meet project goals

**GOOD** Meets project goals and provides benefits in serving the community

**EXCELLENT** Route has unique characteristics and/or has the potential to deliver exemplary positive benefits

BLRT Study Areas & Potential Routes Identified in March 2021 Report



## ASSESSMENT OF ROUTE OPTIONS TO DEFINED GOALS

PROJECT GOAL	AREA 2: BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81) IN BROOKLYN PARK, CRYSTAL, AND ROBBINSDALE	AREA 3: LOWRY ROUTE	AREA 3: WEST BROADWAY ROUTE
Improve transit access and connections to jobs and regional destinations	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT
Improve frequency and reliability of transit service to communities in the corridor	EXCELLENT	GOOD	GOOD
Provide transit improvements that maximize transit benefits, while being cost competitive and economically viable	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD
Support communities' development goals	EXCELLENT	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Promote healthy communities and sound environmental practices including efforts to address climate change	GOOD	GOOD	GOOD
Advance local and regional equity and work towards reducing regional racial disparities	GOOD	GOOD	EXCELLENT



## What informs this goal:

- Overall ridership and ability to expand and improve service to people with limited or no access to cars
- Reverse commute and off-peak transit opportunities
- Opportunity to expand and improve transit system linkages and multimodal transportation opportunities
- Maximize transit access to housing, employment, schools, community services, health care facilities, shopping, parks, activity centers and other destinations

## Goal 1 Evaluation Findings:

### Area 2: County Road 81 Rating: **EXCELLENT**

- 63rd Avenue and Bass Lake Road Stations provide similar access and connections to jobs and regional destinations as the previous route
- Downtown Robbinsdale and North Memorial Stations provide important connections to the downtown Robbinsdale area, North Memorial medical complex, parks and North Minneapolis

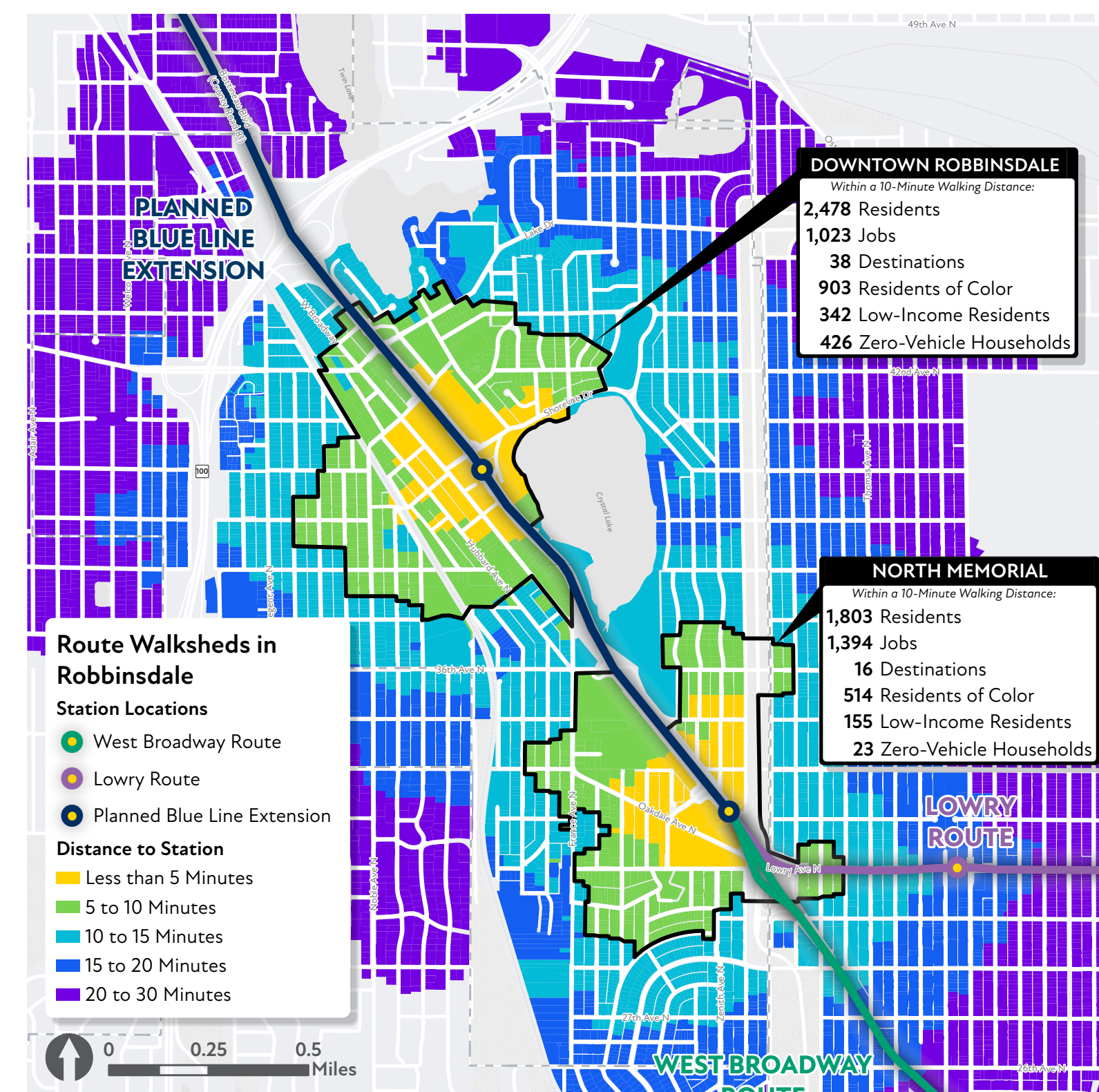
### Area 3: Lowry Rating: **EXCELLENT**

- Serves neighborhoods with limited or no access to personal vehicles, lower income households and a high proportion (60 percent or more) of residents of color
- Provides access to community destinations, primarily along the Lowry Avenue section, along with the North Loop area and the future Upper Harbor Terminal development project
- 0.8 mile longer than the West Broadway route and has up to five proposed stations, meaning additional access points for the community
  - I-94 and the Mississippi River make access limited in the Washington Avenue section

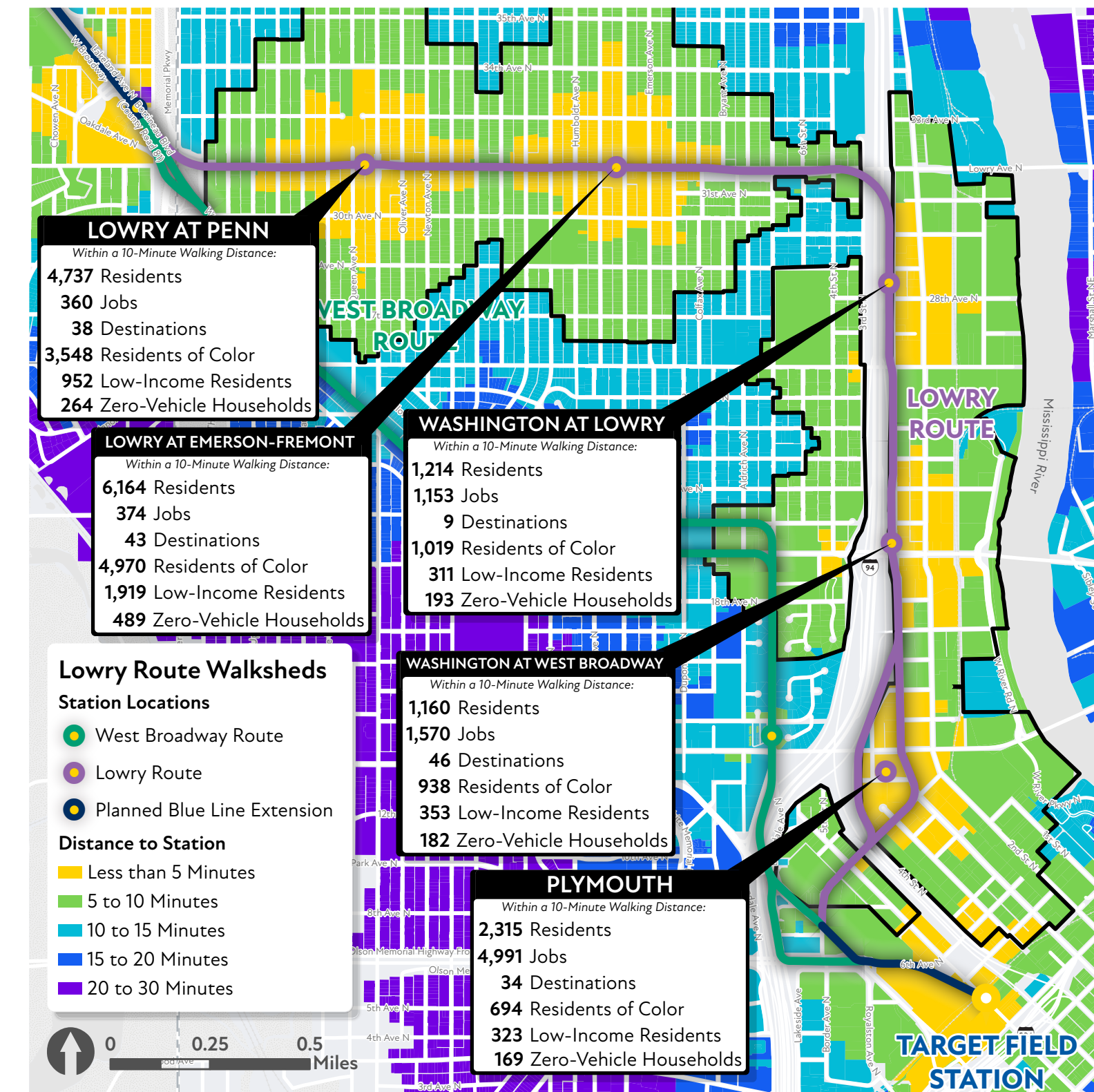
### Area 3: West Broadway Rating: **EXCELLENT**

- Serves the commercial and cultural heart of North Minneapolis, where people live, work and spend their time
- Provides access to numerous community cultural assets and destinations
- Serves neighborhoods with limited or no access to personal vehicles, lower income households and a high proportion (60 percent or more) of residents of color

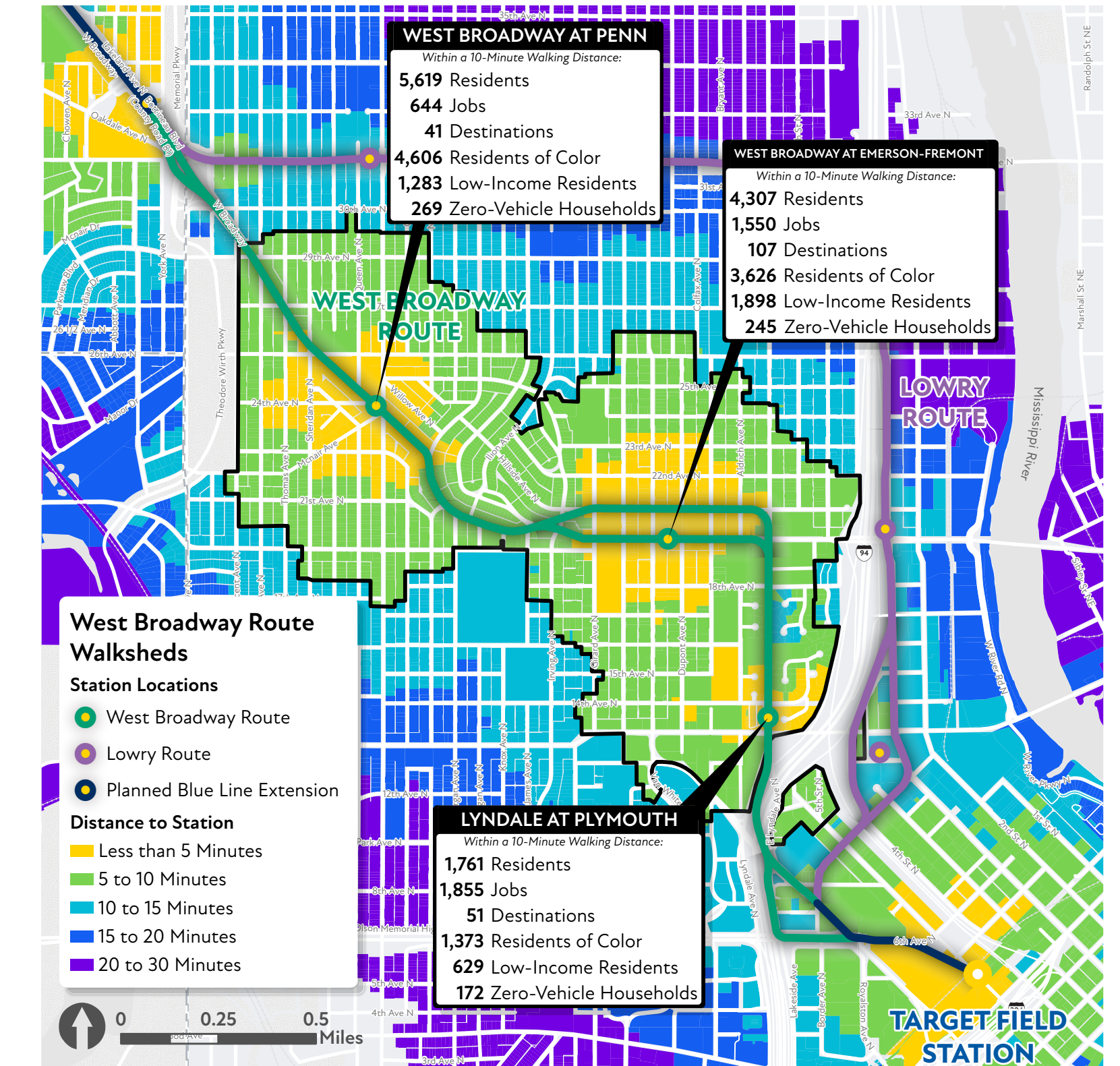
### Robbinsdale Station Area Watersheds



### Lowry Station Area Watersheds



### West Broadway Area Walksheds



# PROJECT GOAL 2

# IMPROVE FREQUENCY & RELIABILITY OF TRANSIT SERVICE TO COMMUNITIES IN THE CORRIDOR

## What informs this goal:

- Improve mobility for transit riders and attract new riders
- Expand and improve safe and efficient connections to existing and planned METRO transitways along with balancing improved transit accessibility with traffic mobility

## Goal 2 Evaluation Findings:

### Area 2: County Road 81 Rating: **EXCELLENT**

- Providing transit in a dedicated guideway improves transit service reliability
- Transit service frequency and regional connectivity would improve
- To balance traffic mobility, coordination will take place with Crystal and Robbinsdale to address traffic and safety concerns
- Improves safety at both signalized and unsignalized intersections with the incorporation of green space, shorter pedestrian crossing distance, new pavement and accessibility improvements.

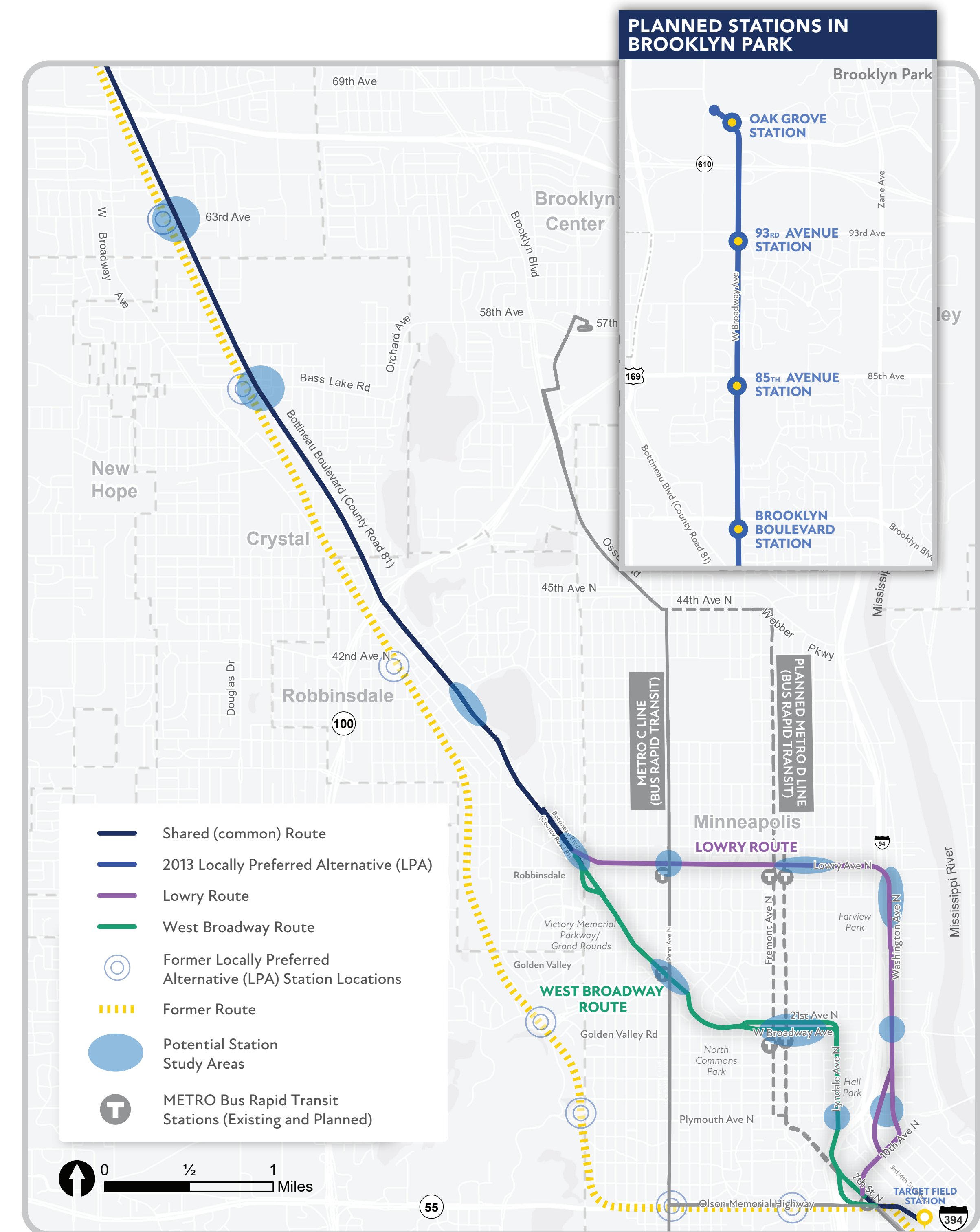
### Area 3: Lowry Rating: **GOOD**

- Improves transit service and accessibility, most notably the east-west transit service along Lowry Avenue
- Provides connections to METRO C and Planned METRO D lines
- Traffic changes:
  - Washington Avenue is expected to have increased delays due to proposed lane reductions to accommodate LRT
  - Unsignalized intersections along Lowry become right-in, right-out

### Area 3: West Broadway Rating: **GOOD**

- Improves overall transit service to the community
- Provides the most efficient connection to regional destinations and connections as people travel from other parts of the metro area to destinations along the corridor and from North Minneapolis to regional jobs and destinations
- Has ability to attract new riders
- Provides connections to METRO C and Planned METRO D lines
- Most intersections along West Broadway Avenue would experience increased delays with the proposed lane reductions, particularly intersections east of Irving Avenue North

## Overview of Route Options & Potential Station Areas



## What informs this goal:

- Balance project benefits and costs through a tiered approach to capital, operating and maintenance cost estimates

## Goal 3 Evaluation Findings:

- **Area 2 (County Road 81) and Area 3 (Lowry and West Broadway) Ratings: GOOD**
  - Project is primarily proposed at-grade and runs in public street right-of-way which supports Federal Transit Administration requirements for cost-effectiveness and makes the project competitive
    - Minimizes the need for right-of-way acquisition and construction risks
    - Considers long-term maintenance costs for structures
  - The project will work to define and advance a route that effectively balances capital and operation costs with overall transit system benefits



This visualization represents how light rail could fit along West Broadway at Queen Avenue in North Minneapolis.



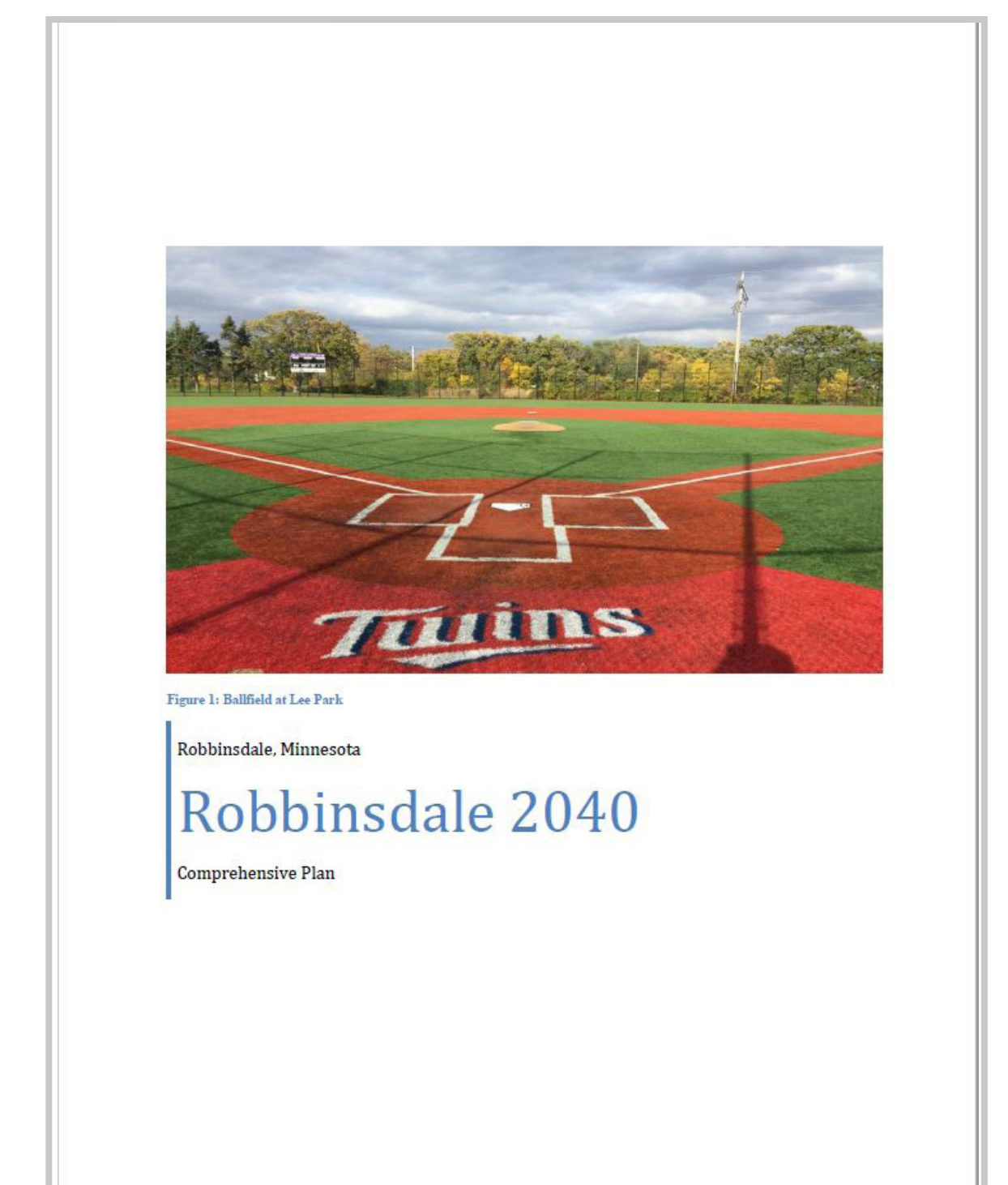
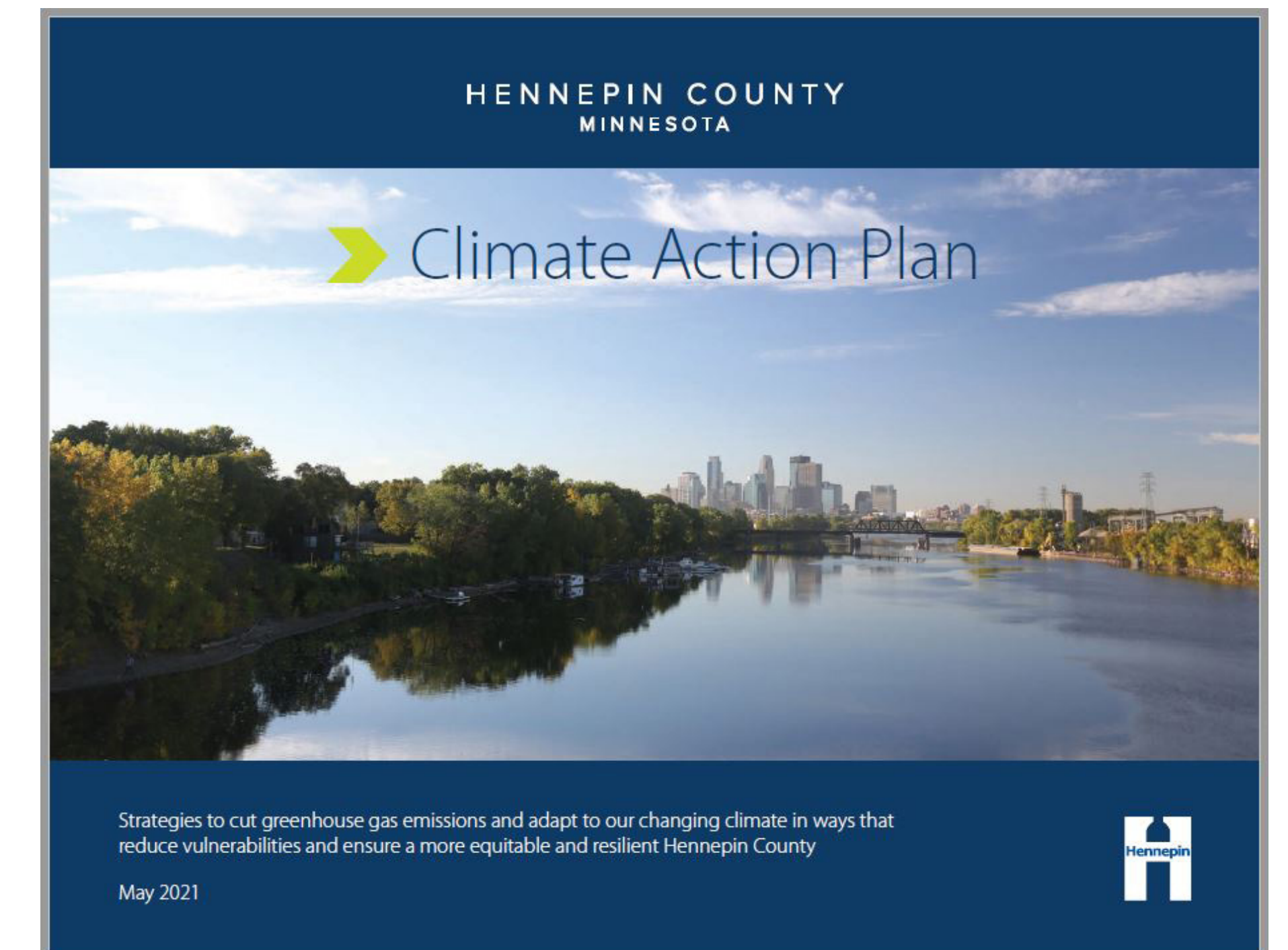
This visualization represents how light rail could fit along Bottineau Boulevard (County Road 81) in Robbinsdale.

## What informs this goal:

- Assessment of capacity and likelihood of transit-oriented development and/or redevelopment opportunities in station areas
- Assessment of consistency with approved plans and policies, including policies related to affordable housing and prioritization of transportation modes

## Goal 4 Evaluation Findings:

- **Area 2: County Road 81 Rating: EXCELLENT**
  - Locating LRT on Bottineau Boulevard provides an opportunity to continue to advance previously completed transit-oriented development work at the 63rd Avenue, Bass Lake Road and Downtown Robbinsdale stations
  - Public and private investment is likely to occur before, during and after BLRT is open
- **Area 3: Lowry Rating: GOOD**
  - Provides connections to various economic development opportunities like the future Upper Harbor Terminal project along the Mississippi River
  - Other development/redevelopment opportunities exist, particularly on land that is vacant or owned by a public entity
- **Area 3: West Broadway Rating: EXCELLENT**
  - Serves the heart of the West Broadway business district and North Minneapolis
  - Meets community goals of revitalization along West Broadway
  - Existing undeveloped parcels of land or properties that are vacant or owned by a public entity provide opportunity for development and redevelopment in the existing business district



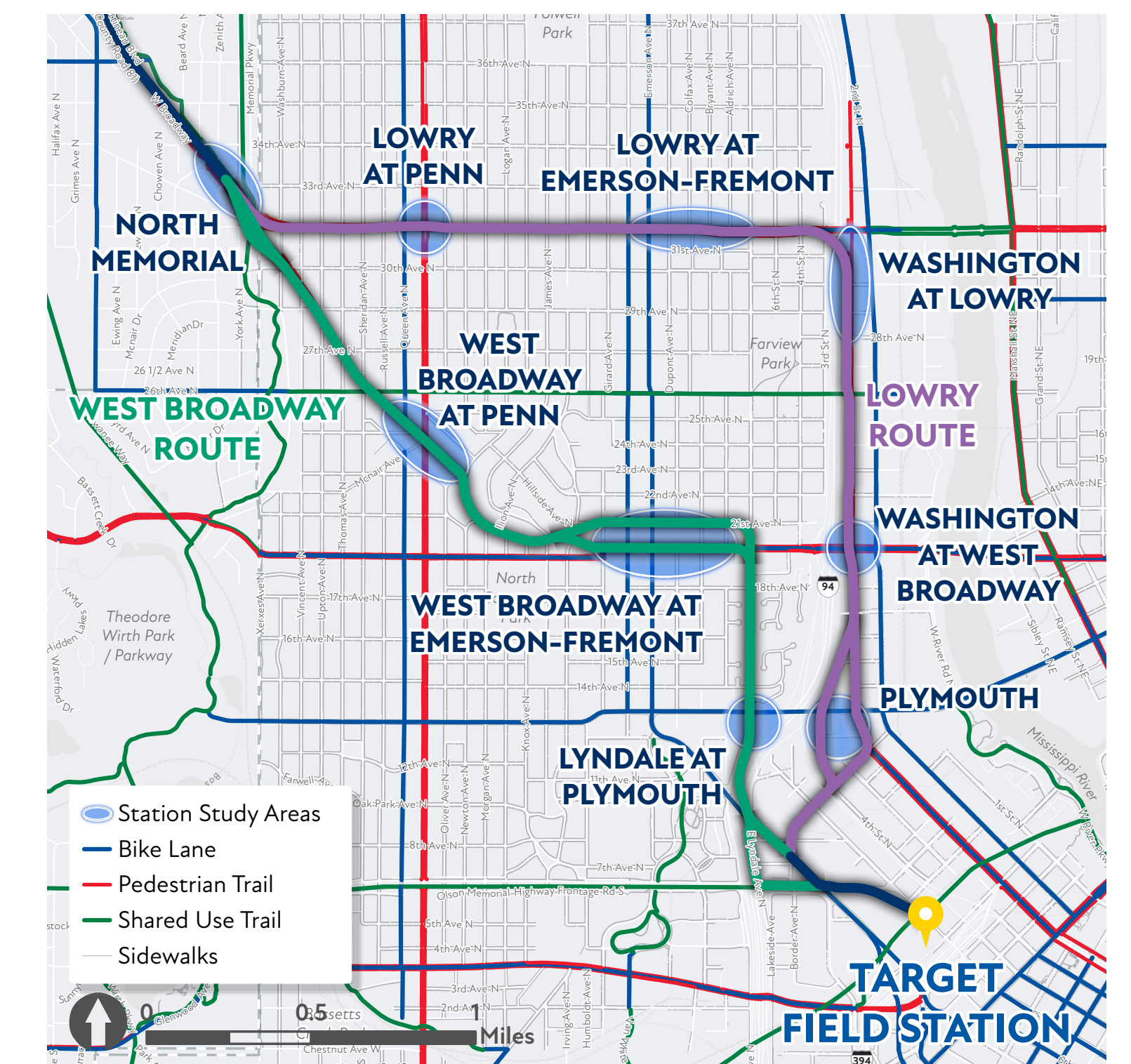
## What informs this goal:

- Minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources
- Assessment of connections from stations to recreation and healthy food options to maximize health and environmental benefits to BLRT communities
- Assessment of existing and future sidewalks and/or trail connection opportunities at stations to improve the safety, connections and accessibility for people walking, biking and rolling to the BLRT
- Assessment of potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through reducing vehicle miles traveled

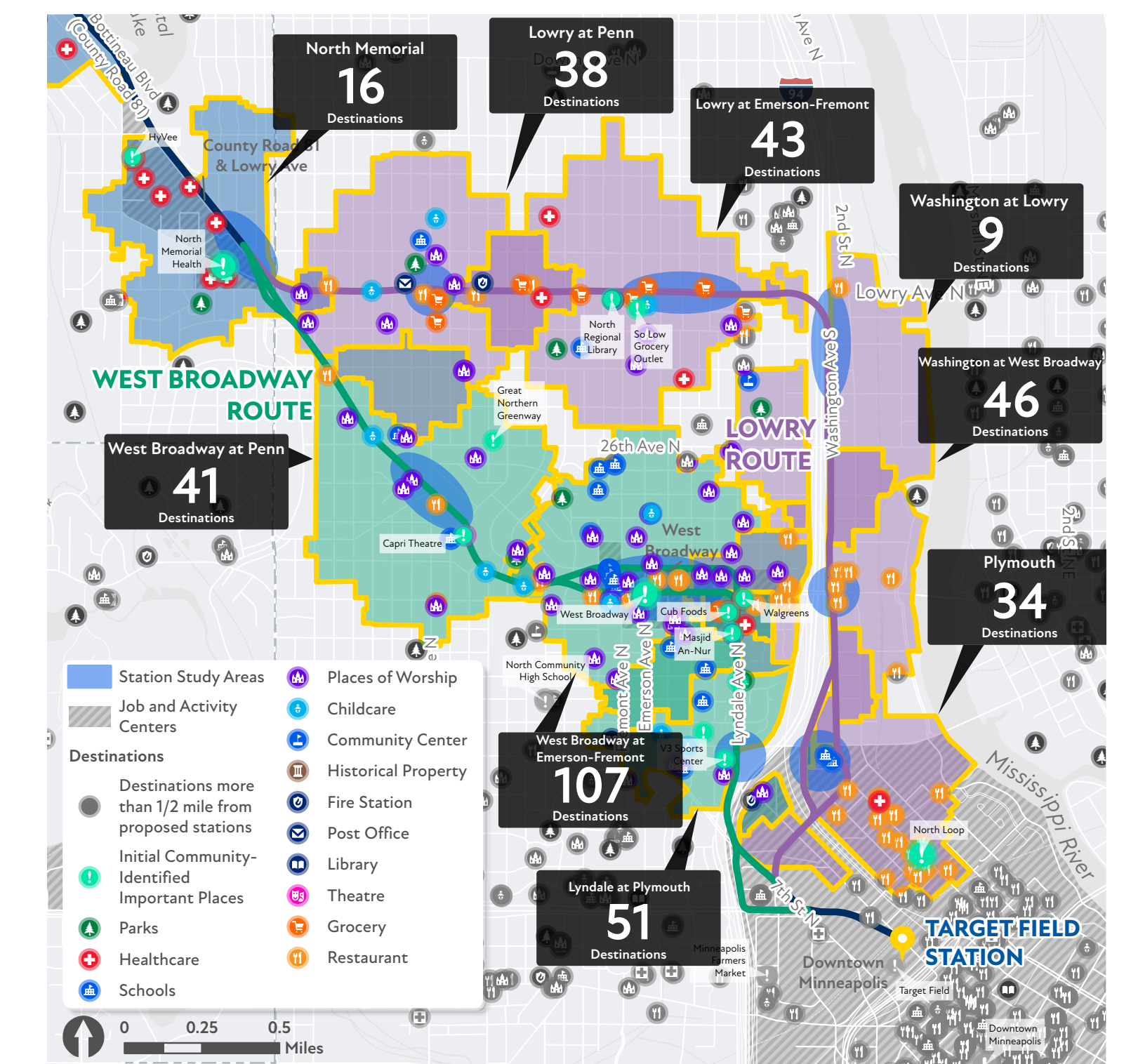
## Goal 5 Evaluation Findings:

- **Area 2: County Road 81 Rating: GOOD**
  - Provides an opportunity to locate LRT in an existing Hennepin County transportation facility (County Road 81), which could minimize overall environmental impacts and provide opportunities to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities
  - Advances the state and county's Climate Action Plans and goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled
  - Provides access to grocery stores and the regional park system
  - Sensitive areas around parks and North Memorial will entail further review and mitigation measures will be developed as the community supported route advances into the federal and state environmental review process
- **Area 3: Lowry Rating: GOOD**
  - Provides roadway and overall safety improvements
  - Advances the state and county's Climate Action Plans and goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled
  - Provides access to grocery stores and the regional park system
  - Has environmental, social and cultural resource impacts
- **Area 3: West Broadway Rating: GOOD**
  - Provides roadway and overall safety improvements
  - Advances the state and county's Climate Action Plans and goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled
  - Reduces vehicle miles traveled to greater extent than the Lowry route
  - Provides access to grocery stores and the regional park system
  - Because of West Broadway's importance as a commercial hub and gathering place, impacts during construction are a concern to the community and will require development of effective mitigation measures

## Trails & Sidewalks



## Destinations





## Goal 6 Evaluation Findings:

### What informs this goal:

- Opportunities to invest in historically disinvested communities and minimize displacement of corridor residents and businesses
- Maximizing cohesion, preservation and enhancement of BLRT communities through assessment of improved access and connections to cultural and community assets along with opportunities to honor local heritage and character of BLRT communities
- Minimizing short-term and long-term impacts to property and property access, including providing vehicle access, sidewalk access, on-street parking and right-of-way acquisition

### Area 2: County Road 81 Rating: **GOOD**

- Provides an opportunity to locate LRT within County Road 81, which minimizes right of way acquisition and supports cohesion
- Route would improve accessibility and connectivity to the broader regional transit system, thereby improving access to jobs and activity centers throughout the region
- Furthers regional equity by providing METRO access to environmental justice communities, particularly in Brooklyn Park and Crystal

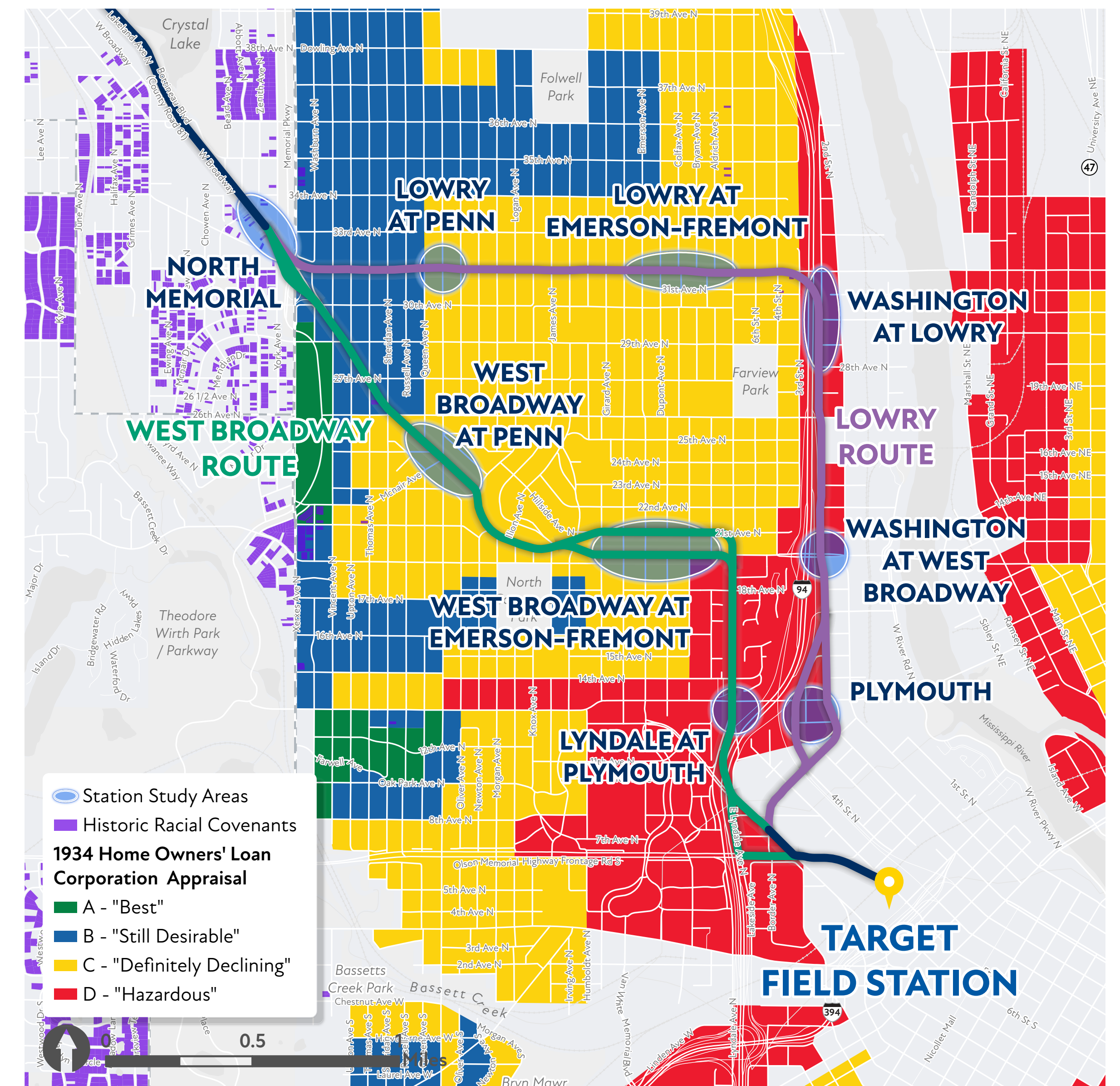
### Area 3: Lowry Rating: **GOOD**

- Has the potential to support community wealth-building in an area that has historically had limited investment
- LRT along Lowry Avenue would limit north/south access, which could adversely divide this residential area

### Area 3: West Broadway Rating: **EXCELLENT**

- Provides access to the commercial district along West Broadway, which is highly valued by the community
- Has the potential to support community wealth-building in an area that has historically had limited investment
- There are several design options that will help limit property impacts and serve the community

## Historic Redlining and Racial Covenants in Minneapolis



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

## FEDERAL INVESTMENT

- Typically, nearly 50% of funding for light rail comes from the federal government, bringing in hundreds of millions of dollars to the region.

## TRANSIT-ORIENTED INVESTMENT

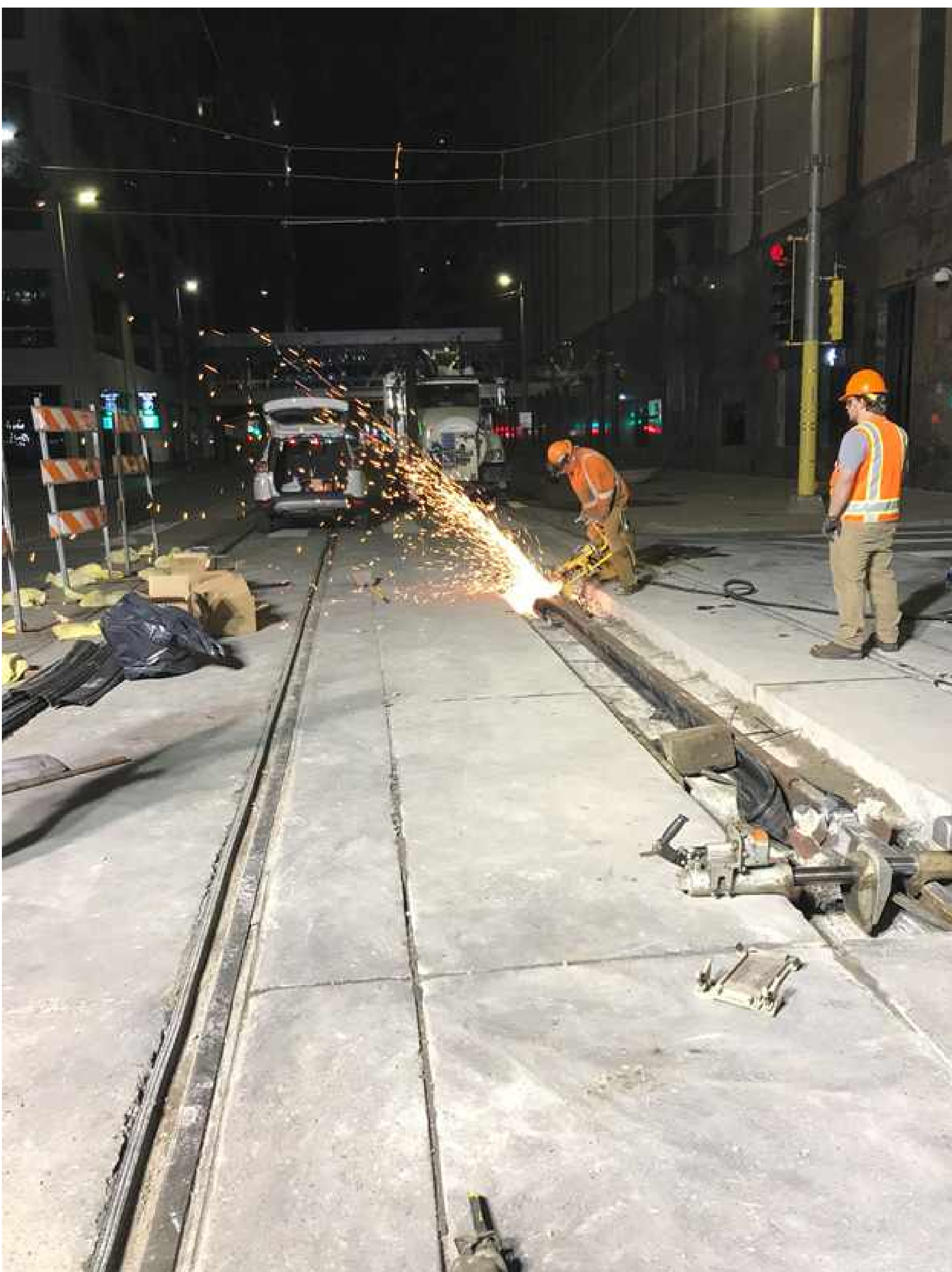
- During the past 17 years in the Twin Cities region:
  - » 35% of regional development has occurred along high frequency transit corridors
  - » \$9.2 billion is located within one-half mile of light rail stations
  - » 20,500 multi-family units were permitted near light rail stations (out of 34,200 units total)

## SUPPORTING AND IMPROVING ACCESS TO SMALL BUSINESSES

- During development and construction of the METRO Green Line, the project used tools such as forgivable loans, façade grants, training, and technical assistance for corridor businesses.
- Can attract more employees for business growth with increased accessibility via transit.

## JOBS AND TRAININGS

- The planning and construction of light rail requires many workers, generating thousands of jobs. The METRO Green Line Extension, the largest infrastructure project in Minnesota's history, with an estimated \$350 million in payroll.
- Metro Transit is committed to hiring women and minorities and contracting disadvantaged business enterprises on its projects.
- Metro Transit offers job training opportunities to help build a diverse work force. The METRO Green Line Extension partnered with 10 Minnesota Building and Construction trade unions and Twin Cities RISE to create the Building Strong Communities program, an apprenticeship preparatory program that prepares adults and high school graduates for careers in the construction industry.



# COMMUNITY BENEFITS

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

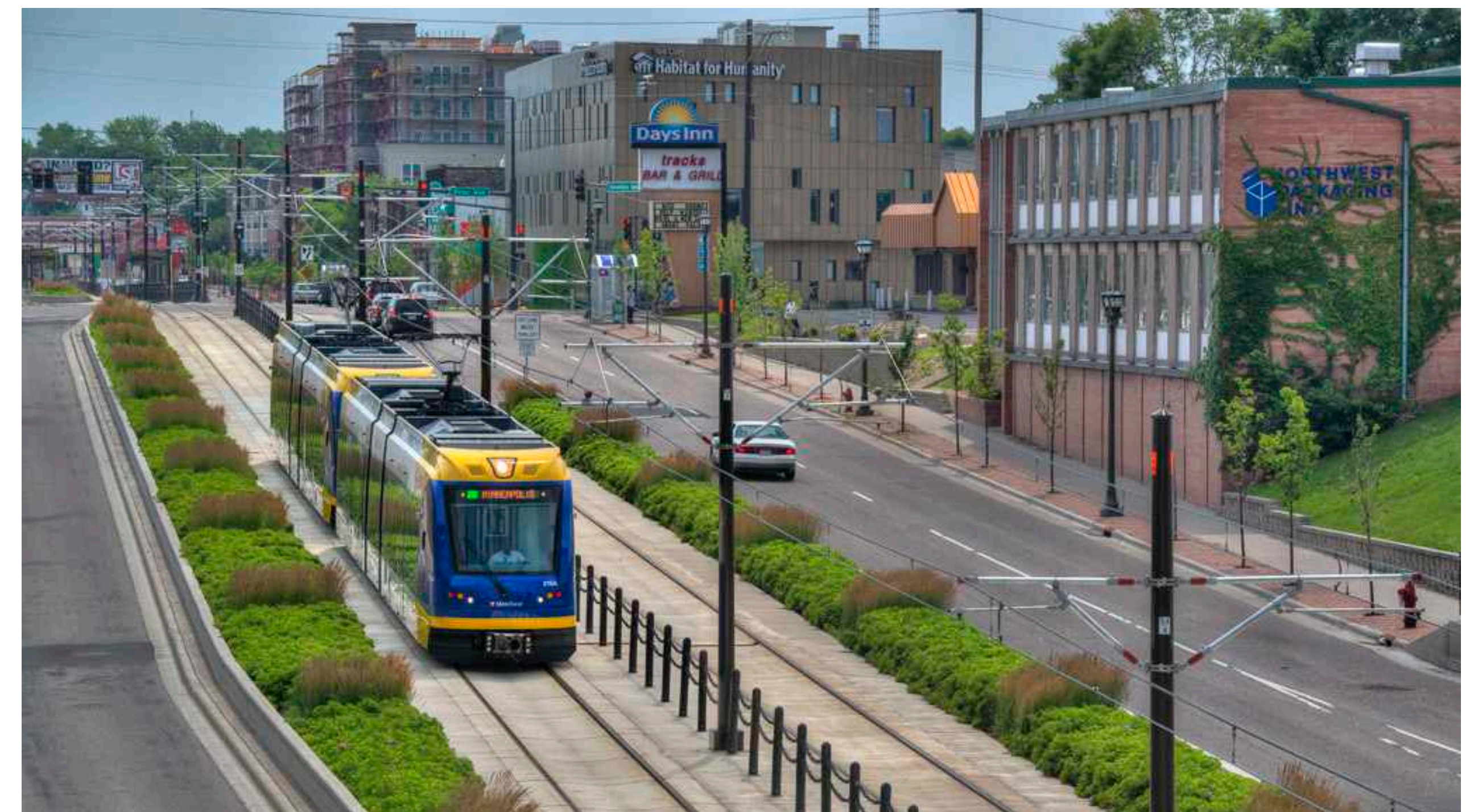
- Light rail offers a more environmentally friendly transportation option with electric-powered trains rather than single-occupancy, gas-dependent vehicles, which reduces pollution and the community's carbon footprint
- Land vacated for light rail can be used to increase green space and community-supported redevelopment
- Provides an affordable transportation option

## INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Roads are rebuilt from curb-to-curb. This will allow for other community infrastructure improvements such as:
  - » Modernized traffic design to improve the flow of traffic and safety
  - » Provides an opportunity for utility updates to happen concurrently with light rail construction (electrical, fiber optics, etc.)
  - » Stormwater and sewer updates to reduce flooding and manage water better

## STREETSCAPE AND LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Lighting:
  - » Pedestrian scale lighting to create a more comfortable environment
  - » Provides safety and an additional buffer between transportation uses
- Street Furniture and Bicycle Parking:
  - » Amenities for users along the corridor that are functional (bicycle parking, trash/recycling)
  - » Contribute to a more comfortable overall experience
- Landscape/Greening:
  - » Provides environmental benefits with increased area for stormwater infiltration, introducing potential pollinator species, diversifying and increasing the amount of green in an urban environment
  - » Enhances the pedestrian experience and lowers the scale of a wide road
- Special Pavement:
  - » Opportunity for community expression and function (i.e. could include colored concrete, pavers, different treatments to concrete to differentiate it)

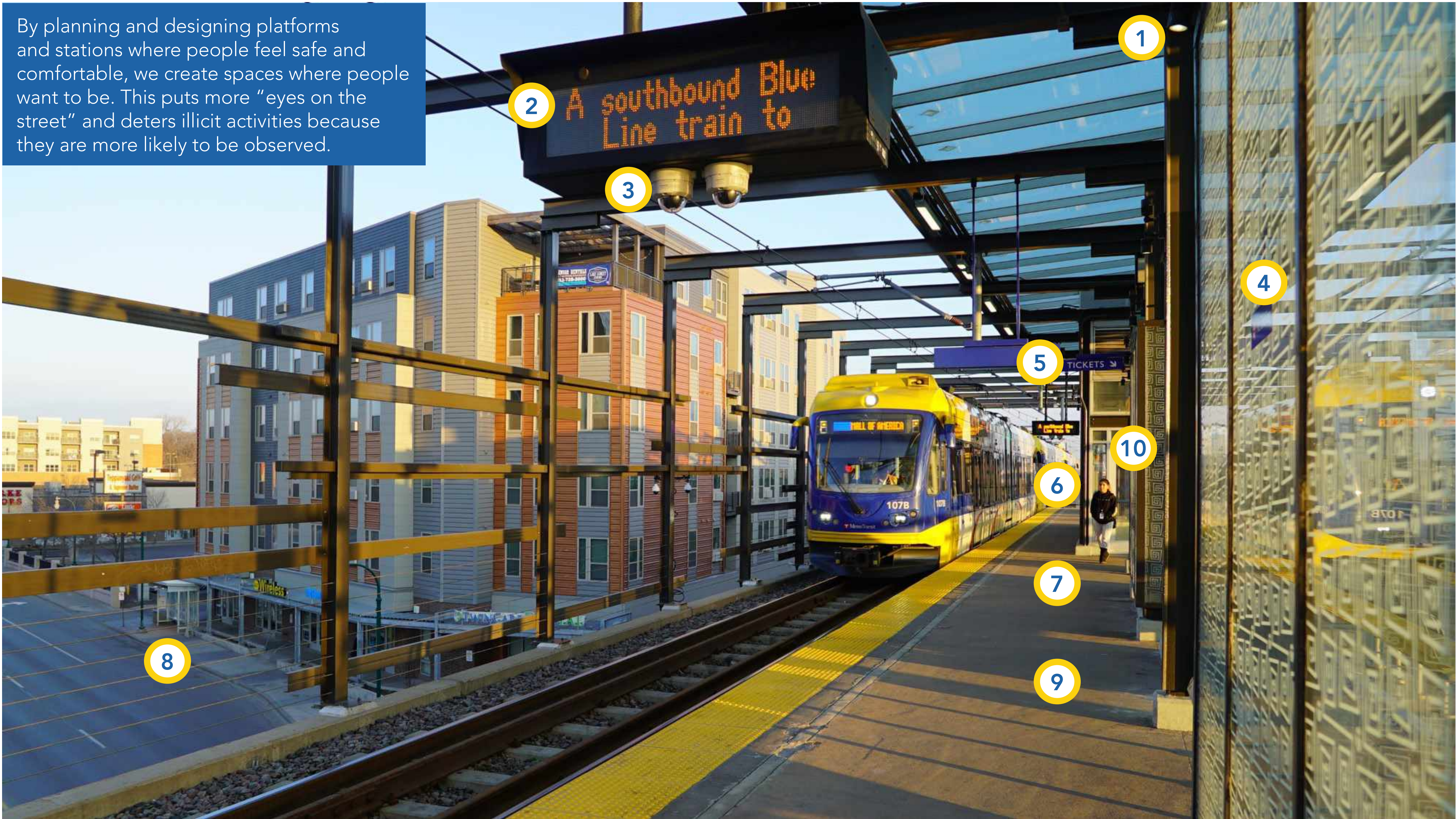


# SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security are key considerations factored into the planning and design of light rail well before the line is built or in operation.

We plan and design the light rail platforms and station areas to be safe and secure with elements such as:

By planning and designing platforms and stations where people feel safe and comfortable, we create spaces where people want to be. This puts more “eyes on the street” and deters illicit activities because they are more likely to be observed.



- 1 Appropriate lighting in the station area and on the trains
- 2 Real-time information
- 3 Security cameras
- 4 Open-air and/or transparent shelters and waiting facilities.
- 5 Consistent wayfinding and signage
- 6 A human-scale feel, which means facilities are designed to be comfortable to riders of all abilities.
- 7 Clear sight lines which allow train operators and riders to see each other.
- 8 Visibility from nearby roadways so riders feel safe and drivers are aware of transit stops.
- 9 Intuitive circulation, which allows riders to safely access the trains.
- 10 Emergency telephones



# SAFETY AND SECURITY

## AGENCY COMMITMENT

Metro Transit is committed to keeping transit safe for all customers. Some of the measures we have implemented to cultivate a safe and secure transit environment include:

- Light rail vehicle and facility cleaning, maintenance, and repair.
- Our Text for Safety program, which allows Metro Transit riders to report unwanted or suspicious behavior discreetly via text.
- Additional resources to directly handle issues and concerns identified by customers.

Feel unsafe, see something suspicious or inappropriate?

**TEXT FOR SAFETY**



## OPERATIONS

Metro Transit uses a multi-layered approach to safe and secure operations on vehicles and at light rail stations. Some of the different ways we ensure safe and secure operations include:

- Metro Transit employees are trained to deal with security issues.
- Metro Transit has its own professional police force that watches out for customer safety and responds to emergency situations.
- Light rail platforms and vehicles feature surveillance and communication tools such as monitored security cameras and emergency phones and intercom buttons for customers to contact a dispatcher and report a concern.



**METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION**



# POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF LIGHT RAIL AND MITIGATION OPTIONS

The list below are potential mitigation options based on the type of impact. A formal analysis of light rail impacts will be conducted as part of the environmental review process required by the Federal Transit Administration and will determine specific mitigation measures for the project.



## ACCESS/DRIVEWAY CLOSURES

- Identify new driveway locations.
- Access may change to right-in/right-out.



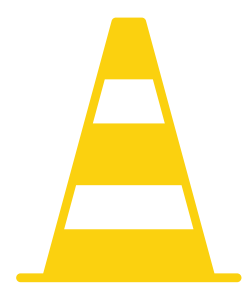
## PROPERTY IMPACTS

- The project's intent is to work within existing available public rights of way as much as possible to avoid direct impacts to homes and businesses.
- If property impacts are unavoidable, relocation advisory services and reimbursement for moving and reestablishment will be provided.



## LOSS OF PARKING

- Add more parking in another location within the community and coordinate with city partners to identify suitable replacement locations for off-street parking.
- Identify parking alternatives such as shared parking, parking regulations (i.e. time limited, meters), and preferential parking for carpools/alternatively fueled vehicles for nearby streets in the area.



## CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

- Work with property and business owners to coordinate access during closures, and identify dates that may reduce impacts to deliveries and operations.
- Provide advance public notice of roadway/driveway/sidewalk closures and utility shutoffs.
- Continued public communications and engagement through construction
- Minimize visual, light, dust, odor, and noise impacts to the extent practical.



## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- Narrow or reduce travel lanes to shorten pedestrian crossing distance and calm traffic.
- Improve or add new pedestrian and bike connections and crossings.
- Install fencing between light rail tracks and trail/sidewalk.
- Flashing light signals with audible warnings at crossings.



## TRAFFIC CONGESTION

- Signal timing and turning movements at signalized intersections may be adjusted.
- New traffic signals could be added.
- Road/lane reconfigurations could be made to better accommodate safety and movement for all users.
- Maintain emergency vehicle access.



## NOISE

- As a fully electric vehicle the light rail trains are quiet. Most of the noise generated by the light rail system comes from the bells on the trains as they operate through intersections and at stations and from wheels on curve track sections. In most cases noise from the light rail system blends in with background traffic noise.



# ANTI-DISPLACEMENT INITIATIVE

## What we've heard

From our engagement efforts, the greatest concern we heard is displacement impacts associated with the project.



## ✓ Our Commitments to the Community

Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, and cities along the corridor are committed to:

- Implementing a comprehensive and innovative set of strategies to prevent multiple forms of displacement
- Maximizing community benefits
- Centering community voices
- Building on, supporting, and protecting existing community assets
- Providing more opportunities for equitable housing, employment, business development, cultural experiences, and other activities of daily life

## ✓ Our Actions

- The project team is convening a diverse Anti-Displacement Work Group with seats for agency and community partners to research and recommend programs and policies that will support this initiative
- Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) will lead and facilitate the Anti-Displacement Work Group
- CURA will provide recommendations in the next 18 months

## What would you most like to see from our anti-displacement efforts?

*Place your comments here*



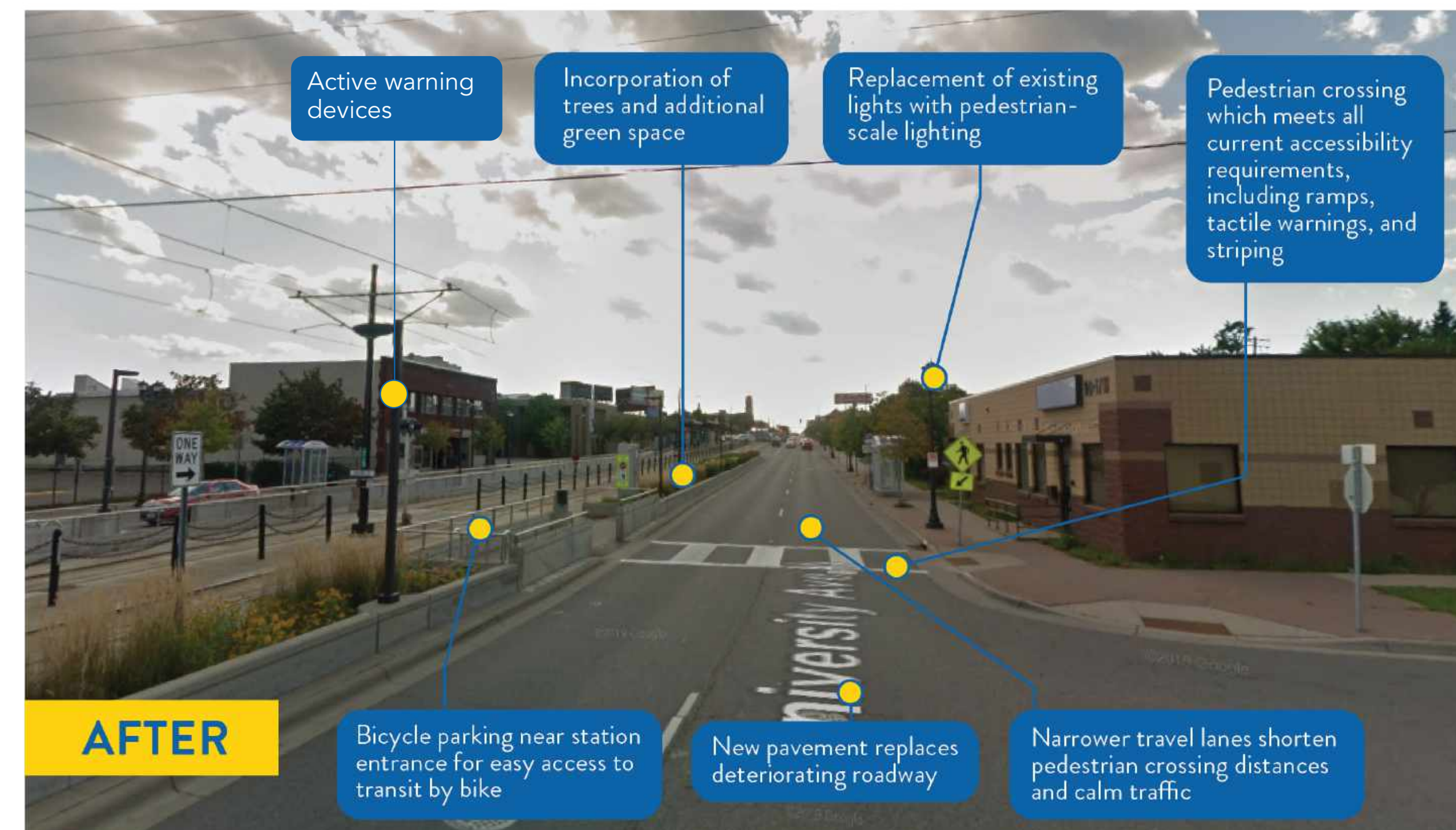
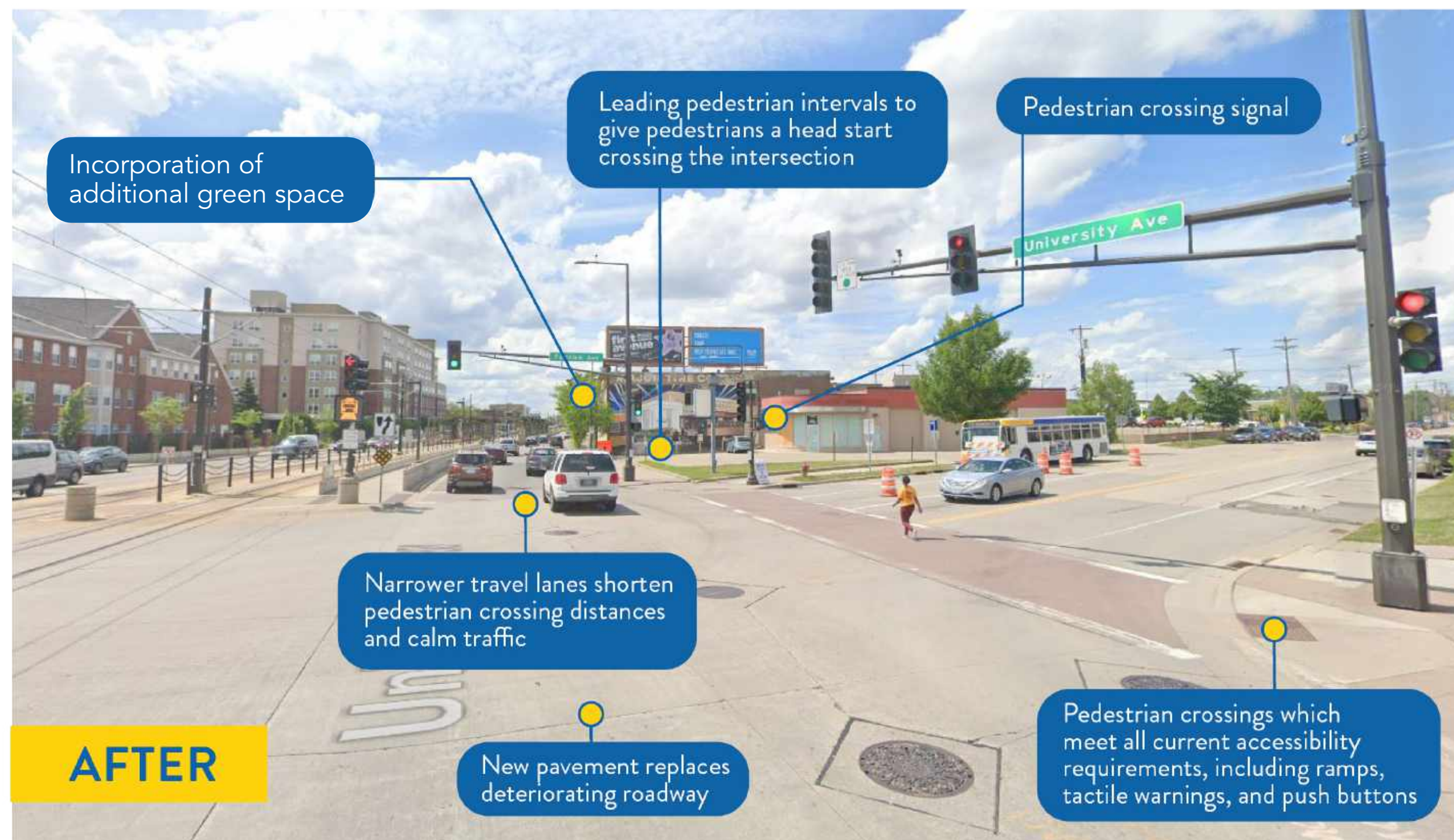
# WHAT DO PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS LOOK LIKE?

These images show safety improvements using the METRO Green Line on University Avenue in St. Paul as an example.

**Signalized intersection on University Avenue at Fairview Avenue**



**Unsignalized intersection on University Avenue at Oxford Street**

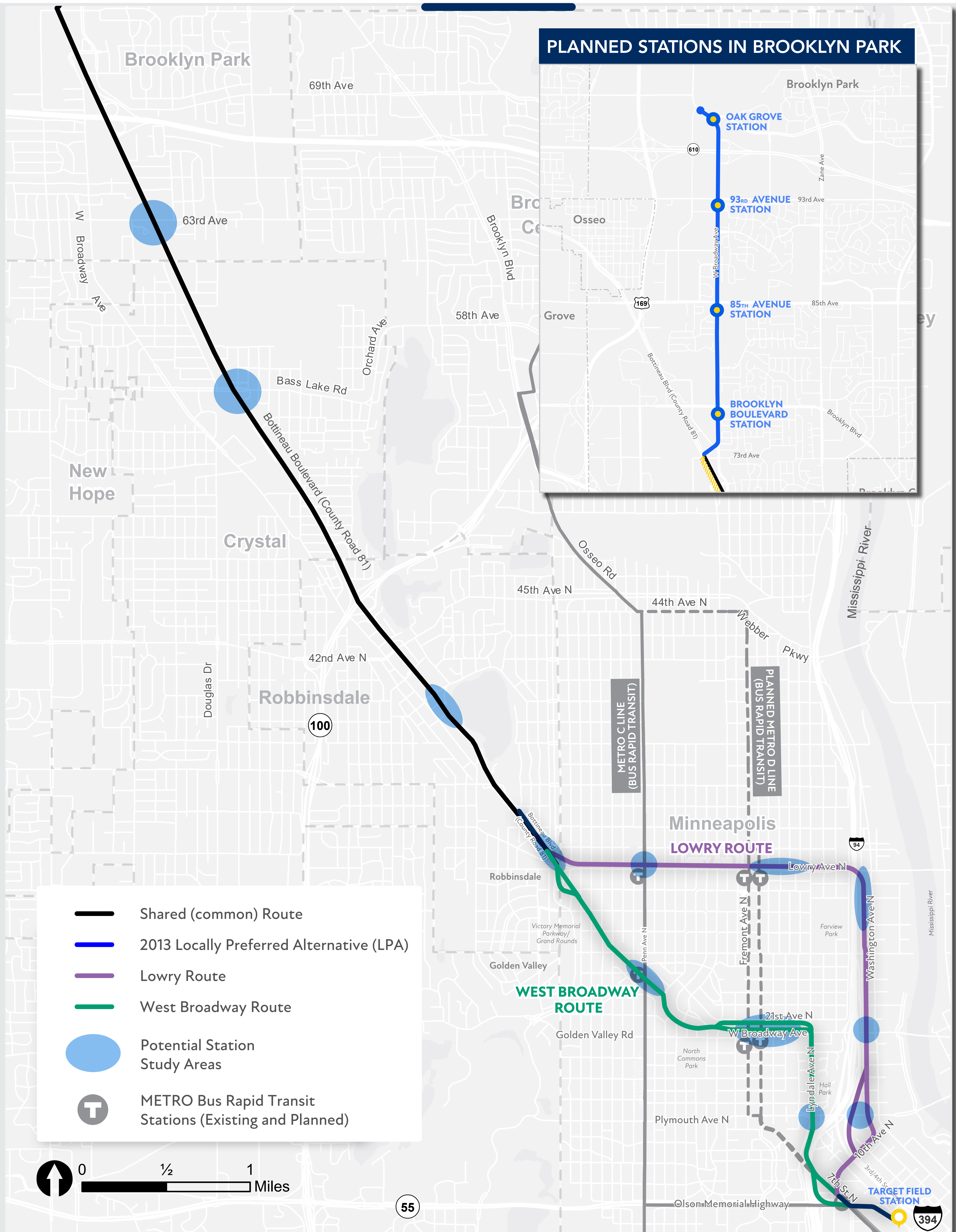




# ROUTES FOR CONSIDERATION

These routes provide opportunities to deliver a light rail project that maximizes community benefits and connects people to jobs, education, healthcare and other key destinations.

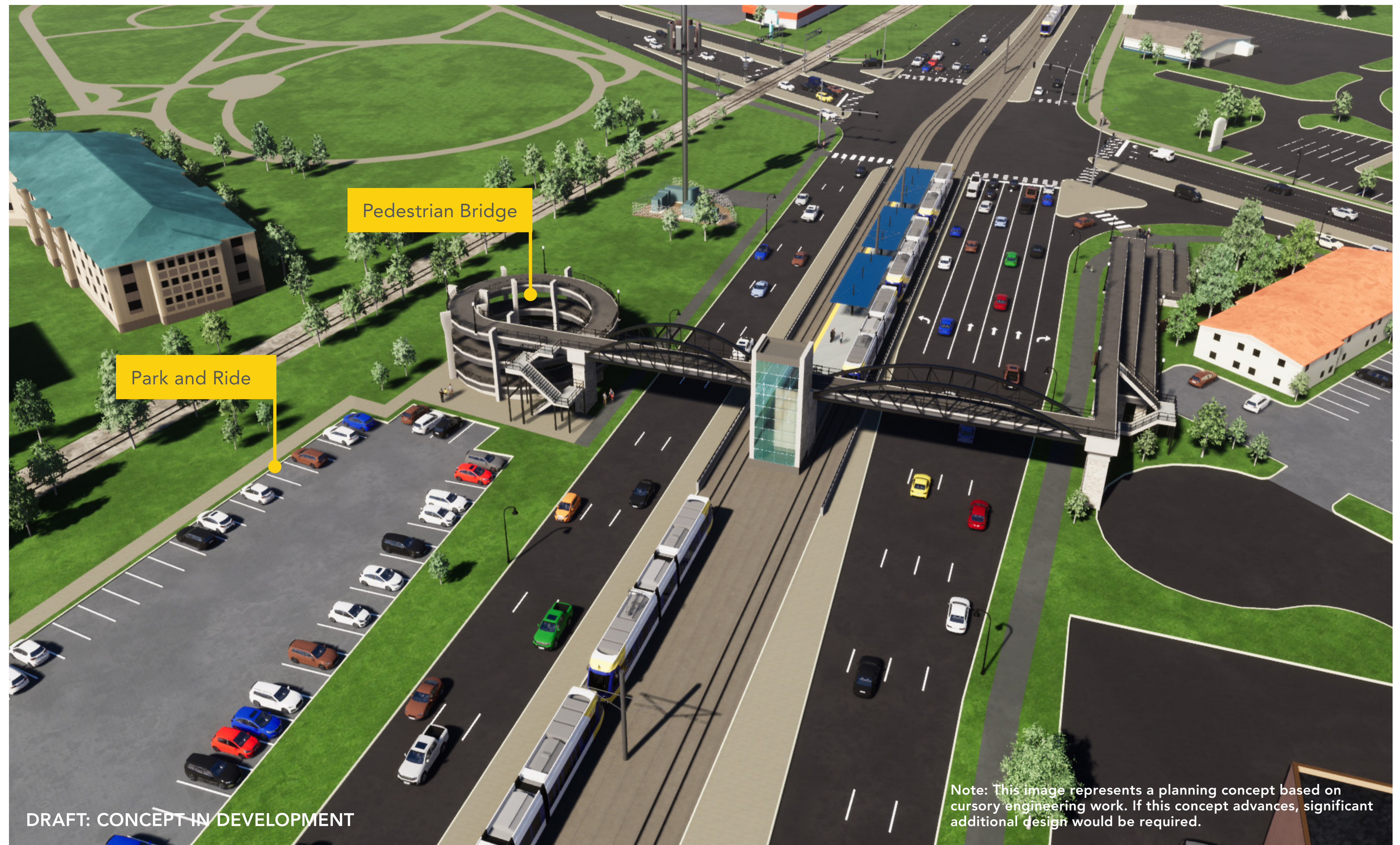
The routes shown represent the best apparent options to extend the METRO Blue Line Extension based on community input, technical considerations and past project work.



# BASS LAKE ROAD: AT-GRADE OPTION

## Design Features:

- Expands County Road 81 between Crystal Airport Road and Wilshire Boulevard, keeping six lanes of traffic (three in each direction) for that section, just over half a mile
- Light rail is at-grade in the center of the roadway
- Park and ride access via Lakeland Avenue North from the Wilshire Boulevard intersection
- Station platform is in the middle of a six-lane road with additional turning lanes at the intersection
- The pedestrian bridge provides a crossing over County Road 81 and a grade-separated access to the south end of the station to the platform from the park and ride and trails



*Aerial View of Station Area Looking North*



# BASS LAKE ROAD: INTERCHANGE OPTION STATION AREA VIEWS



*Ground View of Station Area Looking South*



*Ground View of Station Area Looking East*



*Ground View of Station Area Looking East from Park and Ride*



# BASS LAKE ROAD: AT-GRADE OPTION STATION AREA VIEWS



*Aerial View of Station Area Looking East*



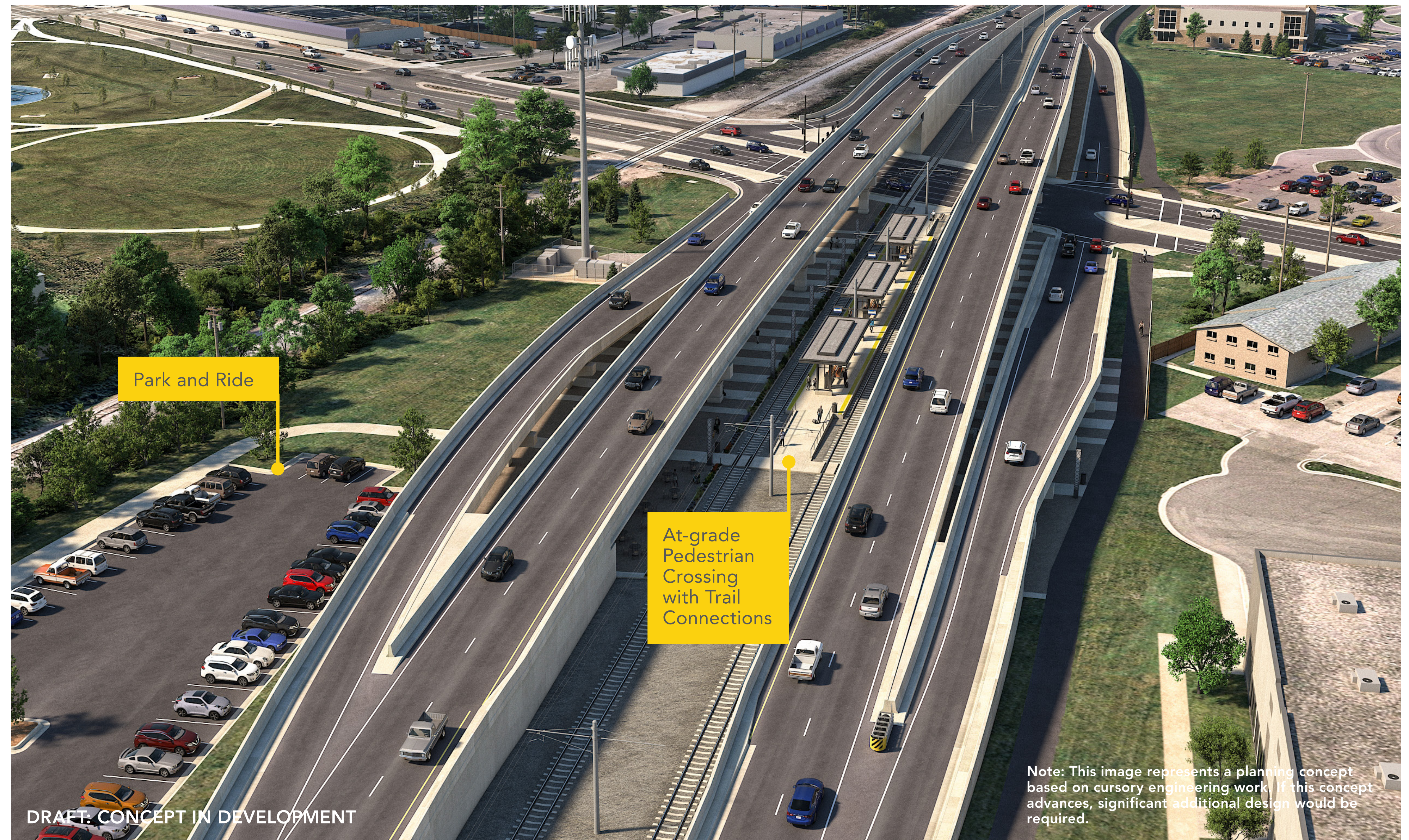
*Ground View of Station Area- Pedestrian Crossing*



# BASS LAKE ROAD: INTERCHANGE OPTION

## Design Features:

- County Road 81 two lanes in each direction on a grade-separated overpass at Bass Lake Road with ramps for access from Bass Lake Road
- The intersection maintains full access for Bass Lake Road
- Light rail is at-grade centered between overpass bridges
- Park and ride access via Lakeland Avenue North from the Wilshire Boulevard intersection
- Station platform is at-grade framed by adjacent interchange bridges
- The south at-grade crossing provides grade-separation from County Road 81 and provides access to trails on either side of County Road 81 and to the park and ride

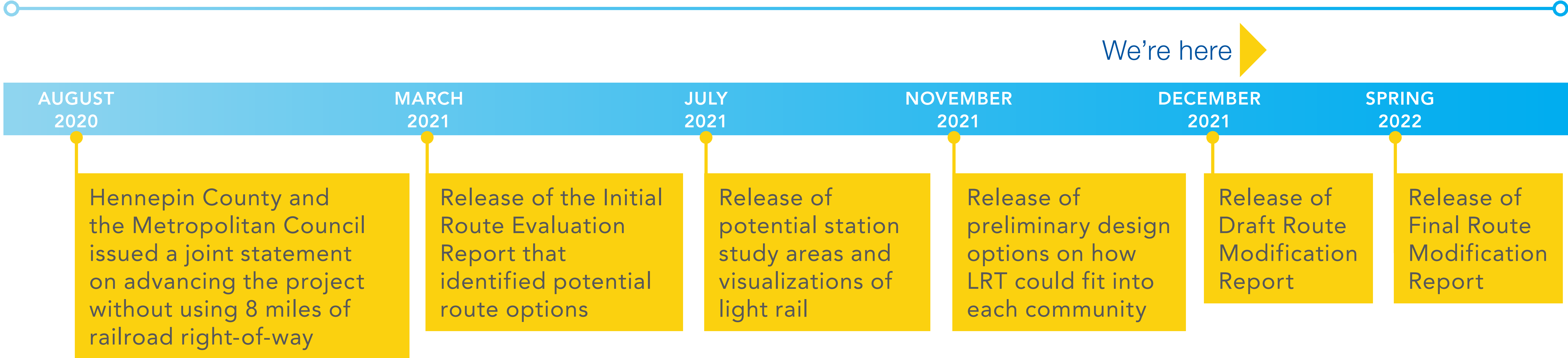


*Aerial View of Station Area Looking North*



# SCHEDULE/NEXT STEPS

## ONGOING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



- Identify community-supported route
- Environmental review  
*Document benefits and impacts of the project*  
Municipal Consent  
*Seek city support of the LRT design*
- Engineering  
*Develop construction ready design plans*  
● Station area planning
- Construction and Full Funding Grant Agreement  
*Federal funding*
- Goal — Line opens in 2028

*LRT projects are complex and unforeseen challenges arise. Schedules and timelines are subject to change.*

**Blue Line Extension Community Supported Route:**

- Best meets the Project Principles and Goals
- Grounded in community feedback through collaboration with stakeholders
- Supported by Project corridor communities and decision-makers



# STAY CONNECTED!

Visit [BlueLineExt.org](https://BlueLineExt.org) for more information to sign-up for the project newsletter, and share your comments, questions and concerns on our interactive feedback map.

**For project questions or to invite us to an event, contact:**

**Robbinsdale/Minneapolis/ Brooklyn Park and  
Overall Project Questions:**

Sophia Ginis – [Sophia.Ginis@metrotransit.org](mailto:Sophia.Ginis@metrotransit.org)

**Crystal:**

David Davies – [David.Davies@metrotransit.org](mailto:David.Davies@metrotransit.org)



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