



Blue Line Extension Community Meetings: January 2022



Brooklyn Park | Crystal | Robbinsdale | Golden Valley | Minneapolis



Today's Topics

- Project Overview
- Draft Route Modification Report Overview
- Anti-Displacement Working Group Update



Project Overview



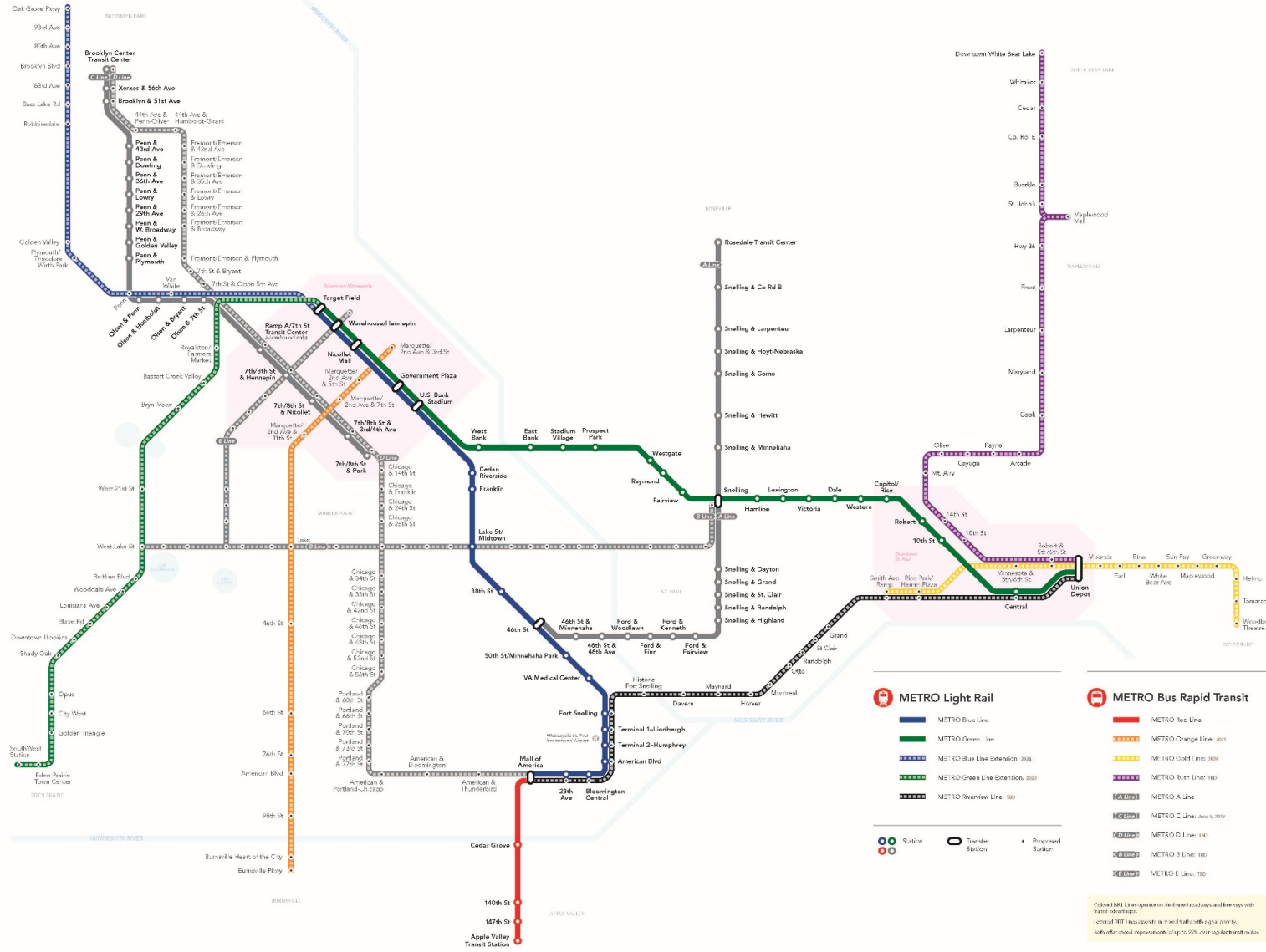
Blue Line Extension

- Connecting communities to fast, frequent, reliable transportation
- Will provide single seat trips to downtown Minneapolis, Minneapolis – St. Paul International Airport, and Mall of America



Fast. Frequent. All day. All yours.

Future Rapid Transit Network



Colored BRT Lines operate on dedicated roadways and have access to street crossings. Colored BRT Lines operate in mixed traffic with signal priority. Both offer speed improvements of up to 20% over regular transit routes.

2020-2022 Milestones

ONGOING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

We're here 

AUGUST
2020

Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Council issued a joint statement on advancing the project without using 8 miles of railroad right-of-way

MARCH
2021

Release of the Initial Route Evaluation Report that identified potential route options

JULY
2021

Release of potential station study areas and visualizations of light rail

NOVEMBER
2021

Release of preliminary design options on how LRT could fit into each community

DECEMBER
2021

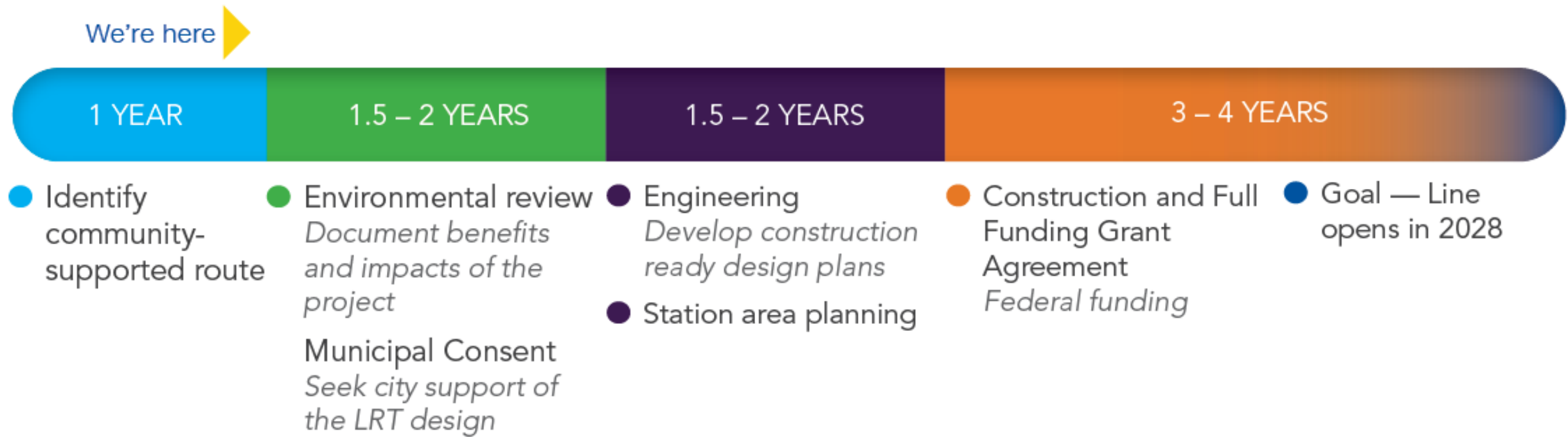
Release of Draft Route Modification Report

SPRING
2022

Release of Final Route Modification Report

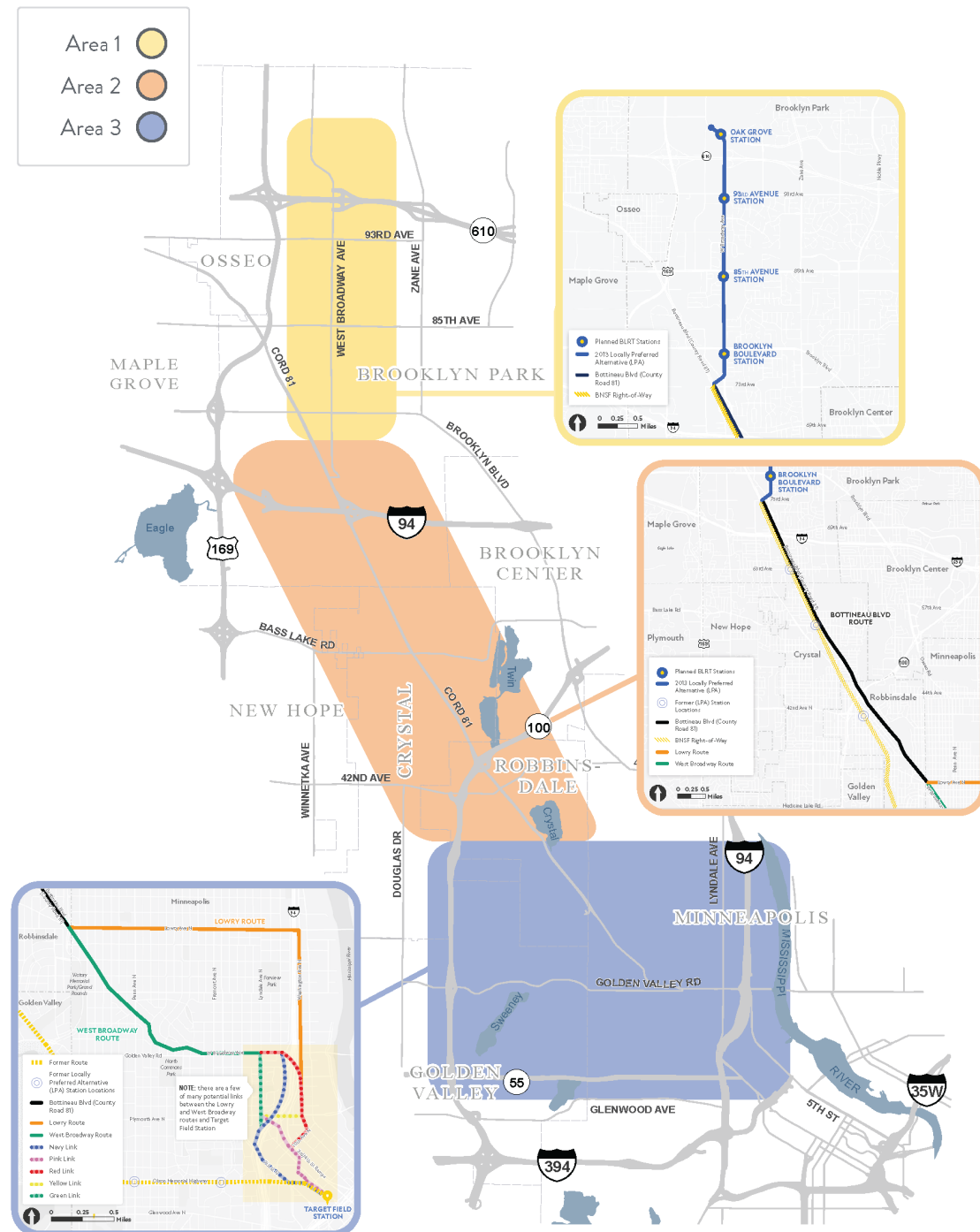


Overall Project Schedule



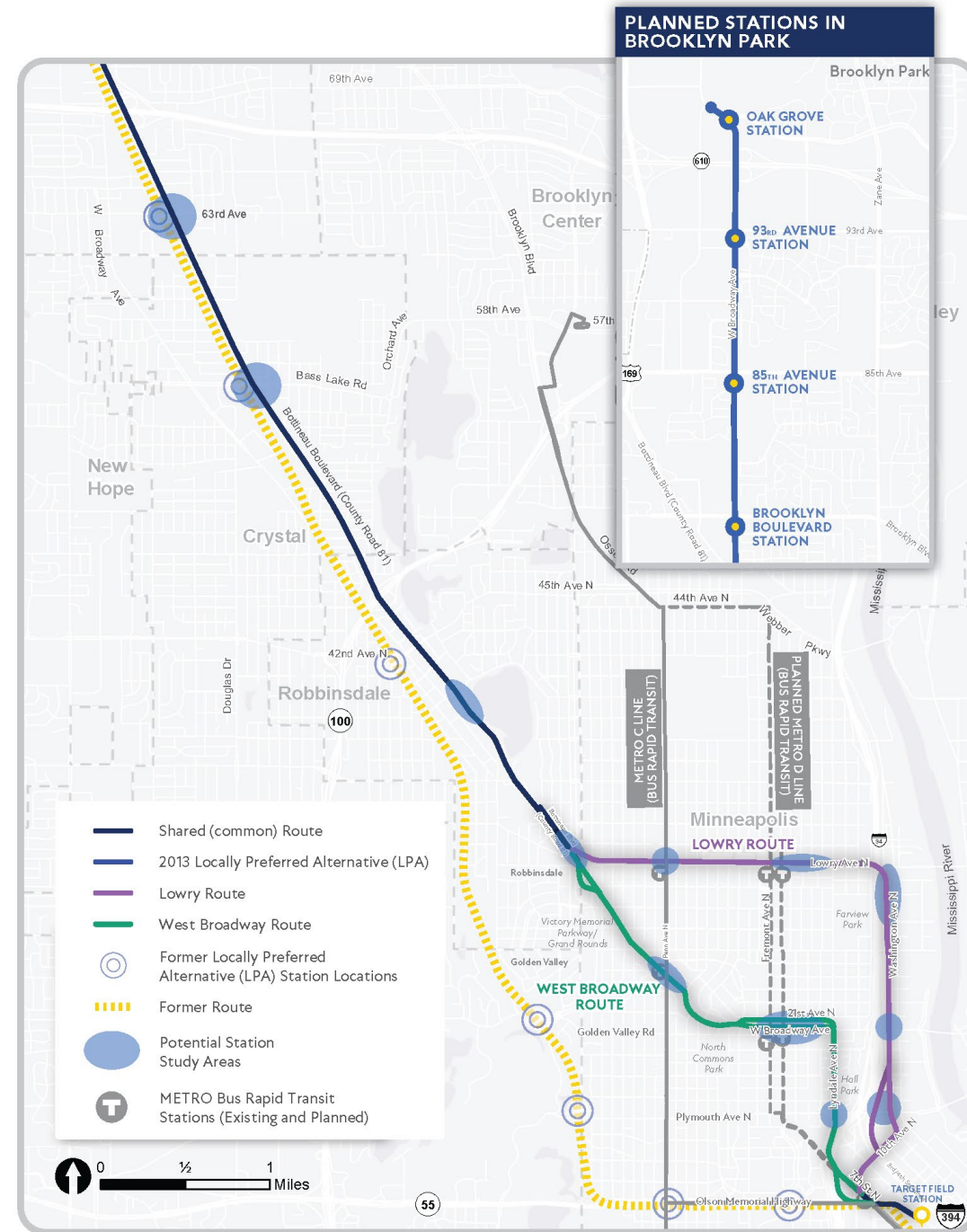
Initial Project Areas

- Project route options
 - Confirmation of route options for Areas 1 and 2
 - Preliminary options for Area 3
- Options based on:
 - Adopted Project Principles
 - Conceptual review of LRT right of way and operation needs
 - Applicable previous work
 - Community feedback on key destinations and connections



Revised Route Options

- Brooklyn Park
 - Former route and stations along West Broadway in Brooklyn Park remain the same
- Brooklyn Park, Crystal and Robbinsdale
 - Proposed route along Bottineau Boulevard (County Road 81) closely parallels the original route for most of this area
- Minneapolis
 - Two route options are being evaluated—one along Lowry and Washington Avenues (shown in purple) and one along West Broadway Avenue (shown in green)



Engagement Overview: Metrics

- Approximately 4,000 survey responses
- Over 1,200 comments on the interactive map
- 270 events resulting in nearly 9,000 points of contact with the public
- Over 500 emails and phone calls
- Majority of activities with environmental justice communities
- 30 comments from comment forms



Draft Route Modification Report Overview



Purpose of the Draft Route Modification Report







- Documents the overall process since the new route options were released in March 2021
- Evaluation incorporates public input from engagement efforts over the past year
- Provides an overview of technical work that informs the route modifications
- Evaluates each route against the Project Principles and Project Goals

Draft Report Assessments

- Each route was reviewed for its ability to achieve the Project Principles and Project Goals and achieved an assessment of Excellent, Good or Poor
 - **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 deliverer exemplary positive benefits

Summary Matrix

ASSESSMENT OF ROUTE OPTIONS TO DEFINED GOALS

PROJECT GOAL	BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81) IN BROOKLYN PARK, CRYSTAL, AND ROBBINSDALE	LOWRY ROUTE	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

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.



Goal 1: Improve transit access and connections to jobs and regional destinations.

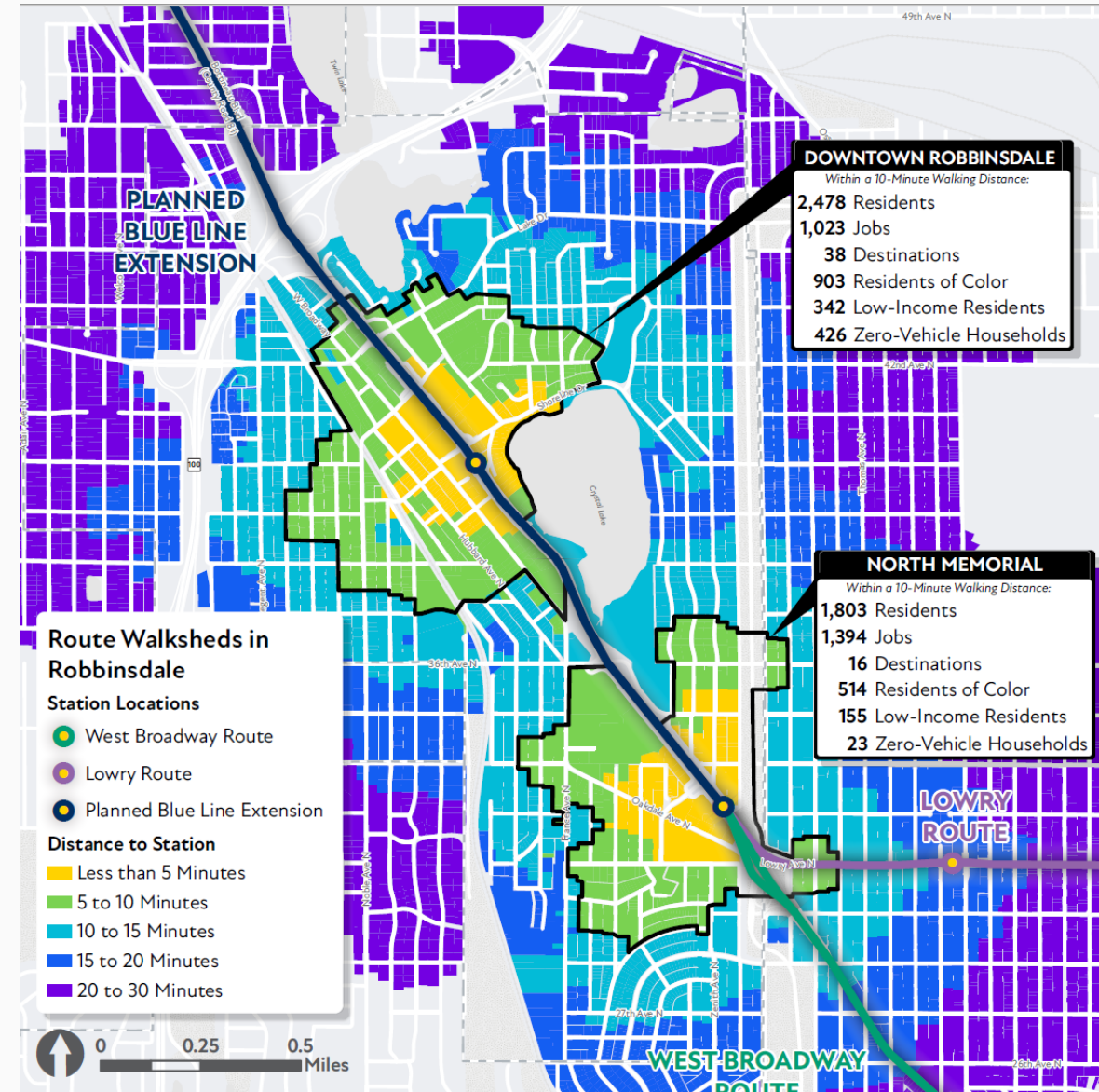
What informs this goal:

- 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 : **EXCELLENT**

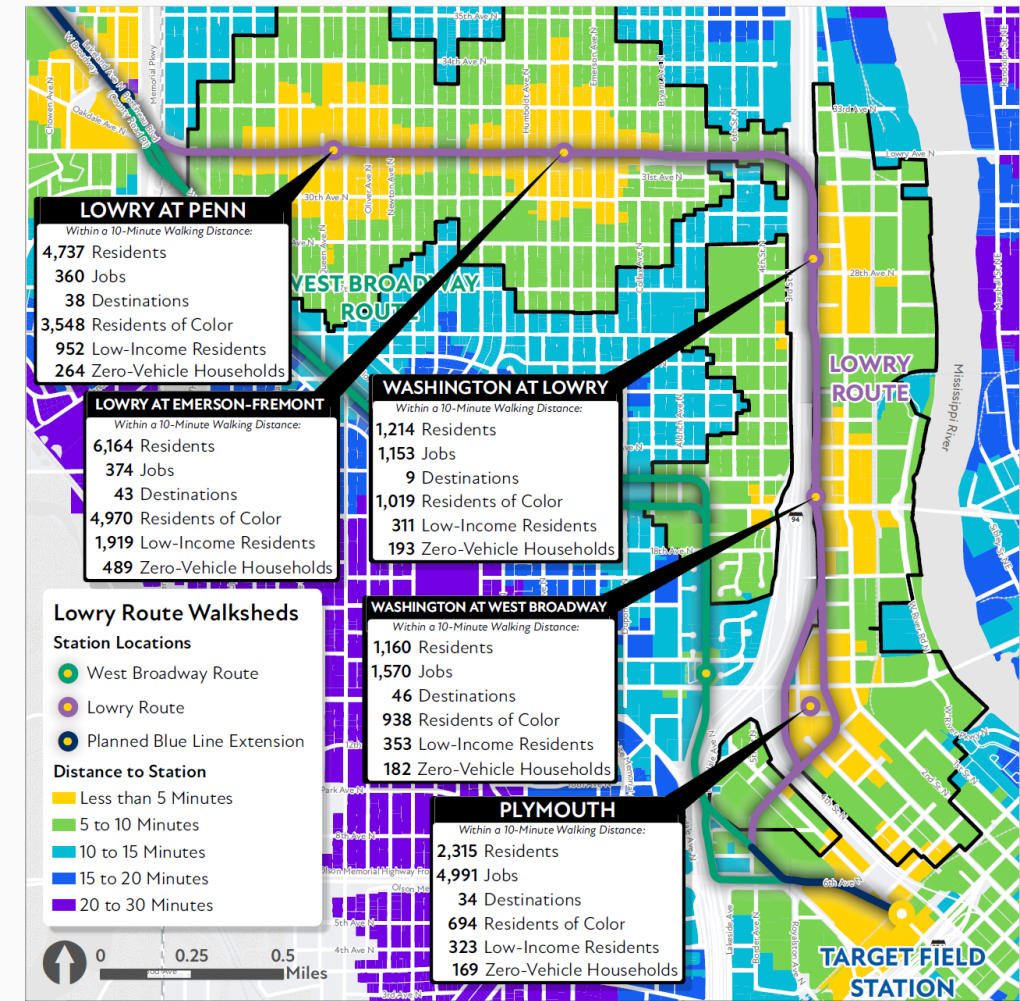
- 63rd Avenue and Bass Lake Road Stations provide similar access and connections to jobs and regional destinations as previous route
- Downtown Robbinsdale and North Memorial Stations provides important connections to the downtown Robbinsdale area, North Memorial medical complex, parks and North Minneapolis



Goal 1 Evaluation Findings

Lowry: **EXCELLENT**

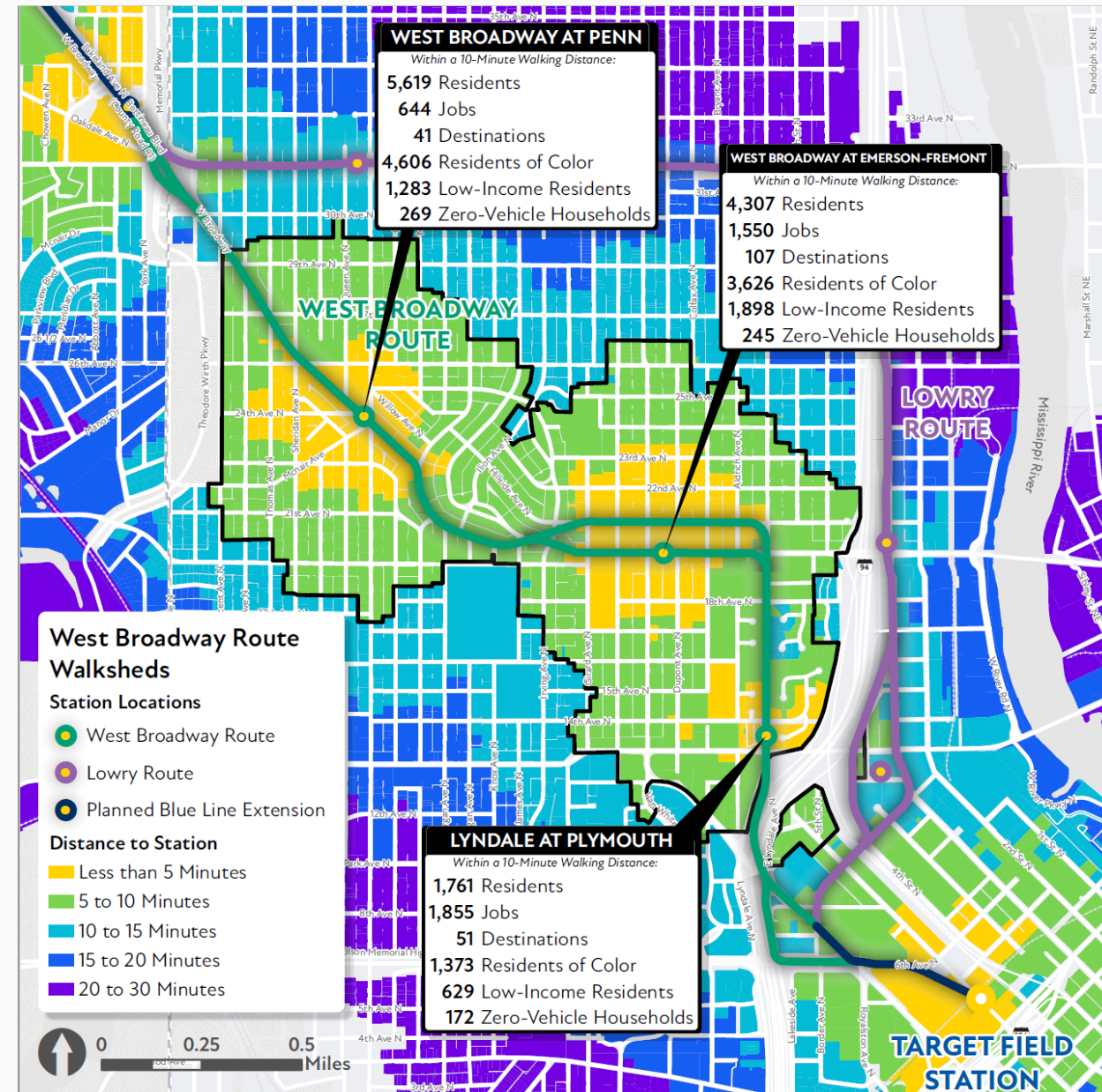
- Serves neighborhoods with limited or no access to personal vehicles, lower income households and a high proportion (60 percent or more) of residents of color
- Provides access to community destinations, primarily along the Lowry Avenue section, along with the North Loop area and the future Upper Harbor 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



Goal 1 Evaluation Findings

West Broadway: **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





Goal 5: Promote healthy communities and sound environmental practices including efforts to address climate change.

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

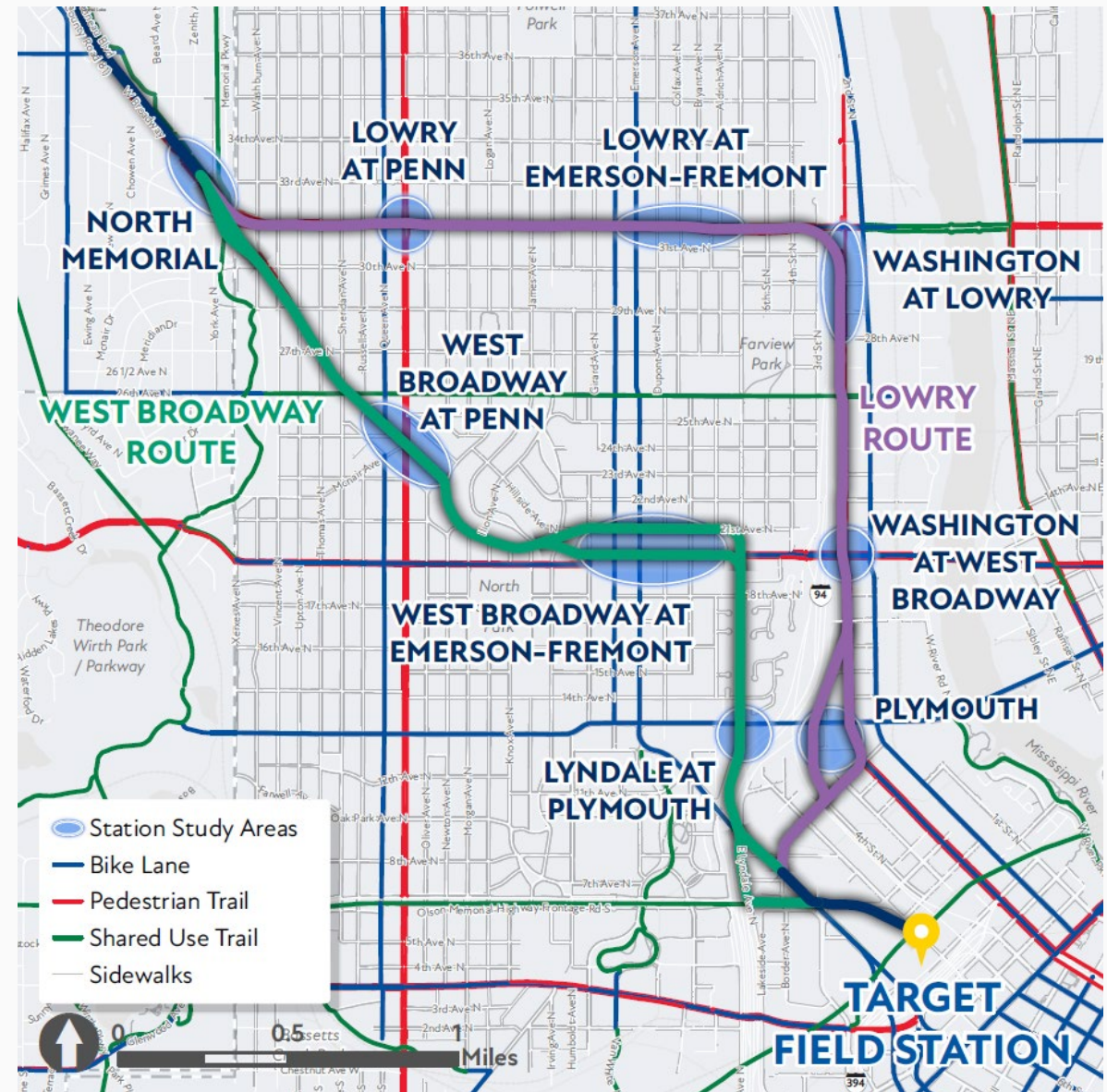
Area 2: **GOOD**

- 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

Goal 5 Evaluation Findings

Lowry: **GOOD**

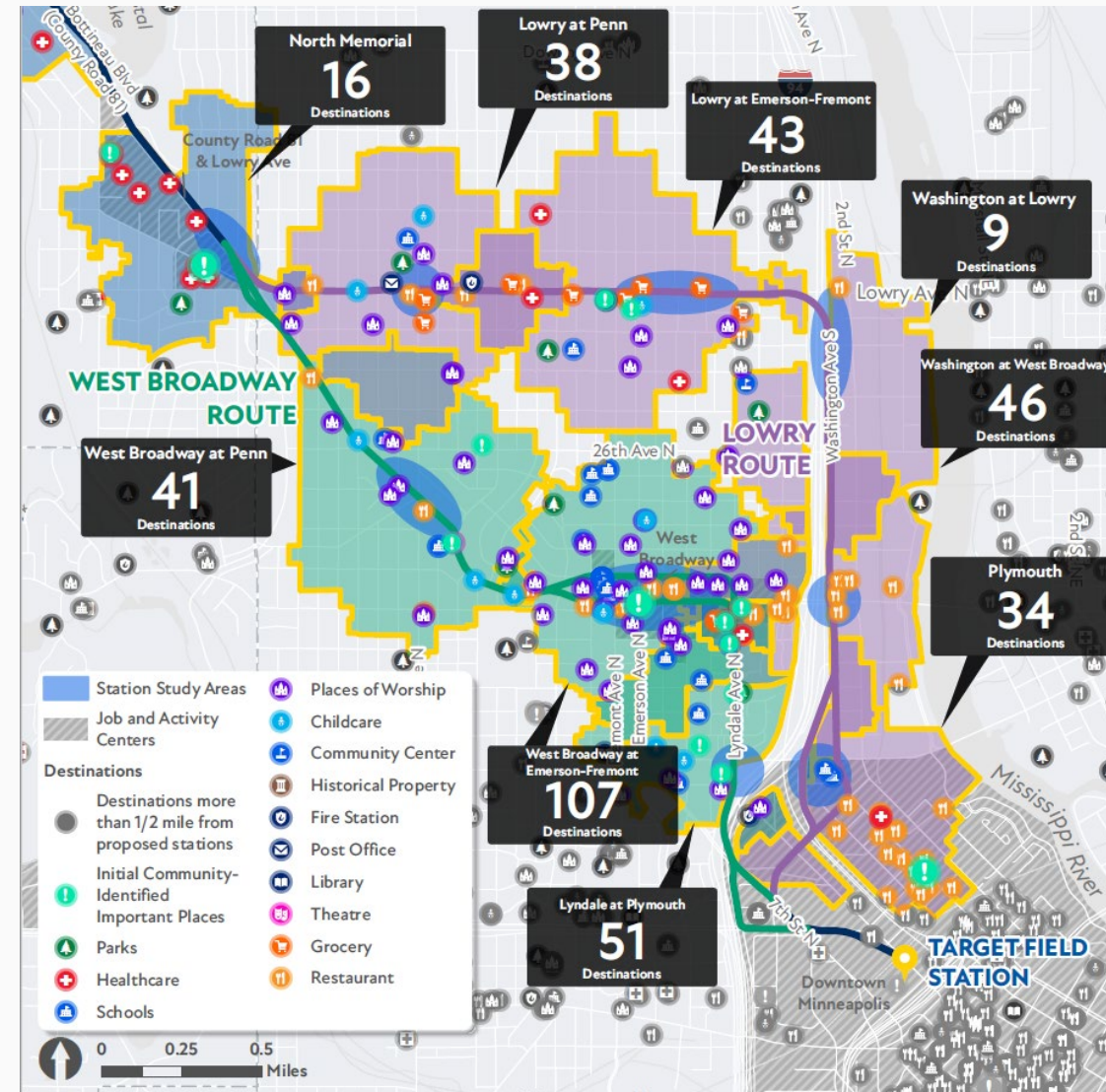
- Provides roadway and overall safety improvements
- Advances the state and county's Climate Action Plans and goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled
- Provides access to grocery stores and the regional park system
- Has environmental, social and cultural resource impacts



Goal 5 Evaluation Findings

West Broadway: **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



Next Steps

- **December 13-January 25:** 45-day comment period on the Draft Report
- **Spring 2022:** the Final Route Modification Report will recommend a community supported route for further evaluation
- **Summer 2022:** begin environmental process: an opportunity for deeper analysis and further engagement

Anti-Displacement Workgroup



Community Wealth Building Through Investment

- Forming an Anti-Displacement Working Group
 - To develop and implement a comprehensive, innovative set of strategies:
 - To ensure this investment builds on, supports, and protects existing community assets
 - Benefit existing corridor residents
 - Provide more opportunities for equitable housing, employment, business development, cultural experiences, and other activities of daily life
 - Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota will facilitate the Anti-displacement workgroup and conduct research over the next 18 months



Anti-Displacement Working Group

- Project Manager: C Terrance Anderson
 - CURA's Director of Community Based Research, C Terrence oversees CURA's community-based programs
- Work group will have approximately 21 members: 6 government representatives, 6 community members affiliated with organizations businesses, 6 non-affiliated community members and 3 philanthropic organization representatives
- Application Process/First Meeting
 - Application accepted from Dec. 20 – Jan. 14



General Principles of the Anti-Displacement Work Group:

- Develop recommendations that can be practically implemented
- Work through existing tensions between various interests
- Support community to take a deep dive into displacement, while also respecting the busyness of their lives to be accommodated
- Develop structures around the group that allow the group to develop clarity on ideas while also bringing along implementers for the discussion

Discussion



Stay Connected!

- Project website: BlueLineExt.org
 - Project news, maps, surveys, what we're hearing
 - Committee meeting materials: agenda, handouts, presentations, meeting minutes
 - Sign-up for GovDelivery project updates
 - Connect with staff for your questions or schedule a presentation
- Follow us:
 - Twitter: [@BlueLineExt](https://twitter.com/BlueLineExt)
 - Facebook: [MetroBlueLineExtension](https://www.facebook.com/MetroBlueLineExtension)



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