



Overview

In 2021, METRO Blue Line Extension Project staff contracted directly with thirteen community-based experts to support robust engagement during the route selection process. These community and cultural organizations were chosen to reflect constituencies identified in a Project stakeholder analysis. These organizations have helped amplify Project communications, educate at community events, host engagement activities, and collect feedback from their constituents. These efforts were collaborative and coordinated across the corridor areas.

2021 Cohort	Areas
Asian Media Access Inc	Area 1, 2, 3
CAPI USA	Area 1, 3
Center for Leadership & Neighborhood Engagement	Area 3
Encouraging Leaders	Area 3
Harrison Neighborhood Association	Area 3
Hawthorne Neighborhood Council	Area 3
Jordan Area Community Council	Area 3
Juxtaposition Arts	Area 3
Lao Assistance Center of MN	Area 1, 3
Liberian Business Association	Area 1, 2
Northside Economic Opportunity Network	Area 2, 3
Northside Residents Redevelopment Council	Area 3
West Broadway Business Coalition	Area 3

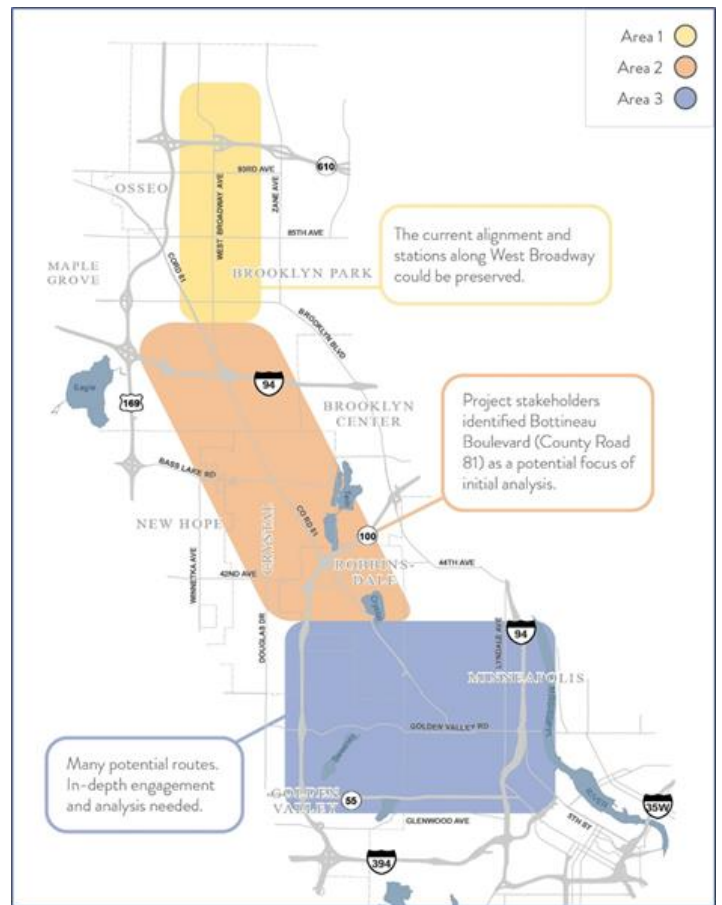


Figure 1. Map of project areas

This report summarizes the work conducted by the Blue Line LRT community engagement cohort during 2021. Each cohort organization’s final report is included in the Appendix.



Areas of outreach geographically and culturally:

Cohort members conducted outreach and engagement in all three areas of the project corridor, prioritizing North Minneapolis. Specific focus on African American, African Immigrant, Asian - Hmong, Lao, Vietnamese, neighborhoods, small businesses, youth and young adults, faith communities, and key stakeholders.

Engagement activities included:

- 273 social media posts/e-blasts/other digital communications.
- 218+ total engagement activities including:
 - 9 total of newsletters/mailers/other print communications
 - 15 translation reviews for accuracy
 - 12 flyering/door-knocking sessions
 - 200 outreach events/focus groups/pop-ups/ tabling
 - 580 paper surveys on route preferences
- 25,000+ total approximate number of people participated in outreach and engagement activities

Summary of final key community issues and opportunities (2021 input also included in BLRT Draft Route Modification Report)

Issues:

- Concern about pedestrian safety and traffic enforcement of at-grade crossings (during and after construction)
- Concern about LRT bringing more crime; need increased safety at stations/on transit
- Concern about language barriers
 - Station communications/maps
 - Being able to communicate issues while on transit
 - During construction – detour signs
- Concern about noise – caused by the train and during construction
- Need for parking for people who ride LRT and to access businesses along the route
- Need plan to help deal with unhoused on transit
- Concern about impacts to traffic
- Concern about displacement and gentrification
 - Need for affordable housing and commercial spaces along the route
 - Concern about the character of neighborhoods changing
- Need for investment in the community as a whole, not just individuals along the chosen route
- Concern that BLRT alignment is no longer going on Olson Memorial Hwy; still expect to receive benefits associated with the old alignment

December 6th Brooklyn Park workshop discussion with Liberian business owners





Opportunities:

- Opportunity for development along the route (e.g., vacant lots along Lowry), increased jobs, growth of economy
- Opportunity to increase access to transit and regional destinations for people who don't have access to other transportation options
- Opportunity for street beautification and public art
- Opportunity to eliminate parking minimums and lots
- Opportunity to engage cultural groups to educate, inform, and involve them in the project
- Opportunity to improve bike and pedestrian facilities
- Opportunity to make North Minneapolis a destination and key transportation hub

November 2021 pop-up event hosted by Lao Assistance Center



Key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered:

- What route is going to be selected?
- How will safety be ensured at stations/on transit/in communities along the route?
- What will happen to businesses along the route when construction starts? How will they be supported?
- Many people still don't know about the project/lack of (culturally appropriate) information about Blue Line Extension
- What is the construction timeline? Timing of closures and detours, etc.?
- What development is planned for neighborhoods around the route?
- Where can small BIPOC owned businesses find resources to benefit from the new development?
- How will this project mitigate negative impacts to the environment, people's health/wellness, etc.?
- Who will the construction contractor be and how can our community contractors participate?
- Why isn't elevated track a viable option?
- What is the plan to ensure businesses and residents aren't displaced? How will the project maintain diversity along the corridor?
- Feel there should be an anti-displacement plan before choosing a route

Community preference/recommendations on the route option:

- West Broadway – **4 cohort members reporting preference**
 - West Broadway has more businesses
 - West Broadway has more connections to existing public transit
- Lowry – **2 cohort members reporting preference**
 - Wider street and less developed than West Broadway
 - In addition to investment in transportation improvements along West Broadway



- Split between West Broadway and Lowry – **7 cohort members reporting preference**
 - Want access to hospitals and Asian markets
 - Whichever route will cause the least displacement
 - Need parking for businesses and safety enforcement
 - Concern about impacts to existing properties and parking along each route
 - West Broadway – impacts to new housing development along the curve, Capri Theater, small businesses, the MPS building and street parking
 - Lowry – impacts to homes as the street narrows
 - West Broadway has more businesses, but Lowry is wider/less complicated
- Other feedback:
 - Believe a new route should not be selected until anti-displacement policies are in place and commitments and investments are made upfront
 - Communities would like to know how routing behind the MPS administrative building can be accomplished

Recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future for METRO Blue Line LRT Extension:

- When sharing project information, provide more visual/graphic support along with the pros and cons to make it easier for general audience to comprehend, especially when conveying property impacts
- Set up info sessions earlier so there's more time to share the information/garner participation
- Ensure project information is readily available/culturally appropriate; ensure translated materials are correct/ready at the same time as English versions
- Advertise project events through more diverse channels (e.g., billboards or transit stations)
- Communities have experienced exploitation around other transportation projects; project staff need to be directly engaging with communities, serve as community advocates
- Displacement strategies/policies should be in place before a route is selected
- Conduct more in-depth engagement with residents and business owners, especially cultural communities
 - Ensure cultural communities are involved in future project decision-making, know of contracting opportunities, and know of opportunities to get involved in development
 - Set up a bus tour that includes the entire BLRT project route and listening sessions that offer virtual displays of the route
- Coordination with CURA to ensure they have information needed for their research around displacement



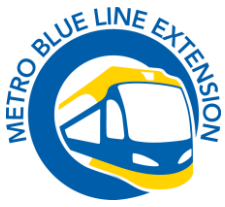
November 2021 Asian Media Access pop-up at vaccination event

Other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to?

- Churches, mosques, synagogues (e.g., Shiloh Temple, New Bethel)
- Sherman and Associates – new housing development
- Broadway Crescent tenants
- West Broadway Flats tenants
- Wells Fargo Bank
- So Low Grocery
- US Postal Services
- Phyllis Wheatley Community Center
- Hospitality House
- A Gardner Builder Remodeler
- Al-maa’uum
- Lao Center of MN – can help with engagement and outreach to Lao communities
- Masjid An-Nur
- Cub Foods
- Boys and Girls Club on Irving
- North Regional Library
- Urban League
- Northpoint
- Faith based groups
- LIBA – can help with engagement and outreach to African immigrant business community
- Schools in North Minneapolis
- Ethnic media
- Disability organizations/new media
- Other cultural organizations and groups with “boots on the ground”



October 2021 Bike, Walk, Bus tour of Minneapolis route options and station study areas



Appendix – Cohort Reports

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: Asian Media Access
Contact: name, email, phone Ange Hwang, angehwang@amamedia.org, 612-376-7715
Date: Jan. 20, 2022

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

Targeting Asian American communities in North Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES:

Inform community and/or small business on the route selection planning and decision-making processing at 3 areas – completed by Sept. 30th, 2021

- Joining All of the selected community consultant contracts (BLRT Community Engagement Cohort) to meet monthly basis throughout 2021 (including a couple initial orientation meetings) and will be encouraged to collaborate with other organizations within the Community Engagement Cohort to share tasks and engagement activities that overlap by Area(s) and focus community(s); -> **DONE**
- Preparing surveys to identify the communities' concerns around BLRT Impacts in both English and Hmong as well as including the selected potential routes; -> **DONE**
- Collecting 100 surveys from Asian American communities' members online and in-person, and will put a special focus on North Minneapolis neighborhoods; -> **DONE, COLLECTED MORE THAN 300+ surveys**
- ~~Producing at least 10 short videos or short written testimonies if members preferring that type of story sharing, and be posting at Asian Media Access' Youtube channel;~~ **ADJUSTED TASKS -> DUE TO INCREASING EFFORT IN COLLECTING SURVEYS AND HOSTING COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENTS**
- Informing community and/or small business on the route selection process and decision-making through Asian American cultural influencers and working with Hmong American and Chinese American Chamber of Commerce to update small businesses at the County; -> **DONE**
- Analyzing data, supporting a route selection report to County -> **DONE – SUBMITTED THE REPORT**

Sharing the information with the communities – completed by Jan 31st, 2022

- Joining All of the selected community consultant contracts (BLRT Community Engagement Cohort) to meet monthly basis throughout 2021 (including a couple initial orientation meetings) and will be encouraged to collaborate with other organizations within the Community Engagement Cohort to share tasks and engagement activities that overlap by Area(s) and focus community(s); -> **DONE**
- Texting 2 times with info to our 996 families in our Hennepin Food Distribution list; -> **DONE**
- Staffing at least 6 diverse Asian ethnic community events online or in-person at the County to share the information; -> **DONE (see below list)**
- Posting at least 24 social media posts to support the new routes announcements (one per week through AMA and through other social media influencers); -> **DONE**
- ~~Writing a press release in 6 different languages—Chinese, English, Hmong, Khmer, and Vietnamese sending to the local ethnic presses, community leaders as well as to Asian American cultural influencers;~~ **ADJUSTED TASKS -> DUE TO SWITCH THE EFFORT TO COLLECT ASIAN BUSINESS ADDRESSES ALONG THE POTENTIAL BLRT ROUTE.**
- Final Report to the County -> **DONE**

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes *such as*:

- a. Amplify BLRT communications = Total number of social media posts such as: facebook posts, emails, whatsapp, e-newsletters.

- 1) Asian Media Access has posted 3 articles at our eNewsletter, with 2588 circulation = 7,764
- 2) Asian Media Access has posted 22 social media posts at average 200 views for each post = 4,400
- 3) Asian Media Access has texted 3 times to our 996 families in our Hennepin Food Distribution list = 2,988

TOTAL: 15,152 people reached through social media platforms.

b. **Direct Community Engagement** list out by each individual activity:

- 1) **04/14** – Earle Brown Heritage Center, 6155 Earle Brown Dr, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430, reached 30 people
- 2) **04/28** Outreach Event at New Millennium Academy, reached 48 people;
- 3) **04/30** Outreach Event at Hmong International Academy, reached 51 people;
- 4) **05/15** Outreach Event at Thai Temple, 2544 Highway 100 South, St Louis Park, MN 55416 for Thai New Year, reached 500+ people;
- 5) **05/21** Outreach Event at Asian Mall , reached 467 people;
- 6) **06/20** – Blueline Open House at Asian Media Access’ 2418 Plymouth Ave. N., Mpls., MN 55411, reached 31 people;
- 7) **07/31** – Outreach Event at 6301 Shingle Creek Parkway, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430, reached 247 people;
- 8) **08/21** – Outreach Event at 6301 Shingle Creek Parkway, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430, reached 50 people;
- 9) **09/05** – Outreach Event at Thai Temple Wat Promwachirayan (Wat Thai of Minnesota), 2544 Highway 100 South, St Louis Park, MN 55416, 200 people reached;
- 10) **09/18** – Outreach Event at Thai Temple Wat Promwachirayan (Wat Thai of Minnesota), 2544 Highway 100 South, St Louis Park, MN 55416, 3,600 people (mostly Thai and Hmong), and 500 flyers totally out for engagement;
- 11) **09/26** – Outreach Event at New Millennium Academy, 5105 Brooklyn Blvd, Brooklyn Center, MN 55429 – 200 people reached;
- 12) **10/17** – Outreach Event at Chinese American Chamber of Commerce – MN, 7901 12th Ave S, Bloomington, MN 55425, 200 people reached;
- 13) **10/30** – Outreach Event at Grow Connect, 2100 Penn Ave. N., Mpls., MN 55411 with ZL, with 70 people outreached;
- 14) **11/07** – Outreach Event at Chinese American Chamber of Commerce – MN, 7901 12th Ave S, Bloomington, MN 55425, with 182 people reached;
- 15) **11/24** – Hmong New Year Event, Brooklyn Park Community Center, 5600 85th Ave N, Minneapolis, MN 55443, with 400 reached;
- 16) **12/18** – Holiday Outreach Event at Cora McCorvey Health & Wellness Center, 1015 Fourth Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55405, with 500 people outreached;
- 17) **12/19** – at Chinese American Chamber of Commerce – MN, 7901 12th Ave S, Bloomington, MN 55425, with 120 people reached; and

18) **01/09** - at Chinese American Chamber of Commerce – MN, 7901 12th Ave S, Bloomington, MN 55425, with 200 people reached.

TOTAL: 7,096 people reached through direct community engagement events

c. Contributed a list of 121 Asian small businesses and cultural assets for the BLRT GIS map

3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what your learned?

See the Attachment #1

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

West Broadway – due to more business communities may benefit from the Light Rail, and since West Broadway area has more public transit stops and frequencies, more people can get to West Broadway easier to transfer to the Blueline.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.

- Consideration an overall ecosystem approach and how public transportation playing in people’s lives, than just focusing on transit;
- Considering to do more visual support along with Pros vs. Cons situations, so the communities can better comprehend what is the route/station design truly mean to them;
- Setting up information sessions earlier on, so CBOs can better push info out;
- Choosing mix populations’ photos, so far many are mainstream members riding on transits; and
- Posting on billboards and bus stations about the Blueline planning, we need to immerse people through diverse channels.

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information.

N/A

Attachment #1 - List of community issues and opportunities
from Asian Media Access

SECTION I. Generation Discussions:

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

- Seeking explanation for the Former Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Station Locations.
- Possible having census tract map to reflect the level of car ownership along the Blueline?
- What's going on with the delay on the Blue Line Extension LRT.
- Need to educate community on how to use/ride transit.
- Metro Transit having translations for all language simultaneously.

NORTH MINNEAPOLIS

- At least a dozen different cultures in our blocks.
- Use marketing to change mindset, humanize all North Mpls riders, showcase diverse riders to break stereotypes.
- Promote cultural destinations to enjoy food, dance performances, celebrations.
- Close to the farmer's market - you can go shopping and feel like you are a part of the place.
- Developing something like a Christmas Village, members selling hand crafts and people can walk around to look and buy stuff.
- Theodore Wirth Park can be promoted as a regional destination.

BROOKLYN CENTER

- Worried about crime and safety while riding the transit.
- Worried about pedestrian crossings for elderly.

BROOKLYN PARK

- Concern about taxes going up - want to be able to stay and live and work 63rd Avenue
- No parking for people who use LRT, People parking in neighborhood.
- Many immigrants businesses here.
- 85th Avenue N - Need Job training/workforce center.
- Zane Ave is where many transit dependent people live and need strong feed-in bus lines.
- Need to improve parking/accessibility/connections.
- More small businesses along the LRT (ice cream or BBQ stand).
- North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) buildings see-through Brooklyn Boulevard.
- Link to NHCC and other schools with jobs being developed at 93rd and Oak Grove/Target.

SECTION II. Concerns from Asian American communities:

A. ASIAN ELDERS' CONCERNS

- Elders need transportation to events.

- Hmong community has problems with public transportation because of safety issues
- Language/translation is a barrier - Multi-lingual because grandparents are taking care of kids too and may not have strong English skills or be literate (Lao, Hmong).
- Language barrier will prevent many older Hmong residents from using LRT.
- Elder members do not drive and rely upon younger people to drive them places. Older people without transportation options get stuck in their homes.
- Concerns regarding safety on LRT. Just like in other cultural communities, there is an increase in the senior population. There is a low comfort level with using transit due to language and cultural barriers.
- Heard about the meeting through a gardening meeting, through radio and through Hmong radio.

B. Lao priority – want to stay in their community. Keep housing affordable and close to amenities.

- Have to travel to St. Paul or Brooklyn Park for grocery shopping for their foods.
- Barbershop, pharmacy, restaurant, grocery store, fast food.
- Seniors don't live on their own – always with family.
- Younger families are moving into single family homes in Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park.
- Lao community has lived by Van White and Olson Memorial HWY, many are 50 – 55 years.

C. BUSINESS AREA CONCERNS:

- No displacement, and making existing businesses stronger - Increase the desirability of what's here.
- Creating affordable rental spaces for businesses.
- Need for more cultural businesses and celebrations that reflect the community.
- Creating a unified look for area branding and each corridor has own branding, ex. Cultural Awareness months, celebrations represented at cultural nodes.
- Should be a good mix, keep desirable businesses and attract others that residents want and need.
- Worried the Asian businesses won't have a stop near them.
- Being able to get to the station area and use transit to get businesses and services are important to build wealth and have people in the area stay there. Grocery stores and businesses are important for people's health.
- Need to view immigrant communities as business owners, entrepreneurs who can contribute greatly to local.

D. HOUSING CONCERNS:

- Minimize resident and business displacement.
- Repairing and preserving existing housing – single family homes and rental housing.
- Mixed use and multi-unit housing.
- Multi-generation housing.
- Need affordable housing, but need a variety of different sizes of units (ex. large Asian family size).
- If higher density housing were to be developed, include green space for gardens
- Single family homes with cultural representation.
- Things for young people, teen housing and senior housing.

E. COMMUNITY CONNECTION:

- The Asian community wants entertainment space close to the Blue Line, a place that could be rented by community members for celebrations, events, and marketplace events.
- Preserve the community gathering place, like Asian grocery stores, daycare centers to preserve the cohesion of the Asian communities - For community engagement, participants want to see outreach go to where people are naturally gathering along.
- Community wants to make sure there are gathering spaces close to the Blue Line, such as bubble tea shops or Hmong restaurants where people can relax and talk with each other that is affordable.
- Connecting with existing community resources, such a media and community-based groups.

F. ROUTES DISCUSSION:

- Lowry vs. Broadway – many Asians prefer Broadway route
- Routes should go through more businesses area, and public building, like schools, government centers, library.
- Walking to the station is a key concern - making sidewalk connections to improve walkability. Asian's highest priority is walkability, not the bike paths.
- For walking pedestrian safety along with strengthening sidewalk connections have been mentioned a lot.
- Sidewalks in good conditiones are important to allow non-driving people to make connections.
- Sidewalk connections are food for elderly.
- Making sidewalk connections to improve walkability.

G. STATION DESIGN

- Station area needs to be well lit.
- Like easy access for pedestrians.
- For commercial and business nodes, reflecting local communities and cultures at business nodes.
- For marketing and branding, recognizing culture and history as the corridor positions itself for future development opportunities.
- Like to have better Lighting and Heating system.
- Possible to check on census tract data to place the shelter at higher number of households without a car, not just the business intersections?
- Want corridors to add to/enhance the community not just functionally, but aesthetically too.
- Connecting to places to grab food and a direct path with wayfinding to local businesses.
- Concerned about loitering around station area.
- Safe walking paths around LRT stations are important.
- Prioritize pedestrians safety and the design stations – not having car passing through.

H. PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- Crosswalks don't always have signals.
- Trying to cross the intersection at 42nd/Lake Drive and Bottineau/81 is dangerous.
- Maintain safe pedestrian connections – few people noted where walking across to the street around station areas are dangerous.

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement (CLNE)

Contact: Kelly Chatman, k.chatman@clne-mn.org,

Date: January 26, 2022

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

Our outreach was focused on faith communities, particularly in North Minneapolis.

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes:

Task 1: Community Engagement Cohort Meetings

We joined the engagement cohort later in the process but participated throughout October 2021 - January 2022.

Task 2: Support communications in collaboration with the Community engagement cohort

We supported communications that amplified BLRT project messaging and events such as:

- Four social media type posts reaching around 1000 people
- Two E-blasts to listserv for reach of 150 people
- Newsletter to list of 100
- Flyers at community dinner with 100 people
- Poster and guidebook - seen/available to 100 people

Task 3: Engage Faith Community in North Minneapolis

Direct community engagement included -

- 20 people in one-to-one conversations throughout October 2021-December 2021
- 3 conversations with organizations October 2021 - November 2021
- 100 people at Community Meal in November 2021
- 75 households receiving flyer at Christmas Store bag giveaway - December 2021

We also convened an engagement conversation with Robbinsdale & North Minneapolis faith leaders - 4 pastors representing 1000 church members - November 2021

The total of these engagements is around 200 people directly.

With the shorter time frame in which we had to learn and begin this process, we felt successful at getting information out. We had hoped but (due to timing) were not able to hire someone to take even more of a lead in doing community organizing.

3. As a community topic expert, provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?

- a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered?

From what we've heard and learned, our key questions are:

- How will displacement be prevented? And in concrete ways.
 - How can this process disrupt displacement? What will the economic benefit be to residents?
 - How will transportation be improved in evenings and on Sunday mornings? (Times when faith communities typically gather.)
 - Will there be consistent access to the BLRT stops via buses?
 - How can residents (especially non-homeowners) feel that their voice matters?
4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

No clear consensus, but from our experience it leaned toward the Lowry route.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.

First, we'd recommend funding community organizers who are able to have more one on one conversations. Large group conversations make it more challenging to facilitate everyone's voices being heard.

When we were trying to plan a standalone informational event, the timing did not work out. But also, we learned and want to pass along advice to tie information into proximity of where people experience daily life. We noticed people that own homes tend to see the investment and are more eager to share their voices, but it's more difficult to gain the participation of people who do not own homes. Thus, we recommend more investment in opportunities where community members are already gathering (like the community meals, Christmas gift giveaways, Block party type of events) to engage people that are less likely to seek out information or attend forums. Similarly, investing in summer communications (when weather is conducive / people are more available to one another) would also be a helpful time for gathering community voice.

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list the name of organizations and contact information.

In general, we recommend more strategic investment in churches, mosques, synagogues, etc. as opportunities for relationship-centered communication. Especially as faith communities have power to gather people whose voices aren't always heard/included in these processes.

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: Northside Residents Redevelopment Council

Contact: Martine Smaller, msmaller@nrrc.org

Date: 1.28.22

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

Our work focused on gathering the perspectives and understanding the lived experiences of the residents of the Willard Hay and Near North neighborhoods in North Minneapolis. In particular we focused on the perspectives of Black residents, seniors, youth, and residents who have lived in this community for more than 25 years.

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes **such as**:

- a. Amplify BLRT communications = Total number of social media posts such as: facebook posts, emails, whatsapp, e-newsletters.

Information about the Blue Line Extension and how to access it was included in 3 issues of Northside Pride NRRC's paper newsletter. We print 4500 copies of this paper newsletter and it is delivered to each household throughout the NRRC Zone (Willard Hay and Near North). We also translate it into Spanish and distribute it to residents who live in the City View apartments. These issues were distributed in May and September of 2021 and January of 2022.

NRRC connected with residents on social media through email blast and facebook. We engaged with 1200 email subscribers via the 15 email blasts where we shared information about the Blue Line Extension Project, how to get involved, and where to go for more information. Concurrently, Facebook posts of the same nature and amount reached 700 residents.

- b. **Direct community engagement** = Total number of engagement activities performed
 - i. NRRC engaged directly with residents at the following events: Ward 5 Candidate Forum, 2 bike giveaways, Youth Focus Groups, National Night Out, Board Elections, Tabling at locations throughout our community such as North Commons and the Homewood Apartments, the Bus Bike Walk Route Tour, and at our monthly NRRC Board meetings, Blue Line Committee meetings and door knocking.
 - ii. Total approximate number of people directly engaged = 450
 - iii. The murder of Daunte Wright (our outreach team has close ties to that community and situation) and the reticence of community members to meet in person due to the Corona Virus Delta Variant decreased the rate of our direct community engagement.

3. As a community topic expert, provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?

- a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered? **All community members** with whom NRRC engaged are concerned about potential displacement of residents from their homes and BIPOC small businesses from their longstanding places of business. North Minneapolis residents want to see an investment in our community that benefits the whole community, not just the individuals that live along the chosen route. Furthermore Northsiders do not want to be pitted against each other, vying for this transportation investment. Before choosing a

route residents want to hear actual figures regarding the amount of funds that would be invested to keep current residents and small businesses in their homes and places of operation. Some residents even felt disrespected that Met Council and Hennepin asked about selecting a route without first committing to stated investment amounts towards property tax and rent freezes.

Residents are really interested in seeing the Blue Line Extension become an example of a world class transportation system in North Minneapolis. Particularly residents want to see the Blue Line Extension serve as an example to the world of how to do transportation upgrades executed in the right manner that improves the quality of life for BIPOC residents and businesses and for residents who are struggling financially and live without the cushion of generational wealth.

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

The majority of residents with whom we engaged want the light rail to go down Lowry while simultaneously investing in transportation improvements along Broadway. Lowry is preferred because it is a wider street and is less developed than Broadway. The thought is that Lowry could become a new commercial district and Broadway could be restored as a cultural district which is consistent with the West Broadway plan. Lowry could be a newly developed transportation corridor connecting North Memorial to the Upper Harbor Terminal where Broadway could be a shopping/business district similar to Grand Ave or 50th and France but with only bus traffic and a specific bus circular that would run up and down Broadway from Robbinsdale to the river.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.

This is a very difficult topic to discuss with residents especially since our community and our residents have experienced so much abuse and exploitation around other transportation and government projects. (Many NRRC residents either experienced displacement or are the descendants of displaced individuals due to the implementation of I 94.) For this reason, the responsibility of engagement on this topic rests with Hennepin County and Met Council. Community and neighborhood organizations can provide Hennepin County and Met Council staff with lists of other community organizations, churches and other such organizations and stakeholders for engagement purposes. Then governmental organizations can present directly to the community.

Further, NRRC recommends that Met Council and Hennepin County staff opt to take the position that they are community advocates tasked with realizing the community's transportation vision. As insiders in these governmental agencies, if they are fighting for and advocating for our vision rather than telling us what is not possible, then they will become trusted allies vs gatekeepers.

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information.

Phyllis Wheatley

Hospitality House

Every school in North Minneapolis (public, charter and private) deserves a presentation on this proposal along with having information on hand in their offices. These presentations should happen at back to school nights in the fall or during conference days.

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report
 Organization: West Broadway Business and Area Coalition
 Contact: Jamar Smith - Program Manager
 jamar@westbroadway.org
 Date: 1/19/2021

WBC focused its outreach in the North Near Community which consist of neighborhoods of:

- Harrison
- Hawthorne
- Jordan
- Near North
- Sumner-Glenwood
- Willard-Hay

Our Engagement outreach work also happened with businesses on the West Broadway Corridor and Lowry Avenue North Minneapolis.

Task	Task Description and Report
One	<p>Share community survey on route preferences: Survey will be shared live during the monthly Northside Business Luncheons. We'll utilize WBC Facebook pages to share surveys with businesses (WBC) and community(NorthMpls). We'll also utilize Instagram, our Bi Weekly Newsletter placement. We'll create informative graphics to place in local community publications such as North News.</p> <p>Report: WBC shared the Blue Line Extension Survey on its Facebook Page April 7, 2021. WBC also shared the community survey on its Facebook page on May 24, 2021. The Surveys were shared at the two BLRT Northside Business Luncheons in the chat with guests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● https://www.facebook.com/westbroadwaympls/photos/a.129256350441532/4178166798883780/?type=3 ● https://www.facebook.com/129250920442075/posts/4326936724006786/?d=n
Two	<p>Amplify BLRT project messaging through social media networks and community emails and newsletters: Bi</p>

	<p>Weekly Newsletter placement, as well as amplifying the BLRT project on WBC Facebook pages and Instagram with targeted campaigns. WBC Communications Coordination will design community and business graphics that will go in Newsletters, social media and websites.</p> <p>Report: Between March 2021-December 2021, WBC has amplified BLRT project messaging on its Facebook page and Instagram.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/westbroadwaympls/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ number of post: 40 ○ number of people reached: 2,464 ● Instagram: https://instagram.com/westbroadwaympls?utm_medium=copy_link <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ number of post: 10 ○ number of people reached: 1229 <p>Below are a list of WBC’s newsletters that amplified BLRT projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● https://mailchi.mp/f3a29c2c6688/sweet-sweet-november-wbc-newsletter ● http://mailchi.mp/5d700c9fa80a/black-friday-broadway-wbc-newsletter-10544693 ● http://mailchi.mp/001474d37ee9/merry-december-wbc-newsletter-10550269 ● https://mailchi.mp/1dafff55092d/remembering-bill-cottman-wbc-newsletter-10555985 ● https://mailchi.mp/57984e0bb628/happy-new-year-wbc-newsletter-10561185
Three	<p>Review BLRT Project material for recommendations on best practices for communicating with the public: WBC Communications Coordinator will review and provide recommendations</p> <p>Report: WBC Communications Coordinator has created graphics for the BLRT projects that were shared on WBC facebook page and Instagram and used in WBC’s newsletters.</p> <p>https://www.facebook.com/westbroadwaympls/ https://instagram.com/westbroadwaympls?utm_medium=copy_link</p>
Four	<p>Produce short videos for community storytelling- WBC will work with local artists and creative entrepreneurs to create</p>

	<p>video narratives told by business and community voices. Stories will be shared through social media and published to WBC YouTube Channels</p> <p>Report: WBC worked with local videographer Emmanuel Duncan to create 4 short videos and 1 extended video of all the short videos for a community storytelling narrative(s) told by business owners along the West Broadway Corridor. The business owners that were interviewed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teto Wilson - Wilson’s Image ● Sue Freidman- Friedman Shows ● Mike Oker - 4th Street Saloon ● Dr. Watson- Watson Chiropractic <p>Videos</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extended version: https://youtu.be/j0xA1O9EcDM ● Short videos: https://we.tl/t-OkVeeA2jyh
Five	<p>Plan and implement 3 Virtual listening sessions that will inform community and small business on the route selection process and decision-making: We will host 3 Northside Business Luncheons for the small businesses. Facilitate listening sessions that will both include business and community input and engagement on the route selection process and decision-making. WBC will bring together elected officials, community and businesses during these sessions to get a wholistic engagement with the community and businesses surrounding West Broadway Ave.</p> <p>Report: WBC Hosted 3 Northside Business Luncheons for businesses and Community that focused on the BRLT project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● April 15,2021 - Planning Zoning & Development: BLRT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attendance: 46 ○ Views on Facebook: 360 ○ Link: https://fb.watch/aUgyUNWrLP/

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Panelist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sophia Ginis- Metropolitan Council ■ Nick Landwer- Metropolitan Council ● August 19, 2021- Planning Zoning & Development: BLRT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attendance: 12 ○ Views on Facebook: 100 ○ Link: https://fb.watch/aUguWhuHjw/ ○ Panelist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sam O’Connell- Metro Transit ■ Dan Soler- Hennepin County ■ Ian Alexander- Riverfront ● September 16, 2021- Transportation Equity on the Corridor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attendance: 22 ○ Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUIf-CtrT8vHtCtYz_i2wYhxy4I-AL5sCN1 ○ Panelist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joan Vanhala- Hennepin County ■ Sam O’Connell- Metro Transit ■ Dan Soler- Hennepin County ■ Chris Webley- New Rules ■ Ricardo Perez- The Alliance
Six	<p>Plan and implement 1 pop-up at community gathering places or events to inform and engage with community and small business on the route selection process and decision-making: Open Streets West Broadway which is an annual event that brings businesses and community together. We plan to partner with biking groups like Major Taylor Fitness and Cycle Sisters to host interactive biking/walking trips along the corridor to help the community and businesses visualize themselves and potential changes in the physical space of West Broadway Ave and solicit feedback. The rides will happen during our annual Open Streets West Broadway event scheduled for Sept. 11,2021.</p>

	<p>Report:</p> <p>WBC hosted a successful Bus, Bike, and Walk collaborative BLRT Pop-up event on Oct 9th. Great intergenerational turnout, all the bikes were donated between Cycle Sisters and Lyft.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 21 community members registered, over 50 attended, majority participating in the bike ride. Simultaneously, rode and received community feedback at curated “possible” stations and key areas along Broadway and Lowry corridors. ● Community members from the ride seemed optimistic about the train overall but skeptical when it came to land use and the geo economic agendas, commentary around public health, compensation, and anti displacement efforts came up often. ● We conducted interviews with community members and employees. Videographer Bruce Williams created a recap video in addition to our individual interviews. See first draft here: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/5jzt2b79l427744/AACY0ckDj0S_gUNIF_8fAr8da?dl=0&preview=Blue+Line+Ext+Bike+Ride+Recap.mp4 ●
Seven	<p>Facilitate 1 focus group that will center Black businesses and community input on the route selection process and decision-making. WBC will bring together members of the project team, the anti-displacement workgroup and Black businesses during this session to get feedback and input from the Black businesses surrounding West Broadway Ave.</p>

Below is a list of critical community issues and opportunities:

- If the METRO Blue Line Extension is selected to go down West Broadway, will there be access to street parking, or is there an opportunity to have parking to shopping areas if not on the street?
- Besides the METRO Blue Line Extension being developed in North Minneapolis, what further development will bring about gentrification issues? An anti-displacement workgroup will be formed to address community and businesses' concerns around gentrification and make recommendations.

- Are safety measures being considered to deal with homelessness and the Blue Line going through North Minneapolis?
- What supports and programs will there be to help businesses and the community before, during, and after the METRO Blue Line construction?

WBC conducted a survey, which asked businesses and community members what route they prefer for the METRO Blue Line Extension. The results were evenly split for both West Broadway and Lowry as a possible route. 60 responses were made to this survey.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/17CgE1U6V8NaJmWTN9B0uM6eLUZAZNOZ3ZG2PdZNKjTA/edit?ts=618c359b>

Based on the feedback from businesses and community members, WBC recommends the following for community engagement for 2022

- One-on-one interview with local business owners and residents
- Monthly Northside Business Luncheons with businesses and residents
- Town Halls where Businesses hear from other communities and business owners who have had experience with METRO Rail Lines as well as project leaders.
- Advising and amplifying project messaging, educating the community on the project's status.



BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: Encouraging Leaders

Contact:

**Tezzaree El-Amin Champion,
info@encouragingleadersmn.org
(612)-428-3123 (612) MN-2-LEAD**

Date: 01/29/2022

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

Encouraging Leaders conducted an education and engagement outreach within the African American community members in Area 3: North Minneapolis regarding the Metro Blue Line Extension Light Rail Transit (BLRT) project and its benefits to the community. For this outreach, to amplify the BLRT project within the community, we created messages that were culturally specific to the African American Community. We disseminated these messages via social media networks, community emails, community newsletters, planned and implemented virtual listening sessions to engage corridor residents. The African American Community in North Minneapolis is known for its love to preserve its identity, culture, values, businesses, and much more. With this love in mind, Encouraging Leaders emphasized how the Metro Blue Line Extension Light Rail Transit (BLRT) project will connect people to jobs, education, healthcare, opportunities, drive investment, bring economic development while maintaining and preserving their identity, culture, values, businesses, and so on.

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes *such as*:

- A. Amplify BLRT communications** = Total number of social media posts such as:
 - i. Facebook posts: 20
 - ii. emails: 5
 - iii. Instagram Post: 16
 - iv. e-newsletters: 5
 - v. Video: 1
- B. Direct community engagement** = Total number of engagement activities performed

- May 1st 2021 **Sistah coop grand opening** IDS Center 80 S Eighth St Minneapolis, MN 55401

Total number of people outreached: 125

- May 11th 2021 **Job Fair** Mpls Urban League 2100 Plymouth Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55411

Total number of people outreached : 62



- May 17th 2021 **BLRT Facebook Live event** encouraging leaders FB <https://www.facebook.com/EncouragingLeadersMN/>
Total number of people outreached: 125
- June 1st 2021 **BLRT newsletter** <https://video.bonjoro.com/g/QOG-k8Um9Wd/player>
Total number of people outreached: 53
- June 5th 2021 **Pimento Relief Services** Pimento Jamaican Kitchen 2524 Nicollet Ave S Minneapolis, MN 55404
Total number of people outreached: 25
- June 5th 2021 **The Purple Day** Phyllis Wheatley Field 1301 Tenth Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55411
Total number of people outreached: 150
- June 14th 2021 **BLRT Awareness Video** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLSgd2NsAvg&t=17s>
Total number of people outreached: 2300
- June 16th 2021 **Youth Speak** 3808 Chicago Ave S
Total number of people outreached : 50
- August 1st 2021 **BLRT newsletter**
Total number of people outreached: 53
- August 3rd 2021 **National Night Out** August 3rd Farewell Park 1201 Sheridan Ave Minneapolis, MN 55411
Total number of people outreached: 100
- August 6th 2021 **Voter Registration Drive** Salvation Army
Total number of people outreached: 50
- August 8th 2021 **Ice Cream Social** North Commons Park
Total number of people outreached: 380
- October 1st 2021 **BLRT newsletter**
Total number of people outreached: 53



- October 22nd 2021 **Health is Wealth** Vaccination Event Washington Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55401
Total number of people reached: 125
- October 31st 2021 **Halloween Bash** Target 6100 Shingle Creek Pkwy Brooklyn, MN 55430
Total number of people reached: 1000
- November 1st 2021 **BLRT newsletter**
Total number of people outreached: 53
- November 10th 2021 **Community Meeting** Nov 11th Family Life Center 1922 25th Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55411
Total number of people reached: 150
- December 1st 2021 **Health is Wealth Vaccination Event** 121 Washington Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55401
Total number of people reached: 63
- December 1st 2021 **BLRT newsletter**
Total number of people outreached: 53
- December 4th 2021 **Self Perfected Minnesota** 121 Washington Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55401
Total number of people reached: 100
- December 11th 2021 **Building Community with real Purpose** 121 Washington Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55401
Total number of people reached: 100
- December 15th 2021 **Men's Group** Tighten Up Gym 2908 Harriet Ave Minneapolis, MN 55408
Total number of people reached: 35
- December 19th 2021 **Ugly Christmas Sweater Party** Moxy Downtown Minneapolis 247 Chicago Ave S. Minneapolis, MN 55415
Total number of people reached: 75
- December 22nd 2021 **A Gift From The Heart a Christmas Celebration for La'Davionne Greer (A kid shot in north Minneapolis due to gun violence)**– New Salem Missionary Baptist Church 2507 Bryant Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55411



Total number of people reached: 150

- December 29th2021 **Mens group** Tighen Up Gym 2908 Harriet Minneapolis, MN 55408

Total number of people reached: 70

- January 1st2021 **BLRT newsletter**

Total number of people outreached: 53

- January 17th2022 **Collaborative meeting w/ Knowledge is Power LLC** 2:00pm-3:20pm (Community Engagement Outreach Planning)

Total number of people reached: 15

- January 18th2022 **Favorite Sneaker Event Planning Meeting** 121 Washington Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55401

Total number of people reached: 25

- January 20th2022 **Domestic violence prevention training** North Regional Library 1315 Lowry Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55411

Total number of people reached: 50

- January 27th2022 **Vaccination Event** 121 Washington Ave N Minneapolis, MN 55401

Total number of people reached: 40

Total number of people directly engaged = 5,530

3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what your learned?

While we spent time with the community during the outreach and awareness programs, we discovered that the community members had mixed feeling about the project. Some members were excited and happy to have such accessibility within their community. They believed the Metro Blue Line Extension Light Rail Transit (BLRT) project would make movement within the community easier and faster while increasing their accessibility from other communities. They were expectant and open to the possibilities the change could bring to the community.

On the other hand, some members felt confused as to why the routes were an option in the first place. They felt a little bit resistant to the change coming to the community. Most of them were scared of the unknown and heard the fear of displacement. They believed the project might affect or disrupt their way of life. Their fears included damage to their houses, grocery shops, hair salons, churches, etc.



One of the major issues faced during this community engagement outreach is the unavailability of environmental information. Questions concerning the environmental effects of the extension were raised by the community members and most of these questions were not answered as the answers were not readily available.

a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered?

During the community engagement outreach, the community members had a lot of questions regarding how the Metro Blue Line Extension Light Rail Transit (BLRT) project will affect their lives, livelihood, health, etc. The most prominent questions from the community engagement outreach include;

- How is this project going to affect their health and wellness?
- How loud are these train and train stations going to be?
- Is the train station going to run 24 hours a day?
- How long from start to finish of the extension project?
- When will they have access to ride?
- What route is going to be selected?

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

From our perspective, as community topic experts and from the response got from our target demography, West Broadway is highly favored. Most of the community members that participated preferred the route option to be West Broadway.

With the response of the community members, we make the following recommendations;

1. The project should be completed as swiftly as possible to reduce the time of disruption of the daily activities of the community members.
2. The project should be completed without the community members losing a lot of the black-owned businesses that they frequent such as their grocery stores, hair salons, etc. The community members would like to keep their identity and culture. This will ensure that their identity is preserved as much as possible.
3. The businesses that the community members frequent should remain accessible during the project. This will ensure little or no disruption to their daily life during the project.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.



We have the following recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension;

1. Displacement strategies should be made available and accessible before the 2022 community engagement. One of the major challenges faced by the 2021 community engagement was the unavailability of the displacement strategies. Making this available will answer questions and concerns of the community members regarding displacement.
2. Concrete plans should be made by all involved in the community engagement for each phase of the engagement.
3. An environmental survey should be provided beforehand. In the instance of the 2021 engagement, in the community's eyes, the buggy was before the horses. Providing this would have helped to subside some of our demographic discomforts from the start. Doing this will equip the organizations conducting the community engagement with the information needed to answer the questions and settle the concerns of community members concerning the effect of the project on their environment.

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information.

BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach with the following organizations;

Organization 1

Name of organization: A Gardner Builders Remodeler

Contact Person: Ogbondah Amadi Sr, CEO

Telephone: n/a

Email: a.gardnerbuilders@outlook.com

Organization 2

Name of organization: Al-maa'uun

Contact Person: Makram El-Amin, **Executive Director**

Telephone: 612-326-5851

Email: info@new.almaauun.org

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: Harrison Neighborhood Association

Contact: Nichole Buehler, nichole@hnampls.org, 612-360-0464

Date: January 29, 2022

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

Harrison Neighborhood Association (HNA)'s outreach was focused on the Harrison neighborhood of North Minneapolis; however, our meetings and events also drew in residents from surrounding neighborhoods (Willard-Hay, Near-North, Heritage Park, Bryn Mawr).

2. HNA informed community about the new direction of the BLRT project, its impact on the Harrison/Near-North neighborhoods, ways to weigh-in on the decision-making process, and how to plug-in to specific HNA campaigns to “make Harrison whole” through the following communications:

- a. Facebook: 33 posts
- b. E-blasts: 3 (581 total emails opened)
- c. Postcard: 1 postcard sent to 1,300 Harrison households
- d. Press:
 - i. North News articles about displacement in Harrison & the new direction of the BLRT published on June 4, 2021, and June 7, 2021
 - ii. KSTP Channel 5 news story on Bring Back 6th & new direction of BLRT, aired November 17, 2021
 - iii. Sahan Journal article about Bring Back 6th, published on November 29, 2021
- e. Podcast: Insight News with Al McFarlane, interview w/HNA staff regarding new direction of BLRT in July 2021, and Bring Back 6th and new direction of BLRT on November 16, 2021

HNA consulted community on the route selection process and decision-making through the following Direct Engagement events and activities:

Date, location, and number of people reached

- 04/12/2021 HNA Board Meeting, Zoom, 15
- 04/17/2021 HNA Earth Day event, Peace Haven Garden, 30
- 04/24/2021 HNA Fireside event, Peace Haven Garden, 20
- 04/29/2021 County Streets for People event with Open Streets & West Broadway Area Coalition, Zoom, 20
- 05/10/2021 HNA Board Meeting, Zoom, 15
- 05/13/2021 HNA Annual Meeting, Zoom, 30
- 06/14/2021 HNA Board Meeting, Zoom, 15
- 07/12/2021 HNA Board Meeting, hybrid Zoom & in-person at Harrison Park, 15
- 07/13/2021 BLC Our Lives Are On the Line community conversation, Zoom, 40
- 07/13/2021 HNA Board Training Session, hybrid Zoom & in-person at Harrison Park, 14
- 08/09/2021 HNA Board Meeting, Zoom, 10

- 09/11/2021 HNA w/Blue Line Coalition Open Streets West Broadway, 50
- 09/13/2021 HNA Board Meeting, Zoom, 7
- 09/22/2021, HNA Blue Line Work Group meeting, Zoom, 4
- 10/09/2021, HNA “Broken Promises: What happens now that the train isn’t coming” event, Harrison Park, 8
- 11/08/2021, HNA Board Meeting, Zoom, 15
- 11/18/2021, HNA Blue Line Work Group meeting, Zoom, 20
- 11/20/2021, HNA & Our Streets Canvassing Launch for Bring Back 6th, Harrison Park, 20
- 01/25/2022, HNA & Our Streets Bring Back 6th Community Forum, Zoom, 80
- 01/28/2022, HNA w/Blue Line Coalition & the Alliance Actualizing Equity, 50
- Weekly canvassing for Bring Back 6th in Harrison & Heritage Park from 11/20/2021-01/30/2022, over 1,000

Total number of people directly engaged = 1,478

3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?
 - In general, residents from Harrison and the Near-Northside have expressed disappointment that the train will no longer be coming down Olson Highway.
 - For some residents, the news that the train is being re-routed was devastating—several residents cried when we told them about the new direction of the project. These were transit-dependent residents who bought homes in the area after the announcement of the former route.
 - Community members have been displaced because of rising property values and rents associated with the former route. One resident that was displaced from Harrison is now living near West Broadway. He is worried the same train will displace him again (see North News article).
 - For community members who have remained in the neighborhood, they grieve the loss of their former neighbors and are worried about their own ability to stay in the neighborhood.
 - Harrison residents still want to receive the benefits and amenities associated with the former route: pedestrian safety improvements on Olson Highway (see Bring Back 6th campaign ourstreetsmpls.org/olson), a community-serving grocery store, infrastructure improvements outlined in the Van White & Penn Ave station area plans, investment in deeply affordable housing (30% of AMI and below to be affordable for existing Harrison and Northside residents whose median income is \$35k/year), anti-displacements policies to help residents stay in their homes and in the community (rent control, TOPA, just cause eviction, more public housing, stricter inclusionary zoning, investment in homebuyer down payment assistance).
- a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered?

The Harrison community would like to know how the harm caused by the former route is going to be repaired. The community still expects to receive the benefits associated with the project (as noted above) and deserves to be made whole for the detriments caused by the project in the form of forced displacement of former Harrison residents, and continuing housing instability for the residents who remain.

Without anti-displacement policies and investment in place before route selection, how will the outcome for communities along West Broadway or Lowry be any different from Harrison?

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

Based on Harrison's experience with the former route, we believe a new route should not be selected until anti-displacement policies are in place and investments are made up front.

Due to considerations of geographic proximity, most Harrison residents that we've communicated with showed a preference for West Broadway with a station as close to Harrison as possible, and direct transit connections to the new route.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.

A new route should not be selected until there are firm commitments for the implementation of anti-displacement policies, investment in North Minneapolis, and the harm caused by the former route is addressed and repaired.

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information.

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: NEON

Contact: Terry Austin Community Engagement Manager:

Email: Terry@neon-mn.org

Phone: 612-230-4148

Date: January 20, 2022

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – **geography and culturally North Minneapolis, West Broadway Ave, and Lowry Ave, Business District, and faith communities, Non- Profit Organizations. BIPOC communities focus, neighborhoods, Camden areas.**
 2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes *such as*: Monthly Newsletter communication, weekly updates to businesses, key influencers, and community leaders, utilize all social media platforms.
 - a. Amplify BLRT communications = Total number of social media posts such as: Facebook posts, emails, WhatsApp, e-newsletters.
 - b. **Direct community engagement** = Total number of engagement activities performed
 - i. **List by category such as**
 - **Pop-up info table (such as at a vaccination event) = total number**
 2.
 - **BLRT focused listening session(s) = 20**
 - **BLRT focused community meetings = 25**
 - **Planned activities such as Bus, Bike, Walk Tour = 13**
 - **Video production/submissions 0**
 - **Other? Virtual Listening sessions- 3**
 - c. Total approximate number of people directly engaged = 1350
- OR this option**
- d. **Direct Community Engagement** list out by each individual activity:
 - **Date, activity, location, total number of people engaged per event**
 - **Sanctuary Church BLRT Community Conversation**
 - **New Salem Church-Community Meeting**
 - **Zion Church Community Conversation BLRT**
 - **Total number of people directly engaged = 750**
3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what your learned?
 - **Anti Displacement: Very big concern with local residents, what will be process, who will be affect, what resources are available, who determines the amount of property. What are the environmental issues, any long term issues for families and kids.**

- **What potential jobs/career opportunities will be available for BIPOC individuals and members of community.**
- **Will training be offered to individuals in the community.**
- **How long will construction take**
- **Temporary closures or detours during construction of the proposed BLRT Extension project would affect existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities**

- **Improved pedestrian and bicycle routes /connections and elevators at Plymouth Avenue and Golden Valley Road stations**

- **Improved pedestrian crossings at BLRT Extension project/freight rail corridor at existing roadway crossings**
 - a. **What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered? What is the Over Cost and Budget for BIPOC workers? Who will be the Primary contractor? Will this contractor be a local Minnesota Company?**

- 4. **From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?**

- 5. **Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension. Local Contractor to carry out Project. BIPOC contractors are supported and funding with training opportunities. Local Businesses are provided resources and subsidies to assist in businesses expenses. Any residents or businesses affected by environmental issues would be compensated.**

- 6. **Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information. Not currently. I feel BLRT had a robust outreach campaign with varies agencies across the Metro conducting outreach.**

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: **Lao Center of Minnesota**

Contact: **Sunny Chanthanouvong**, sunny@laocenter.org, 612.987.2642

Date: **01/25/22**

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally
 - a. **Lao and Southeast Asian Communities who reside in the City of Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, and in Hennepin County.**

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes **such as**:
 - a. Amplify BLRT communications = Total number of social media posts such as:
 - i. **10+ Facebook posts, 1 live video of BLRT**
 - b. Direct community engagement = Total number of engagement activities performed

Community Members Outreach

May

- **Talk of Lao'd Virtual Event 05/26/21 - 250**

July

- **Wat Lao East Bethel Festival 07/03/21 - 250**
- **Wat Lao Anoka 07/10/21 - 200**
- **Wat Lao Forest Lake 07/31/21 - 200**
- **Lao Tennis Tournament 07/10/21 - 75**
- **Lao Women Advancement Meeting 07/24/21 - 30**
- **Mammogram Health Event 07/30/21 – 40**
- **Blue Line/Recycling Workshop 07/24/21 – 40**

August

- **Lao Tennis Tournament 08/14/21 - 50**
- **Lao Women Advancement Meeting 08/28/21 – 26**
- **Mammogram Health Event 08/20/21 – 40**

September

- **Lao Tennis Tournament 09/11/21 - 45**
- **Lao Senior American Association Meeting 09/25/21 – 30**
- **Lao Sport Club Celebration Event 09/25/21 – 250**
- **Hennepin County Health Listening Workshop 08/27/21 - 30**

October

- **Lao Tennis Tournament 10/03/21**
- **Lao Women Friendly Club Gathering 10/09/21 - 30**
- **Mini Health Fair and Mammogram Health Event 10/14/21 – 500**
- **Lao Women Advancement Club Gathering 10/23/21 - 35**

November

- **Blue Line Virtual Event on Facebook 11/16/2021 – 150**
- **1st Booster Shot Event 11/13/21 – 300**
- **Lao Student Association U of M Virtual Meeting 11/17/21 - 25**
- **2nd Booster Shot Event 11/21/21 – 200**
- **Lao Women Advancement Meeting 11/28/21 – 40**

- c. Total approximate number of people directly engaged = **2,000+**

3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?
 - a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered?

Many of the Lao communities expressed concerns about safety while riding the light rail along with waiting at the each stops. Safety is a concern because of the language barrier to communicate with other passengers and the light rail staff. During our discussions with them, they talked about random acts of violence targeted against Asian residents and they fear that it will happen on public transportation. Safety concerns at each of the stops are focused on traffic control and how safe it is to walk across the street to wait at the stops. Lao Residents would like to know the different types of security for the light rails and how to keep them safe.

Lao Residents are also concerned about traffic during construction and how the routes may affect their daily commutes. They talked about the struggles of commuting and having to take detours and at times the traffic signs may get confusing. Noise will also be an issue because it will affect their daily activities. Many residents are also wondering about language accessibility and how that can affect their commuting communication. They have questions about the Blue Line Maps and if there will be Lao. They are concerned they may get lost if they take the light rail and struggle to find their way back.

Lao Communities are also concerned about the cost of property and living in the areas where the routes will go. They want to see if cultural stores such as Asian Markets will be on the routes to make it convenient for them. The cost to ride the light rail might be a barrier for some families therefore they want it accessible to all the Lao residents, both young and elderly, to be able to ride the light rail without having to worry about the cost. Lao Communities asked if there will be parking ramps on the routes for them to use. They are curious if there are ramps, what will the distance from the parking ramp to the Blue Line stop. This also adds into their curiosity of the distance between each stop whether it is a mile or three miles, Lao residents would like to have the access to reach their destination without having to walk or commute much further. Employment for the light rail such as construction or daily operations was mentioned. Lao residents are searching for jobs that are close to where they live. Another concern is displacement for communities. They wonder if the cost of living or property goes up, will they be able to stay where their or if the noise and crime is high, they may have to move out to another community.



Blue Line Event November 28th, 2021

Metro BlueLine Project

Please Circle Answer(s)

Do you know about the Blue Line Project?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe

What are your concerns about the Blue Line Project?

1. Safety
2. Increase of Living
3. Traffic
4. Crime

Do you use the light rail currently or will in the future?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Maybe

Survey Questions for Community Members on November 28th, 2021



Blue Line Program August 28th, 2021



Women's Health Fair 10/14/2021

Survey Questions for Community Members on August 28th, 2021

Do you or any of your household members has disabilities?

- Yes
- No

Employment

- Employed
- Unemployed
- Self Employed
- Retired

Household Income

- < \$20K
- \$20k - \$30K
- \$30K - \$40k
- \$40k - \$50k
- \$50 - \$60K
- \$60k - \$70k
- \$70k - \$80k
- \$80k - \$90k
- > \$100k

How many cars do you have at home?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- > 4

After section 2 Continue to next section





Blue Line Community Survey 2021

Questions Responses 24 Settings

Section 1 of 9

Blue Line Community Survey 2021



Form description

After section 1 Continue to next section

Section 2 of 9

Demographic Info



Description (optional)

What is your Zip Code?

Short answer text

Do you own or rent?

- Own
- Rent
- Other...

The closest street to your address

- Washington Ave
- Broadway
- Lowry
- 85th
- Other...

Household Size

Short answer text



Thank you for your participation



Description (optional)

Would you like to participate in future meetings about Blue Line?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

If "Yes" please leave your name and phone number below

Short answer text





Long answer text

4. What you like or don't like about this design?



Long answer text

After section 7 Continue to next section

Section 8 of 9

Minneapolis Vs. Brooklyn Park

Description (optional)

Between Minneapolis and Brooklyn Park Design, which one do you like better?

Minneapolis

Brooklyn Park



1. What you like or don't like about this design?



Long answer text

2. What you like or don't like about this design?



Long answer text

3. What you like or don't like about this design?



- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Would you be interested in learning or training how to open a business?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

If there are jobs be offered by Blue Line Project, would you be interested to work for?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

What kind of job would you like to work for the Blue Line project, if any?

Short answer text

Do you have skills and experience in construction work?

- Yes
- No

Would you like to enroll in construction work/skill training?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

After section 6 Continue to next section

Section 7 of 9

Exhibition



After section 4 Continue to next section

Section 5 of 9

Expectation



Description (optional)

Would like Blue Line project or stations constructed close to where you live?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Would you like to see Lao language assistance or sign on the light rail?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

After section 5 Continue to next section

Section 6 of 9

Support and Opportunities



Description (optional)

Do you planning to open business in the near future?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

What type of business do you plan to open?

Short answer text



- > 1 time per week
- 2 to 3 times per week
- 3 to 5 times per week
- > 5 times per week

What do you think or our experience about the light rail?

- Don't like it
- Like it
- It's Okay
- Not sure

Will you use or plan to use light rail in the future?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

What will you need to use light rail for?

- Just to try it out
- Work
- Shopping
- Seeing doctor
- Visit friends and families
- Other...

What is the biggest factor for you to consider using the light rail for?

- Price
- Safety
- Language
- Accessibility
- Crime



Awareness and Concerns



Description (optional)

Have you heard about Blue Line Project before?

- Yes
- No

What are your concern about the Blue Line Project?

- Safety
- Displacement
- Losing job
- Increase of cost of living
- Increase of housing or rent
- Traffics
- Health
- Environment
- Crime
- Noise
- Other...

After section 3 Continue to next section



Section 4 of 9

Personal Experiences



Description (optional)

Have you used light rail before?

- Yes
- No



Survey Questions for Community Members on August 28th, 2021

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?
 - a. **Lao Communities are split 50/50 on the routes because they live on both options for the routes. However, they would just like access in transportation to healthcare like the hospital or clinics and stores like Asian Markets.**

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.
 - a. **Engagement with residents in community settings and outreach to young adults who live in Hennepin County. Be a part of the engineering design such as signs, distances, noise, etc. Lao Residents would like to be engaged with understanding and developing the Blue Line.**

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information.
 - a. **Lao Center of MN has the capacity to do engagement and outreach to Lao and Southeast Asian Communities in Hennepin County.**

BLRT Community Engagement 2021 Final Report

Organization: Juxtaposition Arts

Contact: Kristen Murray, kristen.murray@juxtaposition.org, 612-588-1148

Date: 1/31/21

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

Our outreach focused on North Minneapolis, especially along the West Broadway corridor. This area has a high proportion of youth, renters, transit-riders, and is very racially diverse. JXTA's engagement especially focused on engaging Northside young people, transit riders, and other Northsiders, with a focus on the neighborhoods around West Broadway (spanning approximately Plymouth to Lowry, and Lyndale to Penn).

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes **such as**:

Our scope and deliverables included the following elements. Notes are included for each.

Communication Tools:

- Creation of **webpage on JXTA's website** about Blue Line Extension and JXTA engagement activities on JXTA's website:
<https://juxtapositionarts.org/programs/jxta-labs-apprenticeships/tactical-lab/blrt-extension/>
- Creation of **Blue Line Extension Zine**, published online and shared at the engagement events listed below:
<https://juxtapositionarts.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/BLRT-JXTA-Zine-final-spreads.pdf>
- The zine includes **3D renderings** of BLRT alignment options along West Broadway, Lowry and Lyndale.
- Creation of **3D model** of Northside alignment options in Google Earth. This model was used to create the renderings in the zine, and shared live with community members at the listening sessions listed below.
- Creation of a visual summary of what we heard through the engagement, shared on JXTA's website.

Engagement Events:

Pop-up activations - 3:

FLOW Northside Art Crawl at Emerson & Broadway: Sat, July 31, 11 am-4 pm

Pop-up at Lowry & Penn: Fri, Aug 13, 2-4 pm

Pop-up at Broadway & Aldrich: Thur, Aug 27, 5-7 pm

Tours and Listening Session Events - 2:

BLRT Extension Through North - Bus and Bike Tour & Listening Session, starting and ending at JXTA's Skate Plaza. Co-hosted with Cycle Sisters, Hawthorne Neighborhood, JACC, NRCC, WBC and the Metro Blue Line Extension: Sat, Oct 9, 12:30-2:30 pm

Workshop and Listening Session with students at PYC school: Tue, Dec 7, 10:30 - 12:30

Total approximate number of people directly engaged:

- Overall, in conversation at events and surveys = 190
- Surveys collected = 48

3. As a community topic expert, provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?

a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered?

These are the **Key Issues** that we heard. All of these are outstanding/unresolved questions at this time:

Displacement of businesses and residents. From our research, we understand that in the Stp Paul Green Line LRT project, there were financial supports available for businesses who were displaced, but that there weren't technical assistance resources available. People would like transparency on what an anti-displacement plan would look like and, as part of that, what supports would be included for residents who may be forced to move.

Gentrification, rent increases and impacts on people being able to stay in the neighborhood.

Fear of Broadway changing in a way where it doesn't feel like Northside. People want Broadway to develop in a way that builds on the culture and assets of the Northside community and not turn into something that feels like a different neighborhood/part of town.

Potential increases in crime by more outsiders coming in.

Prioritizing small businesses and especially BIPOC businesses, and questions around which route will really do that best. A lot of people said Broadway needs this business development,

while other people said Broadway's has businesses and had that development while Lowry needs more businesses and the train would bring that.

Feels like the train favors homeowners more than renters. A lot of housing developments will pop up around the train. Will they be affordable (and actually affordable for Northsiders).

Parking was another concern that was brought up was parking, but this wasn't as big of a concern as the previous ones that are listed above.

People still have questions about why an elevated track isn't an option.

These are the **Key Opportunities** we heard:

Growing Northside in a way that is conducive to the community: increasing businesses and building up the economy in North, and increased local job opportunities.

Increased transit access, especially for students who are commuting. Increased access for Northsiders to other parts of the city as well as increasing access to North Minneapolis, including bringing more customers to Northside businesses.

Art and design opportunities to beautify the neighborhood (for example, at stations) and modern transit structures on the Northside.

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

It really felt like a 50-50 split. We heard unanimous support for whatever route will cause the least displacement, and many people felt that would be Lowry, since Lowry is a wider street (at least on the east end). On the other hand, people noted that Broadway has more of a consistent width (it doesn't get narrow like Lowry), and still has space and opportunity for development.

Most of our engagement happened before the pre-designs were released and so we couldn't use that information, and the pre-designs didn't include quantifiable information about potential displacement impacts.

It's important to note that we found that most people we talked to needed to be updated and informed about the BLRT Extension overall (that a route is even being planned through the Northside). For many who did already know about it, that it's not happening on Olsen and that new routes are being considered.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.

Integrate anti-displacement engagement and information alongside route planning strategies.

Provide better (clearer, more descriptive and digestible) information about potential property impacts.

Continue to make the pre-designs available and available in a digestible format.

Continue to make information about the overall project readily available (for example, posters at bus stops).

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to?
Please list names of organizations and contact information.

Masjid An-Nur

Cub Foods Community Center

Boys and Girls Club on Irving

North Regional Library

Urban League

Northpoint



BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: CAPI USA

Project Contact: Amanda Xiong, amanda.xiong@capiusa.org

Agency Contract: Ekta Prakash, ekta.prakash@capiusa.org

Phone: 612-721-0122

Date: 01.13.2021

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

Here at CAPI USA, we focused our outreach on those who live in Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, and North Minneapolis- which is where many of our CAPI clients reside. Many of those that participated in Blue Line engagement outreach were of Asian descent and the age group diversified from seniors to youth! When doing outreach through our CAPI food shelf, we were able to inform many of our clients who also come from different ethnic backgrounds about what was going on around the BLRT corridors as well as what they can do to be more involved.

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes *such as*:
 - a. **BLRT communications/Social media Engagement:**

Date, activity, location, total number of people engaged per post. Total direct engagement = 3517

- 11.15.2021 Blue Line workshop info, Instagram - 44
- 11.15.2021 Blue Line workshop info, Facebook - 128
- 11.09.2021 Blue Line workshop info, Instagram - 46
- 11.09.2021 Blue Line workshop, Facebook - 76
- 11.03.2021 Blue Line workshop info, Instagram - 46
- 11.03.2021 Blue Line workshop, Facebook - 111
- 09.01.2021 general blue line info, Facebook - 150
- 08.25.2021 general blue line info, Facebook - 170
- 08.11.2021 general blue line info, Facebook - 170
- 08.11.2021 Blue line virtual event, Facebook/zoom - 162
- 08.04.2021 General blue line info, Facebook - 403
- 05.24.2021 Blue line Fb live Comm D1, Facebook - 101
- 05.19.2021 Blue Line Survey, Instagram - 57
- 05.19.2021 Blue Line Survey, Facebook - 457
- 05.05.2021 Blue Line Survey, Facebook - 137



- 04.05.2021 Blue Line Survey, Instagram - 58
- 04.05.2021 Blue Line Survey, Facebook - 201

b. Direct Community Engagement:

Date, activity, location, total number of people engaged per event

- 12.18.2021 Blue line focus group 2, LAC/Minneapolis - 42
- 11.24.2021 MNZZ Hmong new year, Brooklyn Park Community Center/Brooklyn Park - 14
- 10.08.2021 CAPI Fresh Produce Friday, CAPI USA/Brooklyn Center - 70
- 09.24.2021 CAPI Fresh Produce Friday, CAPI USA/Brooklyn Center - 58
- 09.10.2021 CAPI Fresh Produce Friday, CAPI USA/Brooklyn Center – 71
- 08.14.2021 Blue Line Tabling Event, Becker Park/Crystal - 20
- 08.14.2021 Blue Line Tabling at Tater Daze, Tater Daze/Brooklyn Park - 148
- 08.12.2021 Blue line focus group 1, CAPI USA/Brooklyn Center - 14
- 07.23.2021 CAPI Fresh Produce Friday, CAPI USA/Brooklyn Center - 538
- 07.21.2021 Brooklyn Park farmers market, City Hall/Brooklyn Park - 25
- 07.09.2021 CAPI Fresh Produce Friday, CAPI USA/Brooklyn Center - 459
- 04.30.2021 Distribution event, Cross of Glory/Brooklyn Center - 1346
- Total number of people directly engaged = 2805

3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?
 - a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered?

The community feedback that we had received revolved a lot around displacement and what work we are currently doing to avoid it. Many of those who live along the corridor of the Blue Line are refugees, and they have made their voices heard. These refugees express great concern about having to constantly be on their feet. A particular CAPI client who had attended our Blue Line focus group mentioned, “We Hmong people don’t have a country. Coming here to the US, we were hoping to call this place home, but we may get displaced again. We just want to finally find a place that we can proudly call home.”

Another question that was brought to our attention had to do with safety procedures. How can we ensure this transit to be safe for our students, our children, in the community after dark? Is there a way we can somehow implement extra security and precautions to avoid transit torts.



4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

From my perspective doing outreach on the route options, I would say the routes may sometimes be misleading when asking community members to choose either or. Many of those who have heard of the Blue Line or have been well informed of the pros and cons of each route chose West Broadway. The main responses for why they had chosen West Broadway was “There’s a lot more smaller businesses in need of the revenue that the Blue Line can potentially bring. Lowry seems to have more of a residential side to it, and we don’t want to destroy neighborhoods.” However, those who have just learned about the transit project chose Lowry. The main responses for why they had chosen Lowry was “because it looks less complicated. Wouldn’t it be easier to have a transit route that is a straight shot of that a line?” Many of the votes that we had taken account of had been split evenly between both routes.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.
 - Engagement and work with CURA to help provide any information needed for research around displacement.
 - Continuation of providing handouts, pamphlets, and posterboards of visuals.
 - Better management around translations
 - We must ensure that translated documents are correct as well as accessible to inform communities about the Blueline
 - These documents/fliers should be accessible the same time as the English copy
6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information.
 - a. Ethnic media,
 - b. Disability organization/news media
 - c. Schools and cultural organizations

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report
Organization: **Hawthorne Neighborhood Council**

Contact: name, email, phone: **Diana Hawkins**

dhawkins@hawthorneneighborhoodcouncil.org

612-529-6033

Date: 1/21/2022

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally
Hawthorne –BIPOC residents, 3,707 or 77.8% - population is 4,764 with 1,656 or 35.1% below poverty, 200% of poverty is lower 2,889 or 61.2% and 17.4% is disability.

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes *such as*:

a. Amplify BLRT communications = Total number of social media posts such as: facebook posts, emails, whatsapp, e-newsletters.

HNC provided monthly newsletter, emails, facebook posting.

b. **Direct community engagement** = Total number of engagement activities performed

i. List by category such as

- Pop-up info table (such as at a vaccination event) = **None**
- BLRT focused listening session(s) = **All**
- BLRT focused community meetings = **All**
- Planned activities such as Bus, Bike, Walk Tour = **Planned for media opportunity along with advertising.**
- Video production/submissions
- Other?

c. Total approximate number of people directly engaged

OR this option

d. **Direct Community Engagement** list out by each individual activity:

- Date, activity, location, total number of people engaged per event
- Conversation with Al McFarlane – Oct. outreach to various sites and the show was broadcast nationally.
- Hawthorne Huddle promoted the BLRT – Sept. outreach to various communities and the show was broadcast nationally.
- Monthly- web postings, Facebook, Nextdoor, Postcards, resident listing, MailChimp and flyers. Local News was involved with covering the Bike, Bus & Walk tour.
- Total number of people directly engaged = over 3,000.

3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?

- **Issues: Parking for West Broadway Business after construction**
Traffic Enforcement at grade crossing (people running light & collisions)
Construction disruptions
Displacements
Vandalism

Foot traffic to businesses is safe both during and after construction

- **Opportunity:**
 - Vacant land along Lowry for development**
 - Development along Washington**
 - Transit Hubs (Emerson/Lyndale/Washington)**
 - Street Beautification**
 - Eliminate parking minimums & lots**
 - Public Art**
- a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered? **Where are the transit hubs located and what development is planned for the neighborhoods around the routes. How will safety be ensured at the transit hubs after construction? What considerations are being made for displacement of businesses or surrounding homes?**

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry? **To make sure there is parking for the businesses as well as safety enforcement. Which of the potential routes would displace or inconvenience businesses and surrounding residents?**

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension. **To make sure there is always community input and to keeping them informed quarterly if possible. Have BLRT offer some incentives for seniors.**

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information. **We may want to involve the boots on the ground groups (there are several) if they are not already and the faith base groups.**

BLRT community engagement 2021 final report

Organization: Jordan Area Community Council (JACC)

Contact:

Cathy Spann, former Executive Director , spannhousehold1914@q.com, 612-760-0701
Audua Pugh , Board Chair, calmplace2b@gmail.com, 612-840-4976

Date: 2/17/2022

1. Describe your community where you focused your outreach – geography and culturally

JACC is the nonprofit, citizen participation organization for the Jordan neighborhood located on the northside of Minneapolis. Its mission is to “organize people, knowledge and capital for the collective empowerment of Jordan residents.” It is one of Minneapolis first community organizations, JACC began in 1964 when local PTA members came together to prevent closure of the North Branch public library. That struggle, which resulted in a new North Regional Library opening in 1970, firmly established JACC as a grass roots organization based upon the belief that residents could solve problems through collective action.

JACC focused its outreach effort on the Jordan neighborhood. Jordan is bordered on the north by Lowry Avenue and on the east by Emerson Avenue, it has a unique border on the south and west by West Broadway Avenue.

The neighborhood is a community representing the widest breadths of lifestyles and demographics in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Jordan is mainly a residential neighborhood, and its major strength is its composition of racially and ethnically diverse residents; Black 50.9% (4,150), South East Asian 14.5% (1,186), Hispanic or Latino 14.3% (1,167) White 11.1% (906) and Two or more races 7.3% (599)

Read more: <https://www.city-data.com/neighborhood/Jordan-Minneapolis-MN.html>

2. Refer to your contract deliverables, list them, and describe outcomes *such as*:

Task 1: JACC staff and/or consultant participated in monthly BLRT Community Engagement Cohort meetings in 2021

Task 2: JACC staff and consultant collaborated with other agencies (Rusty and The Crew, Lutheran Social Services, Sustainable Resource Center, the Neighborhood Hub, and the Hawthorne Neighborhood Council) to plan and implement two events to educate and inform Jordan and Hawthorne neighborhood residents about the BLRT route options i.e. National Night Out, August 2021 and JACC Annual Meeting October 2021. Total number of people engaged: directly: 175

Task 3 – JACC collaborated with JUXTA, West Broadway Business Association, Hawthorne Neighborhood Council, Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, etc. to plan and implement 2 listening sessions and a community bus, walk, bike tour of the North Minneapolis BLRT route options and potential station areas. Total number of people engaged: directly: 75 indirectly 250-300

Task 4 – JACC collaborated with community organizations i.e. Rusty and the Crew, St. Olaf Lutheran Church, Mount Vernon Missionary Baptist Church and the MN Department of Health (MDH) to plan and implement 5 pop-up outreach activities to educate residents on BLRT i.e. Community Clean Ups (2), Door knocking (2), Covid 19 Vaccine & Mask up event (1).
Total number of people engaged: directly: 150

Task 5 – On a bi-weekly and monthly basis, as updates were provided by county staff, JACC staff, consultant and board members shared and posted BLRT Project communication materials via social media outlets, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and created an info tab on the JACC website.
Total number of people engaged: Indirectly 750+

Task 6 –JACC spoke with the Hmong Radio station and SE East Asian interpreters to discuss having 2 radio segments, however due to timing and staffing capacity this item was placed on hold.

3. As a community topic expert provide a summary list of the key community issues and opportunities – what you heard/what you learned?

- a. What are any key outstanding and unresolved questions that your community needs answered?
- Many residents expressed concerns about what occurred in the Harrison neighborhood;
 - Gentrification; are people trying to move out the black people;
 - Displacement of residents, especially renters;
 - imminent domain, is the city going to force residents out of their homes;
 - Has the route been selected already, is a constant thread of concern
 - Jobs
 - New business development opportunity
 - Easy access to resources that are not in North Minneapolis
 - Easy access to the hospital
 - North Minneapolis becomes a designation
 - North Minneapolis is a key transportation hub

4. From your perspective as a community topic expert what are the community preference/recommendations on the route options? West Broadway or Lowry?

There is a divide and it is 50/50. People see the benefit of West Broadway, however there is major concern about the impact to the new housing development along the curve, the Capri Theater, small businesses, the MPS building, street parking; On Lowry, residents have noticed there has been no development, so is this the route and no one is telling the community. Lowry also becomes narrow and this will have an impact on homes in that area, whereas West Broadway becomes wider. Directing the route behind the MPS administrative building hasn't been discussed as much, however people are eager to learn more about how this can be accomplished.

5. Your recommendations for 2022 community engagement and into the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension.

- Coordinate a second bus tour that includes the entire BLRT route.
- Listening sessions offering a virtual display of the routes.
- Budget disclosure
- Employment opportunities

6. Are there any other organizations BLRT project staff should be conducting outreach to? Please list name of organizations and contact information.

Businesses:

Sherman & Associates (new housing development)

Broadway Crescent tenants (Commonbond)

US Postal Services

Wells Fargo Bank

West Broadway Flats tenants

Churches: Shiloh Temple, New Bethel

So lows grocery

Cub Foods



HENNEPIN COUNTY BLRT FINAL REPORT

Jackson K. George Jr.
Executive Director
Liberian Business Association in the Diaspora
6248 Lakeland Avenue North, Suite 206
Brooklyn Park, MN 55428
612-227-4064

Joan Vanhala
Engagement Specialist
Hennepin County Communication and Engagement Services
300 South Sixth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55487

Scope of Work Summary:

LIBA collaborated with the BLRT Communication and Engagement team to identify community businesses, shared, and gathered information from small and micro businesses along the corridor and have their input. Conducted focus groups meetings and attended focus group meeting organized by the County. Shared and distributed project materials through its various social media networks.

Outreach – Geography and Cultural Areas:

LIBA worked with the African Immigrant community in mostly the northwest suburb. Outreach was conducted in the cities of Brooklyn Park, Crystal and Robbinsdale. The following activities were conducted:

- **LIBA communicated with small and micro businesses along the corridor about the project timeline.**

LIBA conducted door knocking and interacted with over 30 businesses along the corridor in the three cities. The goal was to inform businesses of the BLRT project and get their feedback as well.

- **Amplified the BLRT project messaging through its social media platforms to include its Website, Facebook, WhatsApp, Newsletter, and Personal Contacts.**

LIBA has a robust social media platform that reaches over 200 participants on its WhatsApp daily, over 4000 on its Facebook page and has an email listing of over 500. Information on the BLRT project was sent out on all these platforms. The goal was to



keep businesses informed about the project, invite them to LIBA's in-person meeting and sent out information about the blue line.

Disseminated and educated small and micro businesses along the corridor on BLRT route selection and its methodology in the route selection.

Every month, LIBA has a resource meeting and brings together small and micro businesses. LIBA used its monthly meeting to disseminate and educate business owners about the BLRT. Over 100 businesses attended the sessions.

Conducted focus group meetings and invited the County to present on the BLRT project.

On October 21, 2021, LIBA hosted an in-person session and invited the County staff to meet with small and micro businesses. The session had brought together 25 persons in attendance and the presentation were made by the county staff. LIBA members also attended the BLRT focus group meeting on December 6th at the Brooklyn Park Community Center.

Share BLRT project materials to small and micro businesses along the corridor.

Over the period of the contract, LIBA conducted door knocking and share BLRT materials to over 100 small and micro businesses. Materials were also share at the LIBA monthly meetings.

Conducted Community Engagement Survey through door knocking to gather information for the GIS mapping project and submitted information for the project.

LIBA conducted survey of over 45 businesses along the corridor. Based on the information gathered, LIBA presented 45 businesses along the corridor to be listed on the GIS mapping.

Met with the City Mayor of Brooklyn Park and discussed in detail the project

LIBA leadership met with the new city Mayor of Brooklyn Park, Mayor Lisa Jacobson and discuss its concerns about the Bluer Line. LIBA concerns are listed in its recommendations.

LIBA as a business association, during its contract interacted with businesses directly.

These are some of the key community issues expressed:

1. The lack of information about the Blue Line
2. What will happen to their businesses once the project begins?
3. The issue of landlords taking advantage of the development and increasing commercial leases.
4. During construction, would businesses along the corridor be paid if their businesses were directly affected?
5. Does the project have cultural approach to accommodate the diversity along the corridor?
6. The issue of big businesses coming in and taking all the commercial spaces along the corridor.
7. The issue of minority businesses owning commercial properties along the corridor
8. The issue of displacement or gentrification



LIBA as a business association, during its contract interacted with businesses directly. These are some of the key community opportunities expressed:

1. The Blue Line brings development to the cities
2. It allows for individuals without cars access to businesses
3. The opportunity for minority business owners to own commercial properties
4. The importance of working with minority groups to educate and disseminate information about the project.

LIBA as a business association, during its contract interacted with businesses directly. These are some of the important things that we learned:

1. Many small and micro businesses did not know of the project prior to conducting the outreach.
2. Many of the businesses along the corridor need more resources to survive
3. If preparation is not made to assist small and micro businesses along the corridor, many will close their doors before the project is complete.
4. Lack of resources that are culturally appropriate for minority businesses
5. There are limited Community cultural assets

From LIBA assessment, many of the businesses we interacted with had unresolved questions

1. Is the County trying to get black businesses out of the cities?
2. Where are the resources available for small and micro businesses along the corridor?
3. Being that minority businesses, especially immigrant businesses are marginalized, where would they be able to find resources to meet up with the new development?
4. Would there be a moratorium on landlords for not increasing leases for couple of years?
5. Would businesses along the corridor be compensated if they are closed due to the development of this project?
6. Has this project taken into consideration the cultural diversity and the affect it has on minority businesses?

From LIBA's assessment, 2022 community engagement and the future of the METRO Blue Line LRT Extension must be taken seriously with more investment into outreach, education, and community engagement. This process must continue to the end of the project. This process involves investing into frontline organizations that are foot soldiers in the implementation of bringing the community together to understand the process. This should not be a one time event, it should be an ongoing process.



Recommendations:

- LIBA believes that the BLRT project has benefits to the Community. The County must invest more resources in the minority communities to continue to inform and educate small and micro businesses as the project progresses.
- Small and micro businesses are concerned about the displacement/gentrification effect this project will have on their businesses. While LIBA is encouraged about the anti-displacement committee being set up, it is imperative that small and micro businesses are represented on this committee and are part of the decision-making process. This way information is fed directly to these businesses by people or organizations they trust and are working with.
- More funds need to be put into this process to get existing small and micro businesses along the corridor to prepare themselves for the development that is coming. More Technical Assistance need to be provided to these businesses, to develop their capacities to withstand the increase in real estate or commercial leasing.
- Minority businesses must be part of the equation in owning commercial properties along the Blue Line corridor. The fear that big businesses will come in and own all the commercial properties along the corridor is frightening. If resources are not properly distributed and existing small and micro businesses are not prepared, the fear will become a reality.
- While the project is ongoing, the GIS mapping program has identified businesses along the corridor, Technical Assistance must be provided to those businesses to prepare them for the incoming development.
- The County and Cities must invest in affordable commercial properties to compete with landlords who are going to take advantage of small and micro businesses thereby displacing those businesses along the lines or making it difficult for those businesses to survive.
- The 63rd and Highway 81 corridor must be redesigned to maximize the safety of pedestrians. The current design must be reevaluated.
- During the duration of the project, small and micro businesses must receive technical Assistance to ensure they are equipped for the new development.
- LIBA is a business association with over 80% of its members and participants very close to or along the Blue Line corridor. LIBA can be a major partner to this project especially in the Africa immigrant business community. LIBA could be funded to continue to educate, share information and materials, conduct surveys, conduct focus groups and be part of the ongoing process.



This is at the Listening session LIBA held in Brooklyn Park.





#	ITEM DESCRIPTION	NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS
1	BLRT Focus Listing Session (1)	25
2	BLRT Community Meetings (3)	75
3	LIBA Door Knocking Outreach	50
4	Total Number of People Directly Engaged	125
5	WhatsApp Communication	500
6	Facebook Communication	4000
7	Emails - Monthly	150