



Engagement Strategies and Approach

September – December 2022

The METRO Blue Line Extension is continuing to refine route options, alignments, and station locations after selecting the West Broadway route modification recommendation.

Since August 2020, the project team, along with the community engagement cohort, has engaged with communities through a variety of activities, including in-person and virtual community meetings, door knocking, attending community events, online and paper surveys, and interactive maps. See below for the timing and project updates shared during each round of engagement.

- **Round 1** (August 2020 through January 2021): Input on project goals, concerns, opportunities, and thoughts on potential new routes
- **Round 2** (March to June 2021): Input on new route options released as part of the Initial Route Modification Report
- **Round 3** (July to August 2021): Input on the connections that light rail would make within communities and station locations within those areas
- **Round 4** (September to December 2021): Input on updated design concepts and potential opportunities and impacts of light rail options
- **Round 5** (April to May 2022): Input on the route recommendation as part of the Final Route Modification Report
- **Round 6** (September to December 2022):
 - **September** – Input on three route options between Target Field Station and West Broadway and four route options between Washington Avenue and Irving Avenue in Minneapolis.
 - **October – December** – Input on route options that will be studied in the environmental document, share updates on the anti-displacement working group’s work, and discuss next steps for the project.

This document summarizes the feedback received during the sixth round of public engagement from September to December 2022, including a summary of responses and questions received from public meetings, advisory committee meetings, community cohort engagement, the online comment form, and the interactive feedback map. Project staff have engaged with the public about the project through the following events:



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- 13 public open houses (9 in-person, 4 virtual)
 - In-person meetings (147 attendees total)
 - Target Field Station to West Broadway route options
 - Wed, September 14 from 5 – 7 p.m. at V3 Sports Center (Lyn-Park Neighborhood Meeting)
 - Tue, September 20 from 5 – 7 p.m. at Encouraging Leaders
 - Wed, September 28 from 5 – 7 p.m. at Franklin Middle School
 - West Broadway/21st Avenue between Washington and Irving route options
 - Thu, September 29 from 5 – 7 p.m. at Sanctuary Covenant Church
 - Minneapolis
 - Tue, October 18 from 5 – 7 p.m. at Episcopal Church in Minnesota
 - Brooklyn Park
 - Wed, October 19 from 5 – 7 p.m. at Brooklyn Park Library
 - Robbinsdale
 - Tue, October 25 from 5 – 7 p.m. at Elim Lutheran Church
 - Crystal
 - Wed, October 26 from 5 – 7 p.m. at Crystal Community Center
 - Project Information Session (74 attendees total)
 - Sat, November 5 from 10 – 11:30 a.m. at Twin Cities International School
 - Virtual meetings (29 attendees total):
 - Overview of route options under consideration in Minneapolis
 - Thu, September 22 from 5 – 6:30 p.m.
 - Wed, September 28 from noon – 1:30 p.m.
 - Review of impacts to be studied in the environmental document
 - Thu, October 20 from 5 – 6 p.m.
 - Fri, October 21 from noon – 1 p.m.
- 40+ community cohort meetings, pop-up events, and driveway chats
- 9 door-knocking events with businesses on West Broadway in Minneapolis and Robbinsdale reaching over 45 business and/or property owners and community members
- Tabled over 15 community events corridor-wide reaching over 450 attendees
- 3 Advisory Committee meetings
- 2 Anti-displacement Work Group meetings



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- Interactive map: 144 comments
- Online comment form (September): 77 responses
- Online environmental survey: 64 responses
- Many more questions and phone calls

Common Themes

Below are common themes that emerged from feedback received during this round of engagement.

Minneapolis

- Mixed feedback on the Target Field Station to West Broadway route options (see Figure 1)
 - **Prefer the Lyndale Avenue option:** Lyndale provides the most direct link between Target Field Station and West Broadway. It is accessible to the residential communities surrounding Lyndale and connects directly to several bus lines and the V3 sports complex. This option provides better wealth building opportunities for Northside residents.
 - **Do not prefer the Lyndale Avenue option:** The Lyndale option disrupts residential communities, especially the LynPark community made up of primarily Black and Brown homeowners. Residents are concerned about property being taken and value decreasing, noise and pollution, as well as the aesthetics and feel of their suburban style subdevelopment being changed by the alignment. Increased traffic is also a concern regarding safety for school children and elderly.
 - **Prefer the east of I-94 option:** In contrast to Lyndale, the east of I-94 option is perceived to have very little residential impacts and has potential to spur new development in the North Loop and along the river.
 - **Do not prefer the east of I-94 option:** A much longer and thus slower route to get from Target Field Station to West Broadway. Businesses with deliveries made by large trucks could be

Figure 1. Target Field Station to West Broadway route options





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disrupted by light rail. Twin Cities International School students and staff will be impacted by noise, construction and safety concerns.

- **Prefer the west of I-94 option:** (*No longer in consideration*): Faster route from Target Field Station to West Broadway than Lyndale or East of I-94 options with less sharp turns and less impacts to traffic and property.
 - **Do not prefer the west of I-94 option** (*No longer in consideration*): Reduced access for residents of neighborhoods west of alignment.
- West Broadway/21st Avenue between Washington and Irving route options, described below:
 - **Option A:** Center running light rail and two lanes of traffic along West Broadway
 - **Option B:** Side-running light rail on West Broadway. Traffic is split with one lane on West Broadway and two lanes on 21st Ave N
 - **Option C:** Side-running light rail and traffic is split between West Broadway and 21st Ave N
 - **Option D:** Light rail only on 21st Ave N and four lanes of traffic on West Broadway (as it exists today)
 - **Prefer West Broadway (Option A):** The West Broadway option would bring people to commercial areas that they frequent. Brings an opportunity to revitalize the commercial corridor.
 - **Do not prefer West Broadway:** Construction will disrupt businesses who have already been through a lot. Removal of on street parking is concerning.
 - **Prefer 21st Avenue (Option D):** Less disruption to West Broadway business while giving transit riders access to these businesses.
 - **Do not prefer 21st Avenue:** Strange to get off light rail at rear of businesses. Impacts more residential homes.
 - **Prefer Split Option B or C** (*No longer in consideration*): Brings residents to West Broadway destination and reduces traffic on West Broadway while maintaining traffic in east and west directions.
 - **Do not prefer Split Option B or C** (*No longer in consideration*): Impacts business properties on West Broadway and residential on 21st Avenue. Could be confusing for riders to know which station goes in which direction and to make transfers.

Robbinsdale

- Station locations
 - Stations at 40th, 41st, and 42nd Avenues received some comments of support and concern from residents.
 - 42nd Avenue was preferred by one to lessen impact on downtown.
 - One commenter said a light rail station would only make sense at 41st Avenue if the entire station and track were elevated.
 - A station at 40th Avenue would need special attention to bicycle and pedestrian safety.



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- Park-and-ride

- One commenter preferred a park-and-ride on the west side of Bottineau Boulevard to encourage support of retail on that side.
- North Memorial Station was also said to need its own parking space, so commuters do not park in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Crystal

- No comments regarding presented design alternatives

Brooklyn Park

- No comments regarding presented design alternatives



Feedback from September Open Houses

Open houses featured informational boards displaying the route options and background information on the project as well as large map layouts with a more detailed view of route options. Staff were present to answer questions and take notes from community members as they explored the information.

Target Field Station to West Broadway route options

- Concerns about impact to residential neighborhood
 - The congestion and pollution produced by light rail impacts community members
 - Property impacts to LynPark homeowner properties
 - Disruption to flavor and aesthetics of LynPark (“suburb in the city”)
 - Property impacts to a majority Black neighborhood
 - Safety concerns for seniors in wheelchairs crossing the street
 - Noise concerns
 - Concern about additional traffic, trouble for school buses
 - Concern about loss of greening/greening is important

- Opportunity for development east of I-94
 - Good opportunity for transit-oriented development on Washington Avenue around station areas.
 - Far less perceived residential property impacts east of I-94.

Route preference:

When asked, over half (55%) of respondents said they prefer to see the East of I-94 route option advance.

Which route option do you want to see advance from Target Field Station to West Broadway in Minneapolis? (66 responses)

- Lyndale Avenue: 38%
- East-I-94: 55%
- West I-94: 7%

Why?

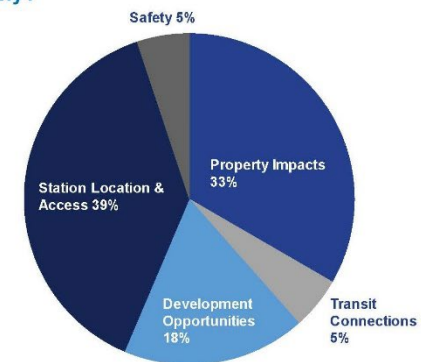


Figure 2. Target Field Station to West Broadway route option preferences and reasons for preferences

Source: In-person and virtual meetings, survey responses



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West Broadway/21st Avenue between Washington and Irving route options

- Property impact concerns for all options
 - West Broadway option would impact less residential homes.
 - Splitting train creates the most impact to properties.
 - Impacts to on-street parking, parking solutions needed.

- Consider communities' specific safety needs
 - All stops need to be safe and secure.
 - West Broadway has more eyes on the street.
 - Getting off train on 21st Avenue facing rear of businesses does not feel as safe.
 - Construction impacts are concerning.
 - Some businesses prefer 21st Avenue, concerned about construction impacts after having been through pandemic.

- Prioritize accessibility of transit lines
 - More stations are desired. Appears to be a long walk to station for some on West Broadway.
 - Local bus service needs to be maintained.



Figure 3. West of I-94 Open House at Encouraging Leaders, September 20th

Route preference:

When asked, over half (58%) of respondents said they prefer to see Option A advance (light rail and two lanes of traffic along West Broadway).

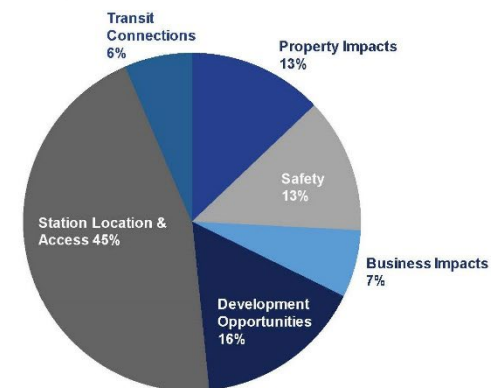
Which route option do you want to see advance between Washington and Irving Avenue in Minneapolis? (33 responses)

- Option A: 58%
- Option B: 9%
- Option C: 15%
- Option D: 18%

Figure 4. West Broadway between Washington and Irving route option preferences and reasons for preference

Source: In-person and virtual meetings, survey responses

Why?





Online Comment Form (September 2022)

Target Field Station to West Broadway route options

- Lyndale
 - Lyndale Avenue is the most direct route to residential and commercial areas.
 - This option would serve the most people.
 - Straight forward design with fewer curves would allow for greater speeds and service times.
 - Some don't see the benefits of this routing outside of being a straight/direct line and no station is planned there.
 - Lyndale and Plymouth station area would offer good bus connections and access to new V3 sports community center; Lyndale and West Broadway is a challenging intersection.
 - Easier to access for residential areas without having to cross freeway.
- East of I-94
 - Focus on growing North Loop with newer businesses and apartments, less disruptive of tight Lyndale corridor.
 - Better for redevelopment opportunities along riverfront and in North Loop.
 - Better access for Northeast residents who have poor transit connectivity.
 - The several sharp turns required to include an additional North Loop station slows the route.
- West of I-94
 - Could be constructed to give greater speeds to train without being slowed by additional North Loop station.
 - Route should prioritize providing fast and reliable service with stations in walking distance of destinations. West of I-94 does this better than east of I-94 option.
 - Alignment provides quicker service without sacrificing connectivity.
- Other
 - Would like to see noise study to compare light rail to standard traffic noise.
 - Important to bring comprehensive information to meetings to mitigate misinformation and irrational fears.
 - Use community-specific design considerations for furniture, lighting fixtures, service poles, etc. to promote the diversity of each neighborhood and give communities buy-in.
 - Service times and service to areas with the greatest number of residents and businesses should be the priority.



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West Broadway/21st Avenue between Washington and Irving route options

- West Broadway
 - Reducing West Broadway to two lanes will improve bike/pedestrian access and safety and bring a neighborhood feel to the corridor.
 - People are accustomed to center-running light rail due to Green Line.
 - Important to maintain two-way traffic.
 - Route goes to commercial corridor where people want to go.
 - Consider grade separation/elevated route over West Broadway to relieve traffic conflicts, travel faster, and reduce pedestrian/train interactions.

- 21st Avenue
 - 21st Avenue option diverts foot traffic away from businesses, defeating the revitalization purpose of the project.

- Split options
 - Good in-between, bringing travelers to businesses without making it too challenging to drive.
 - Doesn't disrupt businesses on West Broadway, while bringing much-needed reliable transit to the area.



Figure 5. West Broadway Open House at Episcopal Church in Minnesota, October 18



Feedback from October – November Open Houses

■ Minneapolis

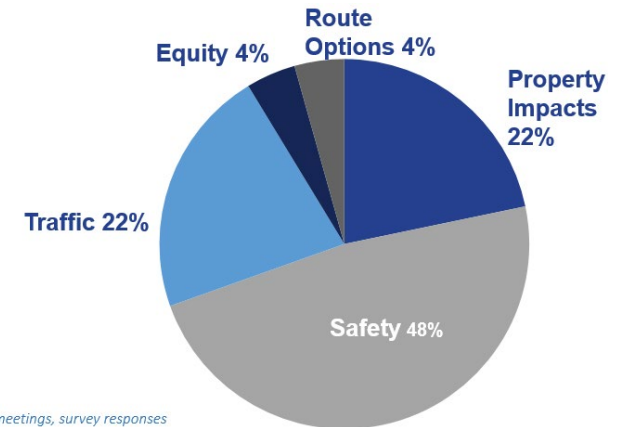
- Lyndale Avenue is the best option.
- Will increase property values.
- Remove bike lane on Lyndale so less property needs to be taken on Lyndale.
- Lyndale option will help people in Fremont area.
- Concerned for safety of students at Twin Cities International School (TCIS).
- Air quality concerns.
- Concern about worsening traffic congestion on Lyndale.
- Concern about increasing crime near Lyndale homes and TCIS.

■ Brooklyn Park

- Study bus rapid transit alternative to light rail.
- Provide route tour for elderly to help them understand safety and access.

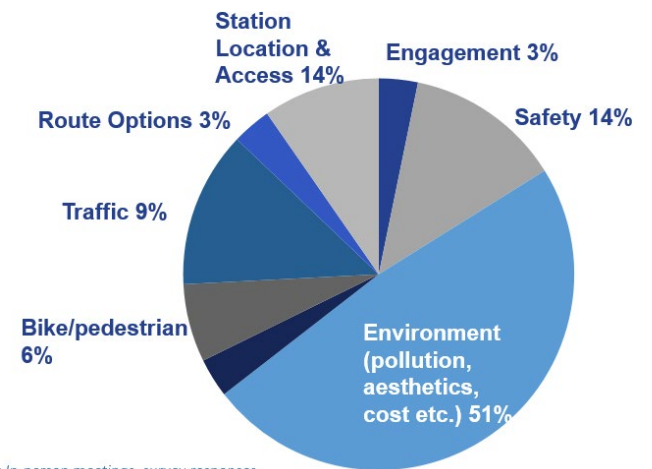
■ Robbinsdale

- Like the ability to get from north suburbs to the airport.
- Dangerous intersections at 42nd Avenue and at Lakeland, concerns about adding train to traffic.
- Commenter preferred station north of 40th Avenue.
- Would prefer to build a park-and-ride on west side of County Road 81 so riders are more likely to support retail district.
- Concerns about impact on lake water quality.
- Like idea of park-and-ride matching the feel of the historic downtown.
- Accommodate mixed use traffic including bus routes.
- Park-and-ride locations should consider traffic in and out during rush hour.
- Questions about whether a park-and-ride in Robbinsdale is really needed. Stations like Bass Lake Road Station are a better fit for park-and-ride.



Source: In-person meetings, survey responses

Figure 6. Minneapolis comments summarized by topic



Source: In-person meetings, survey responses

Figure 7. Robbinsdale comments summarized by topic.



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- Question about how emergency services will have access during construction.
- Some offered support for light rail while wanting to maintain feel of a quaint downtown, community, and lake town.
- Crystal
 - Feel that light rail is a bad idea because, by the time it's built, a new technology will be better and cheaper.
 - Lighting should be pointed downward and should be orange tinted for the benefit of wildlife.
 - If the environmental review finds that some natural place will have to be destroyed in the construction process, local municipalities should be offered compensation for improvements for their natural places.
 - Ensure electric vehicle charging availability at the park-and-rides.
 - Provide trash, recycling, and organics recycling at park-and-rides.
 - Add solar panels along the route.

Comments from Online Environmental Survey

- Minneapolis
 - Concerned for safety of students and teachers at Twin Cities International School as well as noise and pollution from construction.
 - Stations at Plymouth and Lyndale provide future connections to the new aquatic center and surrounding neighborhoods.
 - Concern about disruption to Cord-Sets business that receives deliveries on N 10th Avenue.
 - Concern for neighborhood security with increased foot traffic.
 - Residents along West Broadway will not use the light rail if it does not feel safe.
 - Property impacts to backyards could affect leisure activities.
 - Fears about impacts to West Broadway businesses based on experience with Green Line in St. Paul.
 - Businesses on West Broadway are concerned about the loss of parking.
 - There are only two access streets into the LynPark neighborhoods from Lyndale Avenue on 14th and 18th.
- Robbinsdale
 - Concerns that Blue Line will divide Robbinsdale by going down middle of Bottineau.
 - Have park-and-ride and station design match feel of historic downtown.
 - Preferred the Bottineau/railroad track route.
 - Concerned about noise and air pollution.



- Plans should incorporate sound and visual barriers for safety and comfortability of neighborhood.
 - Light rail will impact small town atmosphere of Robbinsdale by disrupting green space, preservation of downtown, and add to congestion on Highway 81.
 - Many commenters claim light rail is not safe and concern has risen with increasing crime rate
 - Residents will be afraid to ride through North Minneapolis.
 - Concern about construction impacts to businesses and traffic flow.
 - Concern that project will be expensive, over time and over budget based on Green Line Extension progress.
- Non-location specific
- Concerns about lack of ridership post-pandemic.
 - Safety concerns with security on light rail.
 - Concerns about project cost compared to its benefits.

Community Cohort Feedback

Many different organizations have been and will be a part of the community engagement cohort depending on their interest and current project needs. Phase 2 of the community engagement cohort began in September 2022. At this time a new cohort was formed to address the environmental phase of the project. Organizations participating in the current community engagement cohort include:

- A Mother's Love
- Asian Media Access Inc.
- Encouraging Leaders
- Juxtaposition Arts
- Lao Assistance Center of MN
- Liberian Business Association
- Pueblos de Lucha y Esperanza
- Northside Economic Opportunity Network
- West Broadway Coalition

During the cohort's first meeting, participants introduced themselves and gave an overview of the communities they would be reaching and the tactics they would be using. Cohort members planned to reach the community via social media, in-person engagement, door knocking at homes and businesses, events, and relationships with other community institutions like churches and schools.

During the cohort's second meeting in October, participants shared feedback they had received in their initial engagement efforts. Themes included:

- Small business and job creation



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- People expressed interest in opportunities for job creation within communities.
- Desire to support existing small businesses and concern about displacement impacts.
- Concern about parking impacts for small businesses.
- Safety
 - Concerns about crime while riding transit.
 - Fear of existing and increasing crime around station areas.
- Transit access
 - Some populations have difficulty boarding the bus and fear of riding transit in general.
- Access to information
 - Some groups reached by cohort engagement cannot easily access information online.

Interactive Map Comments (September 2022)

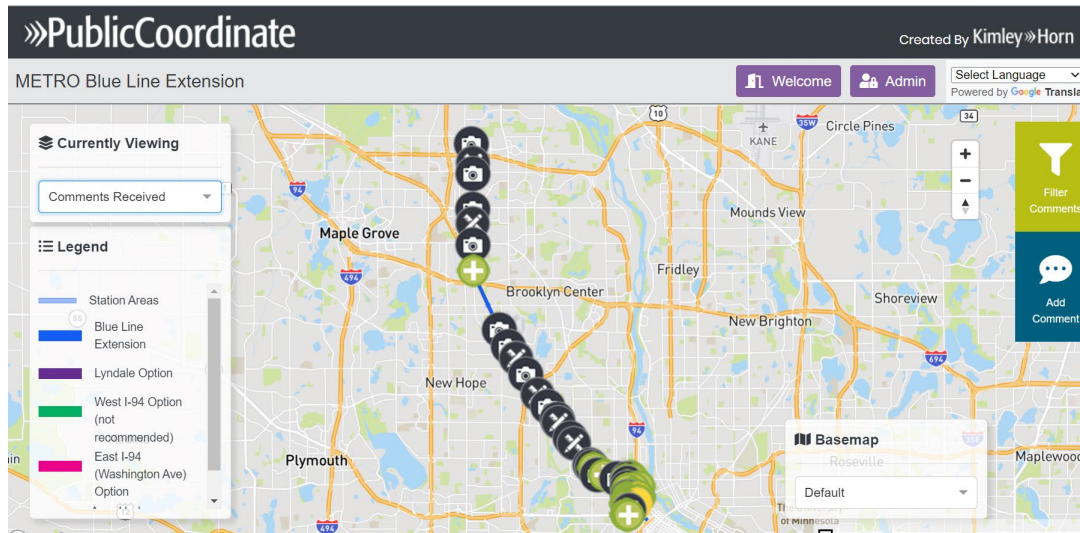


Figure 8. Comment pins on interactive map

The interactive map featured and sought feedback on potential station locations and visualizations of how light rail could fit at locations along the Blue Line Extension corridor. 144 comments were received.



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May Layer	Total Number of Comments	Concern Comments	Opportunity Comments	Responses to Visualizations	Engineering Drawings Comments
Comments Received	144	19	70	31	24

Concerns

- Lyndale option is best way to secure wealth building opportunities for BIPOC residents.
- Slow turns to and from a new North Loop station would be detrimental to the whole route, better to spend money improving pedestrian experience between North Loop and Target Field Station.
- Lyndale route is too close to residential homes and will be dangerous for the park.
- Station near Plymouth & 3rd Avenue (West of I-94 option) is a bad location facing parking ramps and business backs.
- 10th Avenue (West of I-94 option) is crowded, and route could block access to fire station and school buses.
- Light rail on Lyndale is slower and safer than current vehicle traffic.

Opportunities

- Station between Emerson and Fremont would make connection to D Line as easy as possible.
- Station at Broadway and Lyndale needs to be considered to reduce walking distance from Fremont.
- A light rail exclusive bridge over I-94 is better for a more direct and faster route.
- Is it possible to locate station at surface parking lot on West Broadway and Dupont Avenue?
- Add stop to serve Heritage Park neighborhood.
- Consider elevated sections of line to preserve pedestrian environment.

Visualizations

- Mixed ideas about safety concerns near Hall Park, some think light rail will make cars drive slower and reduced traffic will make it quieter.
- Separation of traffic from pedestrians and bikers on Lyndale is good.
- Side running light rail is superior to current Lyndale speedway.
- Consider elevating section at West Broadway and Emerson, would speed up travel time and increase reliability.



Engineering Drawings

- Too many lanes of traffic on Bottineau and 40th Avenue, makes it difficult to cross.
- Split route with one way traffic on West Broadway and 21st Avenue would have larger property impacts and make transit less effective.
- A station closer to homes is better than closer to the freeway (Lyndale).
- Less sharp turns and a more direct route is preferred for Lyndale option coming from Target Field Station.
- West Broadway Option A is the best because that is where the destinations are.

Cultivate Arts

The Cultivate Arts program worked with local artists to conduct culturally relevant engagement in the form of dance, murals, and other arts during 31 events along the Blue Line corridor from July through November. In total, over 5,000 residents of a wide range of ages and cultures were engaged, many of which would not have attended a typical engagement event.



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Events held from September to November included:

Date	Location	Event	Artist
3-Sep	Lakeview Terrace Park, Robbinsdale	Project 281	Malik De Universo
6-Sep	Farmer's Market-Becker Park, 5530 Douglas Dr N, Crystal	Afrodance for All	Afrocontigbo
8-Sep	Capri Theater, 2027 W Broadway Ave, Minneapolis	Dis Place Ment Home	Bayou Bay
10-Sep	Open Streets West Broadway, Minneapolis	At the Front of the Line	Geno Okok
10-Sep	Open Streets West Broadway, Minneapolis	Robot Mobile Disco	Nick Knutson
10-Sep	Open Streets West Broadway, Minneapolis	AMA Project Resonance	Asian Media Access
11-Sep	Becker Park, 5530 Douglas Dr N, Crystal	Afrodance for All	Afrocontigbo
11-Sep	Valley Community Church, 3100 Lilac Drive N, Golden Valley	HeART Connection Project	Daren and Laura Hill
13-Sep	Farmer's Market-Becker Park, 5530 Douglas Dr N, Crystal	Afrodance for All	Afrocontigbo
13-Sep	Becker Park, 5530 Douglas Dr N, Crystal	On the Ground Up	Harper Steinbach
17-Sep	Lakeview Terrace Park, Robbinsdale	On the Ground Up	Harper Steinbach
20-Sep	Becker Park, 5530 Douglas Dr N, Crystal	On the Ground Up	Harper Steinbach
24-Sep	Northrup King Building, 3rd Floor Gallery, Studio 332, Minneapolis	Dis Place Ment Home	Bayou Bay
30-Sep	West Broadway Farmer's Market, Minneapolis	On the Ground Up	Harper Steinbach
15-Oct	St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 1832 James Ave N, Minneapolis	Rails to Souls	Jerry Sedgewick
22-Oct	Capri Theater, 2027 W Broadway Ave, Minneapolis	Dis Place Ment Home	Bayou Bay

Additional information on the Cultivate Arts program can be accessed at their website: <https://mybluelineext.org/Cultivate>.

Anti-Displacement

Beginning in March 2022, the Blue Line Extension Anti-Displacement Work Group started a process that will result in actionable recommendations to prevent displacement and maximize community benefits along the planned light rail line that will connect the communities of North Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal and Brooklyn Park to the regional transit network.

Led by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) in partnership with Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Council, the 26-member Anti-Displacement Work Group includes people who are residents and business owners in the area, people with lived experience with displacement, and people from the philanthropic community and government agencies.



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In addition to monthly public meetings, the Anti-Displacement Work Group has hosted three day-long workshops with the Work Group members between May 2022 and December 2022 focusing on:

- Developing a structure for recommendation making.
- Understanding displacement and lessons learned from previous light rail projects.
- Knowledge of national policies in place to mitigate displacement and understanding of current housing programs facilitated by governments in the corridor today.
- Business and cultural displacement.

The fourth and final workshop is planned for early 2023 and will focus on finalizing anti-displacement recommendations to move forward.

Advisory Committees

The Business Advisory Committee (BAC) and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met on December 6 (BAC) and December 7 (CAC) to introduce the new committee members, review committee charters, discuss the roles of the committees and their members, and receive a project update from staff. Discussion during these meetings included:

- BAC: A belief from some members that project staff during the previous BAC meeting spent too much time discussing the anti-displacement work.
- BAC: Members debated the adequacy of previous engagement work done by the project.
- CAC: A desire for more communication with the public regarding the project's environmental and anti-displacement work.