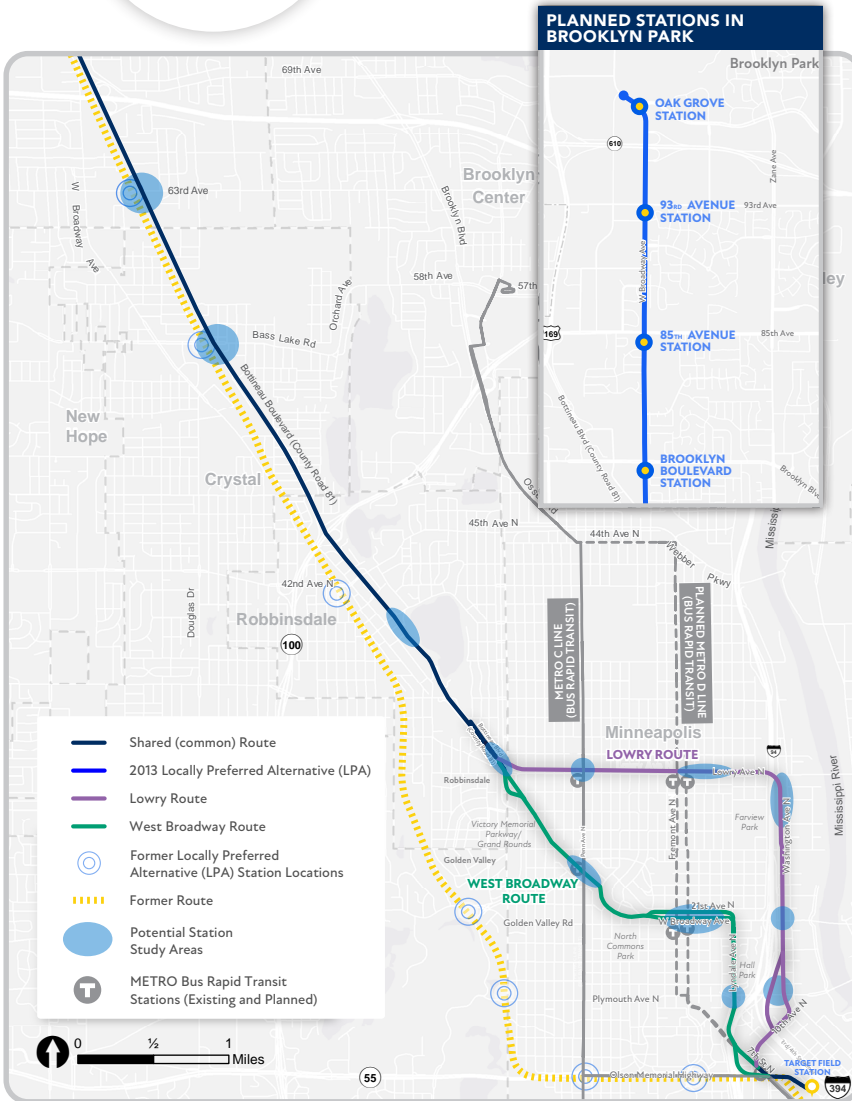




# METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION

Draft Route Modification Report Summary • December 2021



## Background

Since August 2020, the Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County have partnered to evaluate revised route options that do not use freight rail property as previously planned for the METRO Blue Line Extension.

### Brooklyn Park:

The former route and stations along West Broadway in Brooklyn Park remain the same.

### Crystal and Robbinsdale:

The proposed route along Bottineau Boulevard (County Road 81) closely parallels the original route for most of this area.

### Minneapolis:

Two route options are being evaluated—one along Lowry and Washington Avenues (shown in purple) and one along West Broadway Avenue (shown in green).

## Purpose of the Report

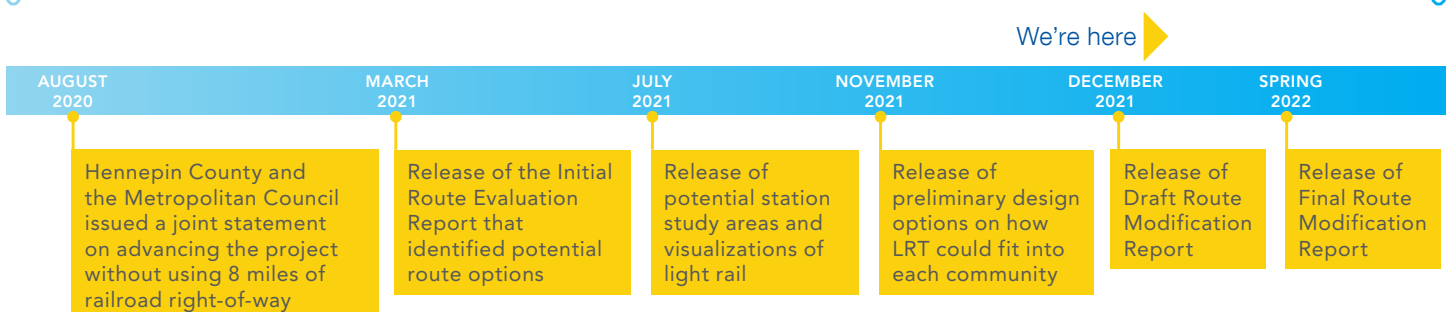
The Initial Route Evaluation Report released in March 2021 laid out a process and general timeline to identify a community-supported route for the project. Now, this Draft Route Modification Report describes the overall process, public input, and technical evaluation that will inform the recommendation of a modified route. The Final Route Modification Report will recommend a community supported route for further evaluation in spring 2022 that responds to the Project Principles and project goals.

## Help us select a route!

Now is the time to give comments as your feedback will shape the final recommendation. To submit your comments on the Draft Route Modification Report and for a list of upcoming community meetings, visit [BlueLineExt.org](https://BlueLineExt.org).

## Schedule

### ONGOING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT





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## Community Engagement

The METRO Blue Line Extension Project relies on community voices to inform project decision-making. Since August 2020, the project 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 since August 2020.

- **Round 1 (August 2020 through January 2021):**  
Input on project goals, concerns, opportunities, and thoughts on potential new routes
- **Round 2 (March 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 (Late September to December 2021):**  
Input on updated design concepts and potential opportunities and impacts of light rail options

Since March 2021, project staff have contracted directly with 12 community and cultural organizations to support a robust engagement process. These organizations are seeking feedback on the project by hosting activities prioritizing low-income communities, communities of color, and specific areas of the corridor. The community and cultural organizations include:

- Asian Media Access Inc
- CAPI USA
- Encouraging Leaders
- Harrison Neighborhood Association
- Juxtaposition Arts
- Lao Assistance Center of MN
- Liberian Business Association
- Northside Economic Opportunity Network
- Northside Residents Redevelopment Council
- West Broadway Business Coalition
- Jordan Area Community Council
- Hawthorne Neighborhood Council

### Major themes heard from the community:

- Avoid impacts/disruption to communities and the environment
- Safety on transit and in communities served
- Easy pedestrian access to/from stations
- Anti-displacement efforts are a priority
- Support for businesses during construction
- Access to regional destinations
- Support economic development
- Improve the transit experience
- Improve access/serve transit dependent populations



October 9th Bike, Walk, Bus tour of Minneapolis route options and station study areas.

## Anti-Displacement Initiative

The Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County are committed to delivering a light rail transit (LRT) investment that benefits current corridor residents and businesses. In response to feedback received during engagement activities, project partners are advancing efforts to address community concerns about housing affordability, business support, and displacement.

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

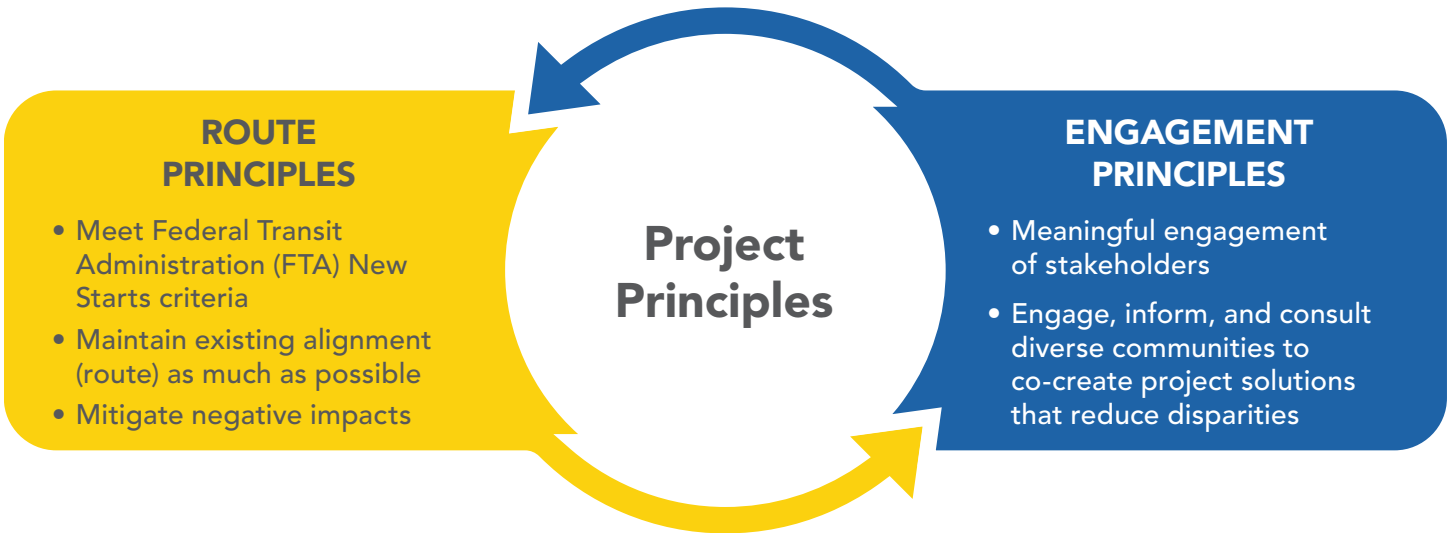


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## Evaluation Process

To determine a community-supported route, the project team is considering Project Principles and goals, community and business feedback, and engineering requirements. Each route is evaluated against the project goals to see how it serves community needs.



Each route has been evaluated based on its ability to meet project goals. All the routes have received an overall assessment of “good” in their ability to serve the community. In some cases these routes achieve an excellent rating based on unique features and the potential to deliver exemplary positive benefits. None of the routes have been assessed as “poor,” which would mean they did not meet the project goals. The Evaluation Findings section of this report provides more detail on how each route was evaluated against the project goals.

### ASSESSMENT OF ROUTE OPTIONS TO DEFINED GOALS

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



# METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION

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## Next Steps

The Draft Route Modification Report is available for public review, and comments will be accepted through **January 25, 2022**. The Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County will carefully review the community input received along with the findings from the technical analysis completed to date to recommend a community-supported route for further evaluation in spring 2022 as part of the Final Route Modification Report. Following that recommendation, design and technical evaluation of the recommended route will advance and will be documented in federal and state environmental review documents. Further robust community engagement will continue through these and future phases.

To submit your comments on the draft report and for a list of upcoming community meetings in January, visit [BlueLineExt.org](http://BlueLineExt.org).

We're here ▶

1 YEAR

1.5 – 2 YEARS

1.5 – 2 YEARS

3 – 4 YEARS

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

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

### Blue Line Extension Community-Supported Route:

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

## Stay Connected!

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

Brooklyn Park/Minneapolis/Robbinsdale/

Overall Project Questions:

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

Crystal:

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



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

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