

WELCOME

Welcome to the
METRO Blue
Line Extension
Community Meeting



METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



BOTTINEAU BLVD (COUNTY ROAD 81) NEAR NORTH MEMORIAL, ROBBINSDALE

EXISTING

This is a visualization of a section of Bottineau Blvd (County Road 81) in Robbinsdale as it exists today.



CONCEPT

This visualization represents how light rail could fit in Robbinsdale along Bottineau Blvd (County Road 81). This picture uses the typical width of the roadway at this location.



BOTTINEAU BLVD (COUNTY ROAD 81) NEAR CRYSTAL LAKE, ROBBINSDALE

EXISTING

This is a visualization of a section of Bottineau Blvd (County Road 81) in Robbinsdale as it exists today.



CONCEPT

This visualization represents how light rail could fit in Robbinsdale along Bottineau Blvd (County Road 81). This picture uses the typical width of the roadway at this location.



BOTTINEAU BLVD (COUNTY ROAD 81) AT 40TH AVE, ROBBINSDALE

EXISTING

This is a visualization of a section of Bottineau Blvd (County Road 81) in Robbinsdale as it exists today.



CONCEPT

This visualization represents how light rail could fit in Robbinsdale along Bottineau Blvd (County Road 81). This picture uses the typical width of the roadway at this location.



ELEVATED (AERIAL) LIGHT RAIL CONCEPT IN DOWNTOWN ROBBINSDALE



NOTE: Proposed trees and other landscape material omitted for visual clarity. These will be added as the design progresses.

DRAFT: CONCEPT IN DEVELOPMENT



NOTE: Proposed trees and other landscape material omitted for visual clarity. These will be added as the design progresses.

DRAFT: CONCEPT IN DEVELOPMENT



METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



LOWRY AVENUE STATION CONCEPT, ROBBINSDALE



DRAFT: CONCEPT IN DEVELOPMENT
NOTE: Proposed trees and other landscape material omitted for visual clarity. These will be added as the design progresses.



METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

47th Avenue to 42nd Avenue



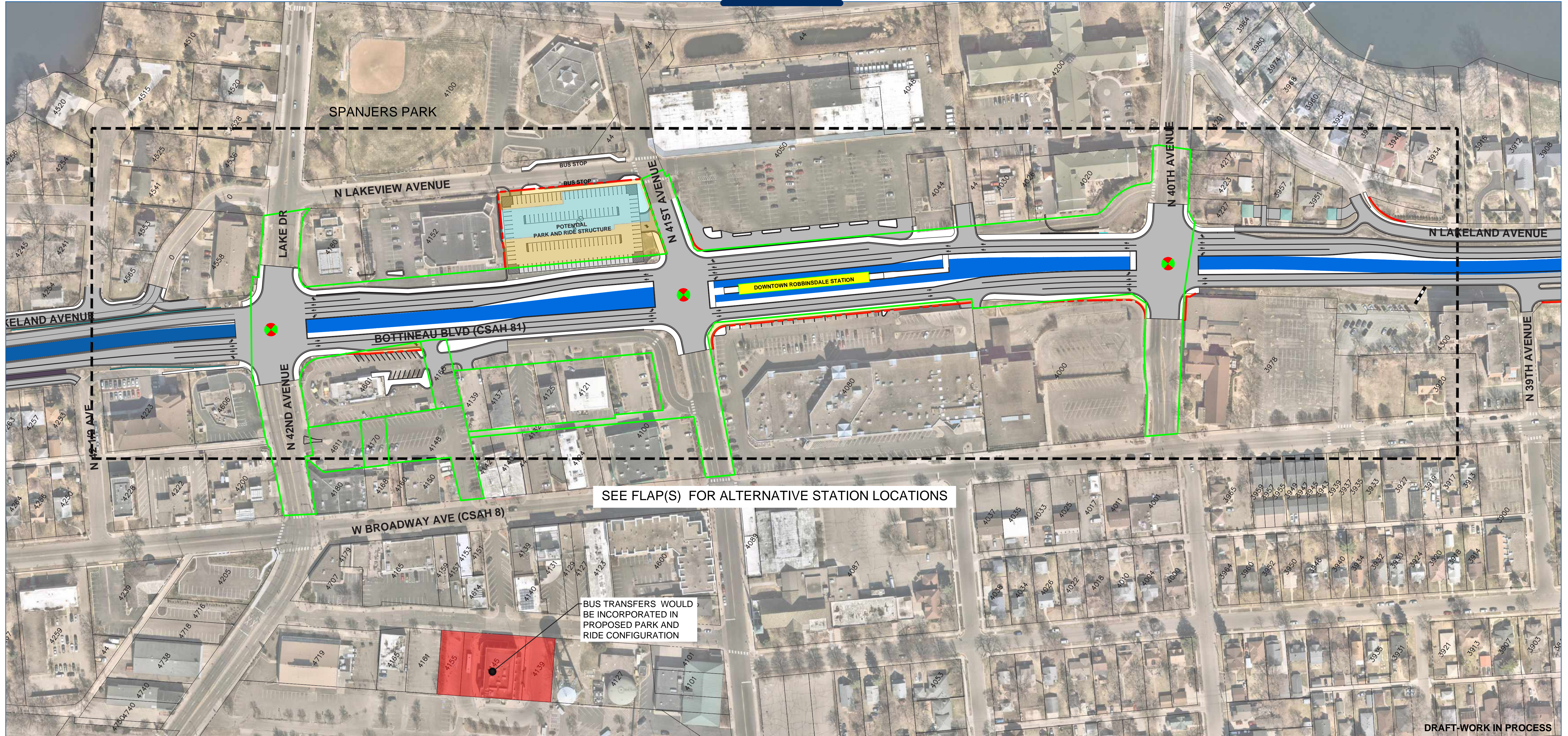
METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

42nd Avenue to 39th Avenue Station Option #1



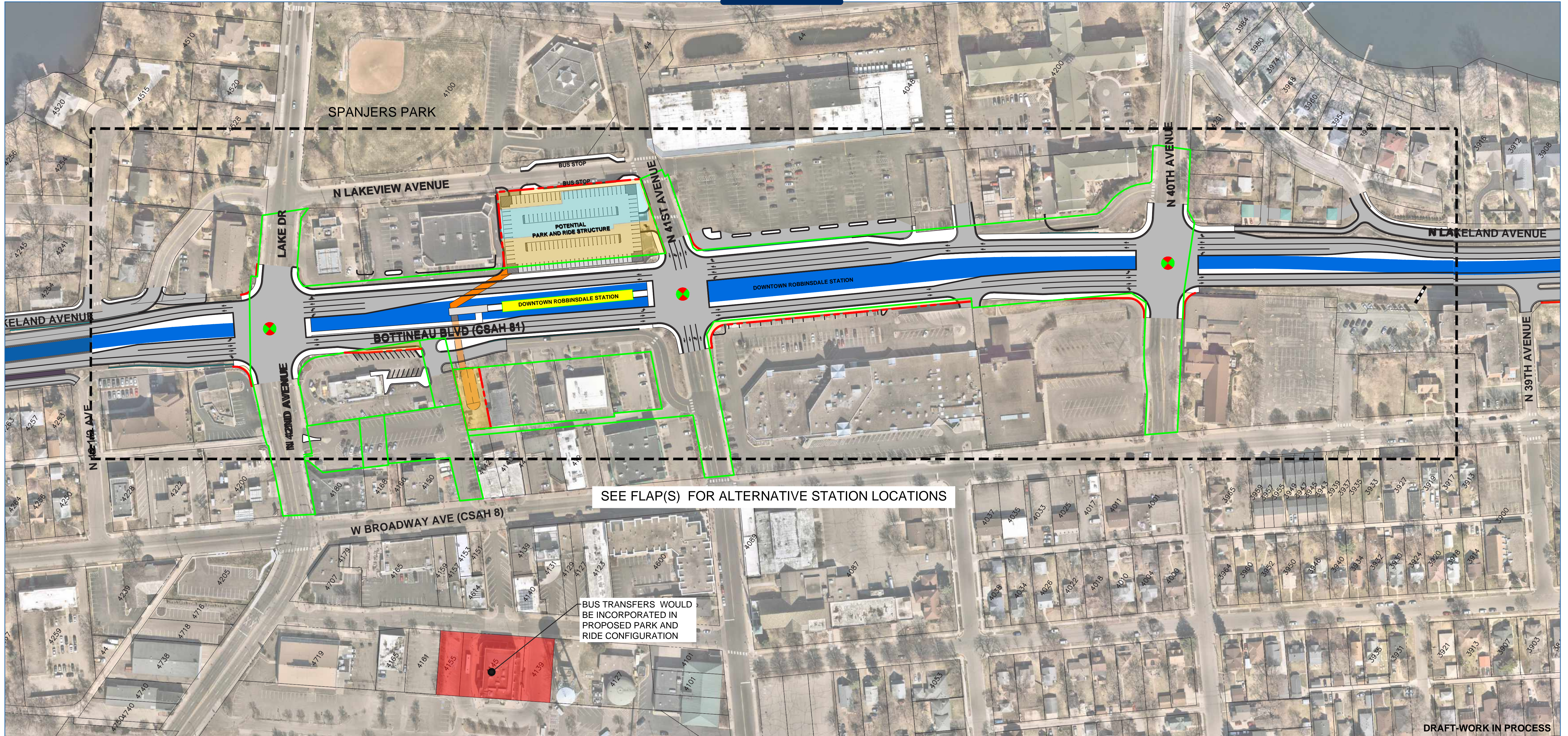
METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

42nd Avenue to 39th Avenue Station Option #2



DRAFT-WORK IN PROCESS



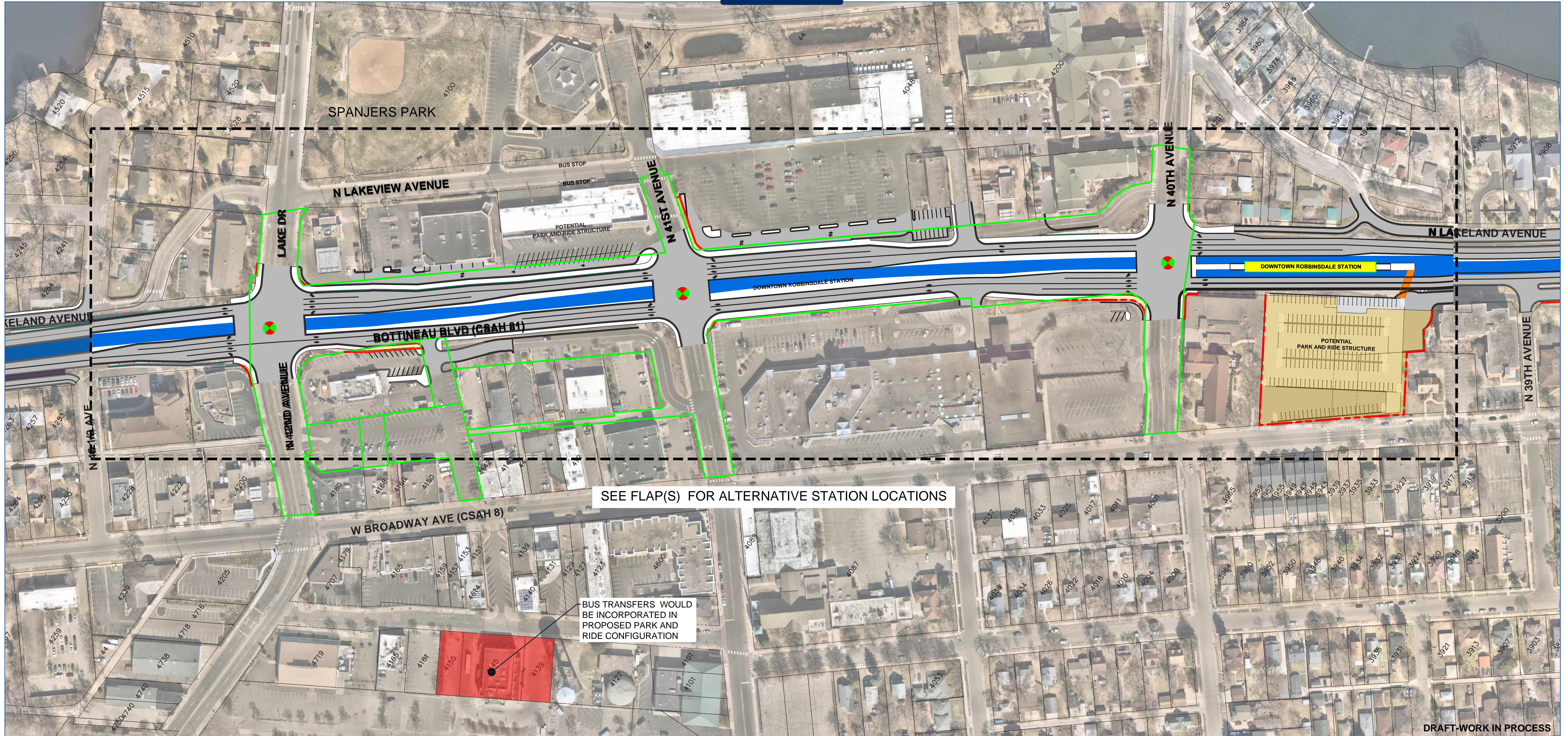
METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

42nd Avenue to 39th Avenue Station Option #3



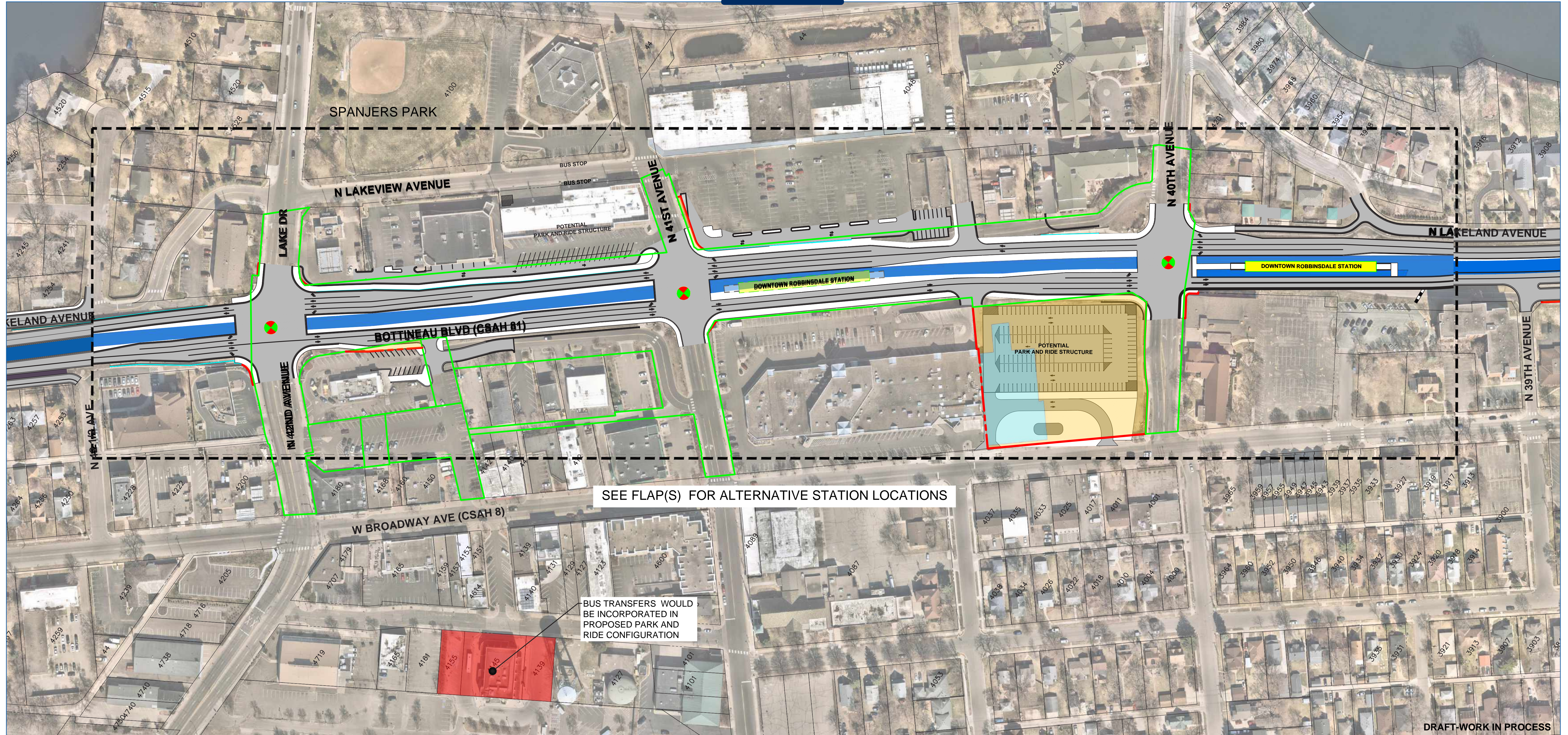
METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

42nd Avenue to 39th Avenue Station Option #4



METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

39th Avenue to 36th Avenue



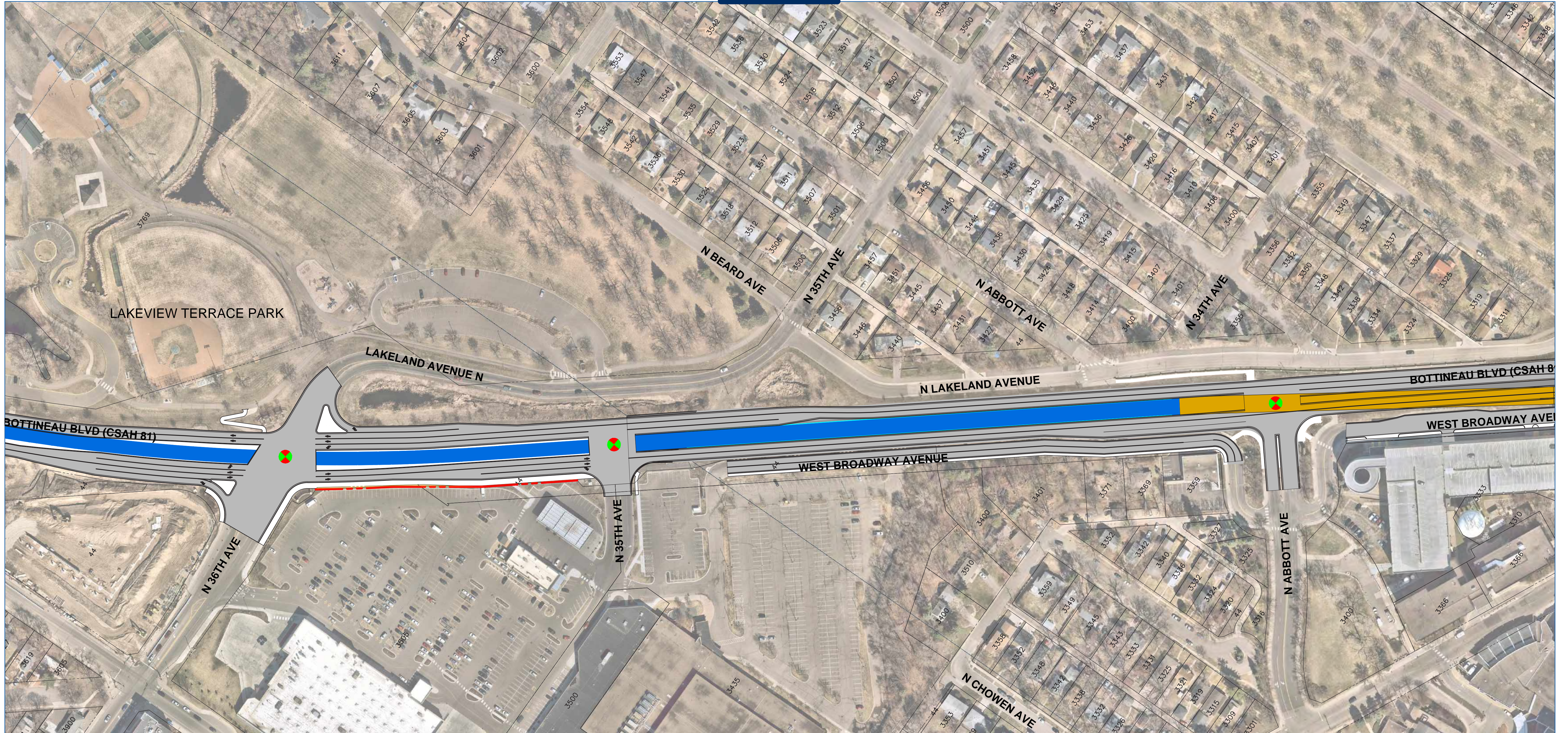
METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

36th Avenue to Abbott Ave



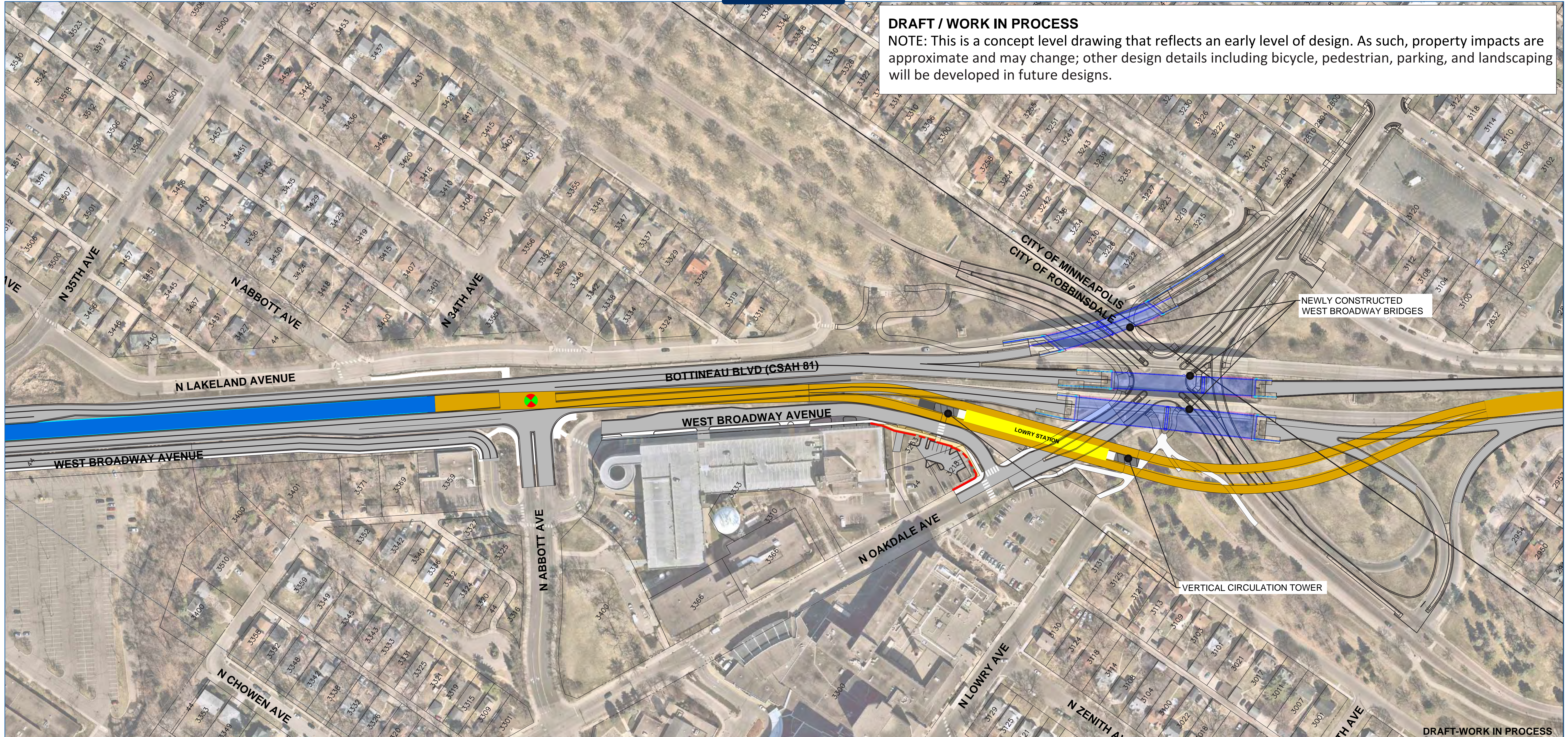
METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



CITY OF ROBBINSDALE

BOTTINEAU BOULEVARD (COUNTY ROAD 81)

Abbott Ave to Oakdale Ave



METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



PURPOSE AND NEED

Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS)

PROJECT PURPOSE

To provide transit service, which will satisfy the long-term regional mobility and accessibility needs for businesses and the traveling public.

PROJECT NEED

To effectively address long-term regional transit mobility and local accessibility needs while providing efficient, travel time-competitive transit service that supports economic development goals and objectives of local, regional, and statewide plans.



METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



NEXT STEPS AND DECISION POINTS



1: SELECT DESIGN OPTIONS TO MOVE INTO THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT (SEPTEMBER 2022)

- ☆ Public comment on the design options studied in the environmental document (October 2022)



2: PREPARE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT (OCTOBER 2022-NOVEMBER 2023)

This process will evaluate social, economic, and environmental impacts and benefits of multiple design options and identify a preferred option

- ☆ Public comment on the environmental findings of the design options (November - December 2023)



3: FINALIZE PREFERRED OPTION (WINTER 2023/SPRING 2024)

This process will advance design, finalize a preferred option, and obtain municipal consent

- ☆ A recommendation on the preferred option will be made through the Blue Line committees (June 2023)
- ☆ The public is able to comment on the plans and public hearings are held (Winter 2023-Spring 2024)



4: PREPARE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT AND MITIGATION COMMITMENTS (JANUARY-SEPTEMBER 2024)

This process will evaluate social, economic, and environmental impacts and benefits of the preferred route and station locations and identify and commit to mitigation measures for impacts

- ☆ Public comment on the mitigation commitments (Fall 2024)

ENGAGEMENT THEMES TO DATE ALONG THE CORRIDOR

Below is a summary of where, along the project timeline, next steps will be taken on key community issues, concerns and opportunities that we have heard through engagement.



ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Ongoing - 2024

- ✓ Identify project impacts/ disruptions to communities and the environment and identify mitigation measures to address impacts



STATION AREA PLANNING

Fall 2022 - Winter 2023

- ✓ Identify elements within stations and station areas that improve safety on transit and in communities served, such as lighting and visibility
- ✓ Ensure walking, biking, and rolling connections to and from stations to local businesses and destinations
- ✓ Ensure local bus service connects to light rail stations



ENGINEERING

Ongoing - Fall 2023 for initial design

- ✓ Design easy and safe pedestrian access to and from stations
- ✓ Determine location of light rail and stations that provides access to regional destinations
- ✓ Identify a light rail route and station locations that improve access to transit and serve zero-car households
- ✓ Plan for loss of parking
- ✓ Improve transit efficiency and reliability



ONGOING AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

Ongoing

- ✓ Anti-displacement strategies
- ✓ Plan for support for businesses during construction
- ✓ Support economic development
- ✓ Improve the transit experience
- ✓ Engage cultural communities to educate, inform and involve them in all aspects of the project



ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK RECEIVED TO DATE

Community Engagement & Communications



- ✓ Engage cultural communities to educate, inform and involve them in all aspects of the project
- ✓ Use trusted leaders and organizations to reach cultural communities in the corridor for outreach and communications
- ✓ Use plain language that is easily translated across the corridor's top language groups: Spanish, Hmong, Lao, Vietnamese, Somali & Oromo
- ✓ Engage communities in a solution-based approach with more than just the route alignment including land use and community benefits
- ✓ Need for more details regarding design & engineering on property impacts and station areas

Environmental Impacts



- ✓ Identify project impacts/disruptions to communities and the environment
- ✓ Address impacts to local neighborhoods, schools, businesses including noise, train vibrations, air pollution, worsening traffic congestion, and green space
- ✓ Plan to support for businesses during construction

Safety Within Station Areas and Transit Corridor



- ✓ Identify elements within stations and station areas that improve safety on transit and in communities served
- ✓ Lighting and visibility in station areas
- ✓ More eyes on the street
- ✓ Safety for seniors, children, wheelchairs
- ✓ Access for emergency vehicle services during construction and operations

Station to Destination Connections



- ✓ Design easy and safe walking, biking, and rolling connections to and from stations to local businesses and destinations
- ✓ Make plain language and multilingual signage that highlights nearby destinations
- ✓ Ensure local bus service connects to light rail stations

Plan for Loss of Parking



- ✓ Concern that loss of parking equals loss of customers
- ✓ Loading zones for deliveries and disabilities is important
- ✓ Concerns over safety walking from parking to business

Anti-Displacement Strategies



- ✓ Prioritize preventing gentrification and displacement
- ✓ Preserve housing and commercial affordability in station areas and the corridor
- ✓ Concern about the character of the neighborhoods changing in the corridor
- ✓ Promote ownership of commercial properties by the business owners in the community.
- ✓ Need for technical assistance and access to capital for small and micro businesses to ensure they are equipped for new development

Improve the Transit Experience



- ✓ Use community-specific design considerations for furniture, lighting fixtures, service poles, etc. to promote the diversity of each neighborhood and give communities buy-in
- ✓ Improve transit service efficiency and reliability
- ✓ Identify a light rail route and station locations that improve access to transit and serve zero-car households
- ✓ Determine location of light rail and stations that provides access to regional destinations



OUTREACH MEETINGS



Brooklyn Park

January 30

OPEN HOUSE

February 6

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

February

BLUE LINE COMMITTEES



Crystal

February 9

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

February 27

OPEN HOUSE

March

BLUE LINE COMMITTEES



Robbinsdale

March 6

OPEN HOUSE

March 14

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

April

BLUE LINE COMMITTEES



Minneapolis

March 22

OPEN HOUSE

April TBD

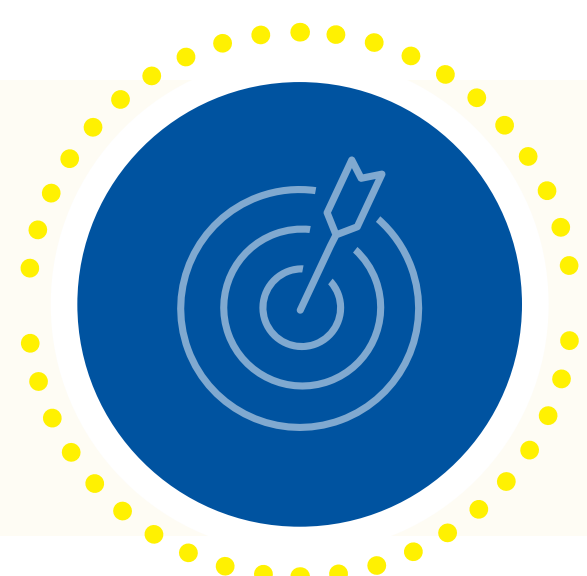
CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

April 17

OPEN HOUSE

May

BLUE LINE COMMITTEES



Route Recommendation: June 2023 – BLUE LINE COMMITTEES

Blue Line committees include: Technical Project Advisory Committee, Community Advisory Committee, Business Advisory Committee, and Corridor Management Committee

Other 2023 BLRT outreach & engagement includes meetings with community, key stakeholders, businesses, and property owners; Anti Displacement Working Group; Community Engagement Cohort; Cultivate Arts; etc.






METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



ISSUES BEING STUDIED IN ENVIRONMENTAL PROCESS

Examples of social, economic, and environmental issues that will be studied include:

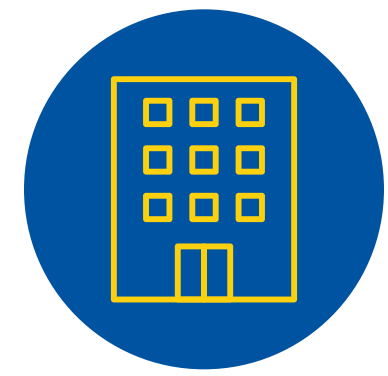
-  Changes to land use, and how the project fits with existing or planned land uses
-  Effects on the community or communities surrounding the project
-  What property needs to be purchased and what residences or businesses may need to be relocated
-  Business impacts – access during construction, relocation, revenue
-  Impacts to historic properties
-  Impacts to parks
-  Visual impacts
-  Safety
-  Transportation impacts – bicycle, pedestrian, transit, vehicles (including parking), freight rail, aviation
-  Water resource impacts – wetlands, floodplains, stormwater, groundwater, water quality
-  Impacts to soils and geologic resources
-  Impacts to plants and animals, including threatened and endangered species
-  Noise impacts, and for transit and rail projects, vibration impacts
-  Contaminated properties and hazardous materials



ENVIRONMENTAL TOPICS

to inform the Preferred Alternative recommendation

While all environmental subject areas will be evaluated and compared in the environmental review, these topics are expected to differ between the route options under consideration in Minneapolis:



PROPERTY ACQUISITION:

businesses, residents, community facilities



HISTORIC AND CULTURAL BUILDINGS/LOCATIONS:

Seek to protect historic and culturally important sites and buildings



HAZARDOUS AND CONTAMINATED SITES:

known locations of industrial uses, spills, and cleanup sites



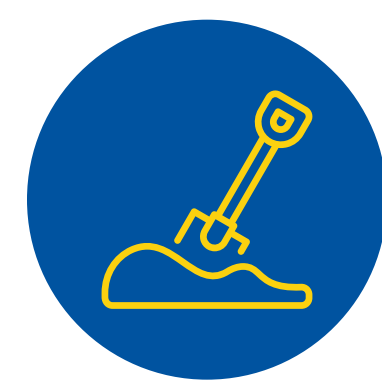
VISUAL QUALITY:

views with major changes



NOISE:

sensitive locations such as places people sleep



CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS:

access to businesses and homes



COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND COHESION:

major changes in infrastructure that could divide communities



EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:

provide benefits to BIPOC and low income communities; identify potential adverse and disproportionate impacts

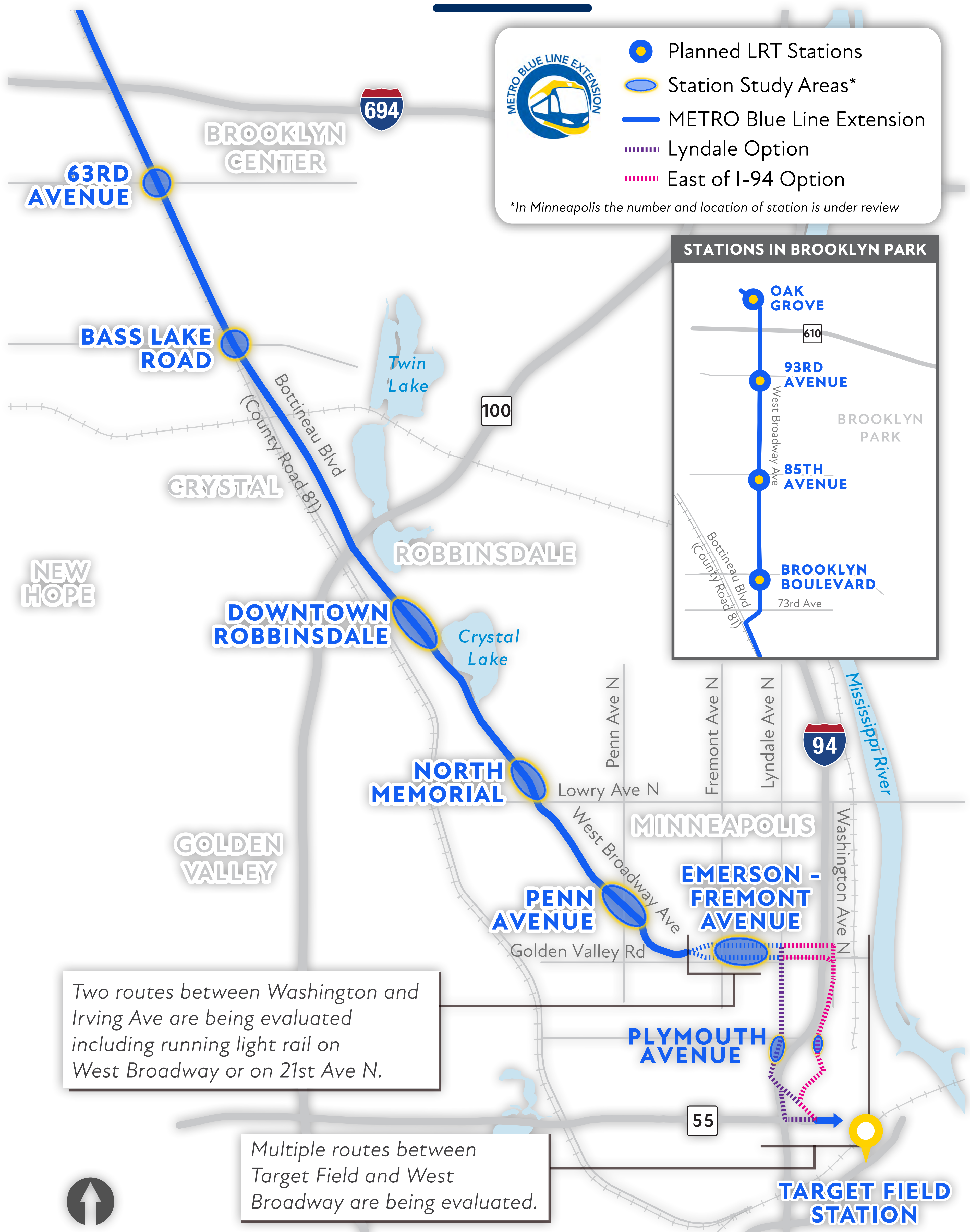


METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



BLUE LINE EXTENSION ROUTE

In June 2022, project sponsors (Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County) identified the final recommended route to advance into design and environmental review: West Broadway Avenue (County Road 103) in Brooklyn Park to Bottineau Boulevard (County Road 81) in Crystal and Robbinsdale to West Broadway Avenue in North Minneapolis, connecting to Target Field Station in downtown Minneapolis.



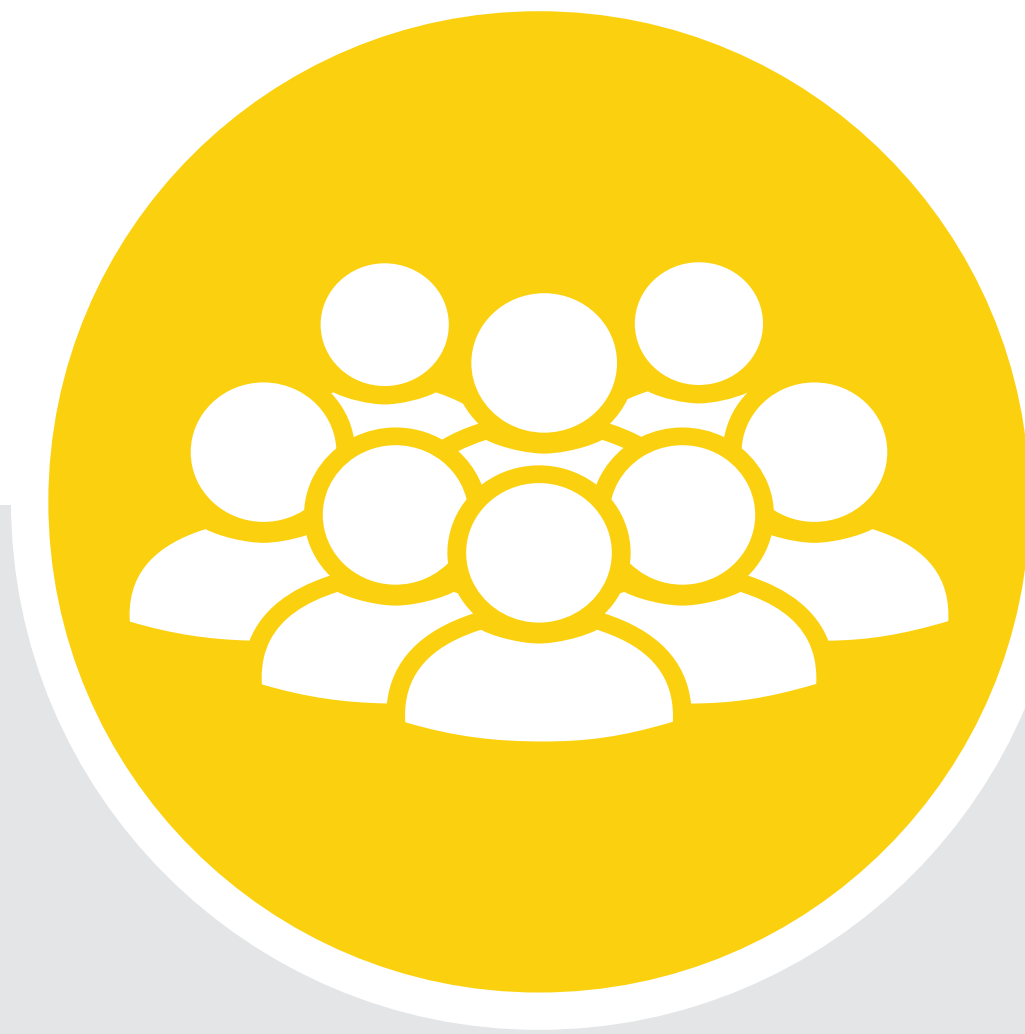
METRO TRANSIT'S SAFETY AND SECURITY ACTION PLAN

To better serve current riders and staff, attract new riders and position Metro Transit as a great place to work, a concerted effort is being made to improve public safety on transit. Examples of some of these efforts – including pre-existing and new work – are summarized below:



ON-SITE

- The use of contracted security guards at transit facilities with the most calls for service
- Greater utilization of real-time cameras, including on buses and at facilities
- Clearer and more prominent communication about respectful behavior on transit



POLICIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Enhanced efforts to hire and retain police officers and Community Service Officers
- Expanded staff training on mental health, de-escalation and personal safety
- New and expanded partnerships that connect riders in need to services
- Increased police officer wages, making the Metro Transit Police Department a more attractive place to work
- Reintroduced a training program that helps bus and train operators respond more effectively and empathetically when conflicts arise
- Create more opportunities for police, operators, and other frontline staff to interact



PLANS

- Metro Transit has recently developed a Safety and Security Action plan with 40 different actions
- The plan is largely focused on actions Metro Transit can take but also recognizes the community need to address underlying issues that impact public safety on transit, such improving access to mental health, addiction, and housing support
- For an example of an action that has come out of this plan, Metro Transit has partnered with the Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority and other service providers to direct unsheltered individuals to emergency housing and, when appropriate, vouchers that provide for long-term housing stability. More than 400 individuals from approximately 200 families are being housed through this partnership

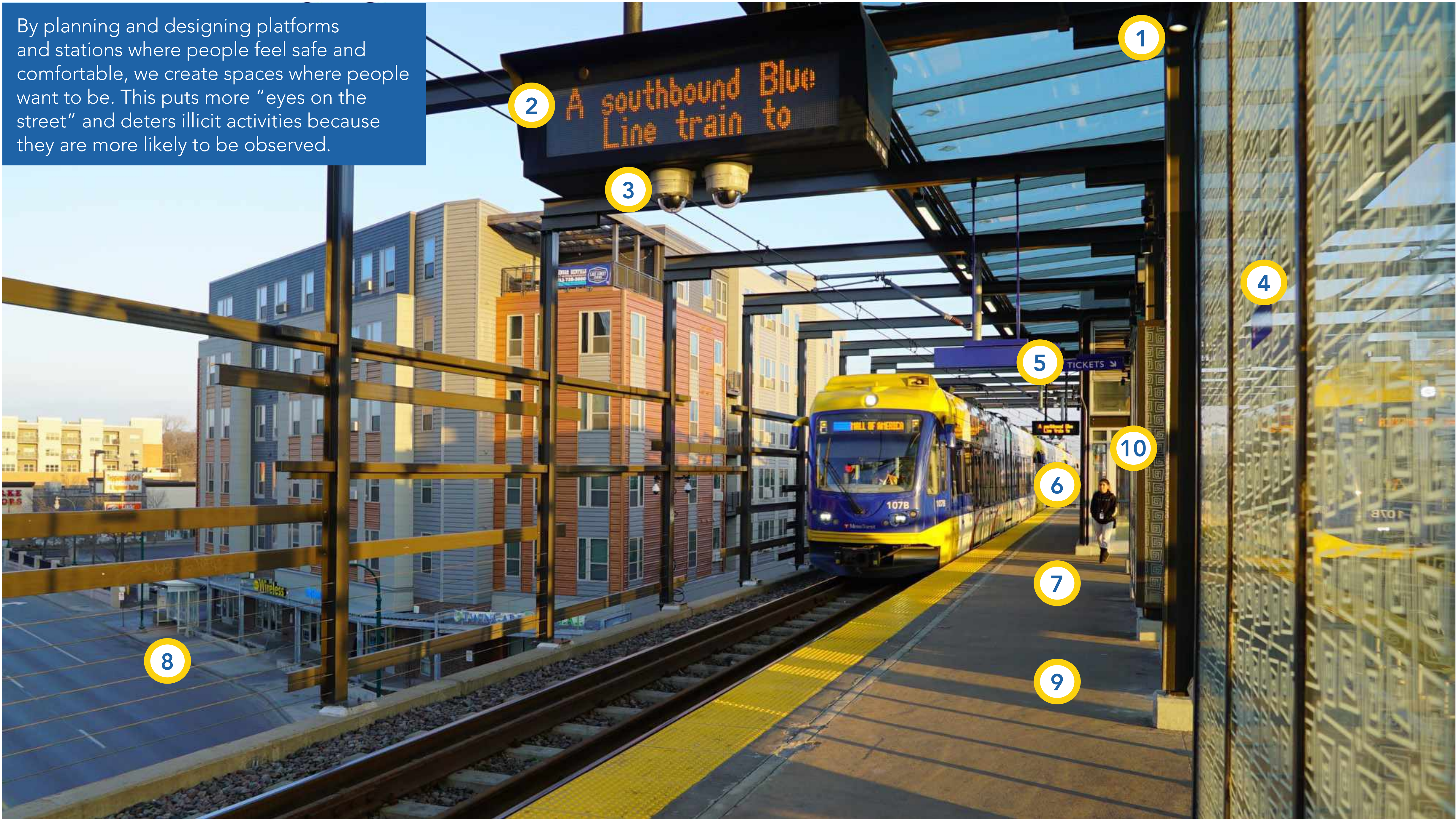


SAFETY AND SECURITY

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

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

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



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



SCHEDULE



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

Blue Line Extension Community Supported Route:

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



STAY CONNECTED!

Visit BlueLineExt.org to sign-up for the project newsletter, and share your comments, questions and concerns on our interactive feedback map.

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

Brooklyn Park/Minneapolis:

Joanna Ocasio-Maisonet –

Joanna.Ocasio-Maisonet@metrotransit.org

Robbinsdale/Crystal:

Kjerstin Yager – Kjerstin.Yager@metrotransit.org

Share your Blue Line Extension story at: MyBlueLineExt.org



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@METROBlueLineExtension



METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION



The BLRT Anti-displacement Workgroup centers community voices and brings together a variety of partners and stakeholders to advance and implement robust anti-displacement strategies that help ensure the value of light rail will benefit current corridor residents, and minimize physical, cultural, and economic displacement.



The workgroup has had four day-long workshops focusing on:

Developing a structure for recommendation making

Understanding displacement and lessons learned from previous light rail projects

Examining national policies in place to mitigate displacement

Identifying business and cultural displacement

Identifying policies that will produce the desired outcomes

To learn more about this ongoing effort go to:

mybluelineext.org



Workshop #1: Displacement and Lessons Learned from Previous Light Rail Projects

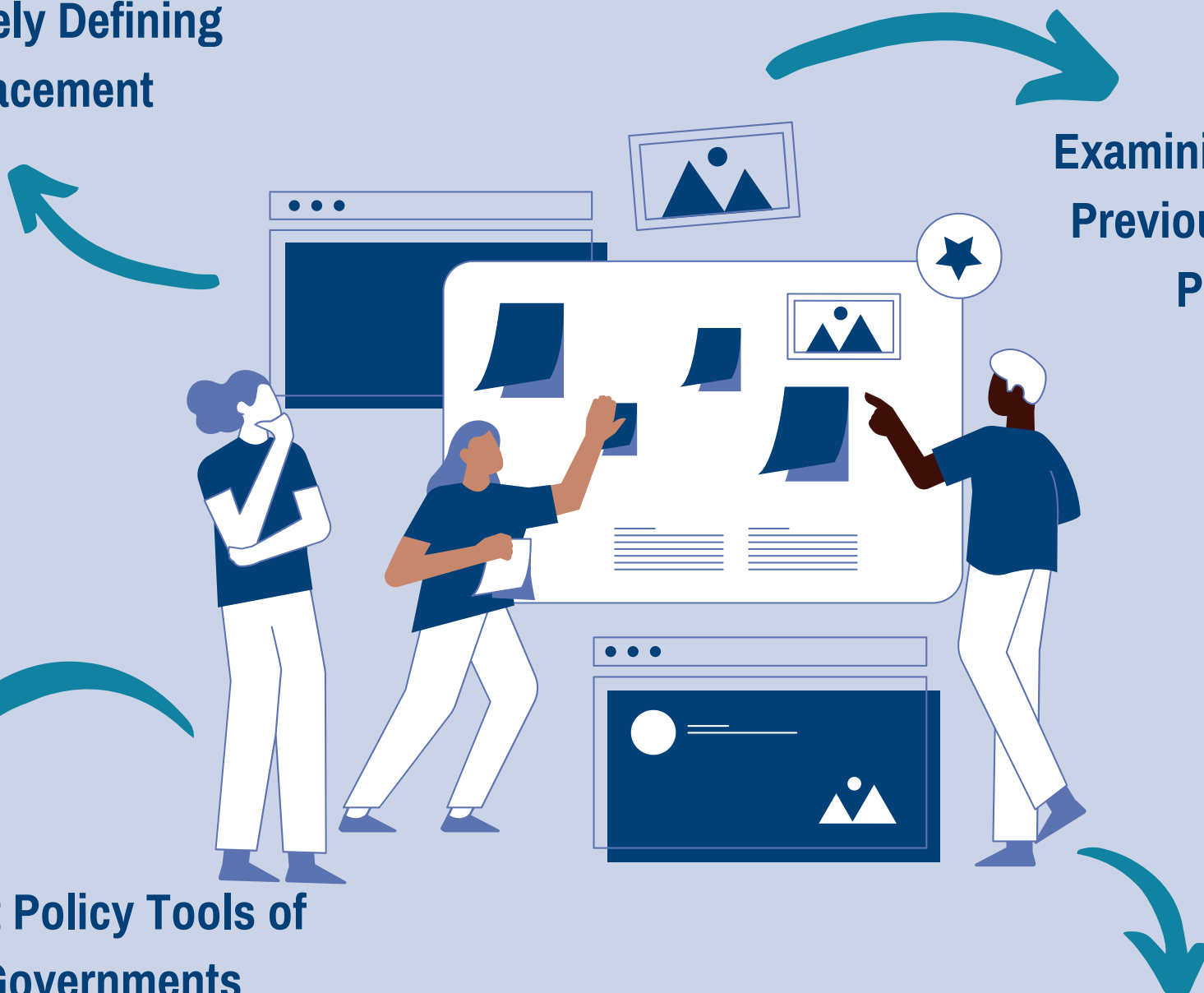
The June 4 workshop focused on national best practices in anti-displacement policies and case studies of existing Twin Cities light rail projects.

Collectively Defining Displacement

Examining Effects of Previous Light Rail Projects

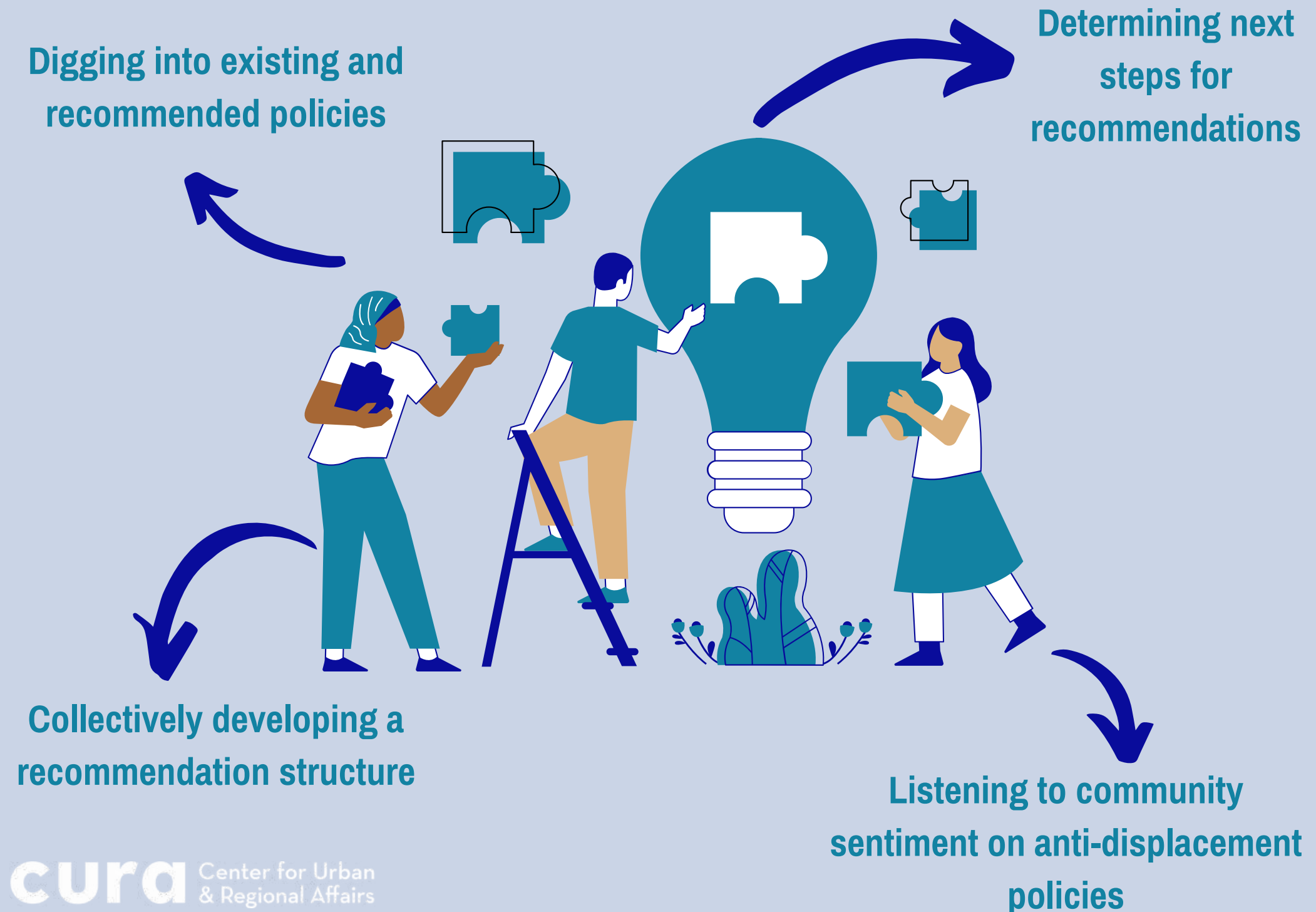
Looking at Policy Tools of Local Governments

Engaging with a Community Expert Forum



Workshop #2: Existing Anti-Displacement Policies and Creating a Recommendation Structure and Process

The September 24 workshop focused on existing anti-displacement policies in the Twin Cities, opportunities to build policy, and developing a recommendation structure.



Workshop #3: Business and Cultural Displacement

The December 10 workshop focused on defining cultural displacement, looking at existing cultural placekeeping efforts, and digesting quantitative and qualitative research done for the project.

Collectively defining cultural displacement

Digging into existing and new cultural placekeeping strategies



Listening to a community expert forum on cultural displacement

Engaging with qualitative and quantitative research on housing, businesses, land use, demographics, and youth perceptions of LRT

Workshop #4: Policy Prioritization, Research, and Finalizing Recommendations

The February workshops focused on policy prioritization, policy research, finalizing recommendations, and incorporating these into the broader BLRT project. ADWG members worked to identify desired outcomes, and what policies and efforts would most effectively produce these.

Evaluating and adjusting current anti-displacement policies

Researching and retrofitting new anti-displacement policies



Finalizing recommendations, developing accountability structures, and incorporating into broader project

Working to prioritize policies based on community sentiment and government structures