METRO Purple Line

Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee

June 05, 2024

Metro Transit
a service of the Metropolitan Council

Today's Topics

1) Welcome & Introductions
2) Project History
3) BRT Route Modification Study Phase II Update
4) Center-running Option in St. Paul
5) Community Outreach Update
6) Q & A

Welcome & Introductions

Liz Jones | Senior Community Outreach Coordinator

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Project History

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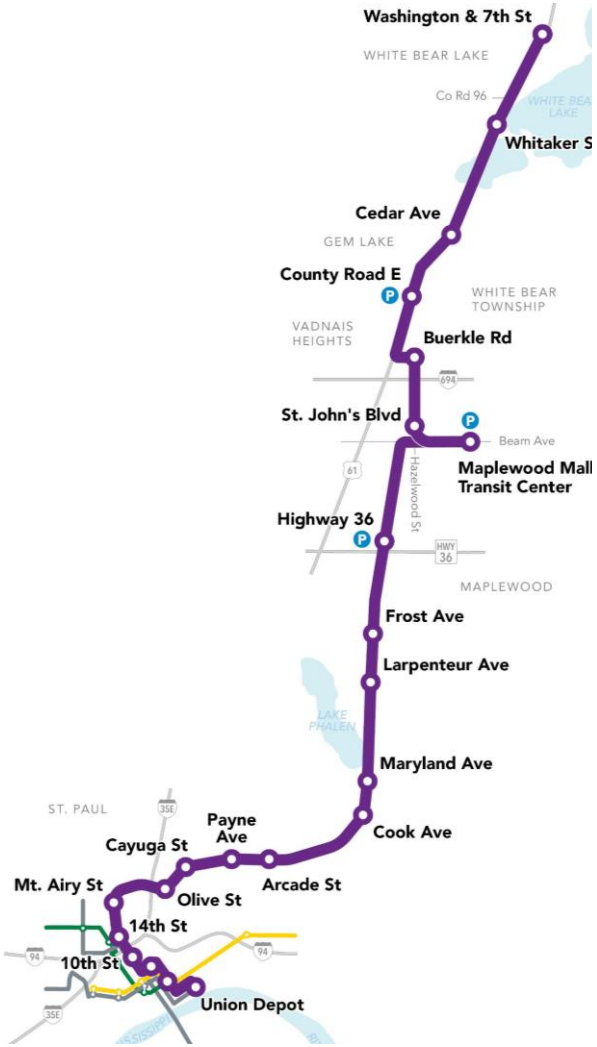
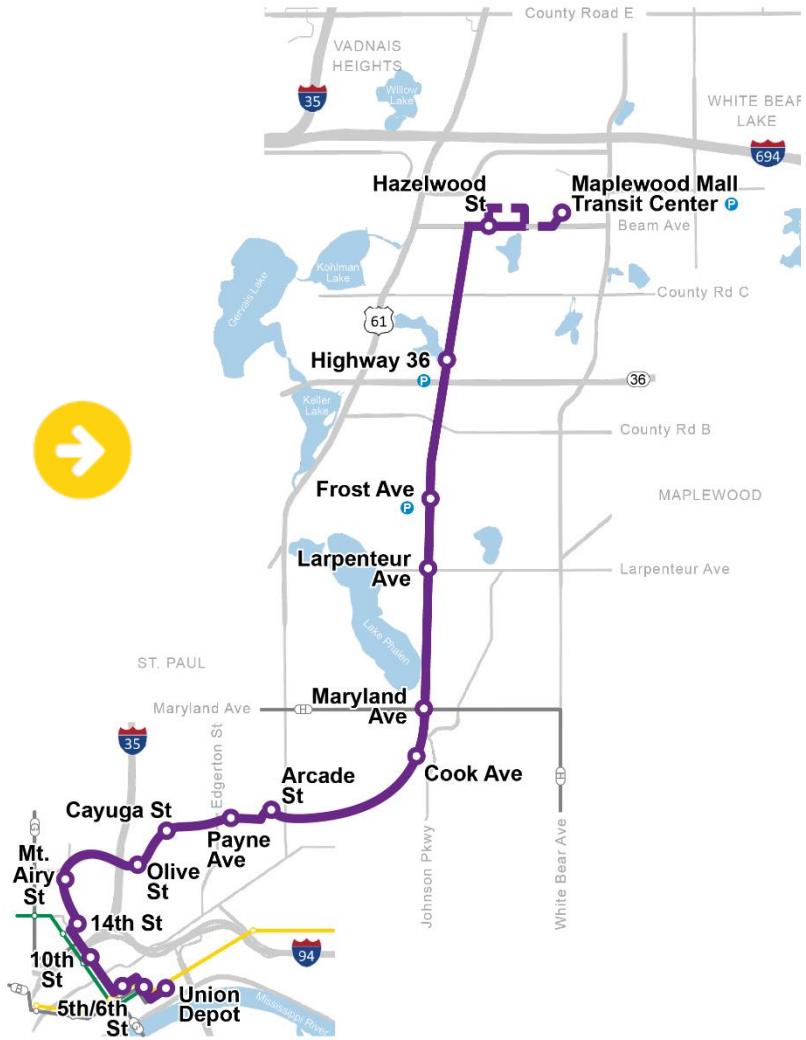
Evolution of Purple Line





Environmental Phase
December 2021

Route Modification Study (RMS) Phase I
March 2023

Route Modification Study (RMS) Phase II
(In Process)

Proposed Station Locations

- Most station locations are current Route 54 stops
- ½ mile station spacing provides reasonable access coverage throughout most of the corridor
- Stations along Maryland Ave to be shared with H Line BRT

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Decision Making

Decisions **made** last year

- Proposed Station Locations – September 2023
- Most Promising Design Options – October 2023

Decisions **to be made** this year

- Preferred Design Concept for the White Bear Ave Corridor – Fall 2024
- Preferred Route between White Bear Ave and Bruce Vento Regional Trail – Fall 2024

How to Provide Your Input

- Community group and stakeholder meetings
- Online Comment Form and Interactive Map
- Project Hosted Community Meetings
- Email or Call the Project Office

Who is Involved?

Metro Transit

RAMSEY COUNTY

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Volunteer Community & Business Representatives

Project Area Public and Stakeholders

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Maplewood

SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA

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Design Options in the White Bear Ave Corridor

Sara Pflaum | Engineering and Design Manager

Jim Gersema | Consultant Design Manager

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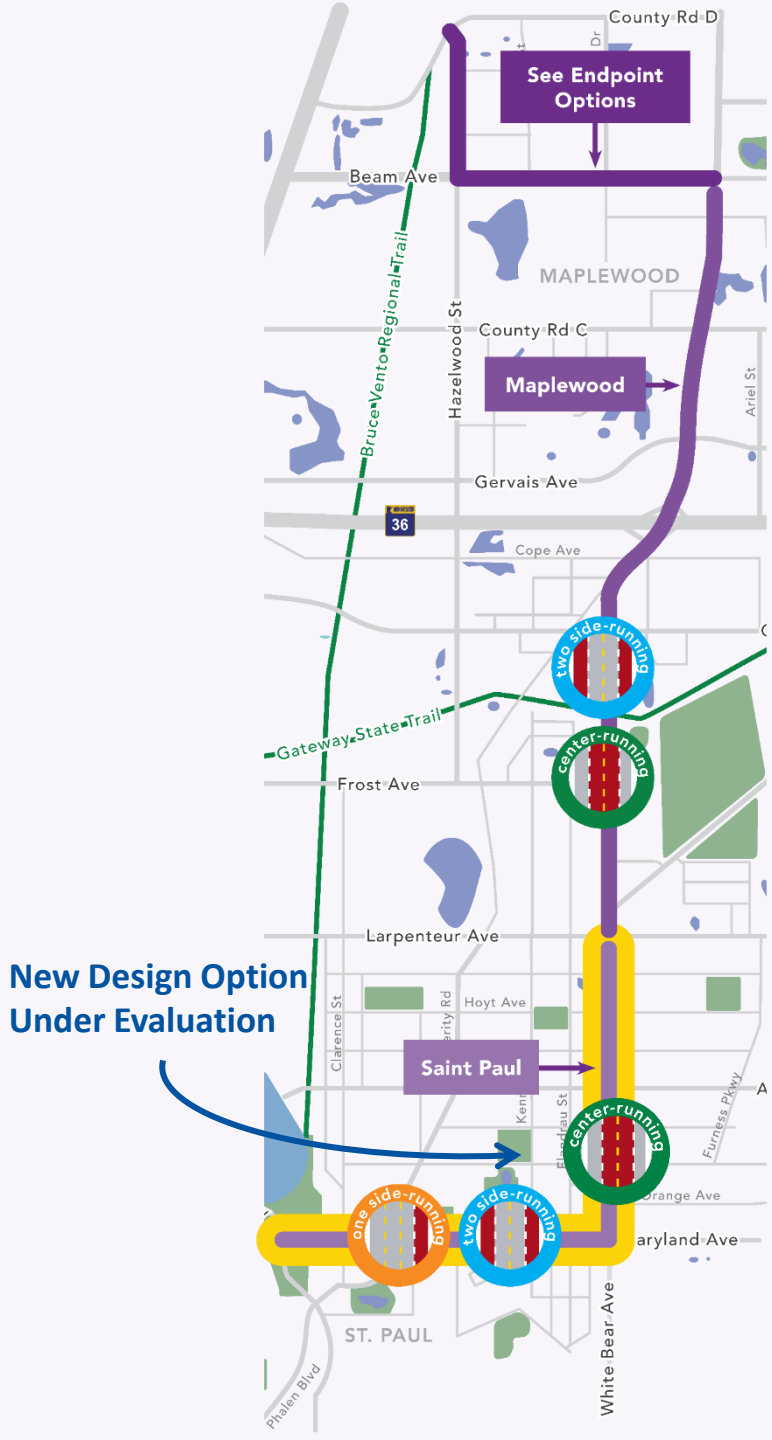
Three Options in St. Paul Section

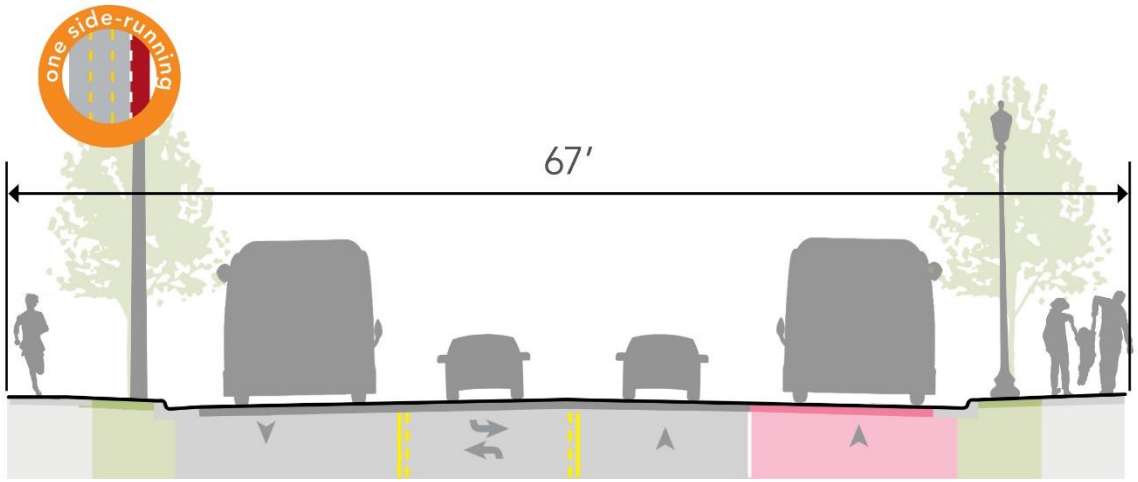
The Saint Paul section is Maryland and White Bear avenues between Johnson Parkway and Larpenteur Avenue.

There are now <u>three</u> options in this section.

- One Side-Running Transit Lane
- Two Side-Running Transit Lanes
- Center-Running Transit Lanes



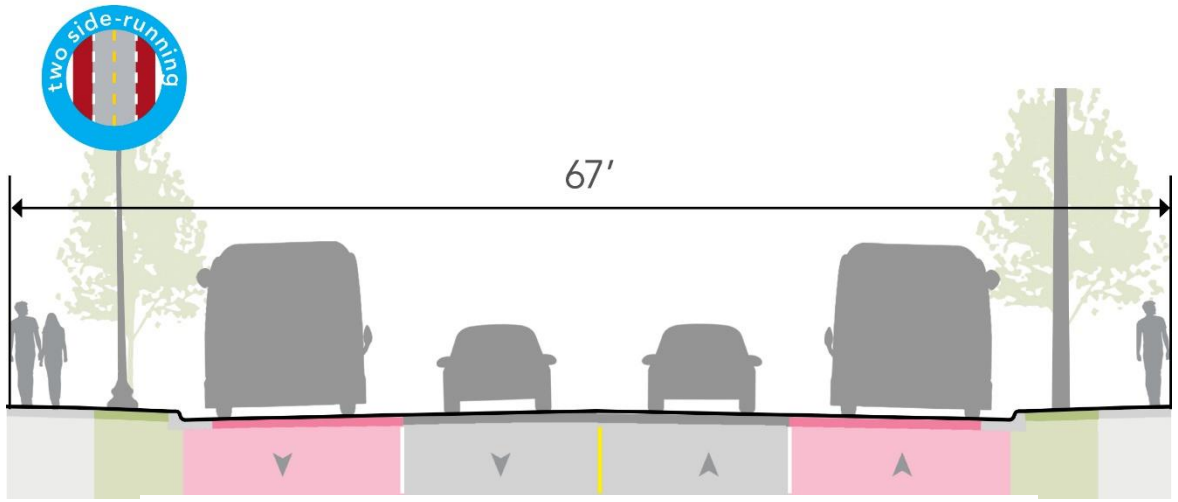
Design Options in the St. Paul section



"One Side-Running" Transit Lane:

The bus lane can be used for local access and transit. The remaining road is a 3-lane roadway for general traffic with the center lane used for left-turning traffic. Buses will use the bus lane going northbound and travel in mixed traffic going southbound.

- ⊕ Larger medians for pedestrian and bike crossing safety
- ⊕ Fewer property impacts from left-turn lanes and medians
- ⊖ Less reliable transit service in the southbound direction, more opportunity for buses to be delayed by cars and trucks



"Two Side-Running" Transit Lanes:

The bus lanes can be used for local access and transit. There is one lane for general traffic in each direction plus left-turn lanes at busy intersections.

- ⊕ More reliable transit service in the southbound direction, better for combined Purple Line, METRO H Line, and local bus operations on Maryland Ave
- ⊕ Easier for maintenance staff to access stations
- ⊖ More property impacts from left-turn lanes and medians

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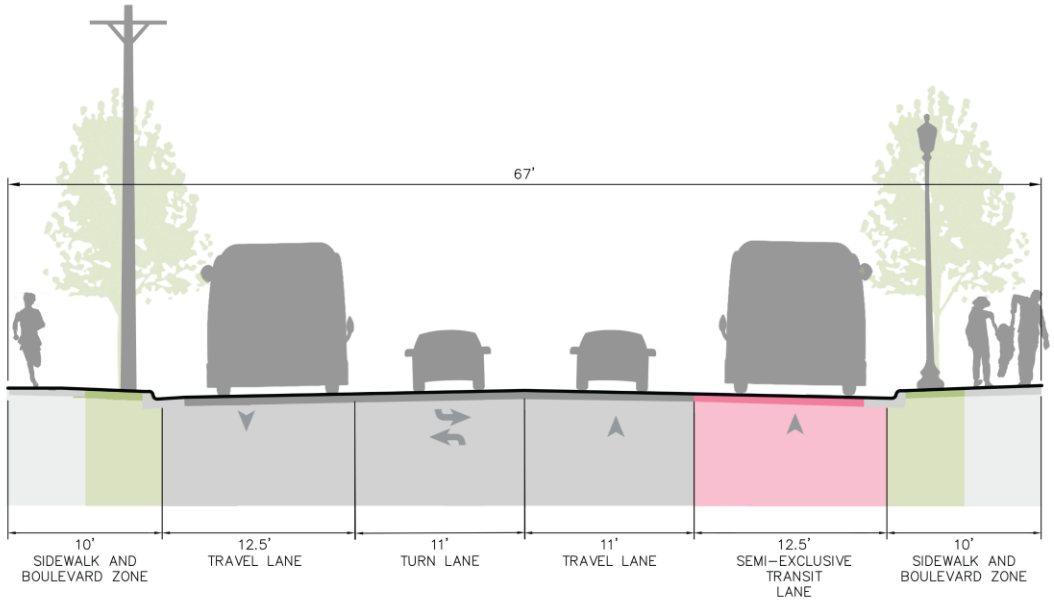
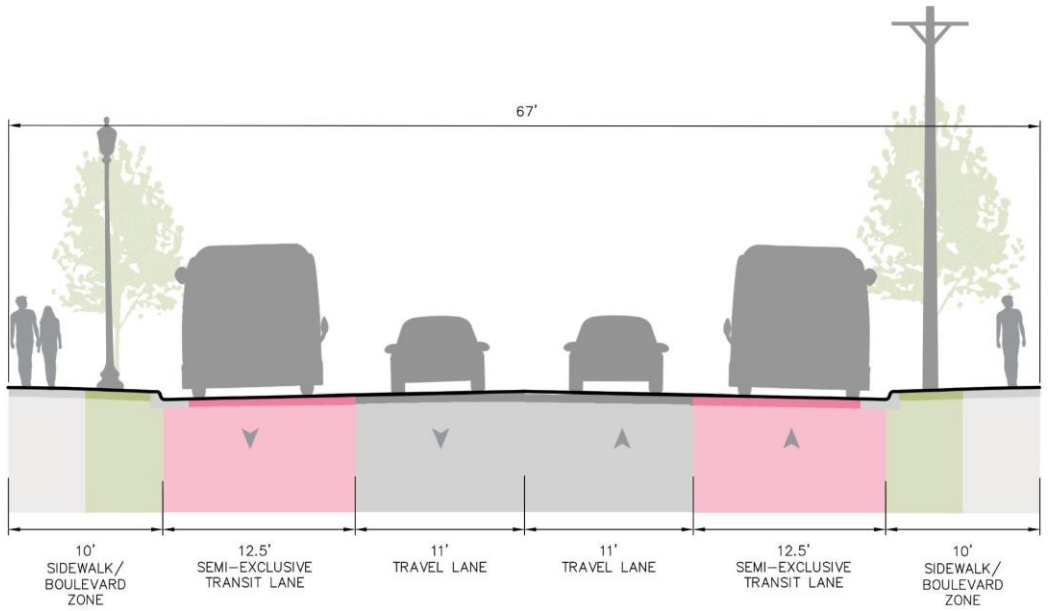
One Side-Running Transit Lane



Benefits include:

- Larger medians for pedestrian and bike crossing safety
- Fewer property impacts from left-turn lanes and medians

Two Side-Running Transit Lanes (Saint Paul)



Benefits include:

- More reliable transit service in the southbound direction, better for combined Purple Line, METRO H Line, and local bus operations on Maryland Ave.
- Easier for maintenance staff to access stations.

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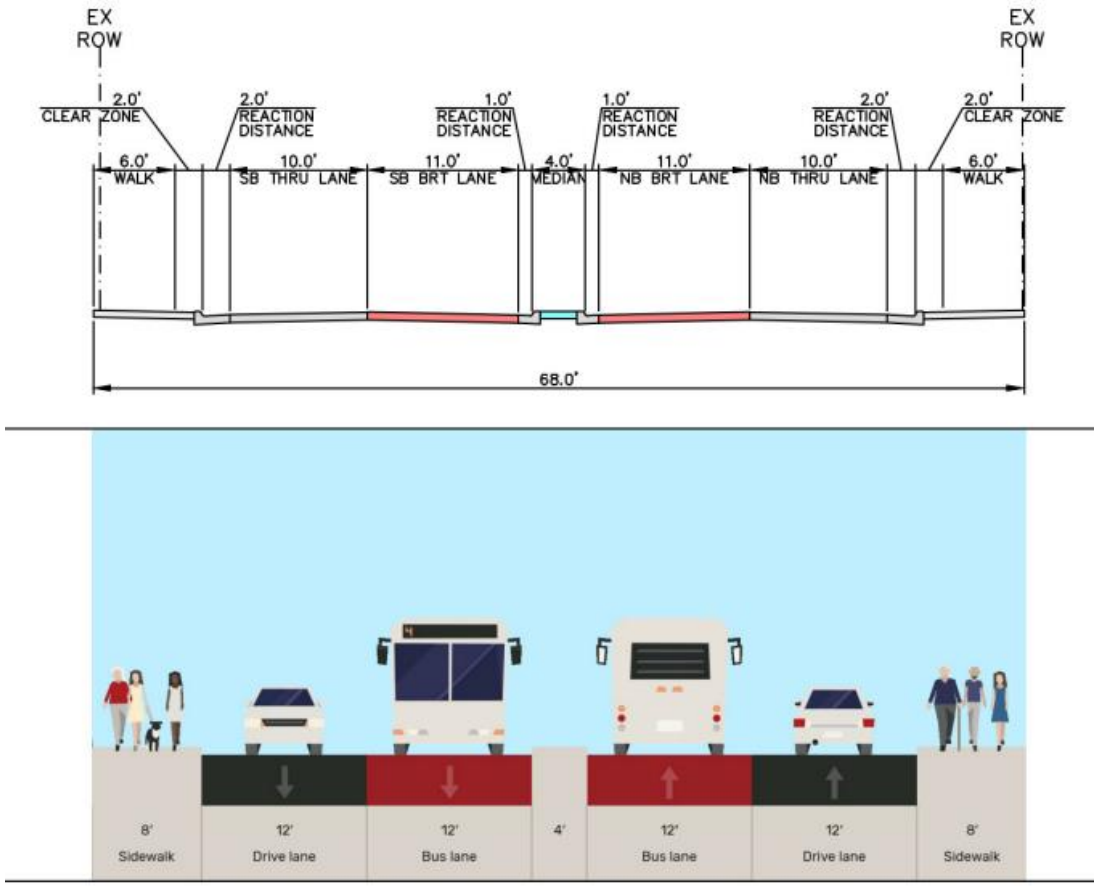
Center-Running Transit Lanes (Saint Paul)



Benefits include:

- More pedestrian refuges and medians at crosswalks
- Faster and more reliable transit service
- Improves vehicle safety by removing left turns between signalized intersections and slowing traffic.

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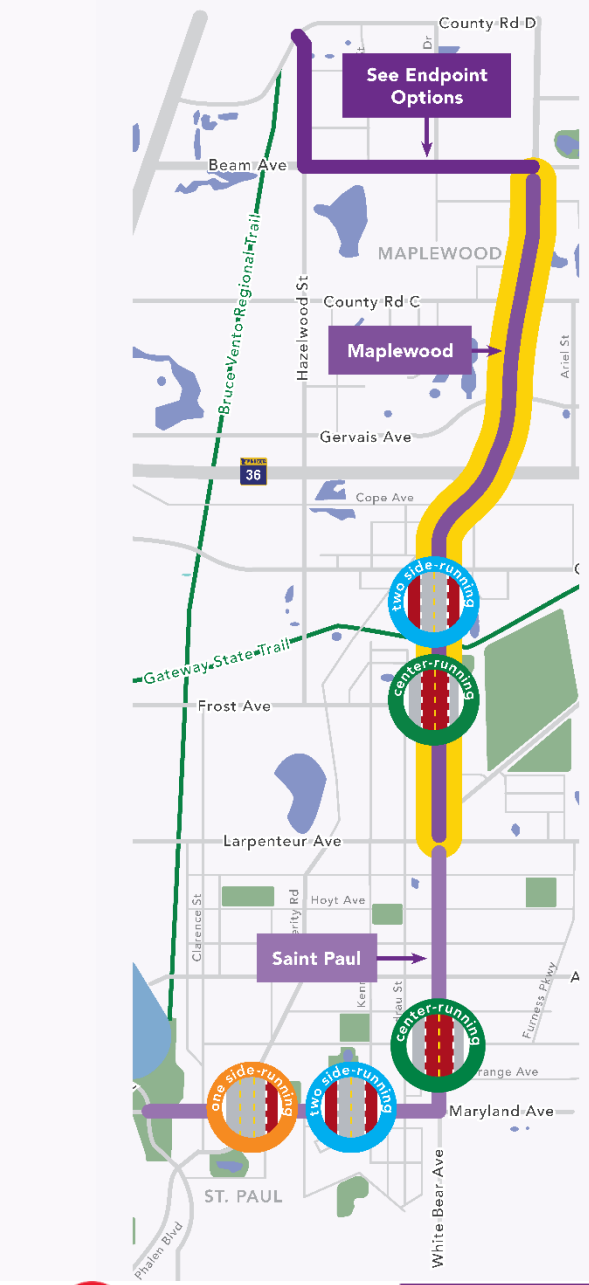
Two Options in Maplewood Section

The Maplewood section is White Bear Avenue between Larpenteur and Beam avenues.

There are two options in this section.

- Center-Running Transit Lanes
- Two Side-Running Transit Lanes



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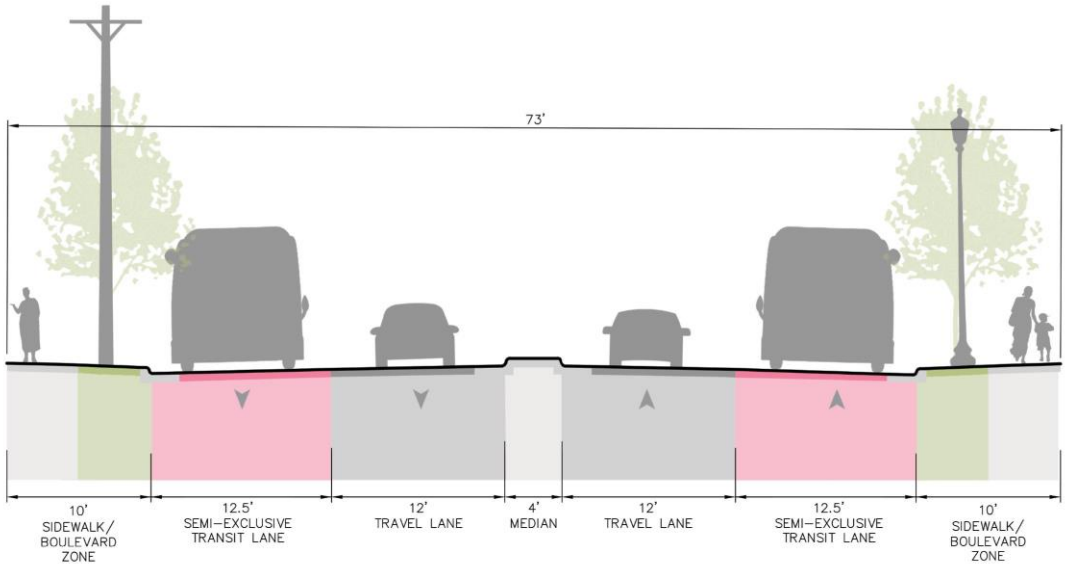
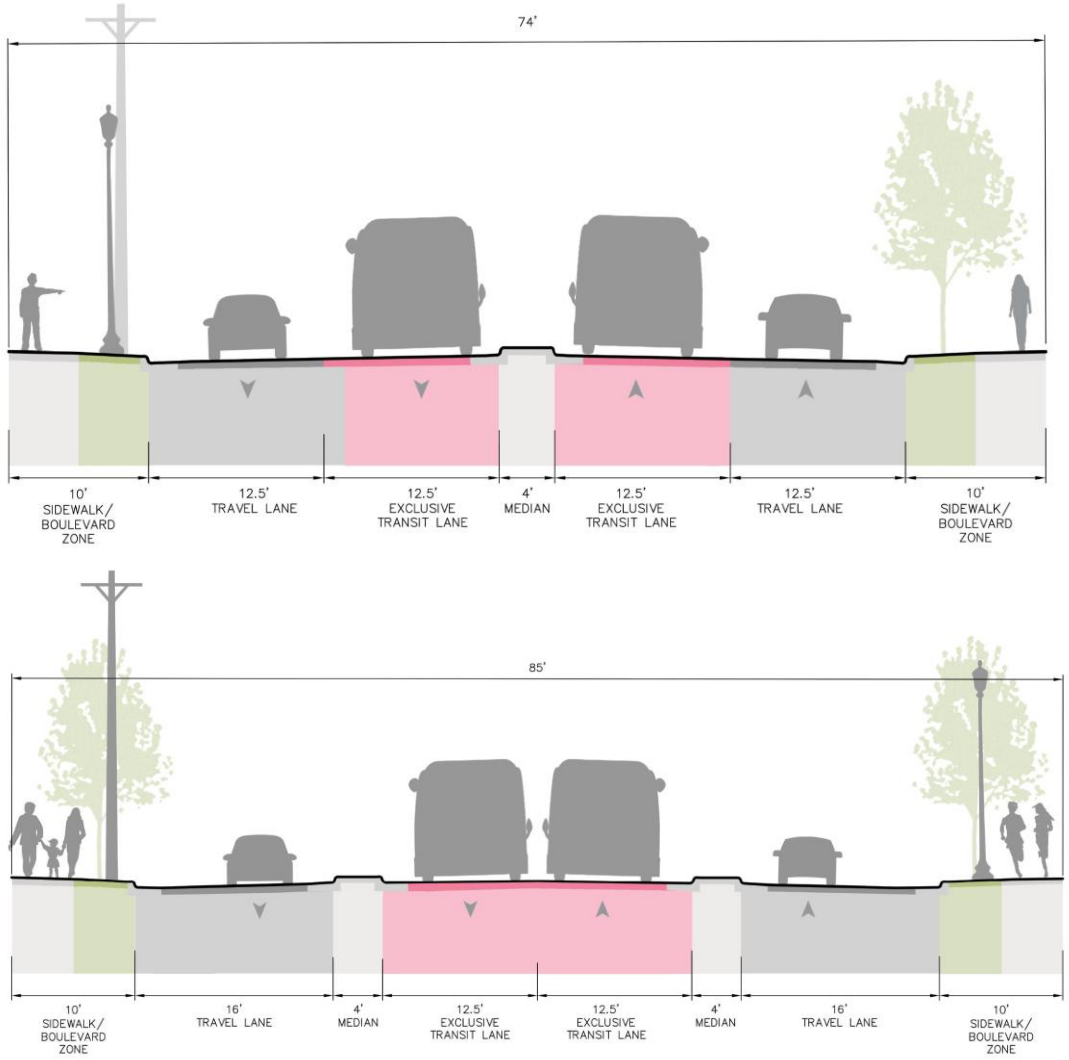
Two Side-Running Transit Lanes (Maplewood)



Benefits include:

- Preferred by disability advocates for consistency of station configurations
- Fewer property impacts on White Bear Avenue
- Easier for maintenance staff to access stations
- Less traffic delay for cars and trucks

Center-Running Transit Lanes (Maplewood)



Benefits include:

- More pedestrian refuges and medians at crosswalks
- Faster and more reliable transit service
- Improving vehicle safety by removing left turns at unsignalized intersections

RMS Phase II Discussion

What does the TAAC want us to know or consider as we evaluate design options in St. Paul and Maplewood?

St. Paul – Maryland Avenue Existing

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St. Paul – Maryland Avenue Two Side Running

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St. Paul – Maryland Avenue One Side-Running

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Maplewood – White Bear Avenue Existing

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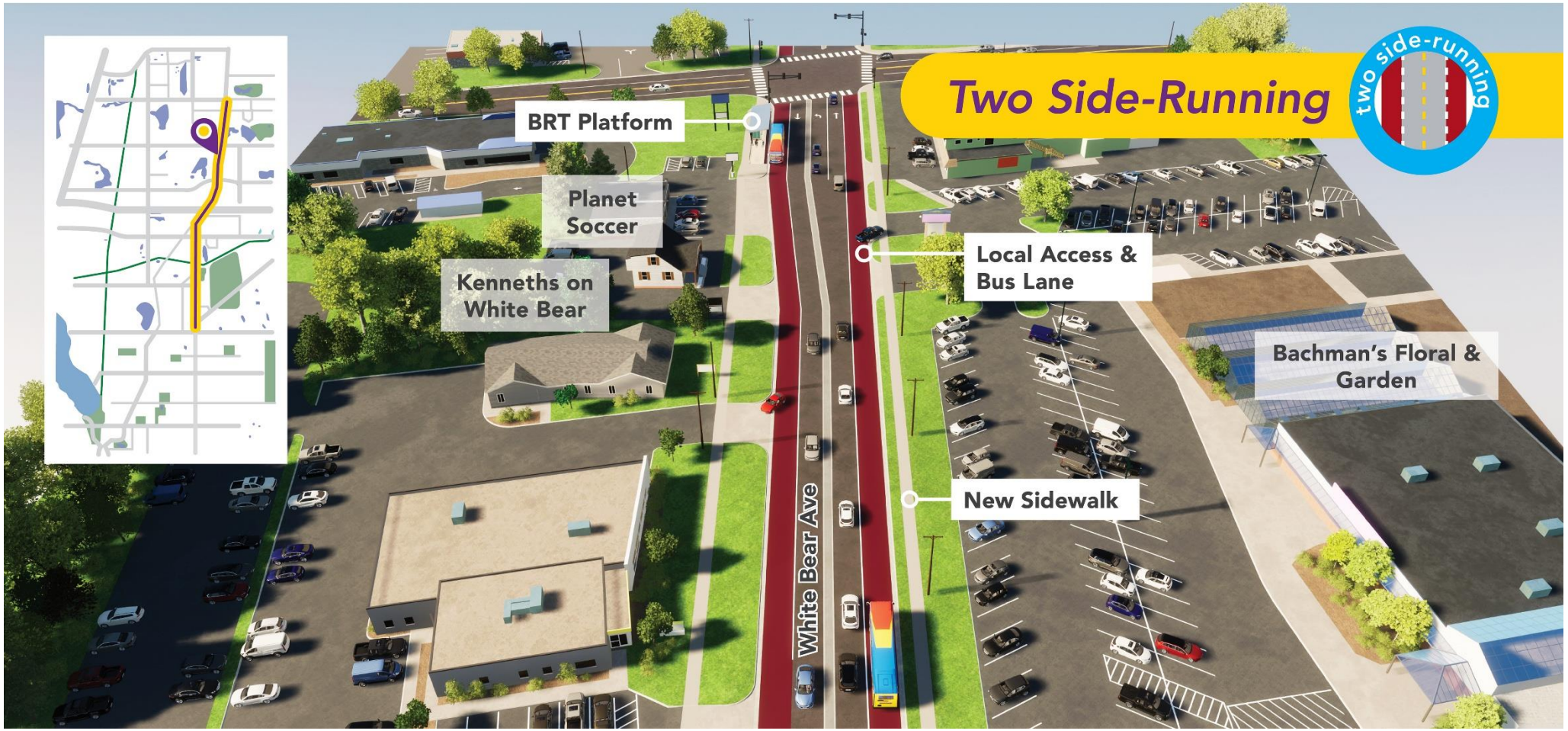
Maplewood – White Bear Avenue Two Side-Running



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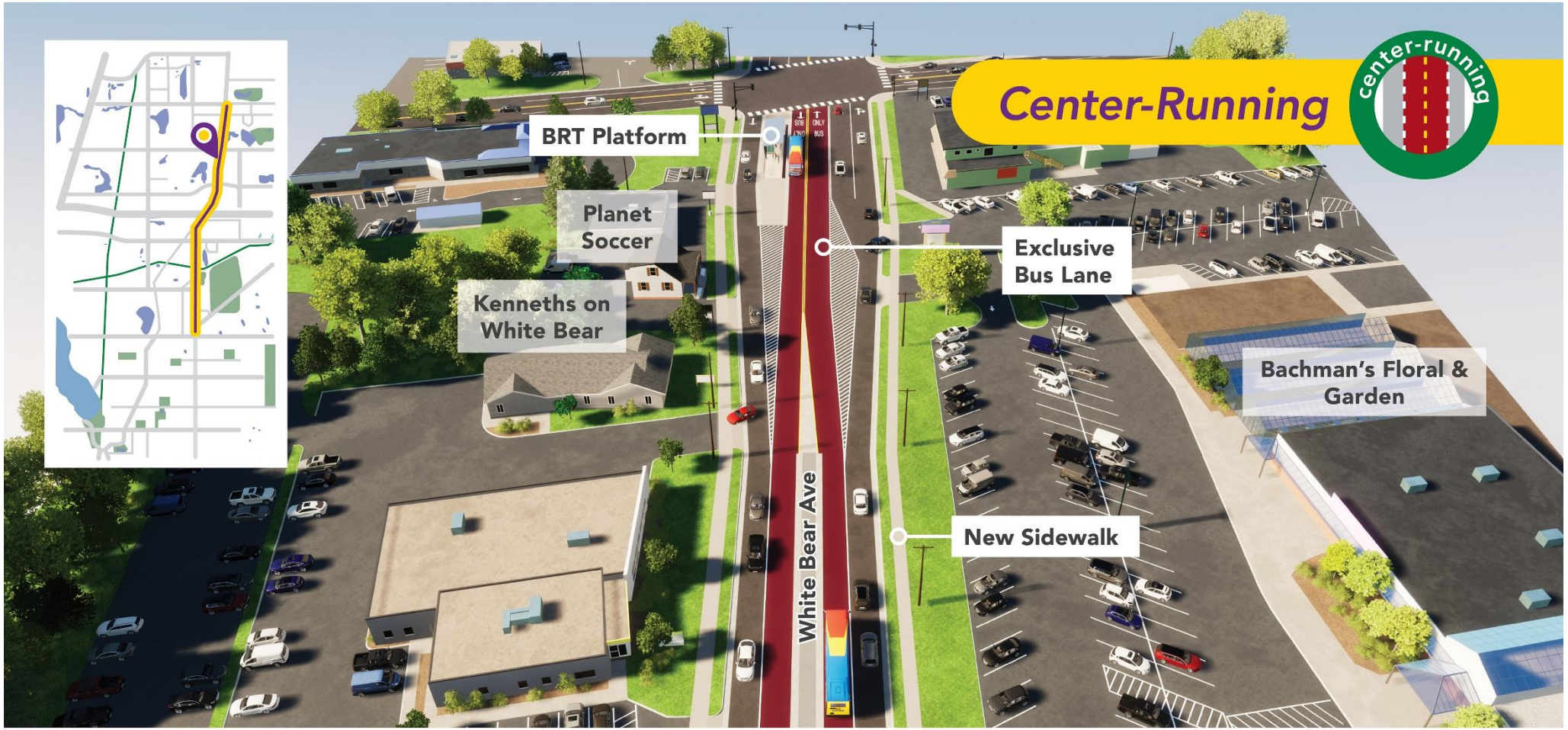
Maplewood – White Bear Avenue Center Running



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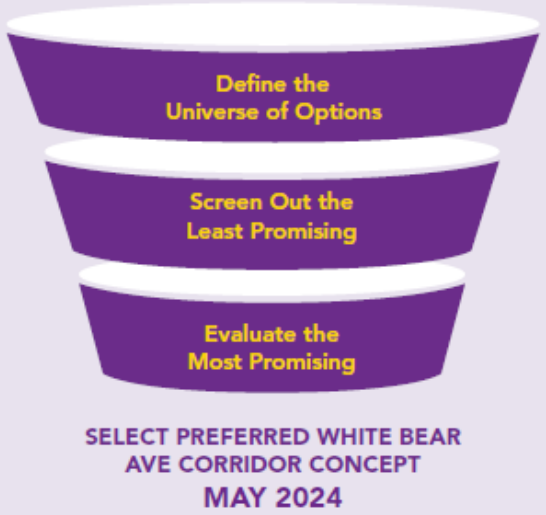
Evaluation Overview

Still in Progress

Key Criteria

Purple Line staff have studied design options in the White Bear Ave Corridor over the past several months to help inform the preferred concept.

Staff started by determining a universe of options, screening out the least promising options, and then evaluating the most promising options which are displayed today.



Pedestrian Access

Property Impacts

Station Access

Traffic Operations

Transit Operations

Parking Impacts

Environmental Considerations

Public Needs

Concept Dimensions

Socioeconomic Demographics

Pedestrian & Vehicle Safety

Land Use

Ridership

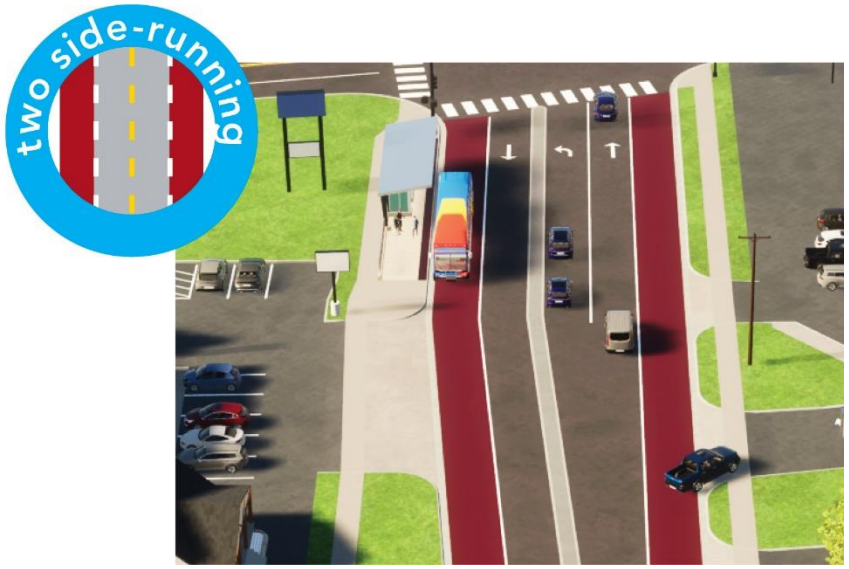
Federal Funding Viability

Project Cost

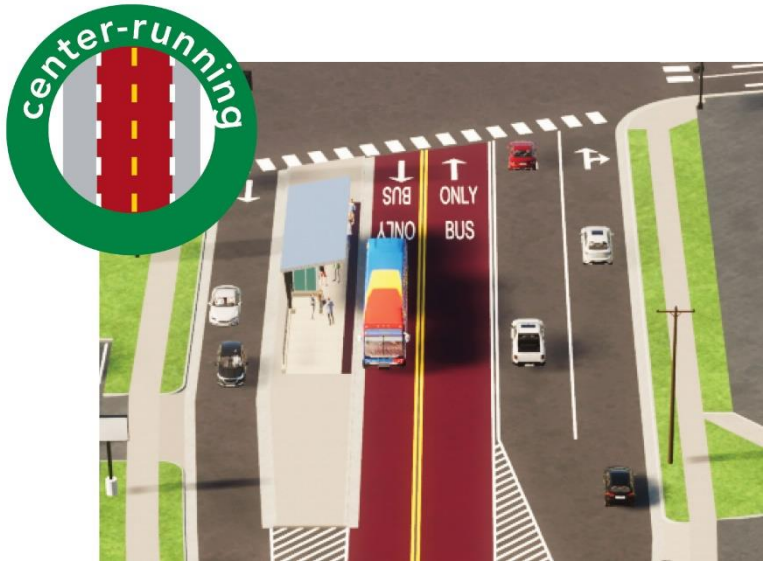
Public Support

Purple Line

Transit Operations



Side-running lanes allow cars and trucks to access driveways or turn onto local streets. Buses can sometimes be delayed by these movements.



Center-running lanes are exclusively used by only transit and emergency vehicles. Buses are least likely to be delayed by general traffic.

In mixed traffic, buses can be delayed by cars and trucks. Buses would also stop “in-lane” at station platforms, momentarily stopping traffic.

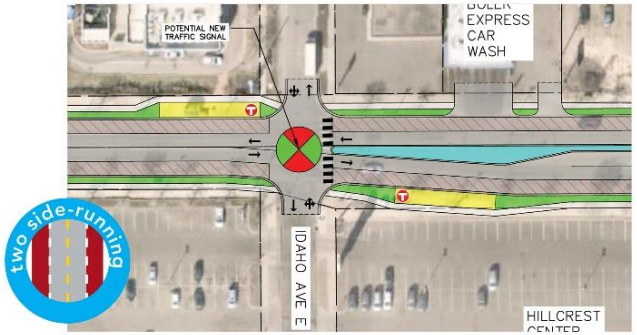
Pedestrian & Station Access – Saint Paul

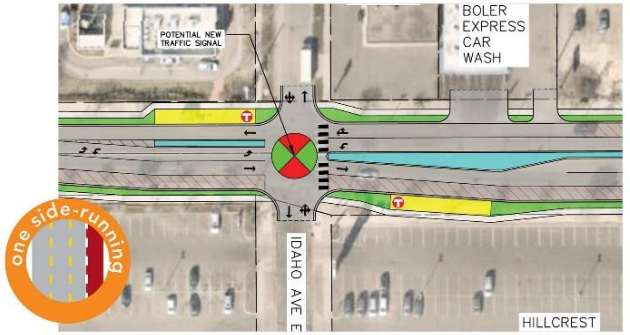
Pedestrian Access

- Both options will add more marked crosswalks and 5 more refuges and/or medians. More crosswalks will reduce the average distance between crosswalks by 5 to 10 percent.
  - **Crossing distances today: 58 to 64 feet**
  - **With project: 50 to 60 feet**

Station Access

- There is no difference between the **ONE SIDE-RUNNING** and **TWO SIDE-RUNNING** options for how transit riders can access stations. Station platforms will be located next to the sidewalk





All options will deliver:

- MORE — Marked Crosswalks
- REDUCE — Average Crossing Distances
- MORE — Pedestrian Refuges/ Medians
- REDUCE — Average Number of Lanes to Cross

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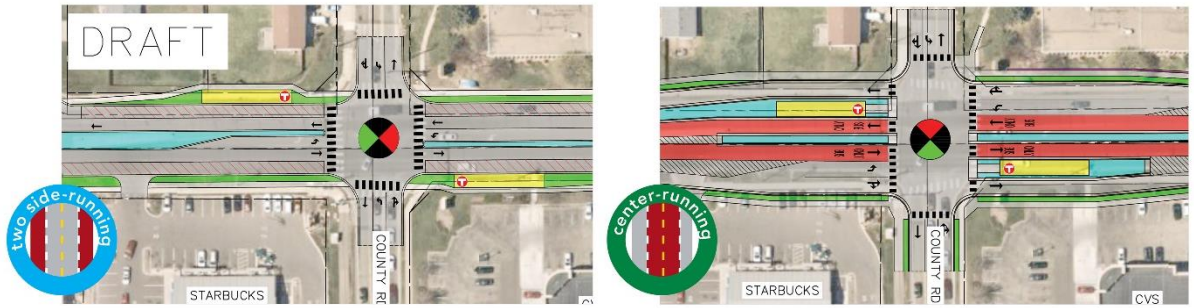
Pedestrian & Station Access - Maplewood

Pedestrian Access

- **TWO SIDE-RUNNING:** Adds more marked crosswalks to the corridor and 3 more refuges and medians.
  - **Crossing Distances Today: 66 to 70 feet | With Option: 56 to 65 feet**
- **CENTER-RUNNING:** Adds more marked crosswalks and around 19 more refuges and/or medians.
  - **Crossing Distances Today: 66 to 70 feet | With Option: 37 to 58 feet**
- All options, in both cities, would also reduce the average number of lanes to cross and the average crossing distance.

Station Access

- The **TWO SIDE-RUNNING** and **CENTER-RUNNING** options have the greatest difference in how transit riders can access stations. In the Center-Running option, station platforms are located in the middle of the roadway.



All options will deliver:

- MORE — Marked Crosswalks
- MORE — Pedestrian Refuges/ Medians
- REDUCE — Average Crossing Distances
- REDUCE — Average Number of Lanes to Cross

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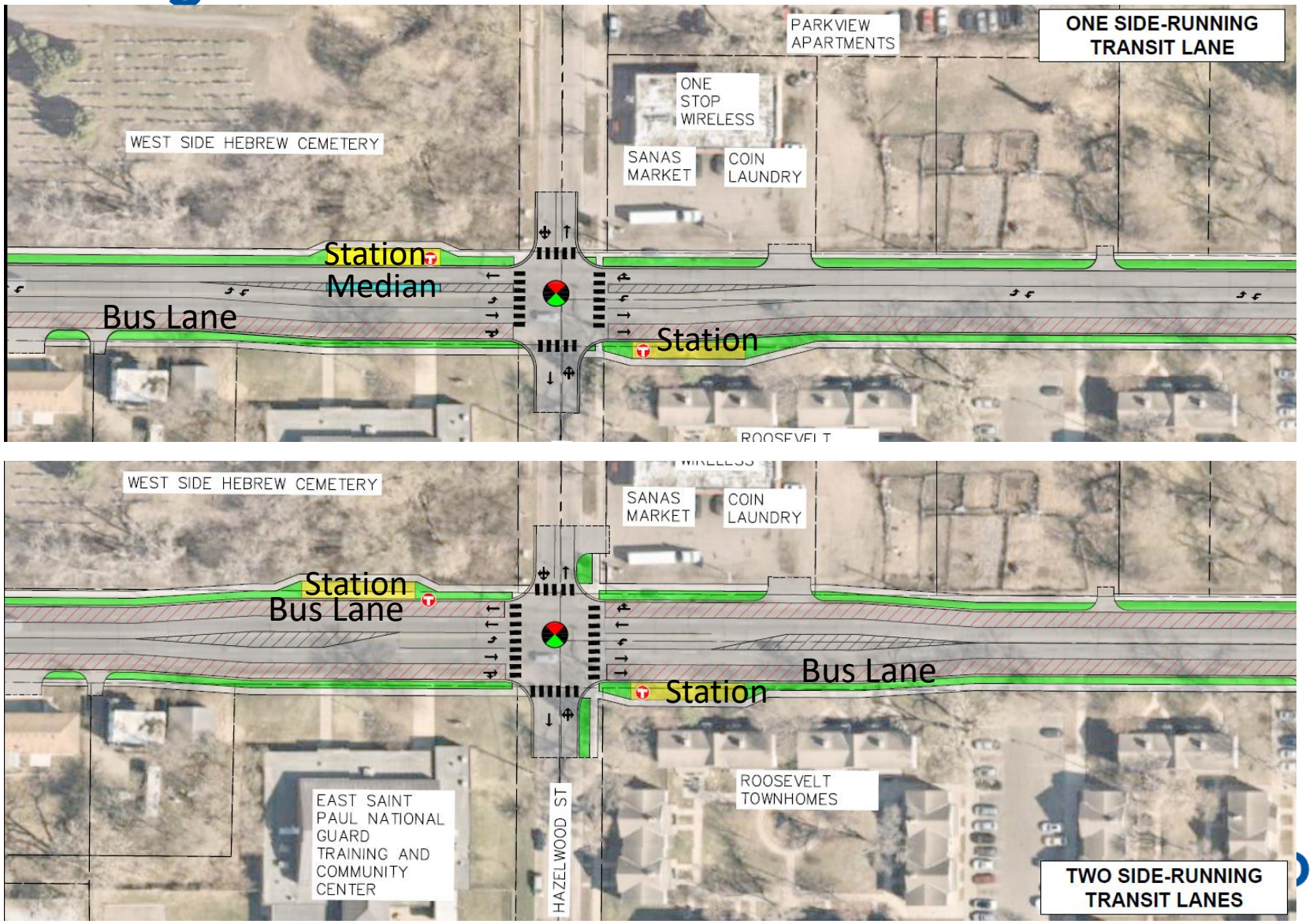
Pedestrian Improvements Outside of Stations

- Mid block crossings
- Improved sidewalks along corridor and closing sidewalk gaps
- All intersections will have improved compliance with ADA (i.e., push buttons, ramps)
- Project staff are evaluating options for creating a safer experience when crossing White Bear Ave

Station Consistency

- Station design is tied to the guideway configuration
  - **Side-running (one or two side):** stations would be on opposite sides of the intersection
  - **Center-running:** stations would be on opposite sides on the intersection but in the center of the road (split)
    - This option includes a pedestrian refuge area
    - Crossing distance would be shorter than side-running (if you needed to cross the street to access the station)
  - Stations south of Maryland Ave are **side-running, far side split stations**
  - Downtown St. Paul – guideway is in mixed traffic
    - Purple Line will use Gold Line and G Line stations in downtown

Side Running



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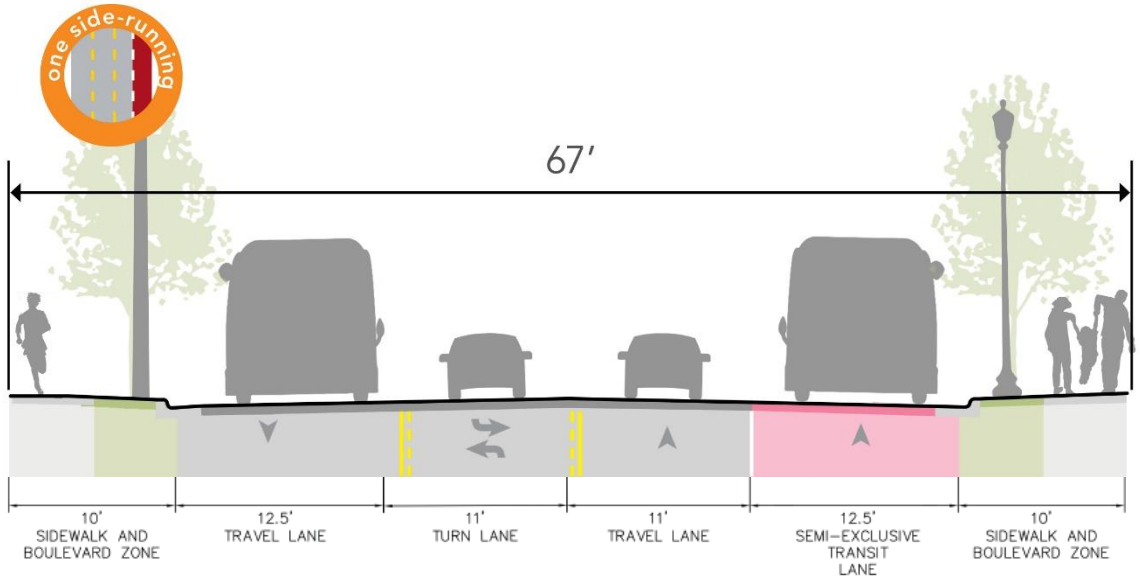
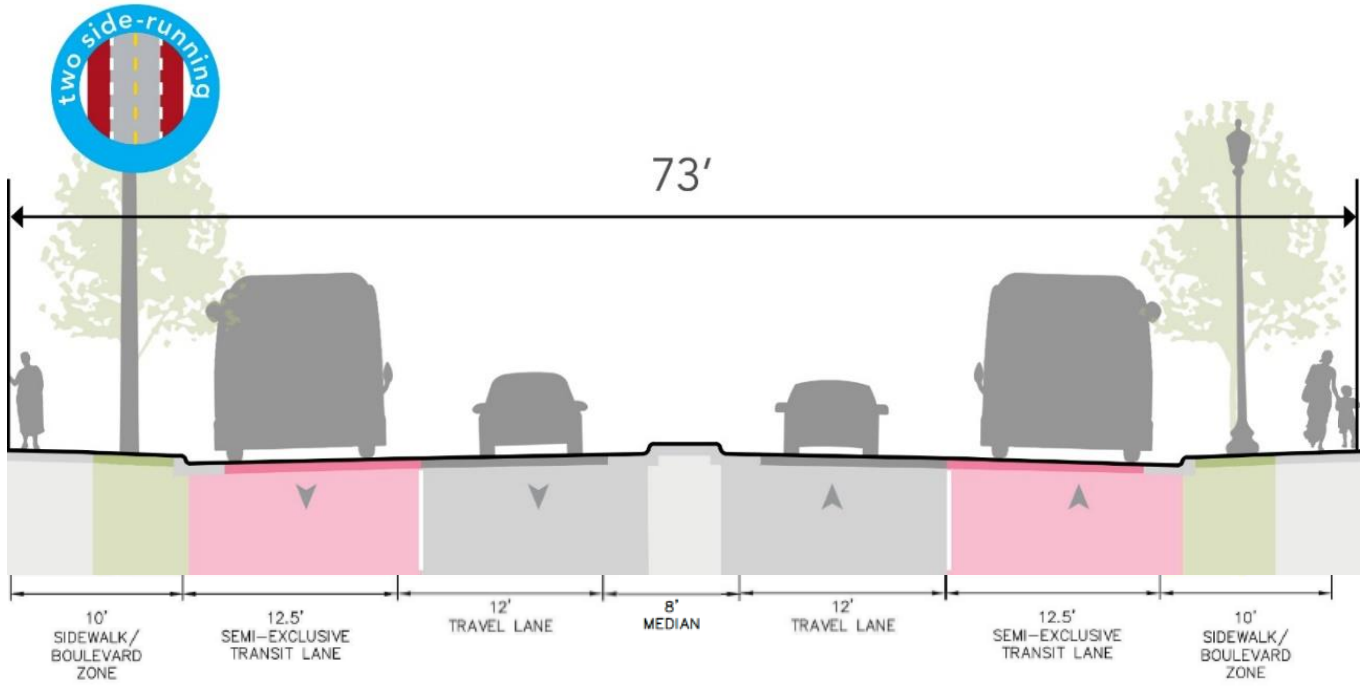
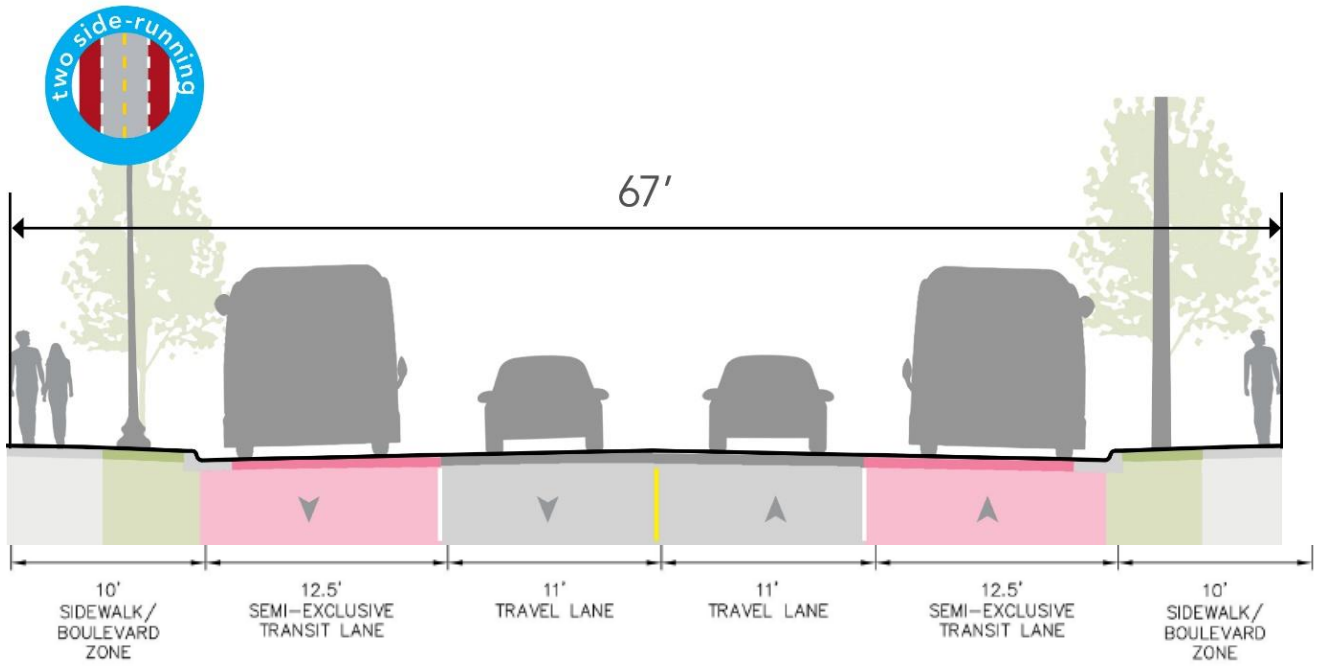
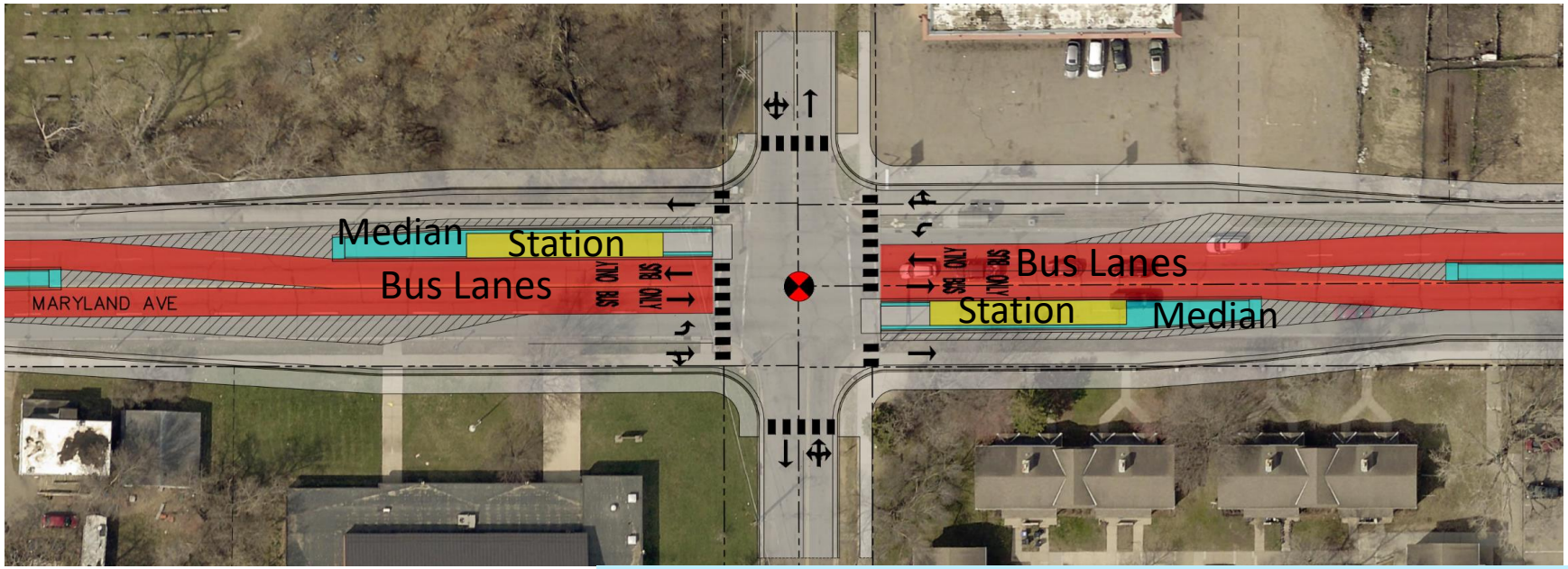
Side Running (cont.)

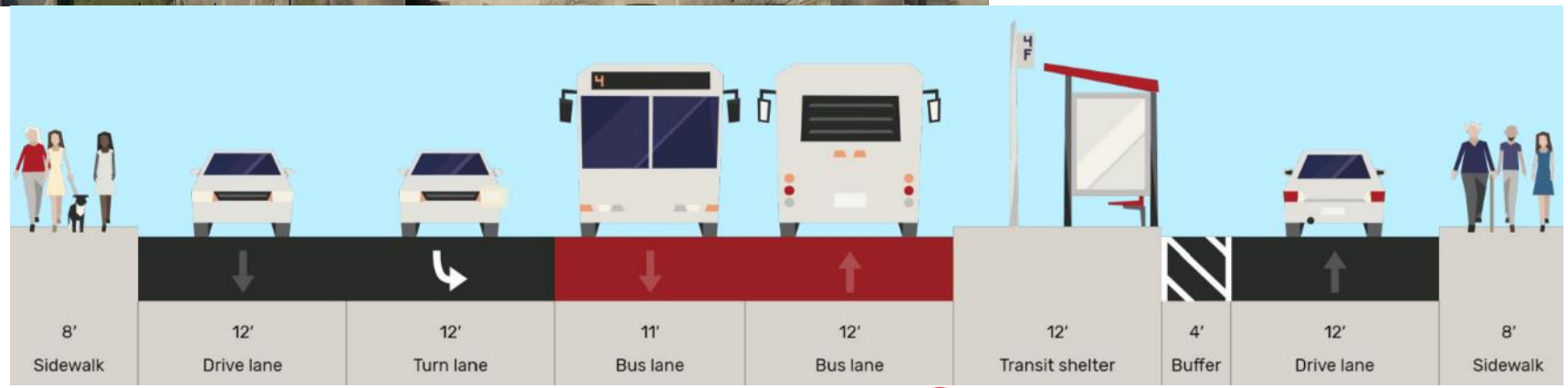






Center Running – Hazelwood Station





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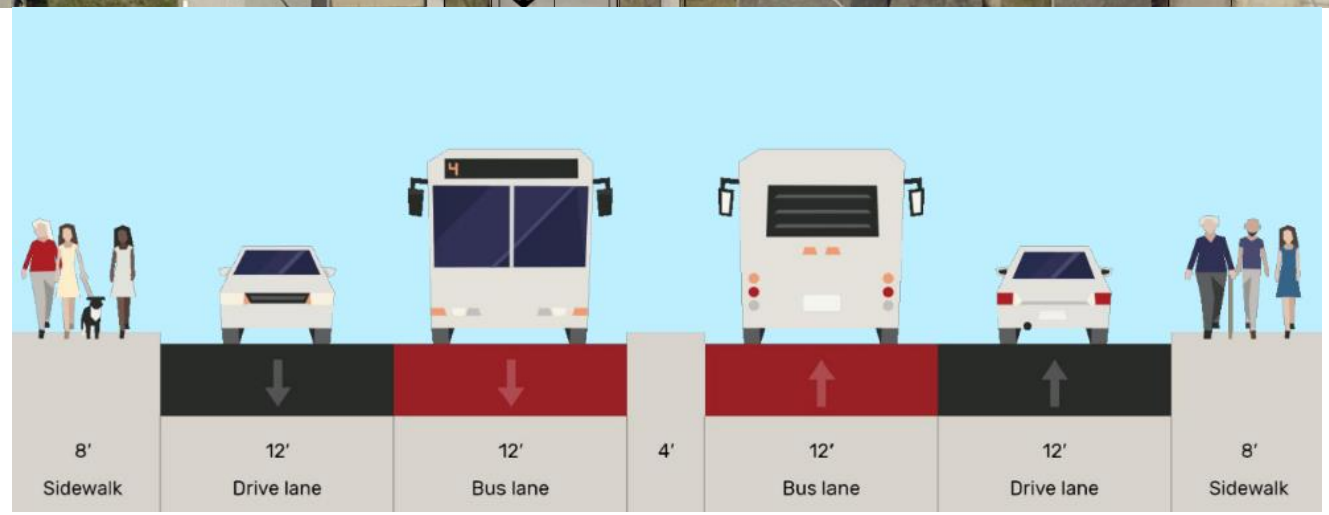
Center Running – White Bear Ave near Orange Ave



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RMS Phase II Discussion

What do you want us to know or consider as we evaluate pedestrian and station access in St. Paul and Maplewood?

Narrowed Center Running Option in St. Paul

Craig Lamothe | Project Manager

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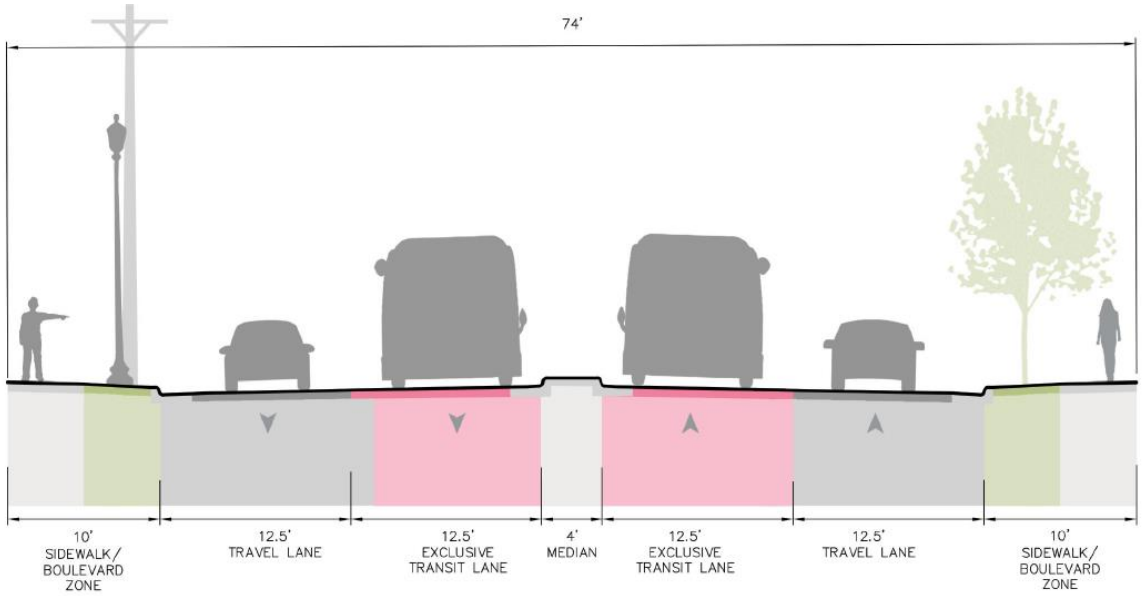
History of Center Running Option in St. Paul

- Included in the Universe of Options
- Evaluated as part of Tier 1 Screening
- Not recommended for Tier 2 Evaluation
  - CMC Meeting (10/11/23)
    - Full property acquisitions
    - Reduced vehicle access



- Jan-Feb. 2024: Community leaders advocate for reconsideration of a narrower cross section
  - 2/28/24: Project team meets with community representatives for a listening session

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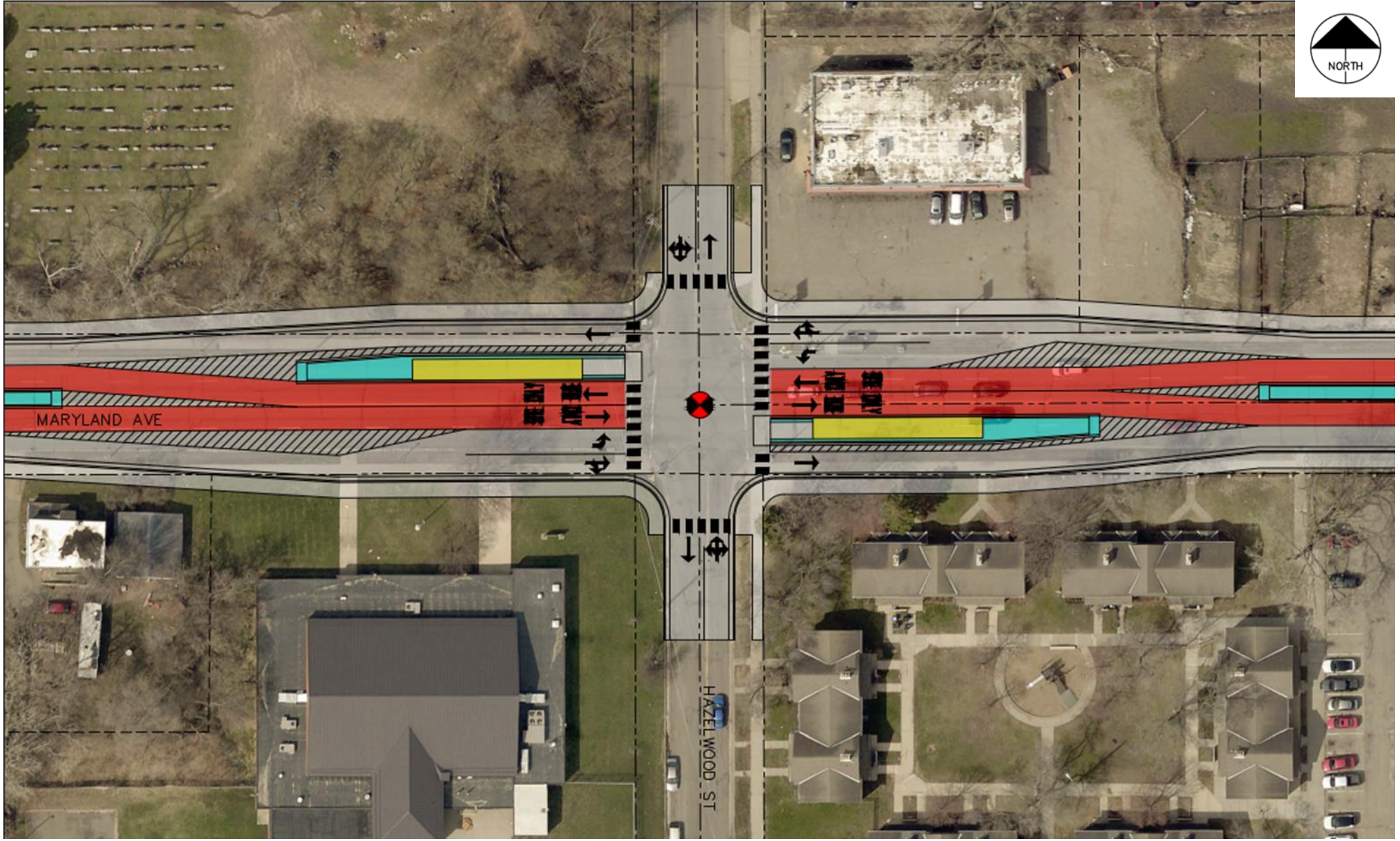
Center Running Option in St. Paul

- CMC concurred on 4/4 to study a narrowed center running option further
- Project team is developing cross sections, layouts, property impacts assessment, and assessment of tradeoffs for public feedback this summer



Center Running in St. Paul Example: Hazelwood Split Center

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RMS Phase II Discussion

What does the TAAC want us to know or consider as we evaluate center running transit lanes in St. Paul?

Q&A

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Next Steps

Liz Jones | Senior Community Outreach Coordinator

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Upcoming RMS Phase II Engagement this Summer

- Engagement on center running option in St. Paul
- Engagement on Bruce Vento Regional Trail Collocation and the White Bear Avenue Corridor Route Alternatives; Solicit preference for a Purple Line BRT Route

Upcoming TAAC Engagement

- Full TAAC updates this summer/fall in conjunction with project engagement and decisions
- TAAC engagement as design advances
  - 30% design - spring 2025
  - 60% design - fall 2025
  - 100% design complete – winter 2026

Contact Us

For more information:
www.metrotransit.org/purple-line-project

Facebook and Twitter @PurpleLineBRT

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