



Corridor Management Committee: March 11, 2021



Brooklyn Park | Crystal | Robbinsdale | Golden Valley | Minneapolis



Today's Topics

- Approval of February 11, 2021 BLRT CMC Meeting Summary
- Committee Reports
 - Community Advisory Committee Report
 - Business Advisory Committee Report
- Initial Route Identification
 - Process
 - Route Options
 - Communications and Engagement
- Route Evaluation Next Steps
- Community Consultants Update



Approval of the February 11, 2021 Meeting Summary



Committee Reports

- Community Advisory Committee Report
- Business Advisory Committee Report

Initial Route Identification

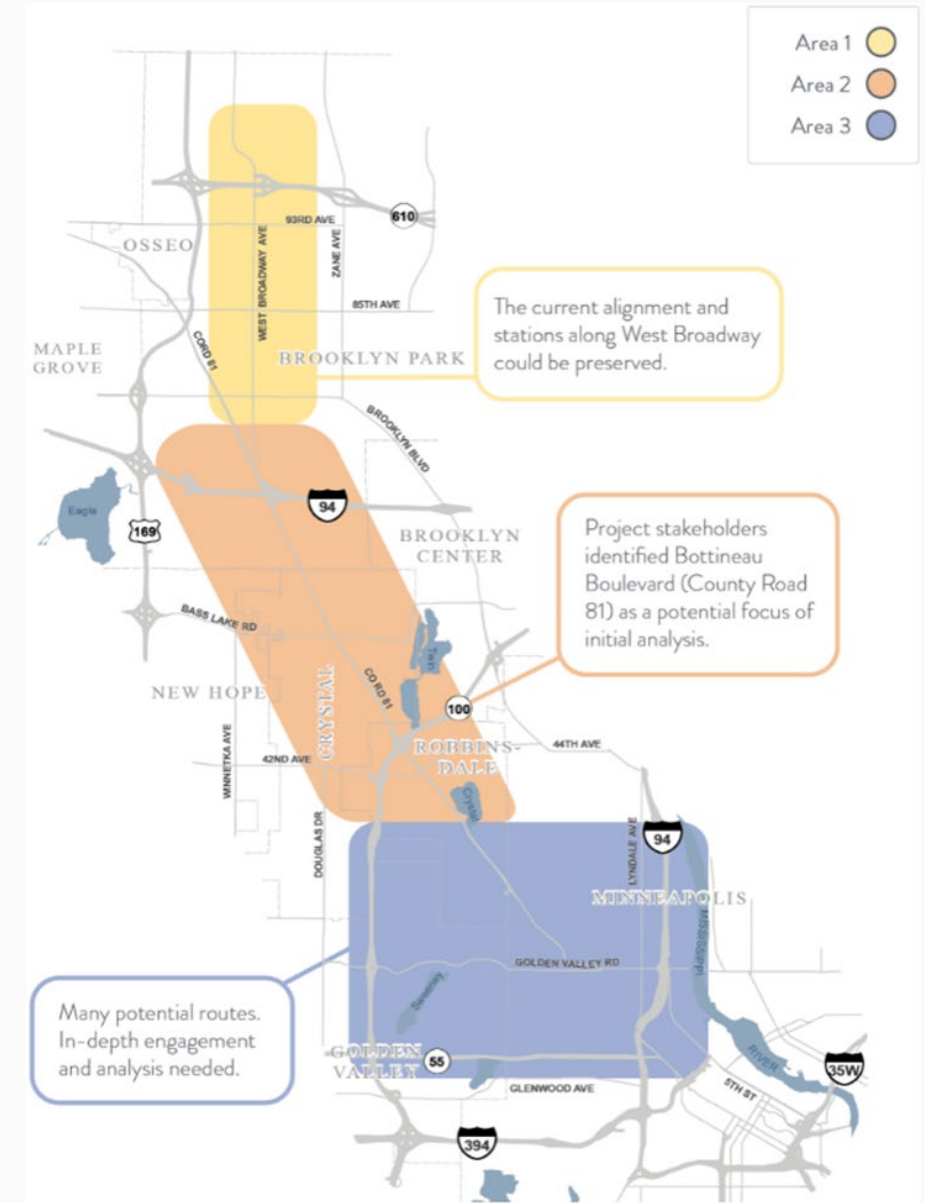
Steps to Route Identification

- Reestablished the Project Management Team comprised of Met Council & Hennepin County staff to help deliver this critical investment
- August 13, 2020 CMC: Committee first discusses the need to move the Blue Line Project forward without using freight rail
 - Decision came after a multi-year effort to negotiate with BNSF that included many levels of government and offers including purchasing the corridor
 - Met Council & Hennepin County committed to finding an LRT solution and maintaining as much of the project as possible in recognition efforts by partner communities over many years
- October 8 & December 10 CMC: Discussion, modification and adoption of Project Principles to set the project scope and guide decision making

Steps to Route Identification

- CMC's adoption of Project Principles provided the framework for the project management team to explore solutions:
 - Meet Federal Transit Administration New Starts criteria
 - Maintain existing alignment as much as possible
 - Mitigate negative impacts
 - Compliment existing and planned transitways
- Reestablished regular Issue Identification Teams & Advisory Committee structure
- Initial community engagement focused on desired destinations, opportunities, and concerns for potential new routes, which helped staff validate the direction of work underway

- 8



Area 1 Considerations

- The current alignment & stations along West Broadway in Brooklyn Park can be preserved
 - Route is not impacted by the freight rail corridor
 - Modifications to the route and stations is not needed to connect to the remainder of the project
- Consistent with the Project Principles:
 - Retain as much of the previous alignment as possible
 - Maintain existing termini: Target Field Station in Minneapolis and Oak Grove Station in Brooklyn Park
- Serves major destinations in Brooklyn Park: North Hennepin Community College, multiple commercial areas, Target Campus

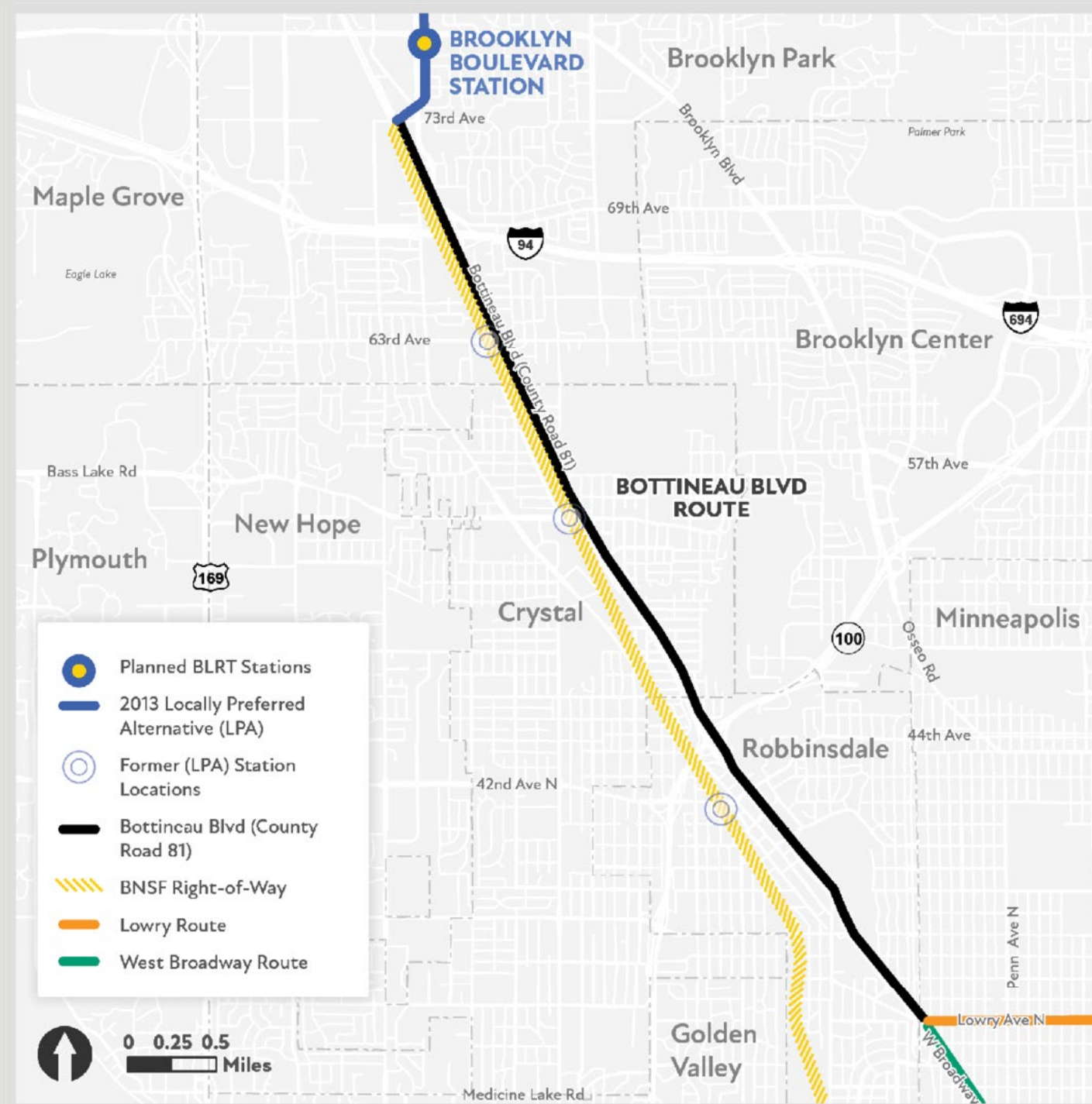
Area 1



Area 2 Considerations

- Consistent with Project Principle: Maintain existing alignment as much as possible
 - Multiple station area elements could be preserved
- Need to avoid geographic features such as Crystal Lake, Twin Lakes, and the Crystal Airport
- Serves major destinations including Crystal's business district, downtown Robbinsdale, North Memorial Campus
 - North Memorial Campus identified as most missed destination from former alignment

Area 2



Area 3 Considerations

- Review of options consistent with Project Principles:
 - Minimize residential, commercial and environmental impacts
 - Complement existing and planned METRO transitways
 - When appropriate, pursue opportunities to serve even more people and destinations, especially areas with lower rates of car ownership/vehicular access and those with mobility challenges

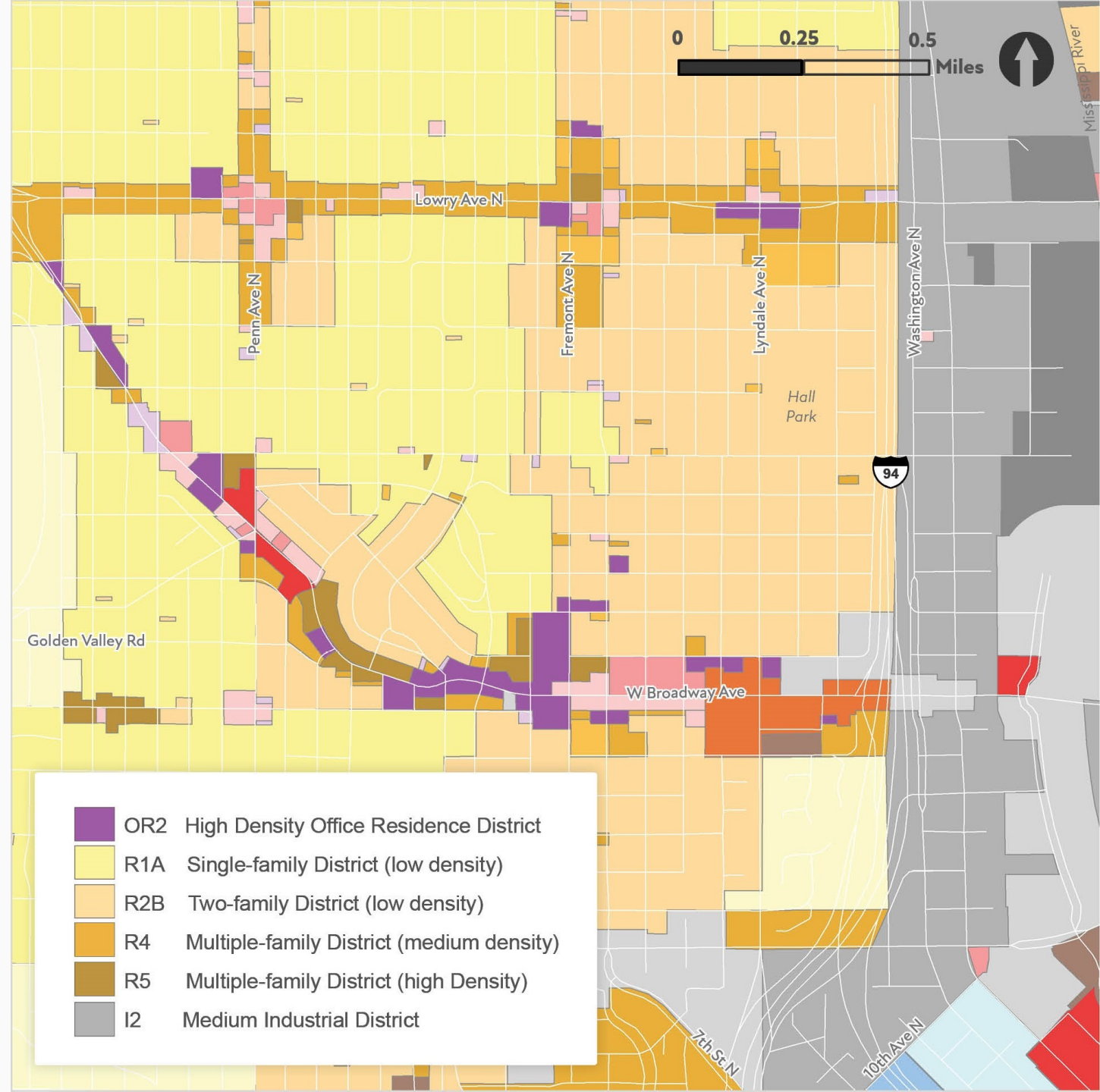
Area 3 Considerations: Public Right of Way

- To fit the LRT guideway, sidewalks, and two travel lanes about 75 feet of right of way is needed
- When additional right of way is available other elements can be included: boulevards, bikeways or street parking



Area 3 Considerations: Compatible Land Use

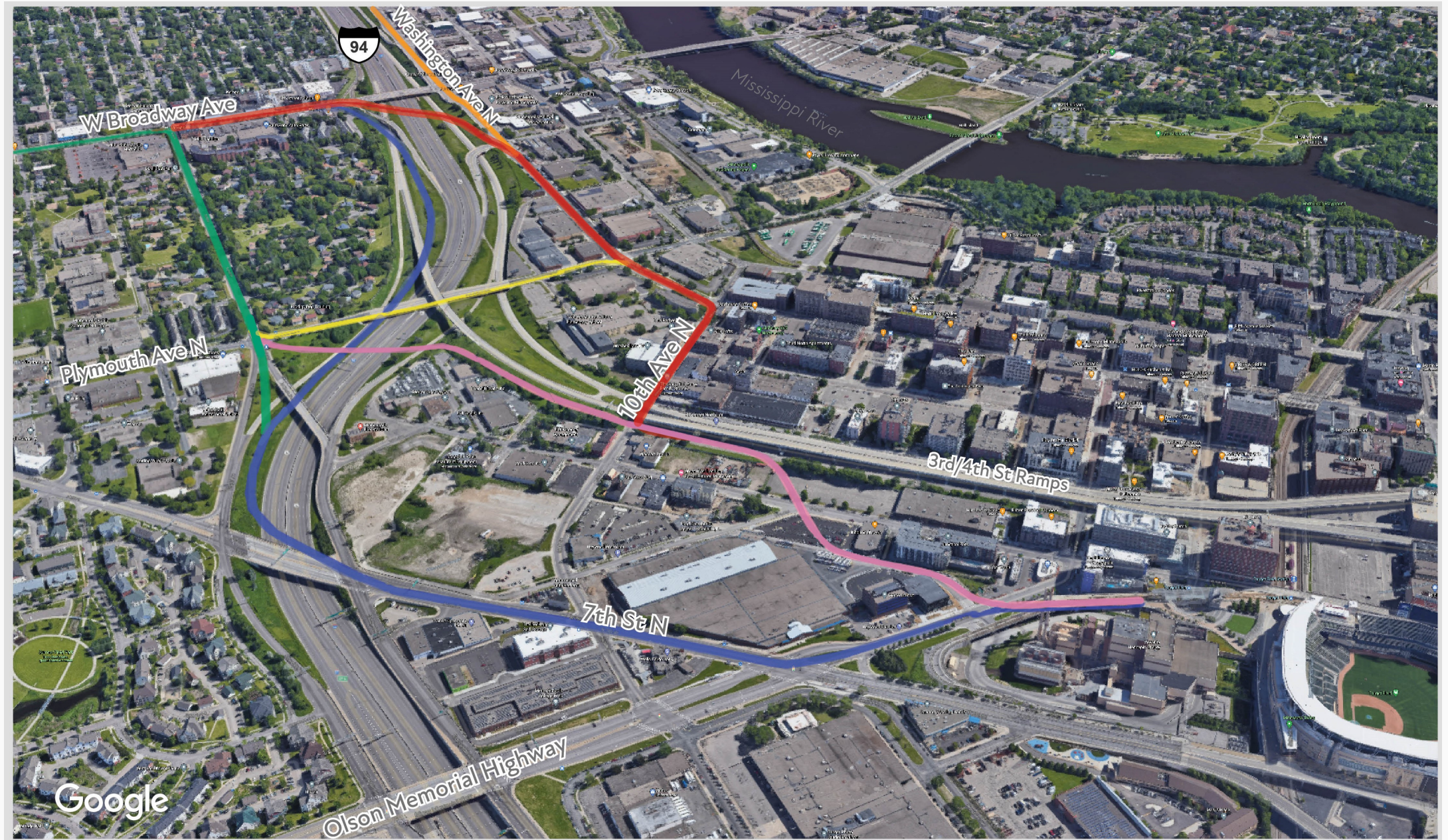
- Light rail is better suited to higher density residential and commercial areas
- Best to place routes where the LRT investment can also leverage related community benefits



Area 3

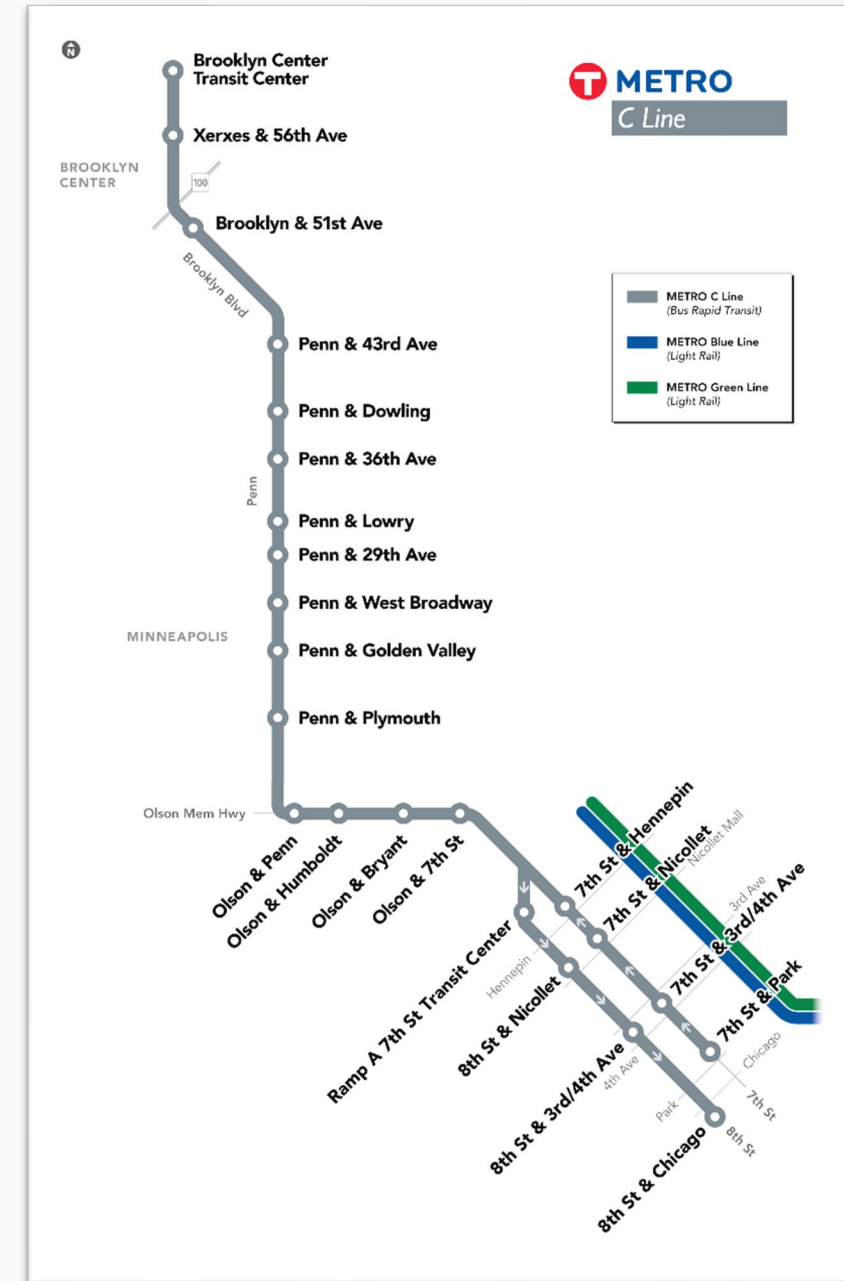


Area 3 Connections



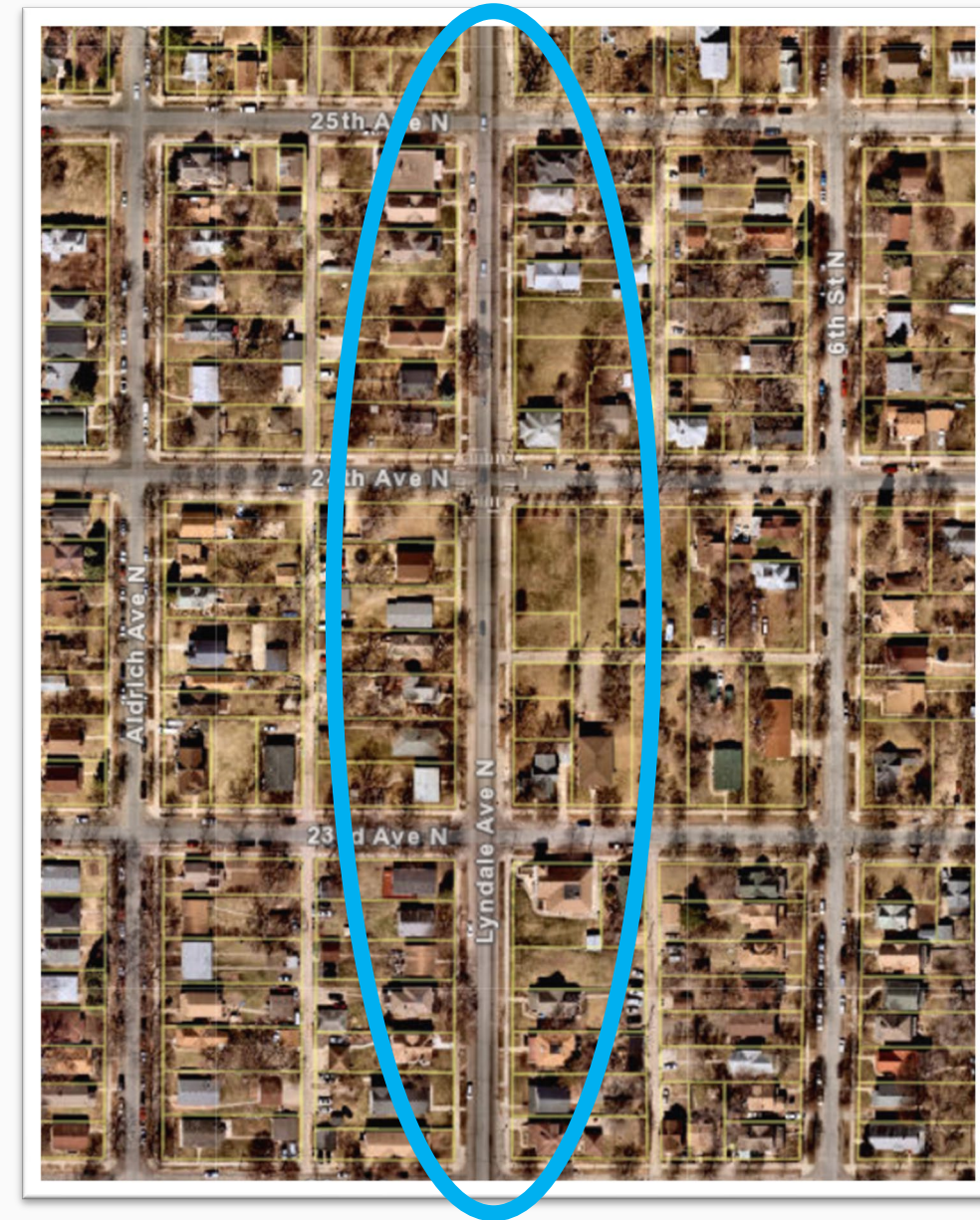
Route Options: Not Recommended

- Penn & Emerson/Fremont were not recommended as they did not meet the multiple Project Principles:
 - Complement existing and planned METRO transitways
 - Minimize residential, commercial and environmental impacts
- Both roadways have narrow Right of Way
- METRO C & D Lines are a valuable part of transit network



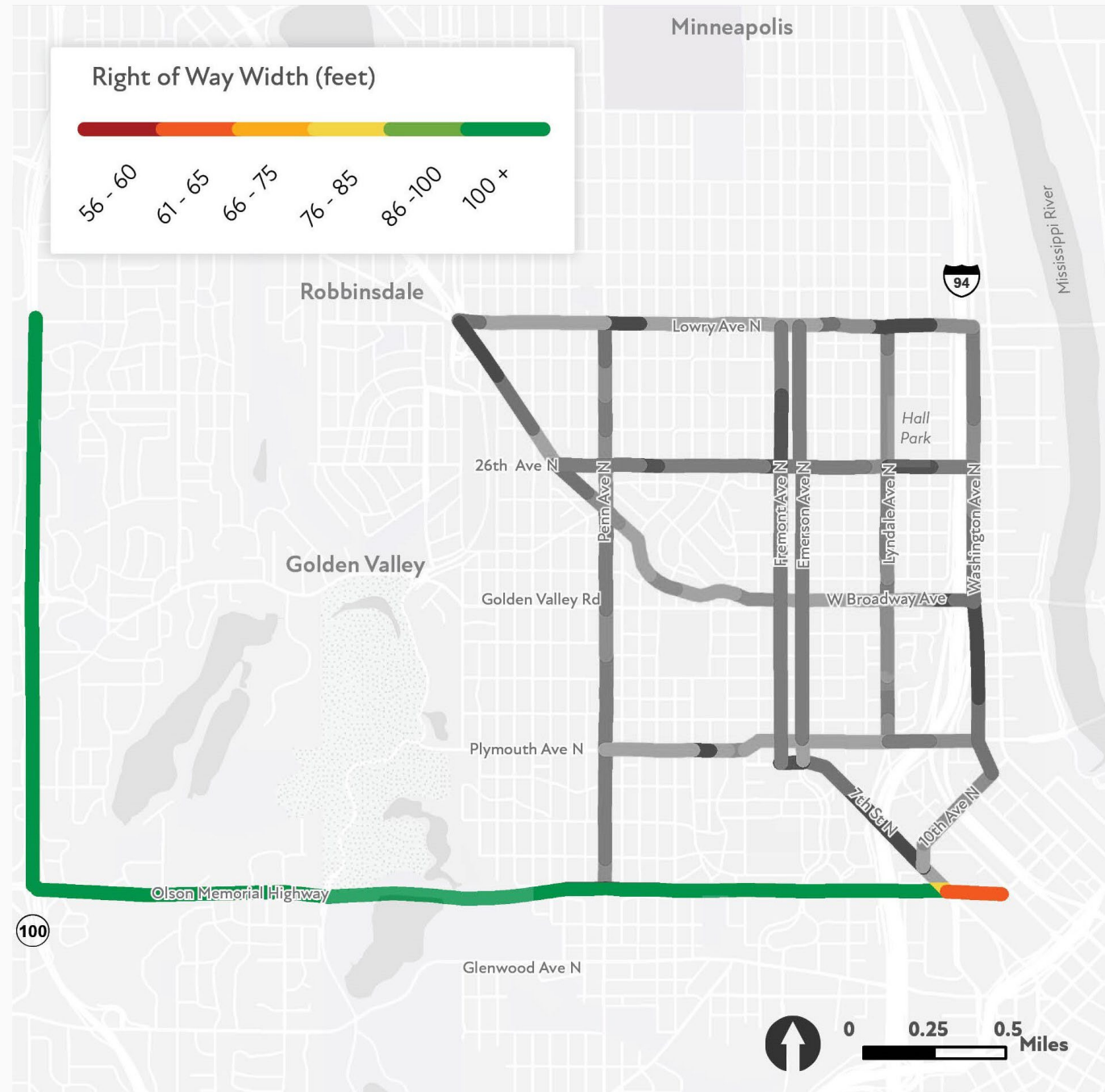
Route Options: Not Recommended

- Lyndale between West Broadway & Lowry
 - Narrower right of way
 - Significant residential impacts
 - Houses are closer to the sidewalk/street

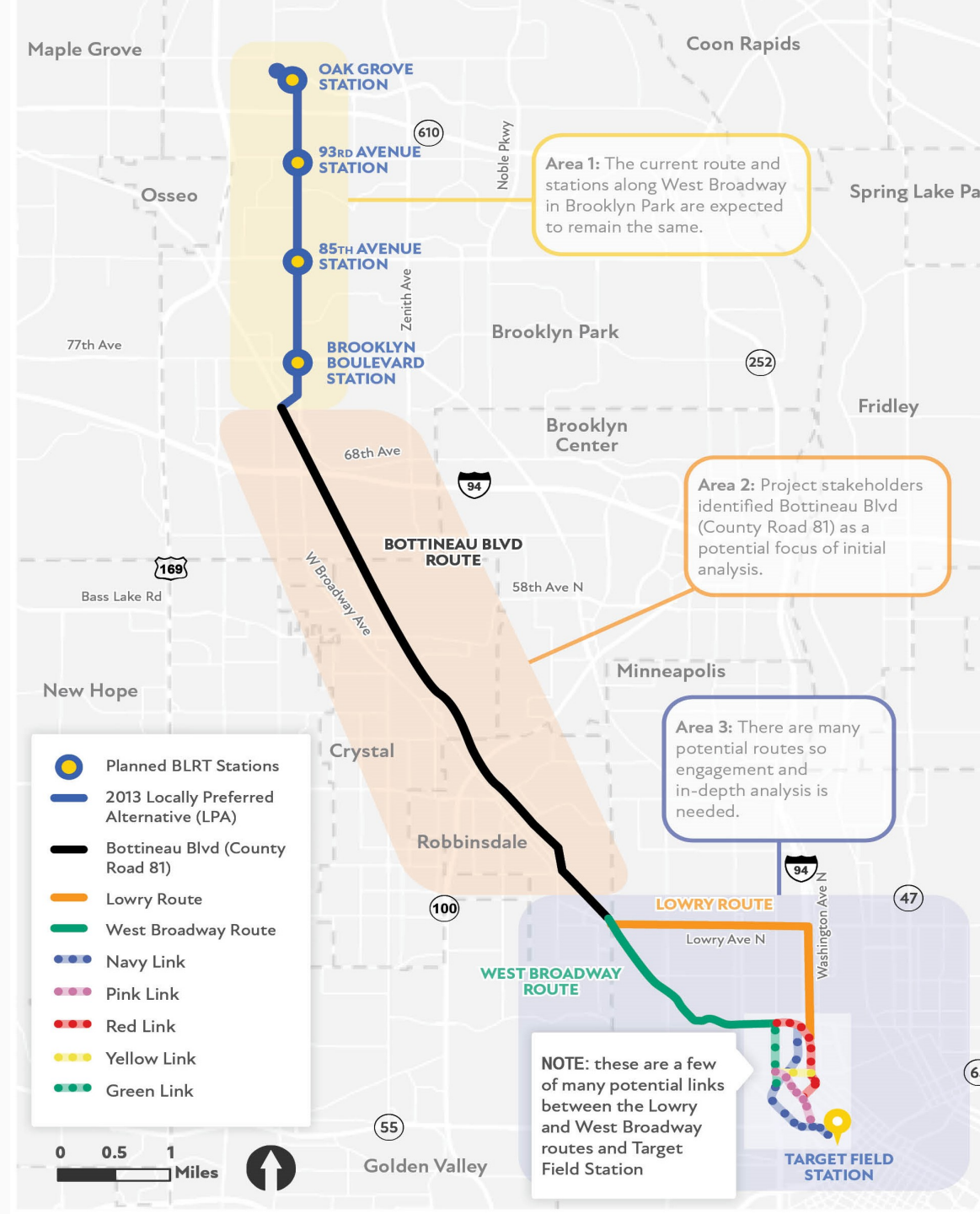


Route Options: Not Recommended

- Highway 55 to Highway 100
 - Does not serve as many riders and destinations
 - Longer route could result in increased travel time
 - Greater diversion from previous alignment
 - Very little initial support for this corridor



Committee Discussion



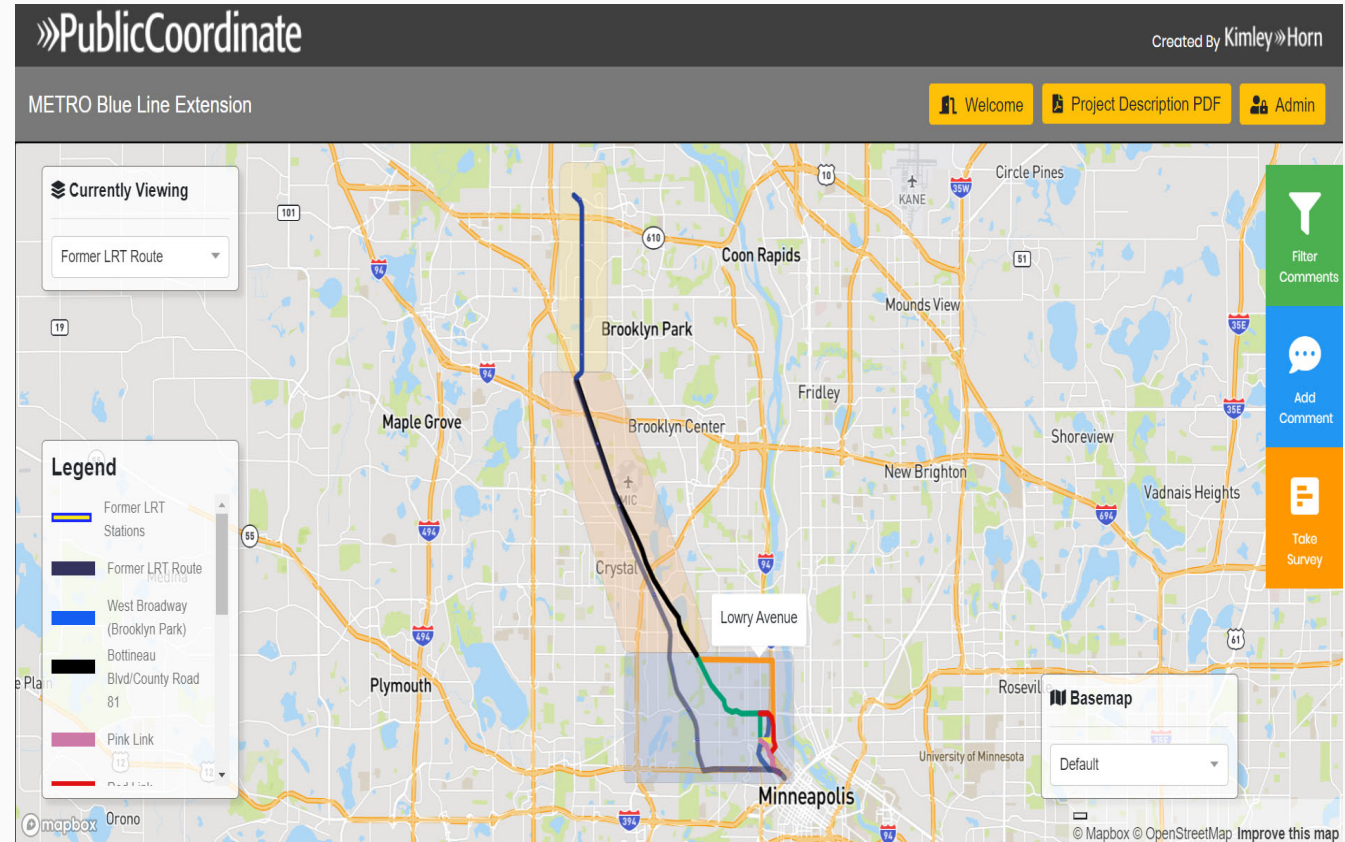
Communications & Engagement

- Ongoing communications & engagement effort through April 30, 2021:
 - Radio and newspaper ads reaching diverse communities
 - On-going social media efforts
 - Videos
 - Continued reach out to community & business stakeholders
 - Community consultants' kick-off efforts

- Tools to engage
- Information and maps
- Committee details
- Contact information

Multiple Methods to Share Feedback

- Leave comments on the interactive map
- Take a survey
- Provide general comments online or by emailing sophia.ginis@metrotransit.org
- We will come to you: invite us to an event or gathering



Upcoming Virtual Townhalls

- A staff presentation followed by time for the community to ask questions and provide comments
 - Events will be recorded and available on the project website via YouTube
- Thursday, March 25: 6:00 – 7:30 PM
 - Tuesday, March 30: 12:00 – 1:00 PM
 - Tuesday, March 30: 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Feedback Sought

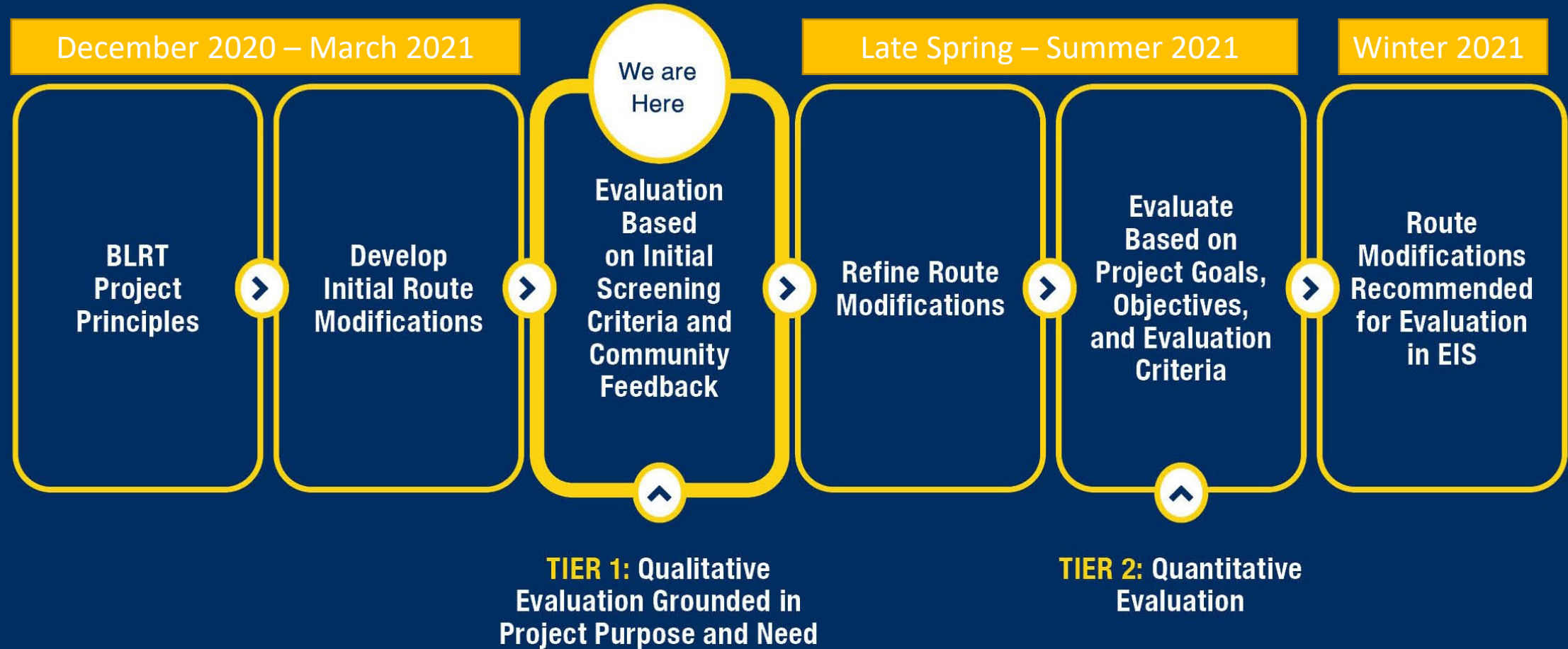
- Begin discussion on the new options to advance
 - Validate if the options presented seem right
 - Understand what options are resonating with residents and businesses
 - Identify if anything is missing
 - What opportunities or issues does the community see right away
 - What other information is needed to support a route option
 - Begin discussion about desired station locations along new portions of the route
- Evaluation goals, which will help refine objectives and evaluation criteria to help analyze the benefits and impacts between options

Evaluation: Project Goals

- Improve transit access and connections to jobs and regional destinations
- Improve frequency and reliability of transit service to communities in the corridor
- Provide transit improvements that maximize transit benefits, while being cost competitive and economically viable
- Support communities' development goals
- Promote healthy communities and sound environmental practices including efforts to address climate change
- Advance local and regional equity and work towards reducing regional racial disparities

Route Evaluation Next Steps

Approach & Timeline



Next Steps: Continue to Seek Solutions

Project Goals, Objectives and Criteria

Conceptual Engineering and Design

Engineering Analysis to Understand LRT &
Roadway Configurations

Potential Station Locations

Right of Way Impacts

Community Benefits

Further efforts to address anti-displacement, equitable development and community wealth building

Previous Project Commitments

Address investments related to the previous alignment

Next Steps: April – May 2021

- We share the communities' concerns about displacement and are working with partners at every level towards short and long-term solutions
 - Beginning a multi-agency effort to fully maximize the benefits that can come with a multi-generational major transit investment
- Next meeting focused on these four topics

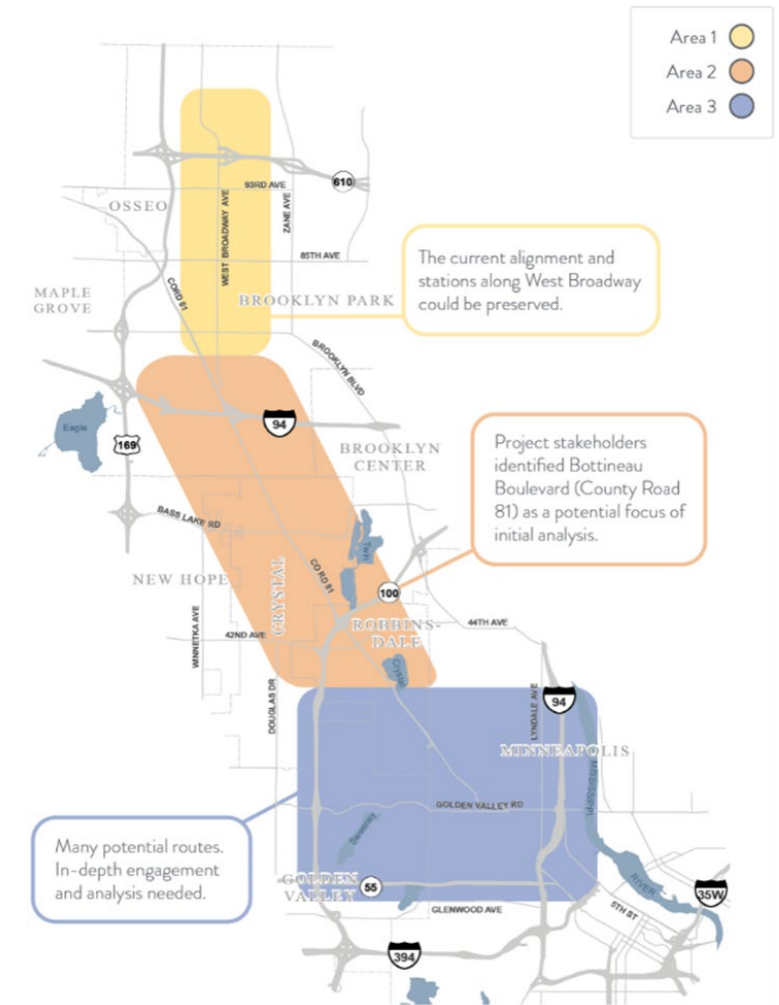
2021 Activities and Beyond

- End of 2021: Adopt a community supported route
 - Conceptual engineering for new route options, including station locations
 - Evaluation of project benefits and impacts
 - Identify a community supported route
 - Identify environmental path moving forward
- Beyond 2021
 - Begin environmental analysis
 - Municipal Consent
 - Develop construction ready engineering plans & design details

Community Consultants Update

Community Engagement Cohort Contractors

- 10-month contracts with 17 community organizations that are trusted community partners with expertise on cultures and geographies
 - Area 1: Priority focus of 3 community organizations
 - Area 2: Priority focus of 3 community organizations
 - Area 3: All 17 community organizations will focus here
- Collaborative and coordinated across the corridor
- Includes 7 contracts focused on amplifying communications



Next Meeting: Thursday, April 8 at 1:30
PM



Stay Connected!

- Project website: bluelineext.org
 - Project news, maps, surveys, what we're hearing
 - Committee meeting materials: agenda, handouts, presentations, meeting minutes
 - Sign-up for GovDelivery project updates
 - Connect with staff for your questions or schedule a presentation
- Follow us:
 - Twitter: @BlueLineExt
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