



February 28, 2019

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PHASE

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions.
- 2. Election of officer(s).**
3. Overview of project activities and process.
4. Public engagement update.
5. Health Impact Assessment update.
6. Community Advisory Committee update.
7. Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Master Plan process.
8. Peer review process and recommendations.
9. Downtown White Bear Lake station update.
10. Public comment.
- 11. Policy Advisory Committee action requested.**
 - a. Peer review results.**
 - b. Downtown White Bear Lake station.**
12. Upcoming activities.
13. Next meeting.

Recap of November Policy Advisory Committee Meeting

- Public engagement update.
- Health Impact Assessment update.
- Environmental analysis update.
- Draft connecting bus service concept plan.
- Downtown White Bear Lake station update.
- Schedule review.
- Public comment.

Election of Officer(s)

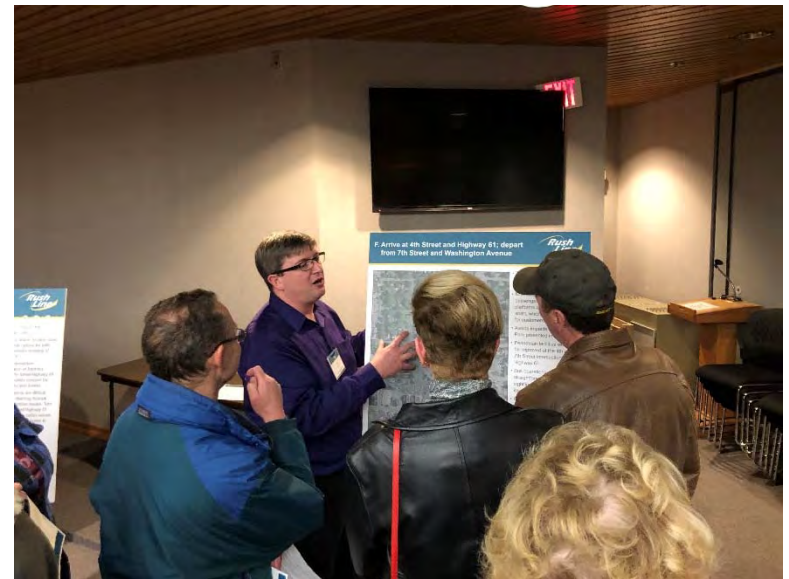
- Role of chair:
 - Serve for the duration of the environmental analysis phase.
 - Set the agenda.
 - Preside at meetings.
- Role of vice chair:
 - Perform the duties of the chair in their absence.

Environmental Coordination Update

- Federal Transit Administration.
 - Schedule review and update on project activities.
- US Army Corps of Engineers.
 - Permitting/coordination process.
- Watershed districts.
 - Stormwater management.
- Cities, Independent School District 622 and Ramsey County Parks.
 - Parkland information.
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
 - Cultural resources coordination.

Recent Public Engagement Activities

- December 4: Meeting at Hmong Village.
- December 6: Pop-up at Duluth and Case Rec Center Santa Dinner.
- December 12: Meeting at White Bear Area Emergency Food Shelf.
- January 4: Pop-up at Ramsey County Library – White Bear Lake.
- January 8: Pop-up at White Bear Area YMCA.
- January 12: Open house in White Bear Lake.
- January 16: Update to District 2 Community Council.



Rush Line BRT Project Open House, January 10

Recent Public Engagement Activities

- January 22: Update to District 5 Community Council.
- January 22: St. John's Hospital leadership meeting.
- January 23: St. John's Hospital pop-up event.
- January 24: Weaver Elementary School meeting.
- February 2: Saint Paul Winter Carnival.
- February: Hmong Village vendor survey.
- Ongoing: Online interactive map.



Winter Carnival, February 2

Public Engagement Themes (December 2018 – February 2019)

- St. John's Hospital: Support for improved transit service to the hospital among staff.
- White Bear Lake: Input regarding station location in downtown White Bear Lake.
- Saint Paul: District 5 Council members and Winter Carnival attendees are particularly excited for all-day frequent service seven days a week.

Upcoming Public Engagement

- March 26: Meeting with business owners around Hamm's site in Saint Paul.
- April 7: Northeast Metro Community Expo in Vadnais Heights.
- April 9: Update to CapitolRiver Council Development Review Committee.
- April 26: Weaver Elementary School Carnival.
- May 7: Parent Information Night at Weaver Elementary School.
- May 14: Maplewood Bike Rodeo.

Health Impact Assessment Update

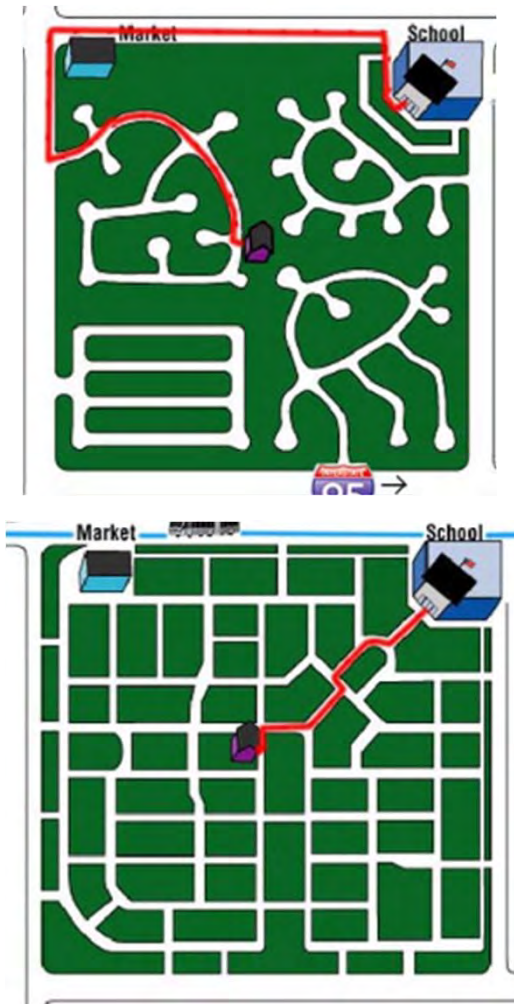
- Goals:
 - Create a tool to help educate policymakers and community members on the project's ability to achieve social equity, environmental and economic development goals.
 - Build capacity among planners, engineers and public health officials in achieving positive health outcomes throughout the corridor.
- Selected topic areas for assessment at October 2018 workshop.



Health Impact Assessment Workshop, October 30

Connectivity

- Definition:
 - A broad topic area and may include physical connections and neighborhood cohesion, influencing ability to use active transportation.
- Draft recommendations:
 - Connect streets where possible to create a more complete street grid.
 - Explore transit priority treatments for routes connecting to Rush Line BRT, such as signal prioritization.



Access/Accessibility

- Definition:
 - Includes the ability to reach desired goods and destinations such as healthcare and parks.
 - Language limitations are often barriers to access.
- Draft recommendations:
 - Add wayfinding signage in common languages to help people navigate between stations and key neighborhood destinations.



Source: Rapid Growth Media

Access/Accessibility

- Draft recommendations:
 - Prioritize improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure during street reconstruction projects near planned stations.
 - Expand language assistance to increase accessibility for riders with limited English proficiency.
 - Explore increasing frequency and service span of routes connecting to Rush Line BRT.



Source: Smart Growth America

Jobs and Employment

- Definition:
 - Unemployment as a barrier to improved health.
- Draft recommendation:
 - Workforce programs should take into consideration residents and employers along transit corridors to better match workers with opportunities along the corridor.



Source: Durham Public Schools

Affordable Housing

- Definition:
 - Housing as a factor affecting stress and health.
- Draft recommendations:
 - Increase support for affordable housing development and preservation near stations.



Source: Enterprise Homes

Health Impact Assessment Next Steps

- Finalize Health Impact Assessment report and distribute to advisory committees.
- Continue to collaborate with partnering agencies on recommendations.

Community Advisory Committee Update



Community Advisory Committee Meeting #3,
Maplewood YMCA

- Third meeting held January 17.
 - Public engagement and project updates.
 - Health Impact Assessment recommendations discussion.
 - Ramsey County rail right-of-way master plan discussion.

Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Master Plan



- Goal:
 - Develop a safe and context-sensitive BRT guideway and shared use trail plan incorporating relevant user, stakeholder and public guidance along the Ramsey County rail right-of-way.

* Project assumes co-location with Bruce Vento Trail

Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Master Plan Guiding Principles

- Will be developed to help guide and support decision-making.
- Collaboratively developed through technical expertise and community input.
- Begins with information from previous outreach activities:
 - June 16 Ride and Walk.
 - July 25 Bruce Vento Trail pop-up.
 - August 28 Move Minnesota Women on Bikes ride.
 - Pre-Project Development Study public engagement.



Bruce Vento Trail Pop-Up, July 25

Input Through Previous Public Engagement

- Trail users generally positive about transit.
- Top amenities desired:
 - Seating.
 - Wayfinding.
 - Fix-it stations.
 - Lighting.
 - Bike racks.
- Concern about private property impacts, visibility, safety, noise and the natural habitat.



Bruce Vento Trail Pop-Up, July 25

Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Master Plan Components



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- Landscaping.
- Lighting.
- Stormwater best management practices.
- Wayfinding/signage.
- Bridges and structures.
- Intersection design.
- Trailhead amenities.
- Buffers and edges.
- Operations and maintenance.
- Education opportunities.



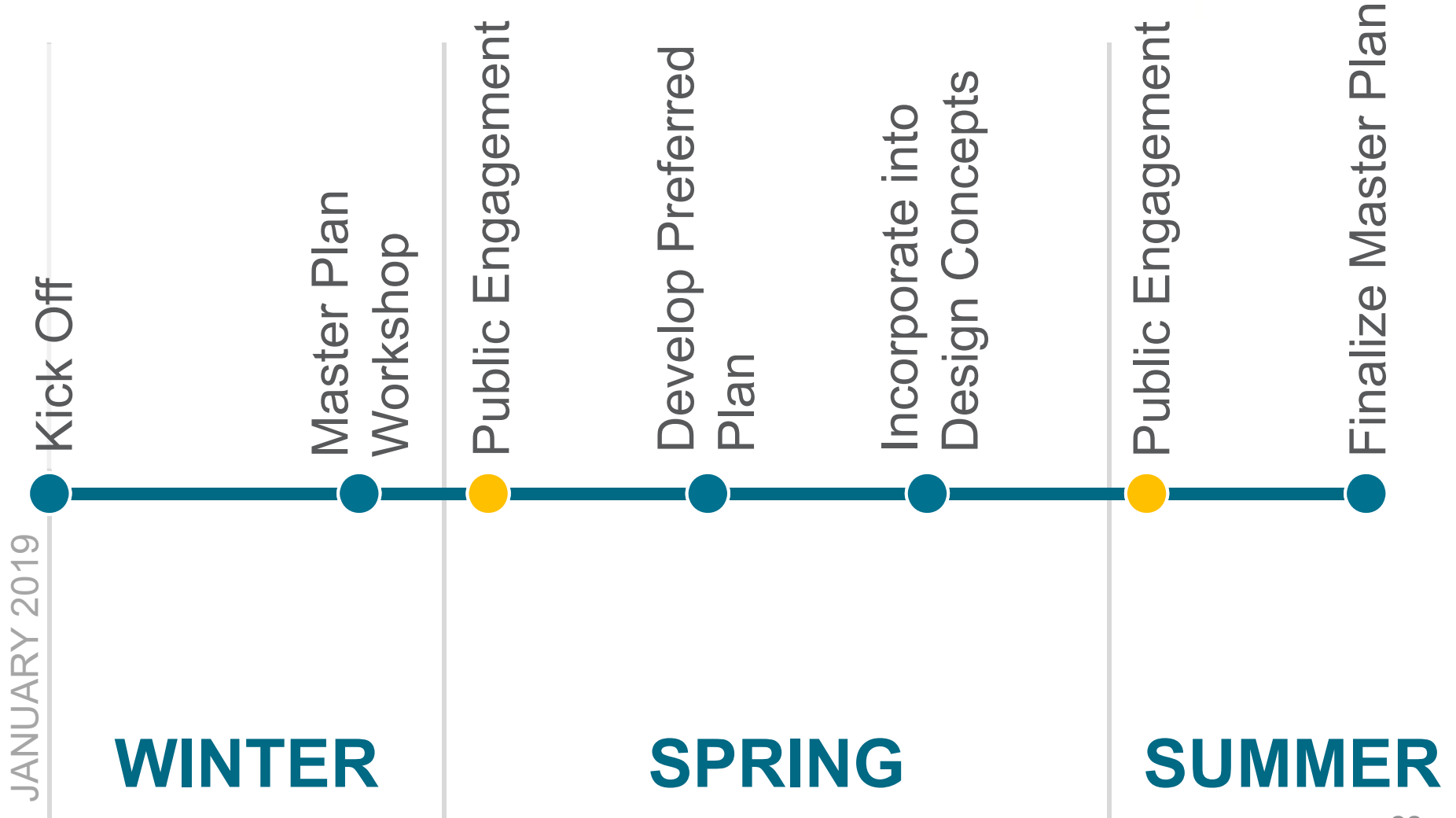
Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Master Plan Schedule



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Ramsey County Right-of-Way Master Plan Workshop

- Goal:
 - Gather feedback on potential design solutions.
- Participants:
 - Advisory committee members and other key stakeholders.
- Scheduled for end of March 2019.

Peer Review Process

- Step 1: Conduct peer review (December 11-12).
 - Independent experts from the project management consultant, environmental assessment phase consultant and agencies.
 - Focused on refinement of Rush Line BRT Project design and operations.
 - Field visits, workshop and small group format.
 - Presentation to project team and report (in progress).
- Step 2: Project Management Team reviews feasibility of initial peer review findings.
- Step 3: Review process with Technical Advisory Committee. Issue resolution teams review and recommend refinements.
- **Step 4: Present recommended refinements to Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Advisory Committee.**

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WE ARE
HERE

Eliminate Jackson Street Option



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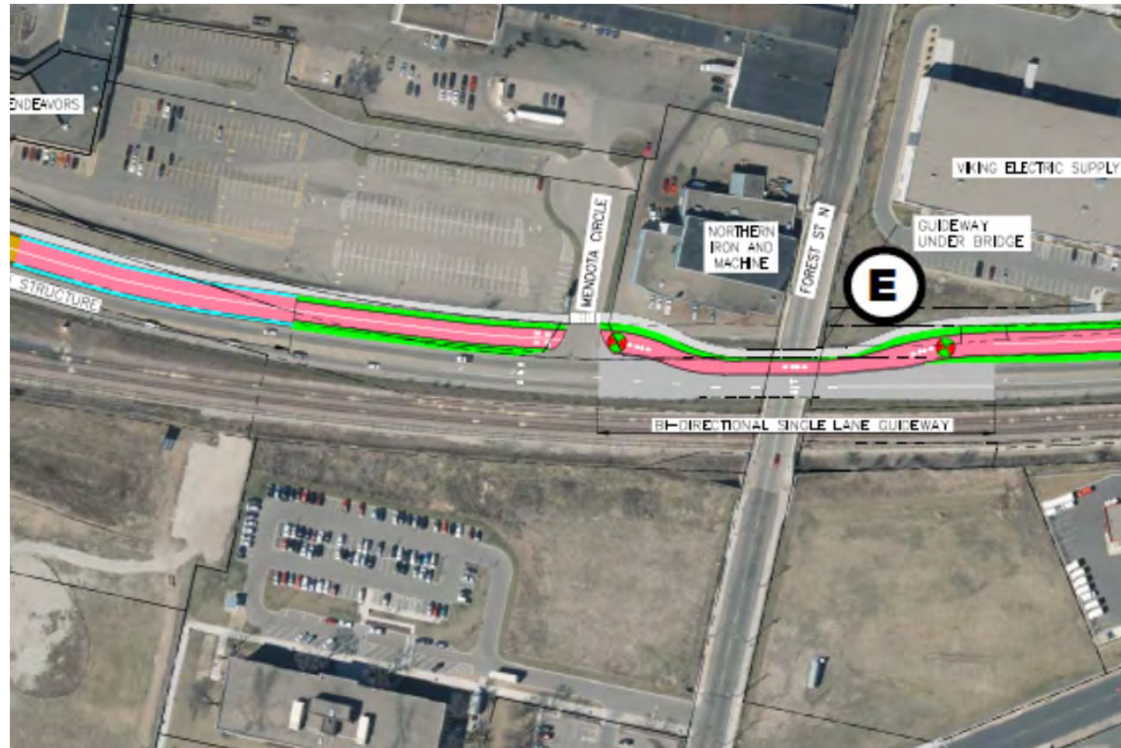


- **Recommendation:**
 - Advance the dedicated option and eliminate the mixed traffic option.
 - Provides for improved BRT operations and eliminates multiple options to advance through the environmental process.
 - Continue to coordinate with the city of Saint Paul on the design.

Eliminate Single Lane Guideway



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- **Recommendation:**

- Eliminate bi-directional single lane guideway.
 - Improves BRT operations by eliminating potential delays and disruptions in service.
- Move the regional trail to the north side of piers.

Modify Bruce Vento Trail Configuration Shift to Larpenteur Avenue



B R T



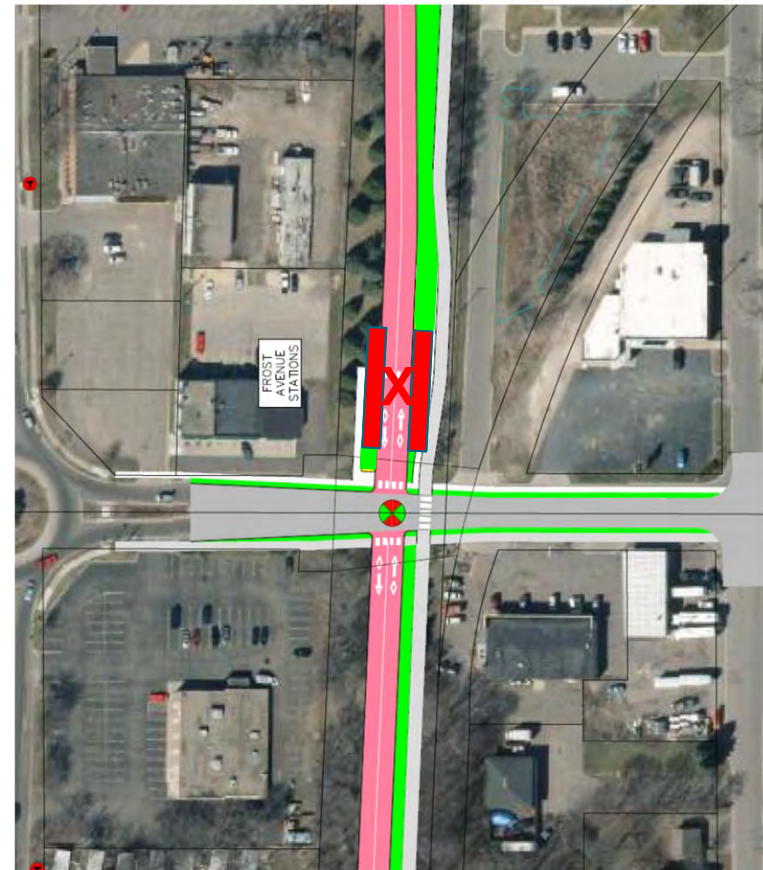
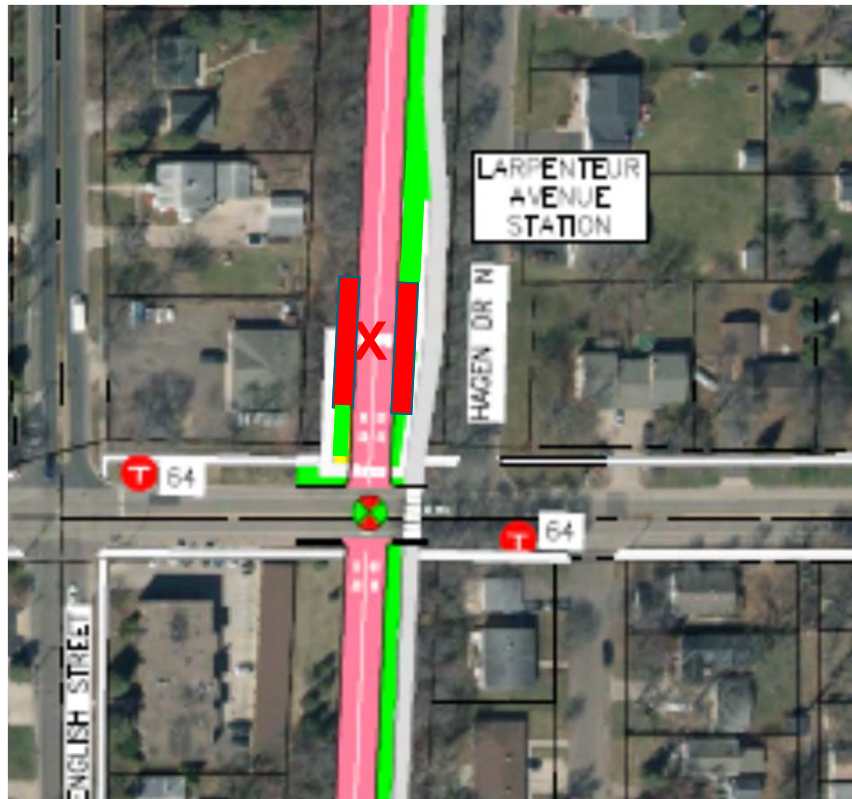
- **Recommendation:**

- Revise trail location change from west to east at Larpenteur Avenue (instead of Arlington Avenue) to provide for crossing at station.
 - Improves safety and eliminates potential conflict between BRT and trail users.

Modify Larpenteur and Frost Avenue Station Configurations



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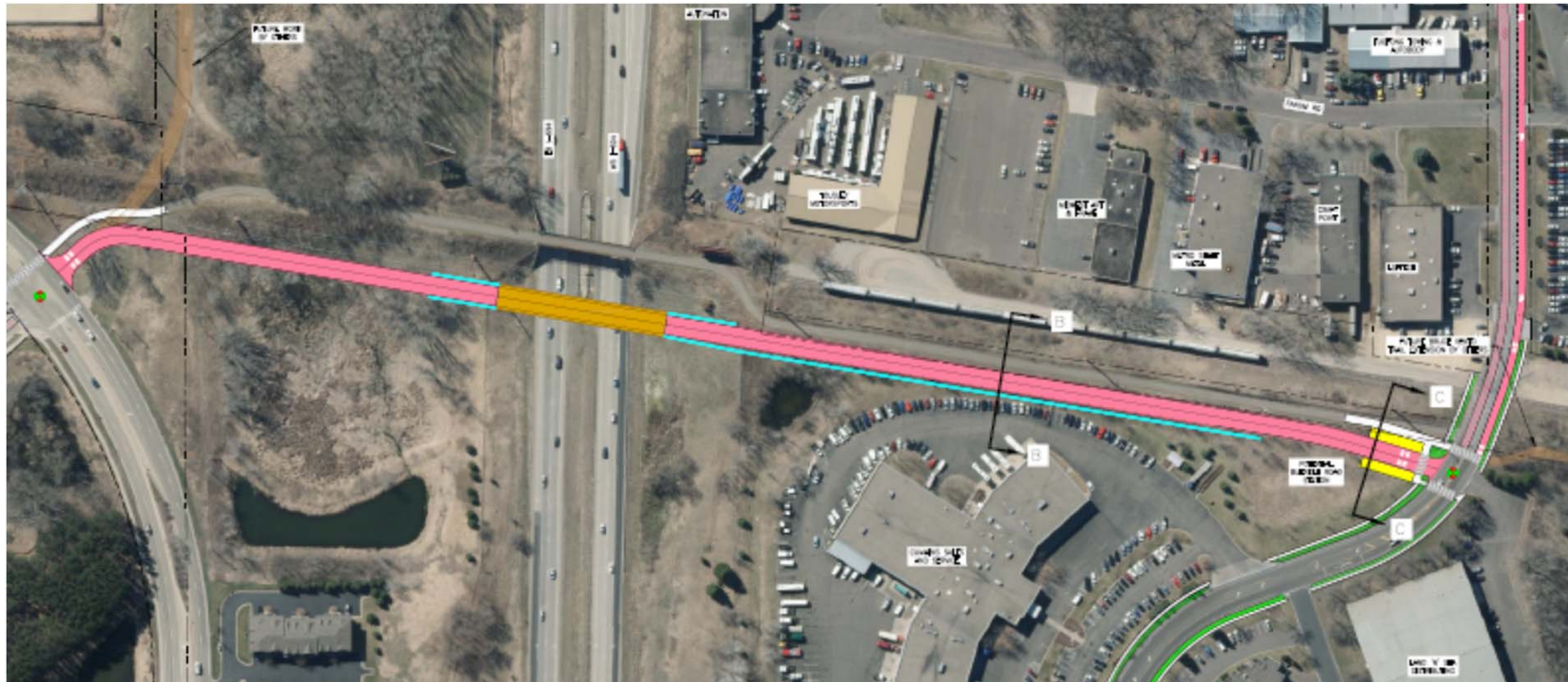
- **Recommendation:**

- Use parallel configuration for stations located on the same side of an intersection.
 - Provides for consistent station configuration and improves safety by eliminating mid-platform crossings.

Eliminate BNSF Right-of-Way Option



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- **Recommendation:**

- Advance BNSF right-of-way avoidance option and eliminate BNSF right-of-way utilization option.
 - Provides for alignment that avoids railroad right-of-way acquisition and eliminates multiple options to advance through the environmental process.
 - Supported by business community.

Recent Actions to Advance Downtown White Bear Lake Station Decision-Making



Activity	Timeframe
Held two listening sessions and attended City Council meetings to understand local concerns and identify potential station options.	October 2018
Conducted one-on-one interviews with community leaders and other local stakeholders.	November 9 and 16, 2018
Multi-agency team to conduct station evaluation (meeting on bi-weekly basis through end of 2018).	November 2018 – February 2019
Attended White Bear Lake City Council work session to provide evaluation process update and approach to additional engagement.	December 17, 2018
Held pop-up events at the library and YMCA in White Bear Lake.	January 4 and 8, 2019
Held open house in Downtown White Bear Lake.	January 10, 2019
Solicited input on downtown station options via an online survey.	January 9-31, 2019
Currently pursuing a recommendation on preferred station location from White Bear Lake City Council and Policy Advisory Committee. Intention is to carry forward one Downtown White Bear Lake station location in Environmental Assessment.	February 2019



Downtown White Bear Lake Station Options Evaluated



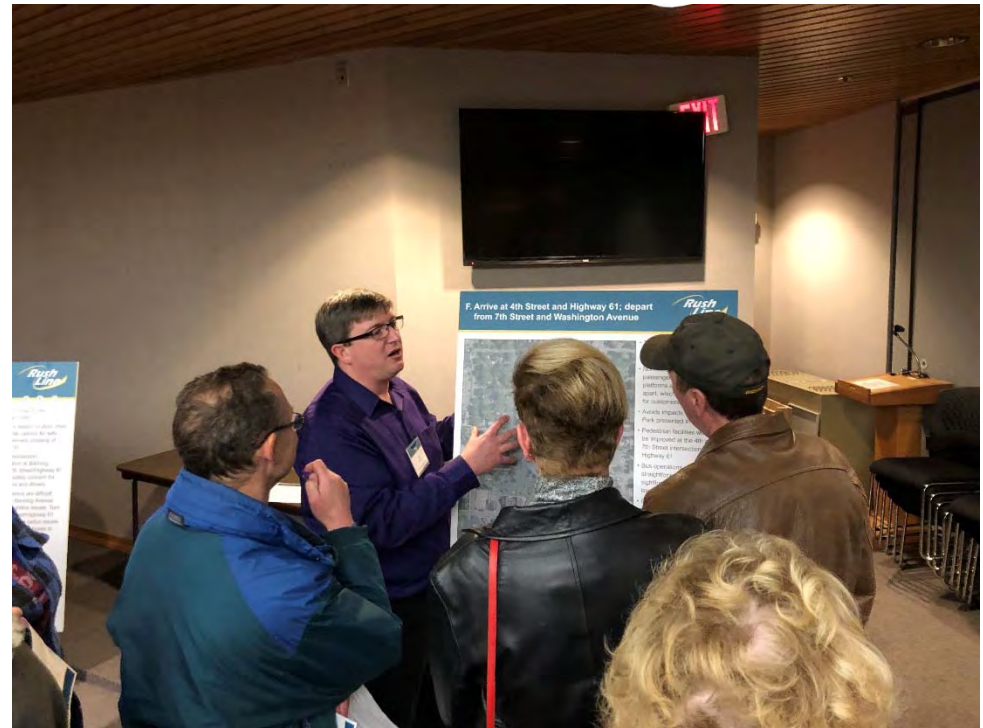
B R T



- A: 7th Street and Washington Avenue.
- B: 4th Street and Division Avenue – 4th Street or 7th Street Routing.
- C: 4th Street and Highway 61 – In line platform.
- D: 2nd Street and Clark Avenue.
- E: Banning Avenue and Highway 61.
- F: Arrive at 4th Street and Highway 61; depart from 7th Street and Washington Avenue.

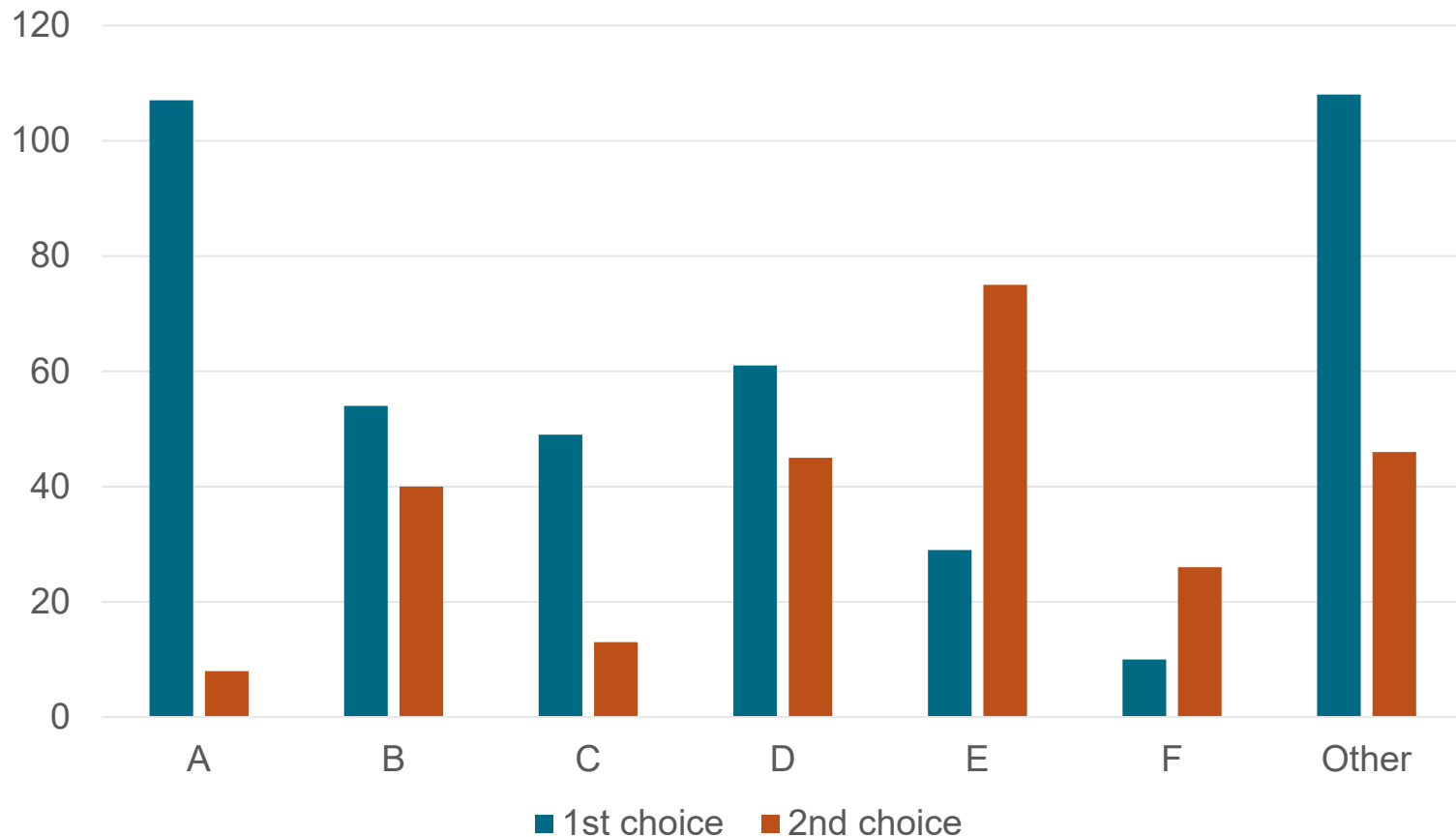
Downtown White Bear Lake Station Public Engagement

- January 4: Pop-up at White Bear Lake library.
- January 8: Pop-up at White Bear Area YMCA.
- January 10: Open house at White Bear Lake City Hall.
- January 9-31: Online survey.



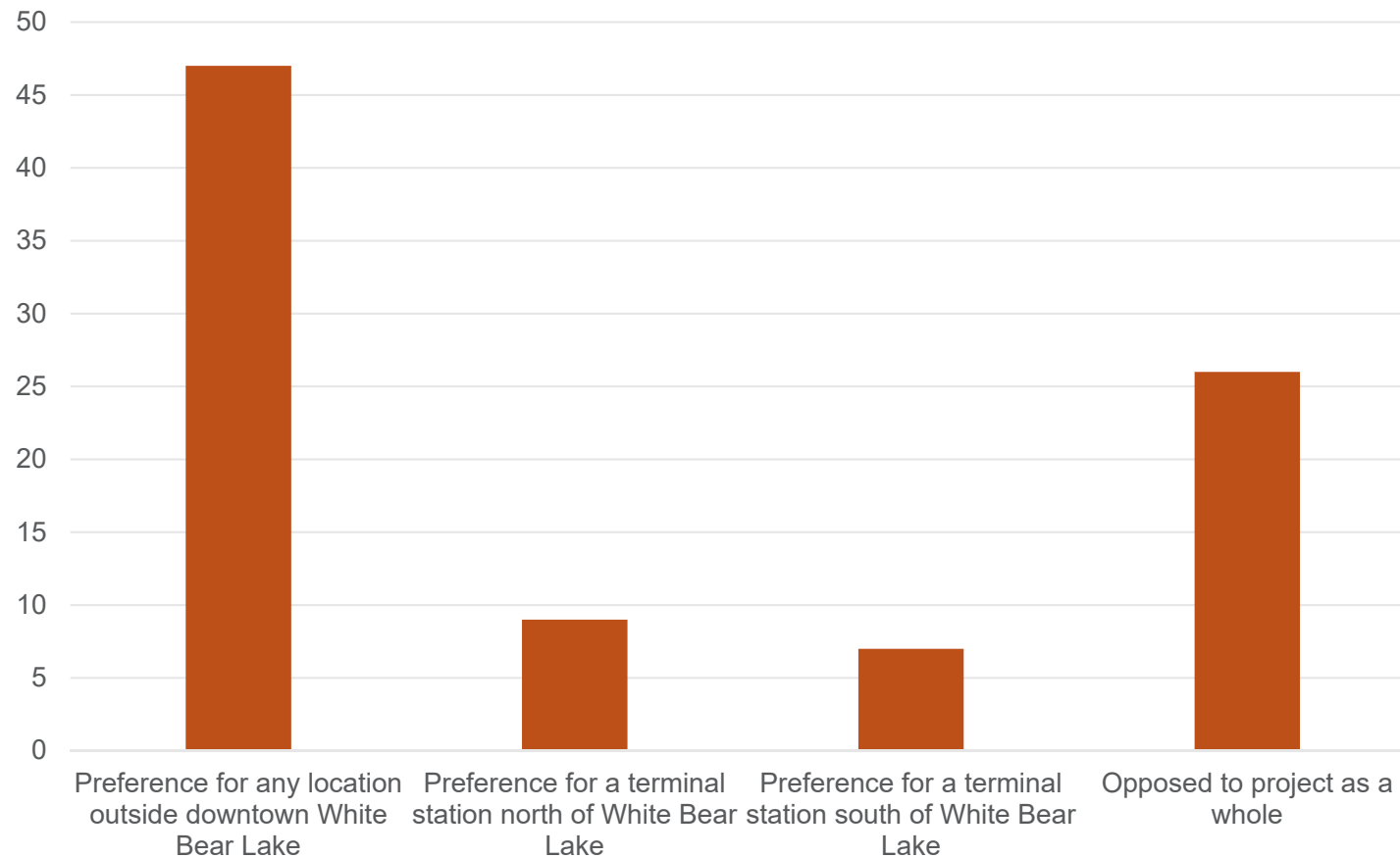
Rush Line BRT Project Open House, January 10

Station Location Option Preferences



Survey results are based on input received at the open house and the online survey. While the project received a robust response, the results are reflective of a self-selected group rather than a statistically valid random sample.

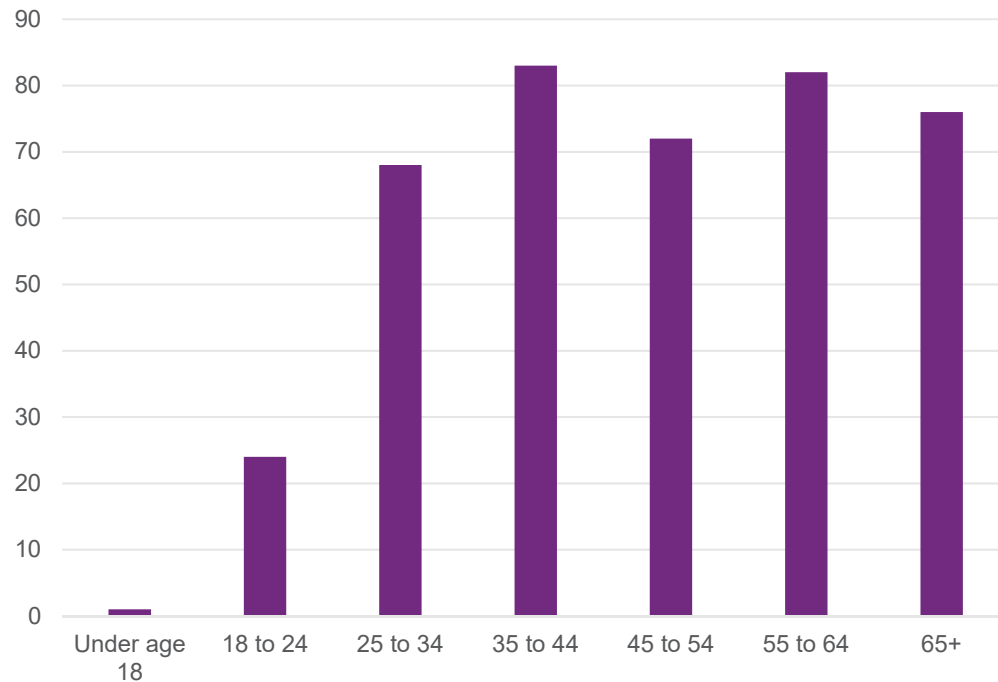
Station Location Preference – “Other”



Survey results are based on input received at the open house and the online survey. While the project received a robust response, the results are reflective of a self-selected group rather than a statistically valid random sample.



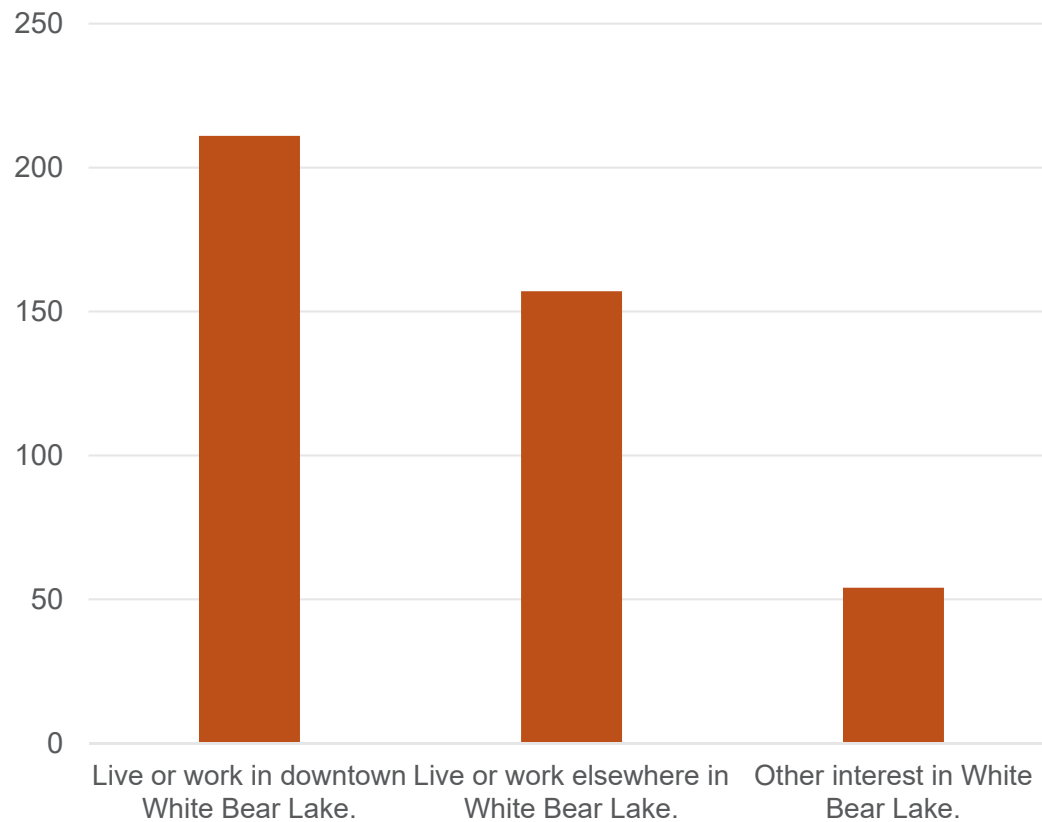
Age of Respondents



Age of Respondents	
Under age 18	1
18 to 24	24
25 to 34	68
35 to 44	83
45 to 54	72
55 to 64	82
65+	76

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Connection to White Bear Lake

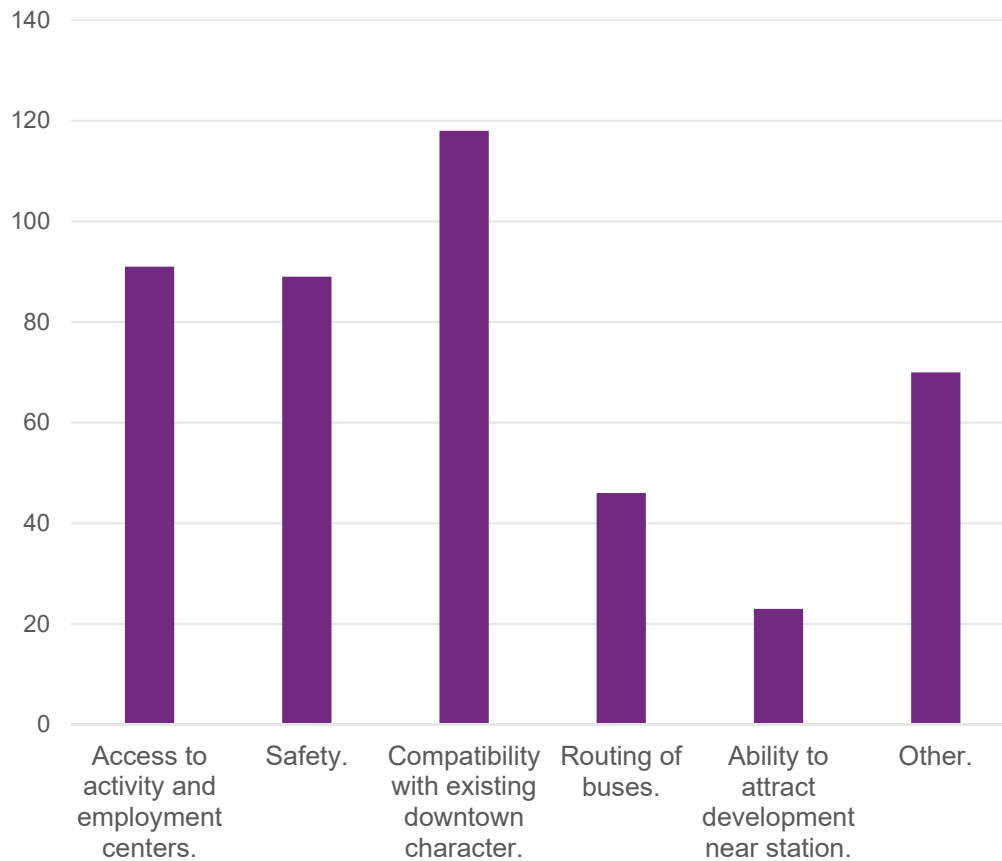


Connection to White Bear Lake	
Live or work in downtown White Bear Lake.	211
Live or work elsewhere in White Bear Lake.	157
Other interest in White Bear Lake (e.g. frequent visitor).	54

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Top Elements to Consider in Selecting a Station Location

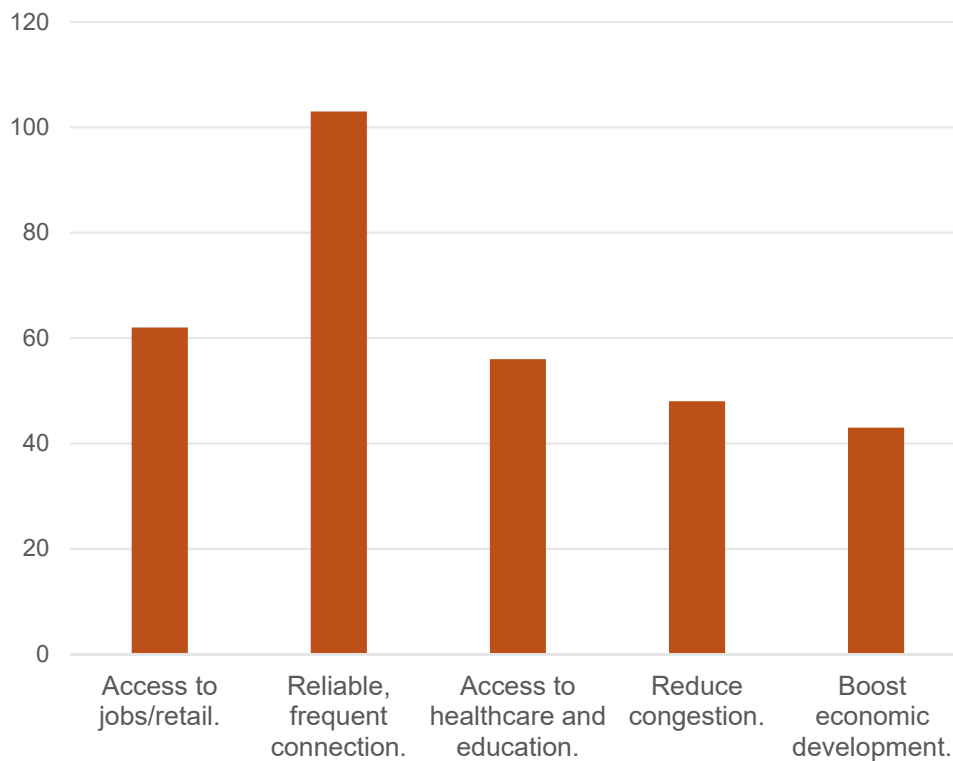


Top Elements to Consider	
Access to activity and employment centers	91
Safety	89
Compatibility with existing downtown character	118
Routing of buses	46
Ability to attract development near station	23
Other	70

Survey results are based on input received at the open house and the online survey. While the project received a robust response, the results are reflective of a self-selected group rather than a statistically valid random sample.



Expected Benefits of Rush Line BRT



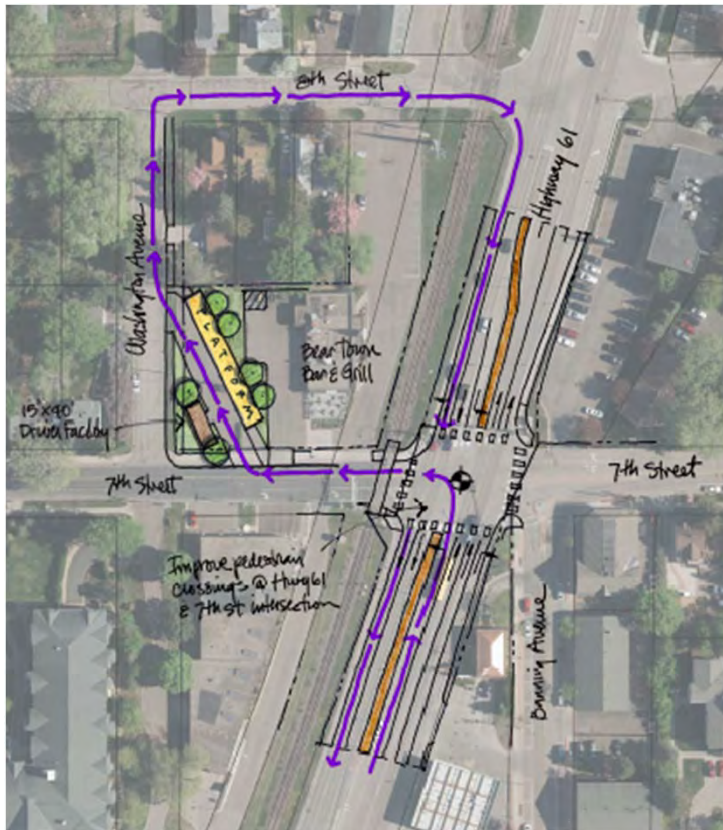
Expected Benefits of Rush Line BRT	
Access to jobs/retail.	62
Reliable, frequent connection.	103
Access to healthcare and education.	56
Reduce congestion.	48
Boost economic development.	43

Survey results are based on input received at the open house and the online survey. While the project received a robust response, the results are reflective of a self-selected group rather than a statistically valid random sample.

Option A: 7th Street and Washington Avenue



B R T



Evaluation Criteria and Results



Station Accessibility:

- Station requires riders to cross Highway 61 and walk several blocks to access downtown core.
- Existing walkshed constrained by more limited sidewalk network north of 7th Street.
- Station is close to senior housing and arts district.



Proximity to High-Intensity Development

- Station is near primarily low- to medium-density commercial and residential.



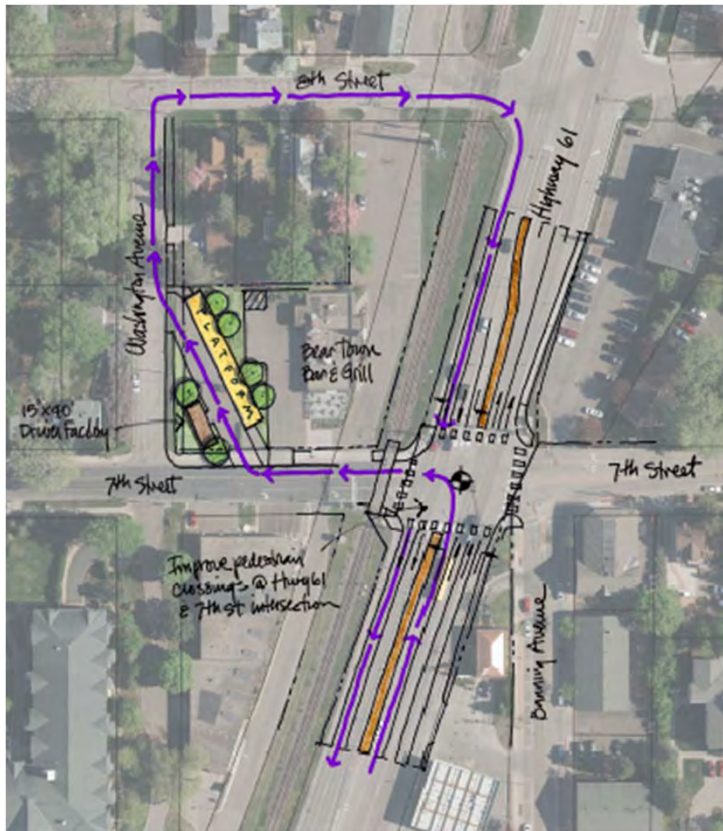
Efficient Transit Operations

- Station is farthest from the downtown core and has longer travel time.
- Minor sightline issues; no turning issues.
- Transit delays could occur at 8th Street and Highway 61. Mitigation options would need to be coordinated with and approved by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Option A: 7th Street and Washington Avenue



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Evaluation Criteria and Results



Minimize Traffic Impacts

- Traffic improvements may be needed at 8th Street and Highway 61.



Minimize Property Impacts

- Station requires partial acquisition of private property but would not require acquisition of any buildings.

Technical Analysis Results

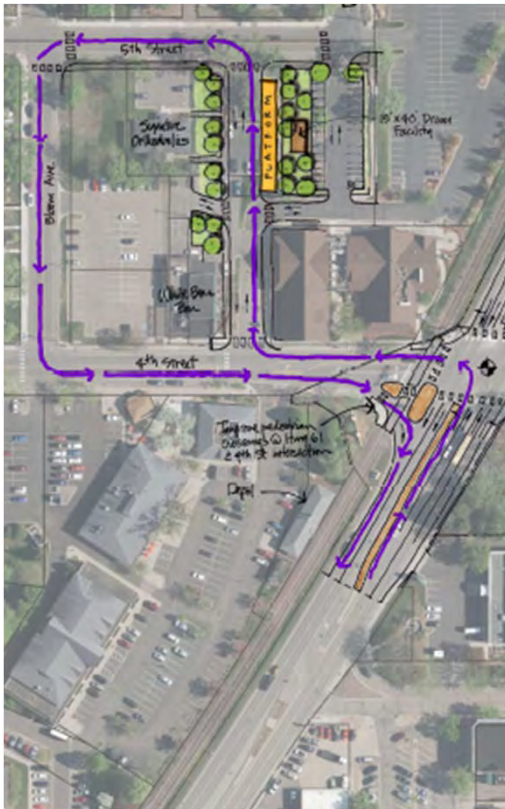
Option A is a viable option.

Option B: 4th Street and Division Avenue

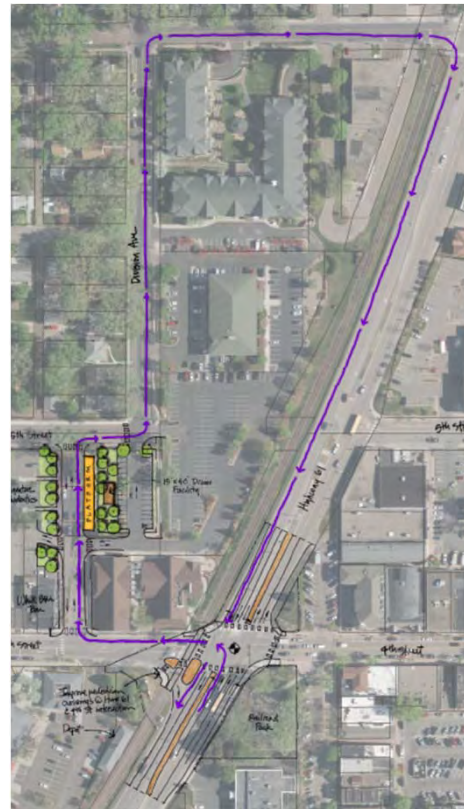


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4th Street Routing



7th Street Routing



Evaluation Criteria and Results



Station Accessibility

- Station is close to but across Highway 61 from the downtown core.
- Existing sidewalk network near the station but limited north of 7th Street.



Proximity to High-Intensity Development

- Station is near medium- to high-intensity commercial and residential development.



Efficient Transit Operations

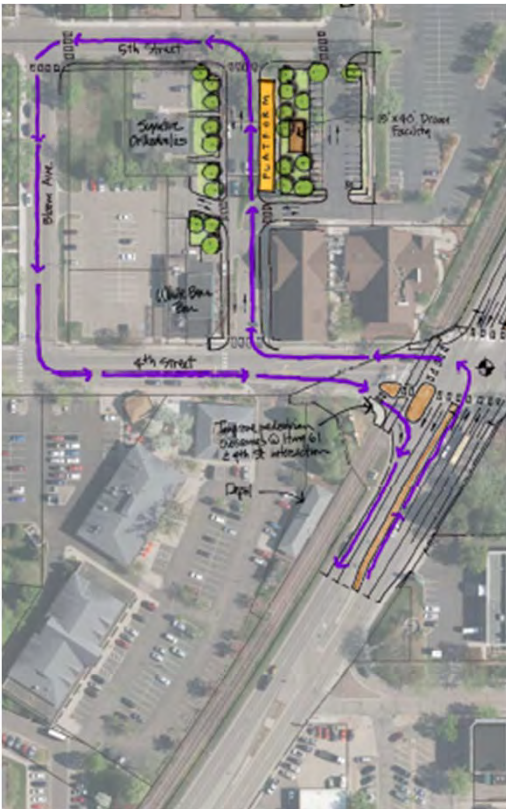
- Transit delays could occur at 4th Street but there are options to mitigate.
- No sightline or turning issues.

Option B: 4th Street and Division Avenue

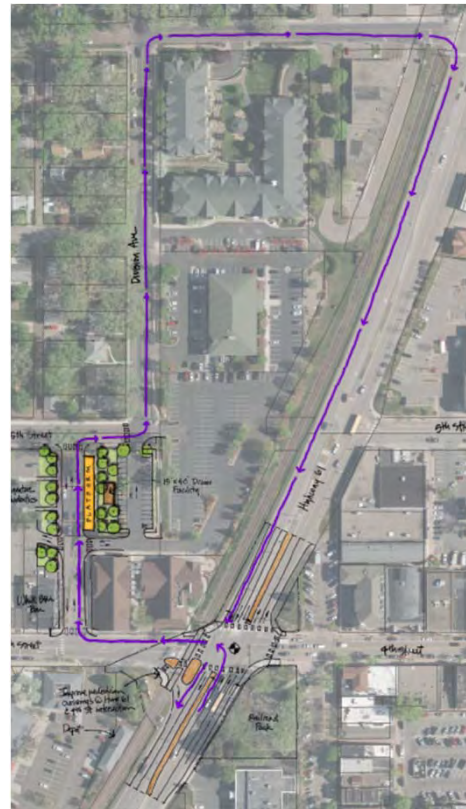


B R T

4th Street Routing



7th Street Routing



Evaluation Criteria and Results



Minimize Traffic Impacts

- **4th:** The bus may experience delays turning left from Bloom Avenue to travel east on 4th Street. Traffic control improvements could alleviate existing queuing issues and improve traffic operations.
- **7th:** Longer routing but no anticipated traffic issues or with this option.



Minimize Property Impacts

- Requires partial acquisition of property owned by the City and a private property owner but does not require acquisition of any buildings.

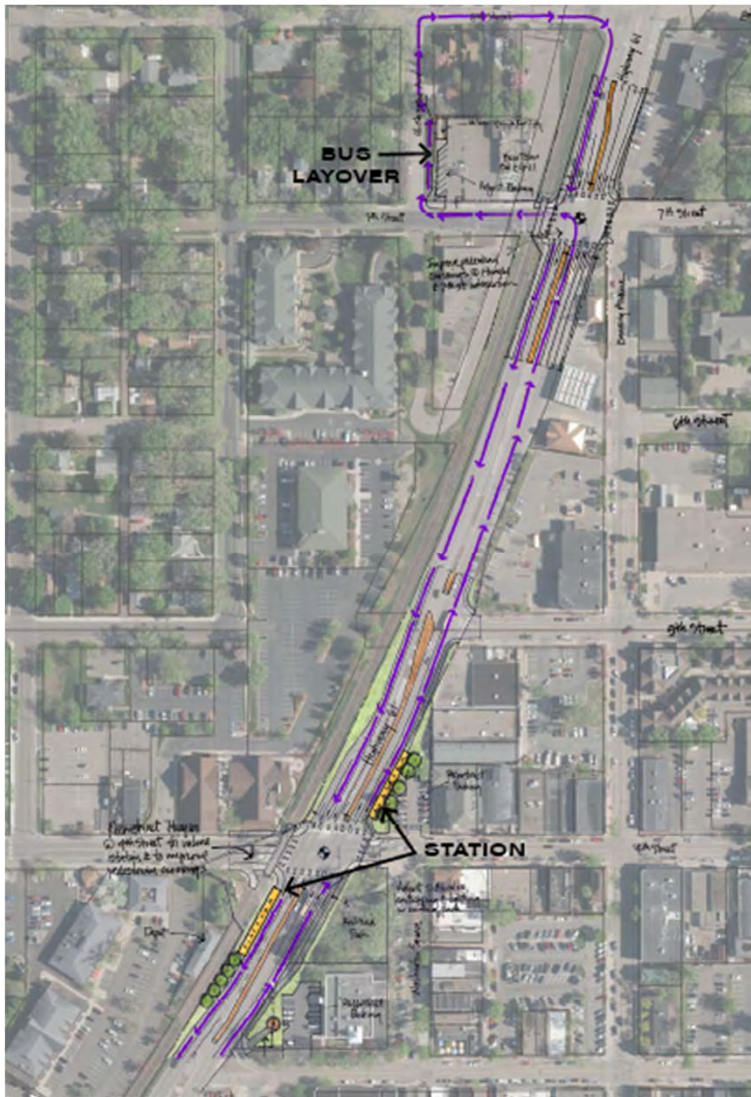
Technical Analysis Results

Option B is a viable option.

Option C: 4th Street and Highway 61



B R T



Evaluation Criteria and Results



Station Accessibility:

- Riders would have to cross Highway 61 to access the southbound platform from the downtown core.
- The existing sidewalk network is extensive near this location.



Proximity to High-Intensity Development

- Station is near medium- and high-intensity commercial and residential development in the downtown core.



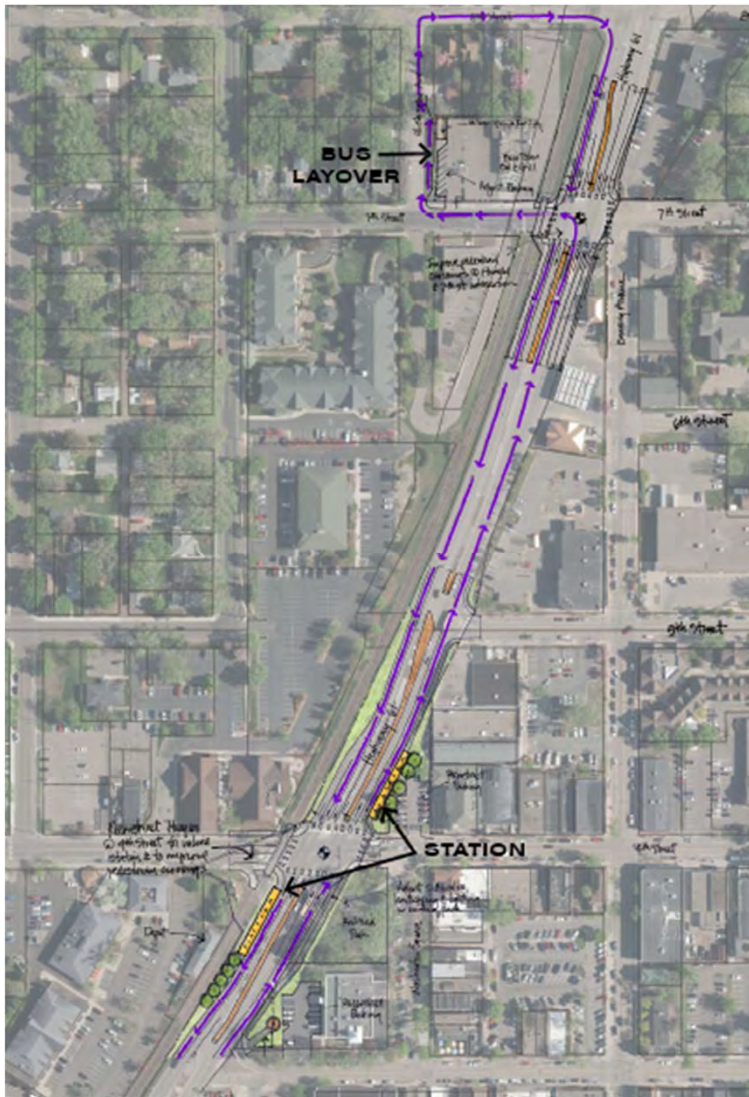
Efficient Transit Operations

- Transit delays could occur at 8th Street and Highway 61. Mitigation options would need to be coordinated with and approved by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.
- Separate bus layover facility needed increasing travel time
- No sightline or turning radius issues.

Option C: 4th Street and Highway 61



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Evaluation Criteria and Results

Minimize Traffic Impacts

- Transit delays could occur at 8th Street and Highway 61.



Minimize Property Impacts

- Due to the railroad tracks on the west side of Highway 61 the roadway would need to be shifted to the east to fit the southbound platform which would encroach on Railroad Park
- Require partial acquisitions of private property for the layover facility but would not require acquisition of any buildings.

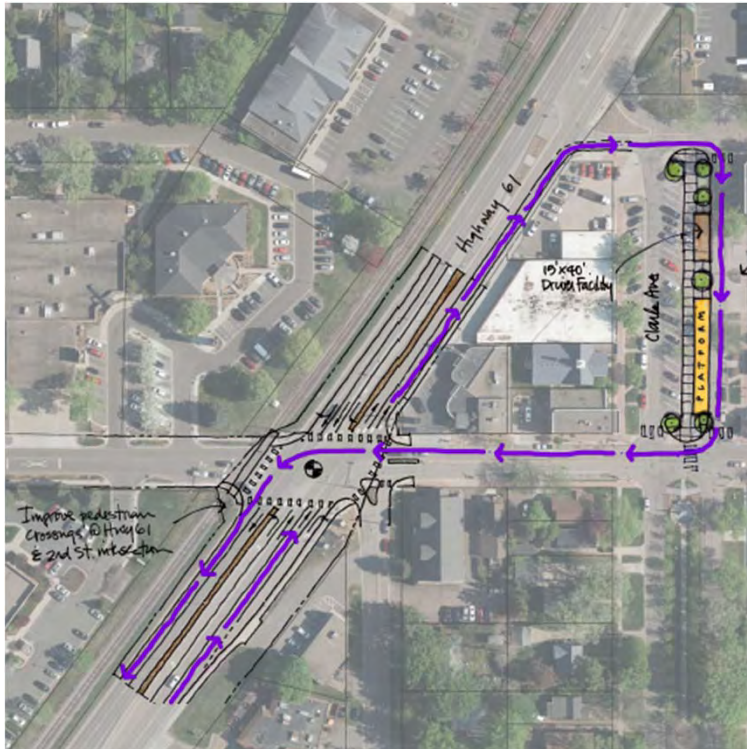
Technical Analysis Results

Option C has technical issues due to park encroachments that impact viability.

Option D: 2nd Street and Clark Avenue



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Evaluation Criteria and Results



Station Accessibility:

- Riders would be dropped off and picked up immediately in the core of downtown.
- The walkshed is extensive, though constrained somewhat by Highway 61 and White Bear Lake.



Proximity to High-Intensity Development

- Station is near medium- to high-intensity commercial development in the downtown core.



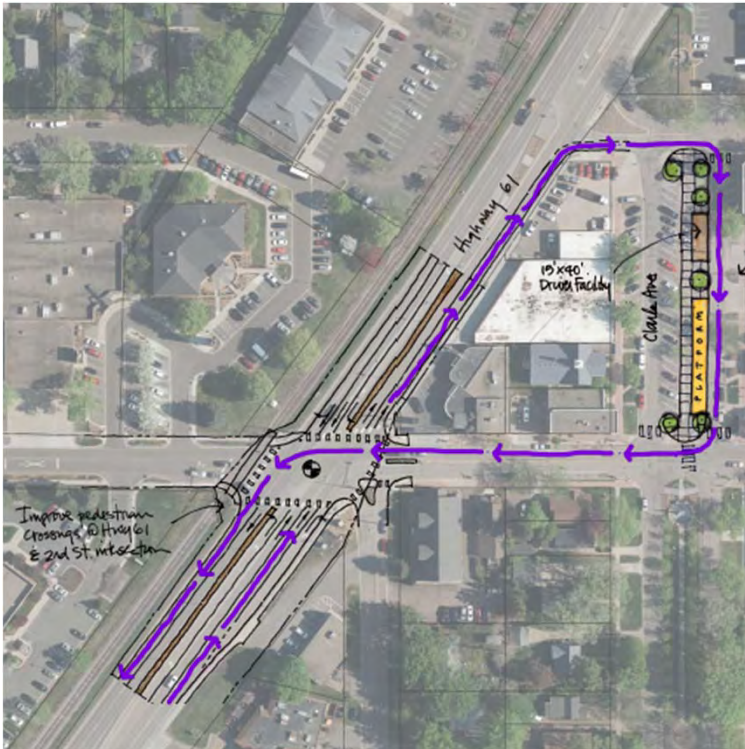
Efficient Transit Operations

- Transit delays are anticipated along 2nd Street. Mitigation options are available to minimize delays.
- No sightline or turning radius issues.

Option D: 2nd Street and Clark Avenue



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Evaluation Criteria and Results

Minimize Traffic Impacts

- The westbound left turn from 2nd Street onto Highway 61 is anticipated to have high delays, which could be mitigated with a bus-only signal and transit signal priority. Signal changes would require coordination with and approval by MnDOT and could provide additional traffic flow benefits when a bus is present.



Minimize Property Impacts

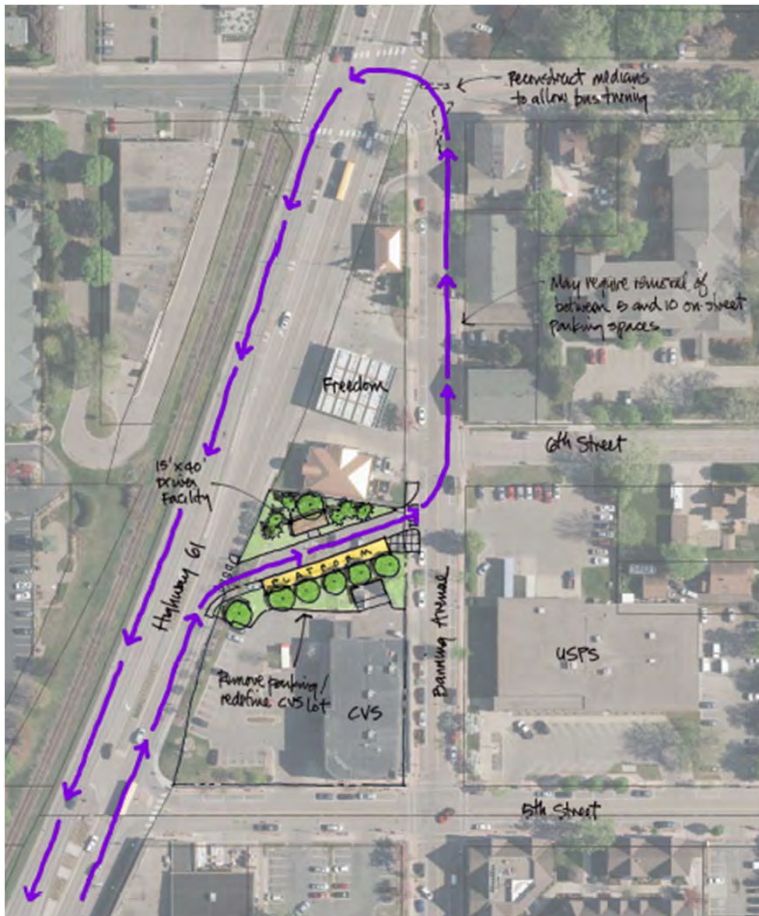
- No property acquisitions are needed for this option. Access to local businesses on Clark Avenue is maintained.
- On-street parking along the east side of Clark Avenue would be impacted.

Technical Analysis Results
Option D is a viable option.

Option E: Banning Avenue and Highway 61



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Evaluation Criteria and Results



Station Accessibility:

- Unique intersection configuration at Banning Avenue/7th Street/Highway 61 presents safety concern for pedestrians and drivers.
- Mid-block station location does not provide options for safe and convenient crossing of Highway 61.
- Limited pedestrian connectivity north of 7th Street.



Proximity to High-Intensity Development

- Station is near a mix of low-, medium-and high-intensity commercial and residential development.



Efficient Transit Operations

- The northbound left turn on to Banning Avenue presents sightline issues. The south/eastbound left turn on to 7th Street/Highway 61 presents turning radius issues.

Option E: Banning Avenue and Highway 61



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Evaluation Criteria and Results



Minimize Traffic Impacts

- Special operation of the traffic signal at 7th Street and Highway 61 will be needed. This could add delay for all users and would need to be coordinated with and approved by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.



Minimize Property Impacts

- This option requires partial property acquisition but would not require acquisition of any buildings.
- Approximately 5-10 on-street parking spaces may be removed to accommodate bus movement.

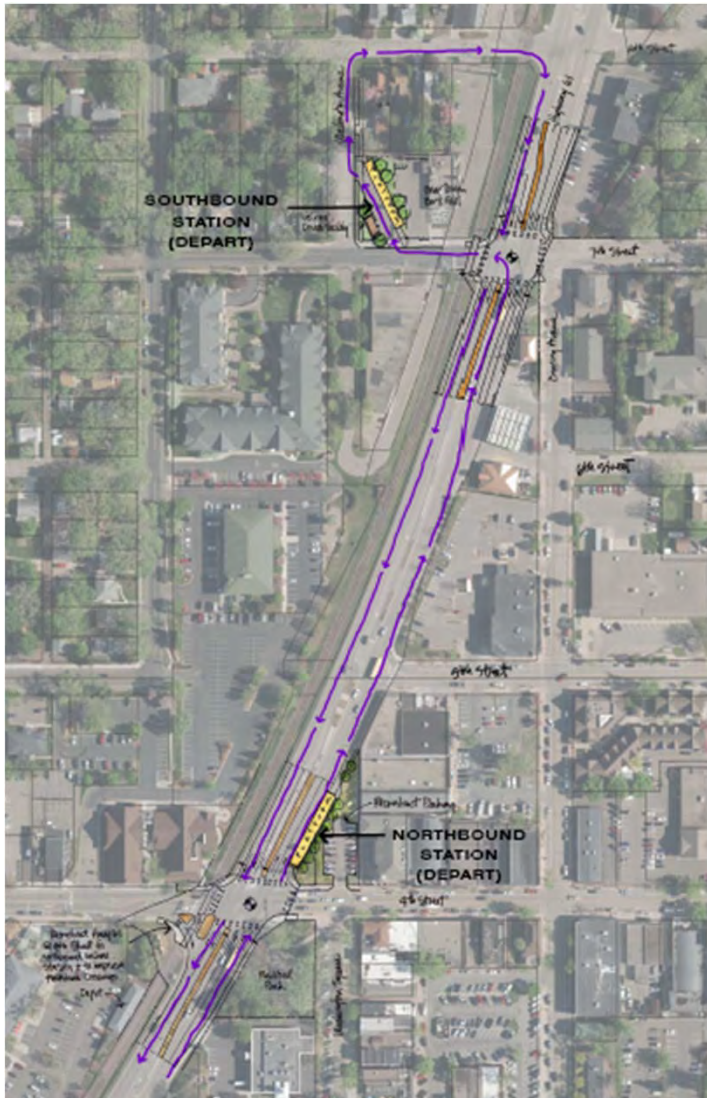
Technical Analysis Results

Option E has traffic operations issues that impact viability.

Option F: Arrive at 4th Street and Highway 61; depart from 7th Street and Washington Avenue



B R T



Evaluation Criteria and Results



Station Accessibility:

- Southbound platform is farthest from the downtown core but close to Arts District, senior housing and District Center.
- Southbound platform requires riders to cross Highway 61 and walk several blocks to access downtown core.
- Northbound platform existing walkshed is the most extensive.
- Southbound platform existing walkshed is constrained by a more limited existing sidewalk network north of 7th Street.



Proximity to High-Intensity Development

- Northbound platform at 4th Street and Highway 61 is near medium- and high-intensity commercial development
- Southbound platform is near lower-intensity development.



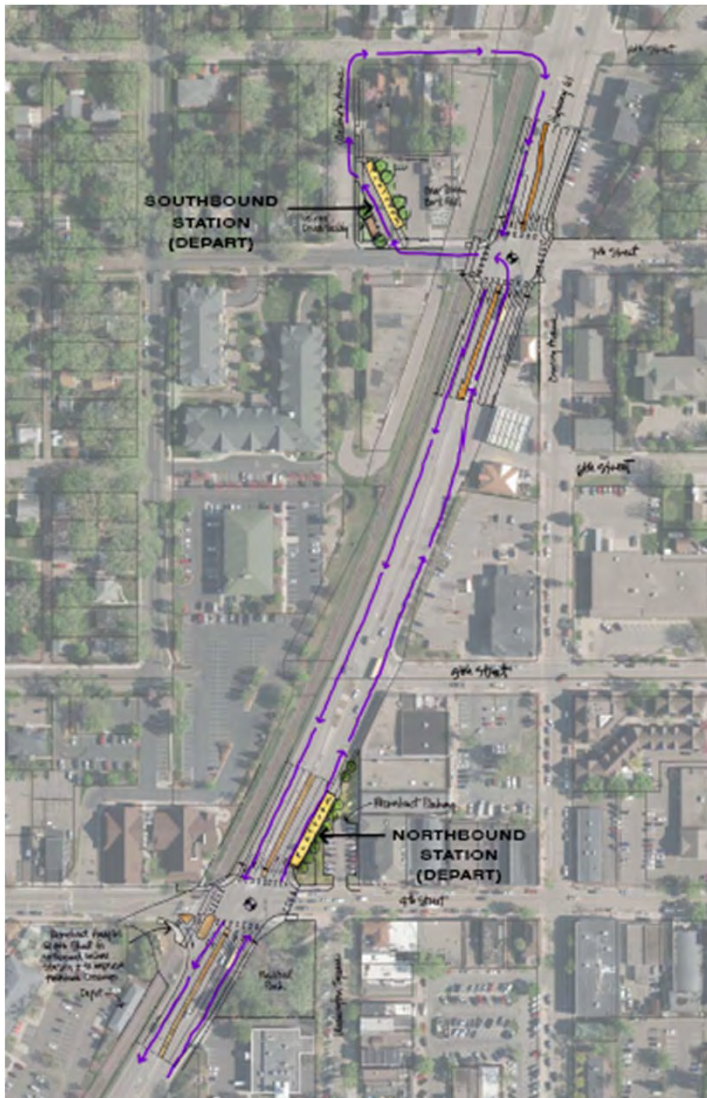
Efficient Transit Operations

- No sightline or turning radius issues.
- Arriving to and departing from platforms in different locations that are not visible from one another is likely to be confusing for passengers.

Option F: Arrive at 4th Street and Highway 61; depart from 7th Street and Washington Avenue



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Evaluation Criteria and Results



Minimize Traffic Impacts

- Traffic improvements may be needed at 8th Street and Highway 61.



Minimize Property Impacts

- This option avoids impacts to Railroad Park presented in Option C but would require partial acquisition of private property. No buildings would be acquired.

Technical Analysis Results

Option F has transit operational issues that impact viability.

Technical Advisory Committee Recommendation



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- Options C, E and F should no longer be pursued because they have technical issues that affect their viability.
- Options A, B and D are all viable options and the preferred site should be determined based on input from the city of White Bear Lake.

White Bear Lake City Council Recommendation

- Resolution passed to advance Option A as the Downtown White Bear Lake station location.

Public Comment

- When commenting, please:
 - Be respectful.
 - Be brief. Limit comments to three minutes to give others an opportunity to speak.
- Public comments will be included in the Policy Advisory Committee meeting summary.
- The Chair reserves the right to limit an individual's comments if they become redundant, disrespectful or are not relevant to the Rush Line BRT Project.

Policy Advisory Committee Recommendation

- Confirm the project refinements brought forward through the peer review process for further evaluation in the Environmental Assessment based on the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee.

Policy Advisory Committee Recommendation

- Confirm the Downtown White Bear Lake station location for further evaluation in the Environmental Assessment based on the recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee and the city of White Bear Lake, which reflects input from public engagement efforts.
 - White Bear Lake city council supports Option A.

Upcoming Activities

- Ongoing public engagement.
- Project visualizations.
- Market assessment at stations.
- Walkshed and bikeshed analysis.
- Advance engineering and technical evaluations.



Next Policy Advisory Committee Meeting

- Thursday, March 28.
- 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Maplewood Community Center.



*Rush
Line*

B R T

Thank you!

 rushline.org

 facebook.com/rushline

 info@rushline.org

 [@rushlinetransit](https://twitter.com/rushlinetransit)

 651-266-2760