



*Rush
Line*

B R T

October 8, 2020

POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PHASE



Agenda

1. Virtual meeting procedures.
2. Welcome and introductions.
3. Recap of project update distributed to Policy Advisory Committee in July.
4. Public engagement update.
5. Community Advisory Committee update.
6. Federal Transit Administration Transit-Oriented Development Planning grant update.
7. Environmental update.
8. Engineering update.
9. Public comment on the Rush Line BRT Project.
10. Next meeting.

Virtual Meeting Procedures

- Mute your microphone when not speaking.
- All committee members and staff are panelists. Only panelists are able to speak and share video; attendees are only able to view and listen to the meeting.
- Attendees may submit comments by using the “raise hand” feature only during the public comment period. The host will unmute you in order of hands raised.
- Project staff is not recording this meeting. There will be a meeting summary as usual published at rushline.org. As with any in-person Policy Advisory Committee meeting, members of the public may attend and record this meeting.
- Email dmcniel@srfconsulting.com if you are having issues connecting.

Recap of Project Update Distributed in July

- Environmental Assessment:
 - First administrative draft of the Environmental Assessment was submitted to the Federal Transit Administration on June 17.
- Public engagement:
 - Notice of online station design survey.
- Station area planning:
 - Notice that the Federal Transit Administration awarded a \$1,250,000 grant for planning for transit-oriented development at Rush Line stations.

Recap of Project Update Distributed in July

- Engineering:
 - Refined potential locations for stormwater management in Saint Paul and White Bear Lake.
 - Refined the design on Jackson Street to reflect BRT operations in mixed traffic. Operating in mixed traffic on Jackson Street does not impact travel time or station access.
 - Update on the Minnesota Department of Transportation's layout review process.

Recap of Project Update Distributed in July

- Ridership Workshop – May 6.
 - Anticipate sharing refined ridership forecasts later this fall and will include the forecasts in the Environmental Assessment.
- Risk Assessment Workshop – May 26-27.
 - Initial effort to identify potential risks and how likely and how severe each risk might be to inform the project as it moves forward.
 - Summary of findings will be provided once report is finalized.

The logo for 'Rush Line' features the words 'Rush' and 'Line' in a white, italicized sans-serif font, stacked vertically. The text is framed by two yellow swooshes that curve around it, suggesting speed and motion.

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The letters 'B', 'R', and 'T' are each enclosed in a white circle, which is then placed on a yellow horizontal line. The circles are spaced evenly along the line.

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Public Engagement Update

Online Station Design Survey

- Available June 24-August 1.
 - Available in English, Spanish, Hmong, Karen and Somali.
 - Promoted via social media, e-newsletters and signs on the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.
 - 471 responses.
- Topics of interest:
 - Safety and security at stations.
 - Landscaping.
 - Bicycle access.
 - Enclosed shelters.
 - Parking.

What additional station amenities or features would improve your experience using Rush Line BRT?
Select up to three features.

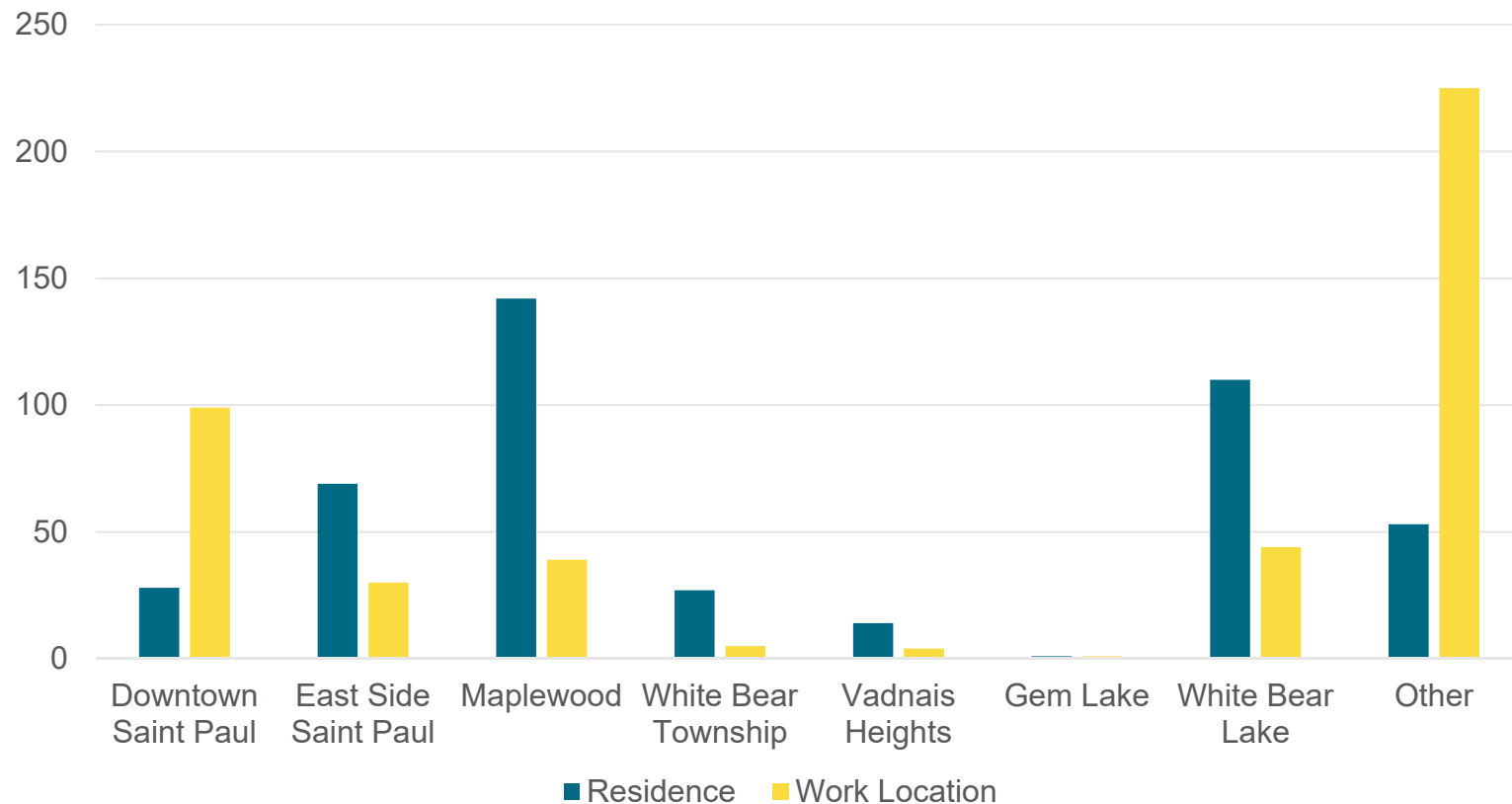
<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle drop-off/pick-up zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle share station	<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle tune-up station
<input type="checkbox"/> Secure bicycle parking	<input type="checkbox"/> Signs with directions to nearby destinations	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced landscaping
<input type="checkbox"/> Public art		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Station design survey

Residence and Workplace

- Home: Saint Paul, Maplewood and White Bear Lake.
- Work: Minneapolis, downtown Saint Paul, Maplewood and White Bear Lake.
- Some are retired and many work elsewhere in the metro.

Residence and Workplace of Respondents

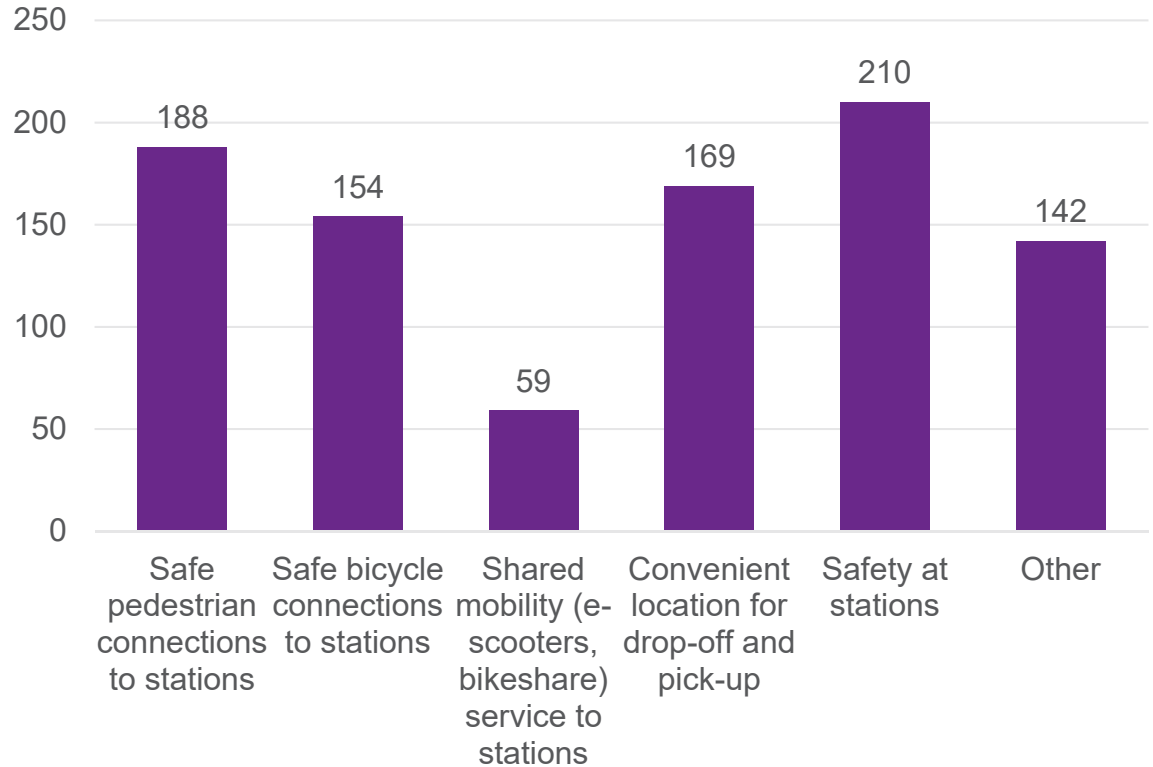




Use of Rush Line BRT

- Top features that would encourage Rush Line use:
 - Safety at stations.
 - Safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to stations.
 - Convenient locations for drop-off and pick-up.
- Other suggestions:
 - More development.
 - Convenience of use (easy access and frequent service).
 - Accessible parking.

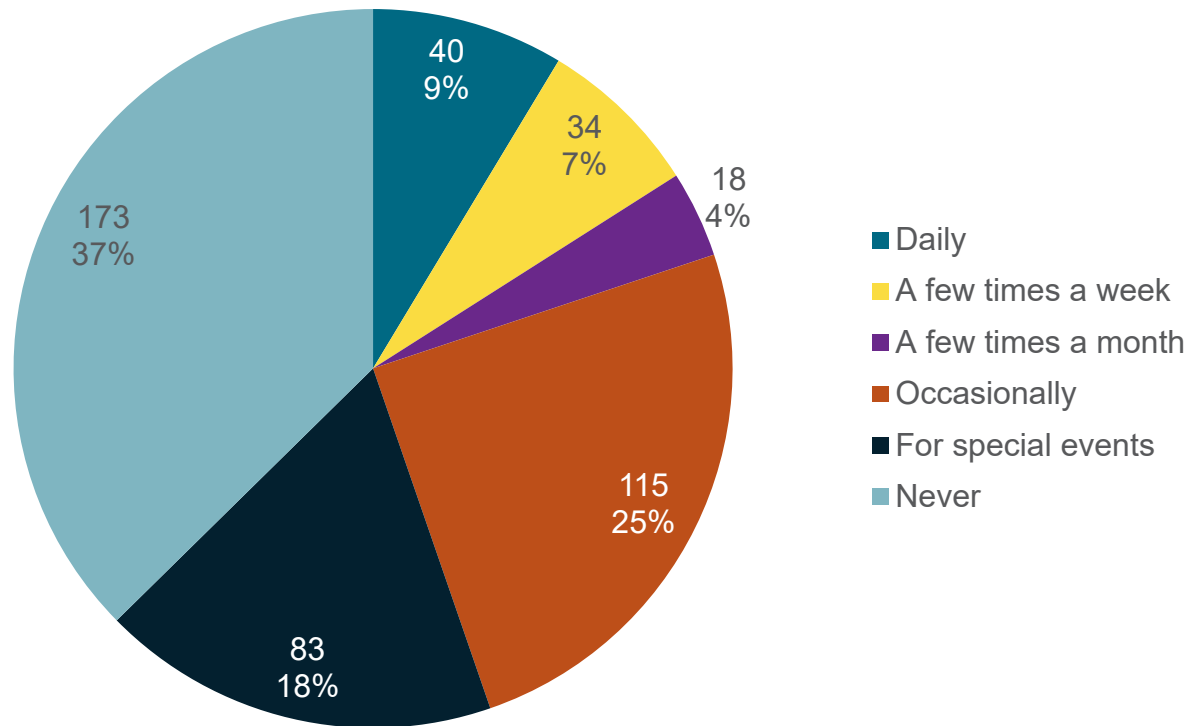
Features That Would Encourage Rush Line BRT Use



Frequency of Transit Use

- More than 60 percent of respondents use transit at least sometimes.*

Frequency of Transit Use



*Respondents were asked to answer this question as if the COVID-19 pandemic was not a factor.

Top Destinations to Access Using Rush Line BRT

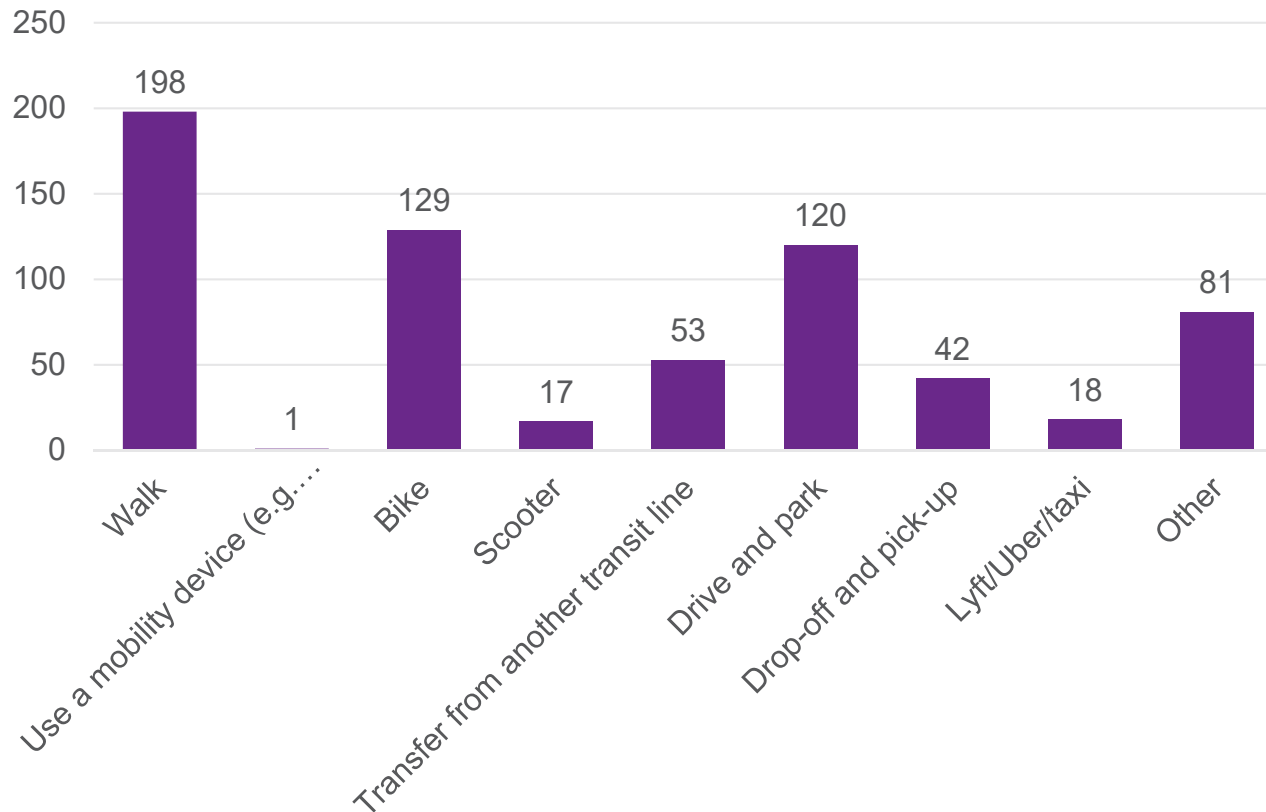


- Downtown Saint Paul: work, restaurants and shopping, appointments and residences.
- East Side of Saint Paul: work, restaurants and shopping, residences, Hmong Village and Lake Phalen.
- Maplewood: residences and medical appointments; Maplewood Mall Transit Center: shopping and transfers to other routes.
- Vadnais Heights: TCO Sports Center and nearby shops.
- White Bear Lake: residences, restaurants and shopping, and recreation.

Accessing the Rush Line

- Walking, biking and park-and-ride are most popular modes of access.

Mode of Accessing Rush Line BRT



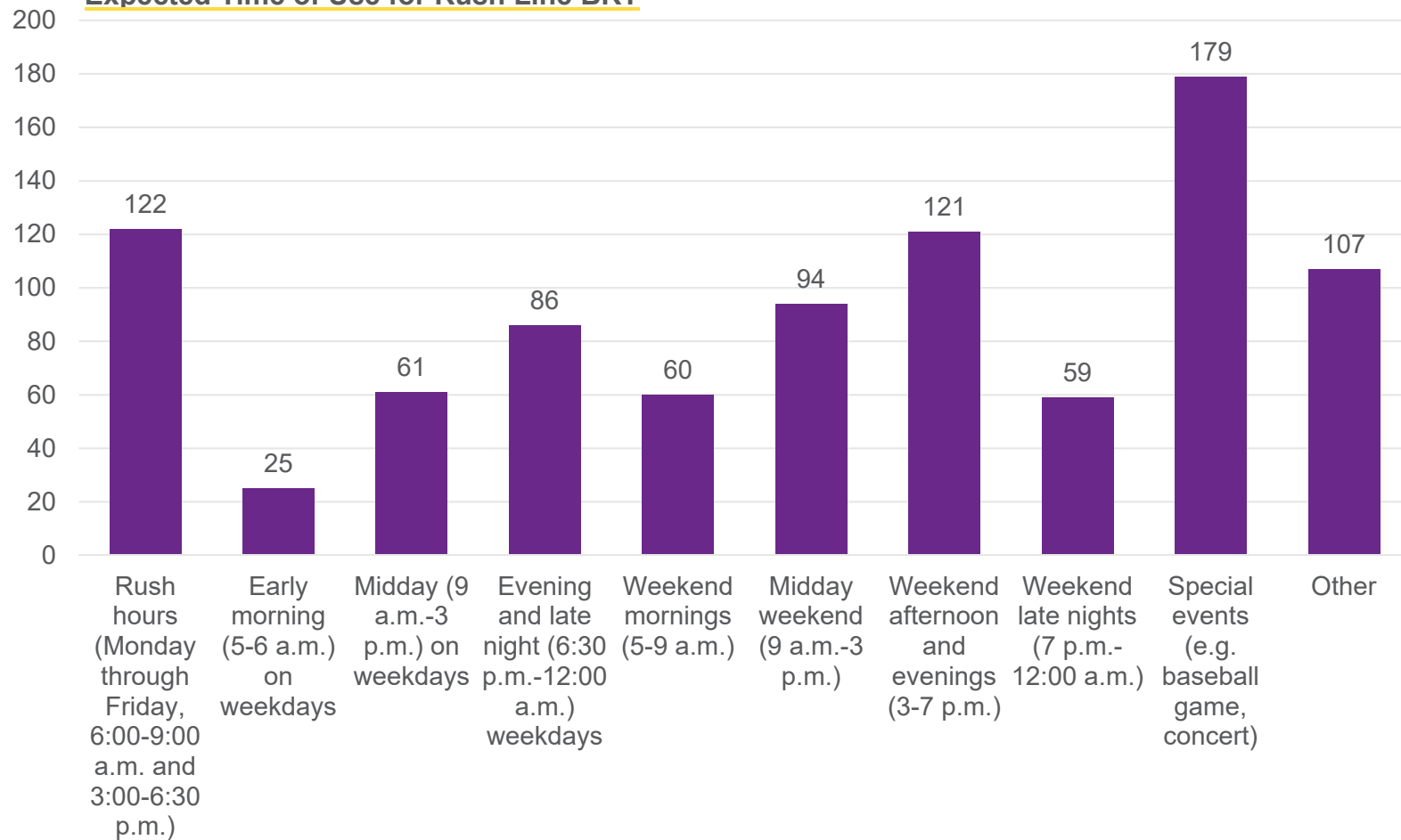


Using the Rush Line



- Special events, rush hours and weekend afternoons are most popular times for use.

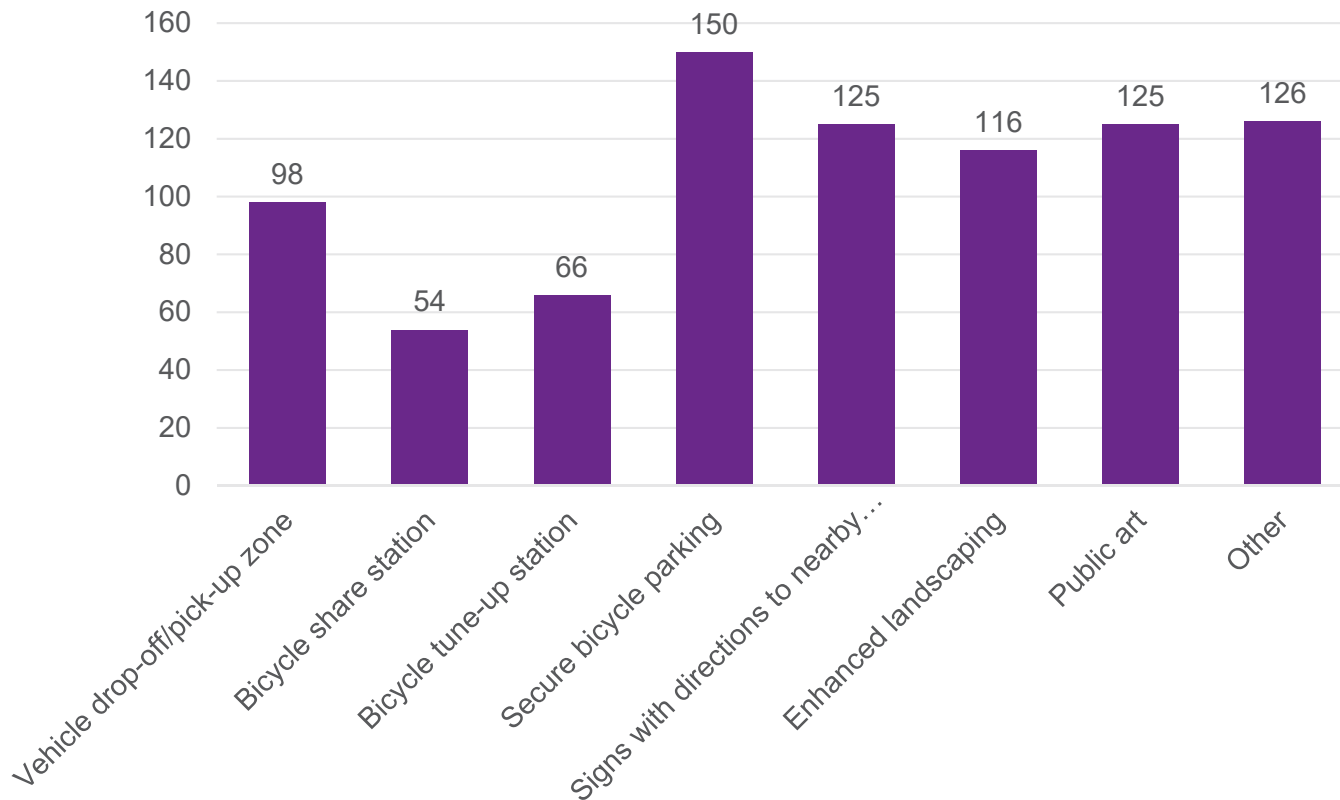
Expected Time of Use for Rush Line BRT



Additional Amenities and Features

- Secure bicycle parking, wayfinding signage, public art and landscaping are most desired.
- Other: park-and-ride and security.

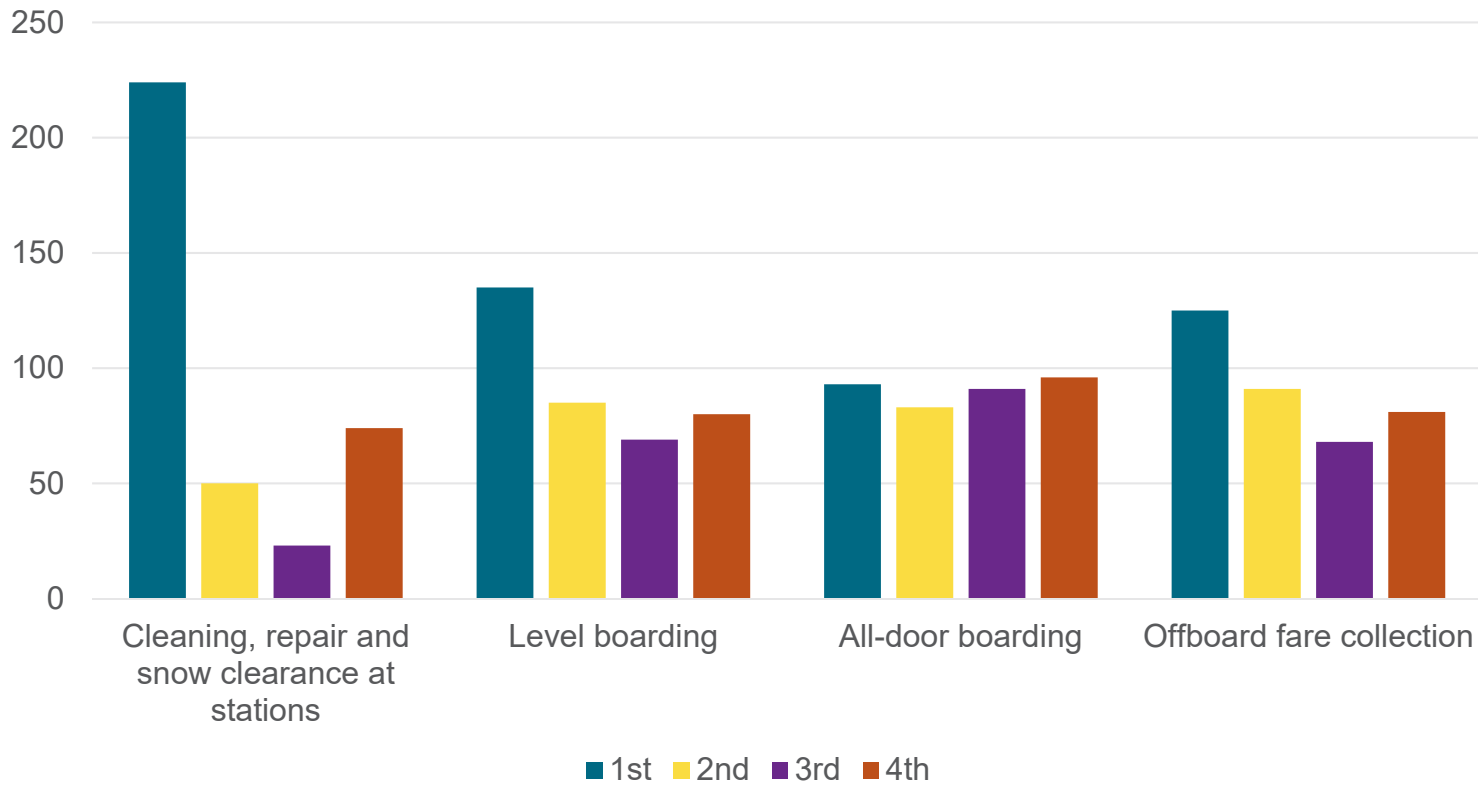
Preferred Additional Station Amenities and Features



Boarding Experience

- Cleaning, repair and snow clearance at stations is top priority for boarding, followed by level boarding and offboard fare collection.

Priorities for Boarding Experience



Station Area Characteristics

- Saint Paul residents highlighted:
 - Proximity to downtown.
 - Bruce Vento Regional Trail, Lake Phalen and Hmong Village.
- Maplewood residents highlighted:
 - Proximity to Bruce Vento Trail.
 - Quiet atmosphere.
- Vadnais Heights residents highlighted:
 - Quiet neighborhoods.
- White Bear Lake residents highlighted:
 - Quaint/historic neighborhood character.
 - White Bear Lake (the body of water).



Other Comments

- Interest in:
 - Potential private property impacts.
 - Changes to the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.
 - Desired pedestrian improvements.
 - Station size and siting.
 - Access to destinations including Hmong Village and the Gateway State Trail.

Other Recent Public Engagement

- Comments received via email regarding:
 - Interest in pedestrian improvements on Saint Paul's East Side and in White Bear Lake.
 - Concern about impacts to the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.
 - Perceived lack of need for the project in light of changes in travel patterns due to COVID-19.
- Additional input received from businesses near Robert & 10th Streets.



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Community Advisory Committee Update

Recap of August Community Advisory Committee Meeting

- Project updates.
- Station design survey results.
- Transit-oriented development grant update.
- Walkshed and bikeshed analysis overview and discussion.



Federal Transit Administration Transit-Oriented Development Planning Grant Update

Rush Line Advanced Station Area Planning

- Funded by Federal Transit Administration grant, Ramsey County and in-kind contributions of staff time from project partners.
- Draft scope of work under development.
 - City staff questionnaire completed in August.
 - Partner agency review of work scope will be requested in fall 2020.
 - Partner agency involved in RFP process.
- Planning process expected 2021-2023.



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Environmental Update

Environmental Assessment Review Schedule

Timeframe	Review
June 2020 to February 2021	Federal Transit Administration administrative and legal reviews
February 2021	Publish Environmental Assessment and begin 45-day public comment period
March 2021	Environmental Assessment public hearings
June 2021	Anticipated environmental decision

Note: Schedule is under review by the Federal Transit Administration and is subject to change.

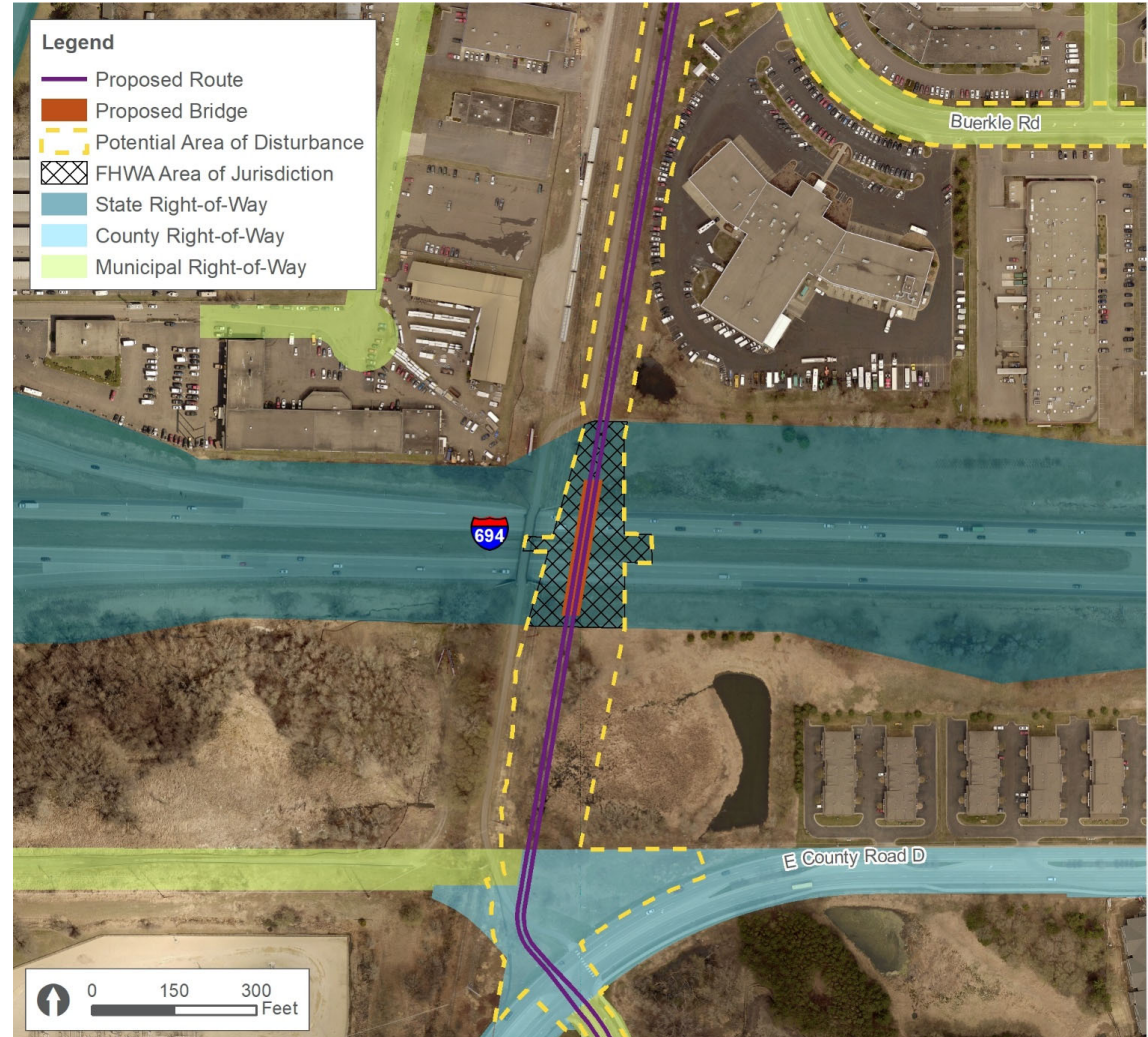
- Section 106 process:
 - The Federal Transit Administration has reviewed the draft Assessment of Effects.
 - Consulting party meeting #2 anticipated in mid-November.
 - Discuss assessment of effects and introduce approach to the Memorandum of Agreement.

Federal Highway Administration Coordination for I-694 Crossing



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- The proposed I-694 crossing would require the following from the Federal Highway Administration:
 - Interstate right-of-way use approval.
 - Environmental decision document.
- The Federal Transit Administration invited the Federal Highway Administration to become a cooperating agency.

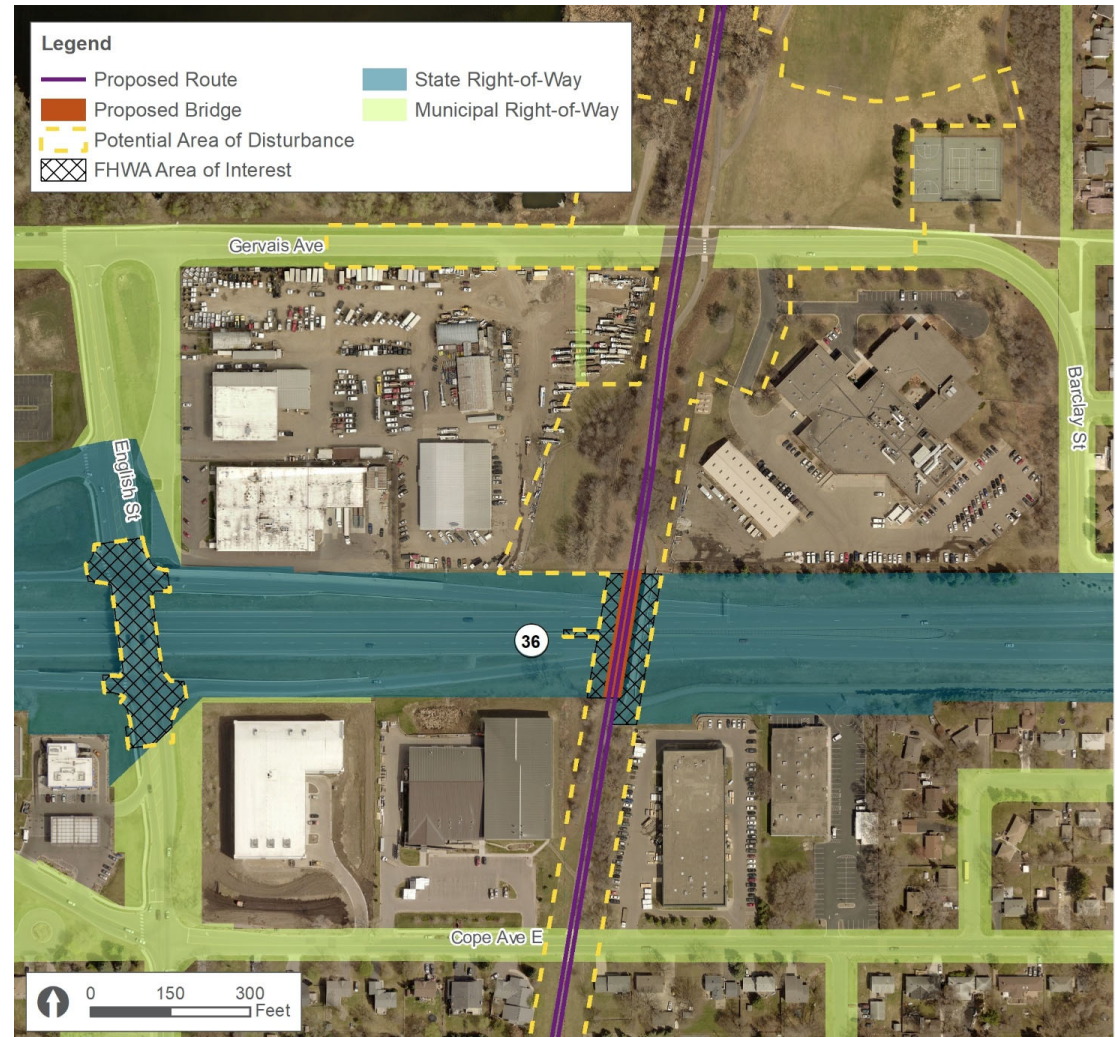


Federal Highway Administration Coordination for Highway 36 Crossing



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- The Federal Highway Administration does not have jurisdiction in the area of the proposed Highway 36 but considers it an area of interest because it is on the National Highway System.





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Engineering Update

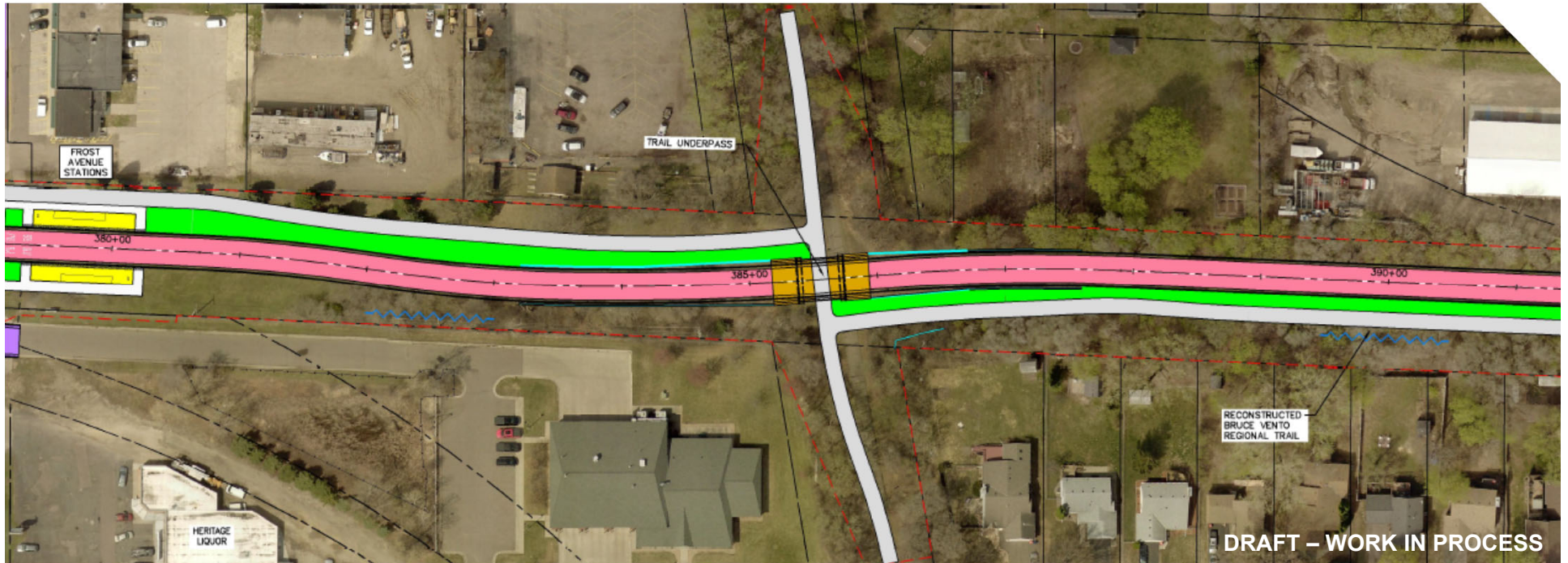
Coordination Activities

- Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, Saint Paul Regional Water and District Energy meetings regarding utilities.
- Metro Transit coordination regarding conceptual 2040 bus network.
- Minnesota Department of Transportation staff approved layout process.
 - Arcade Street.
 - Highway 36 and I-694 crossings.
 - Highway 61 (to be submitted).

Municipal Resolutions of Support

- White Bear Lake – April 14.
- White Bear Township – April 20.
- Maplewood – May 11.
- Vadnais Heights – May 19.
- Saint Paul – August 5.

Bruce Vento Regional Trail/Gateway State Trail Connection Refinement



- Refinement made based on input from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and included in 15 percent plans.



Advancement of Design

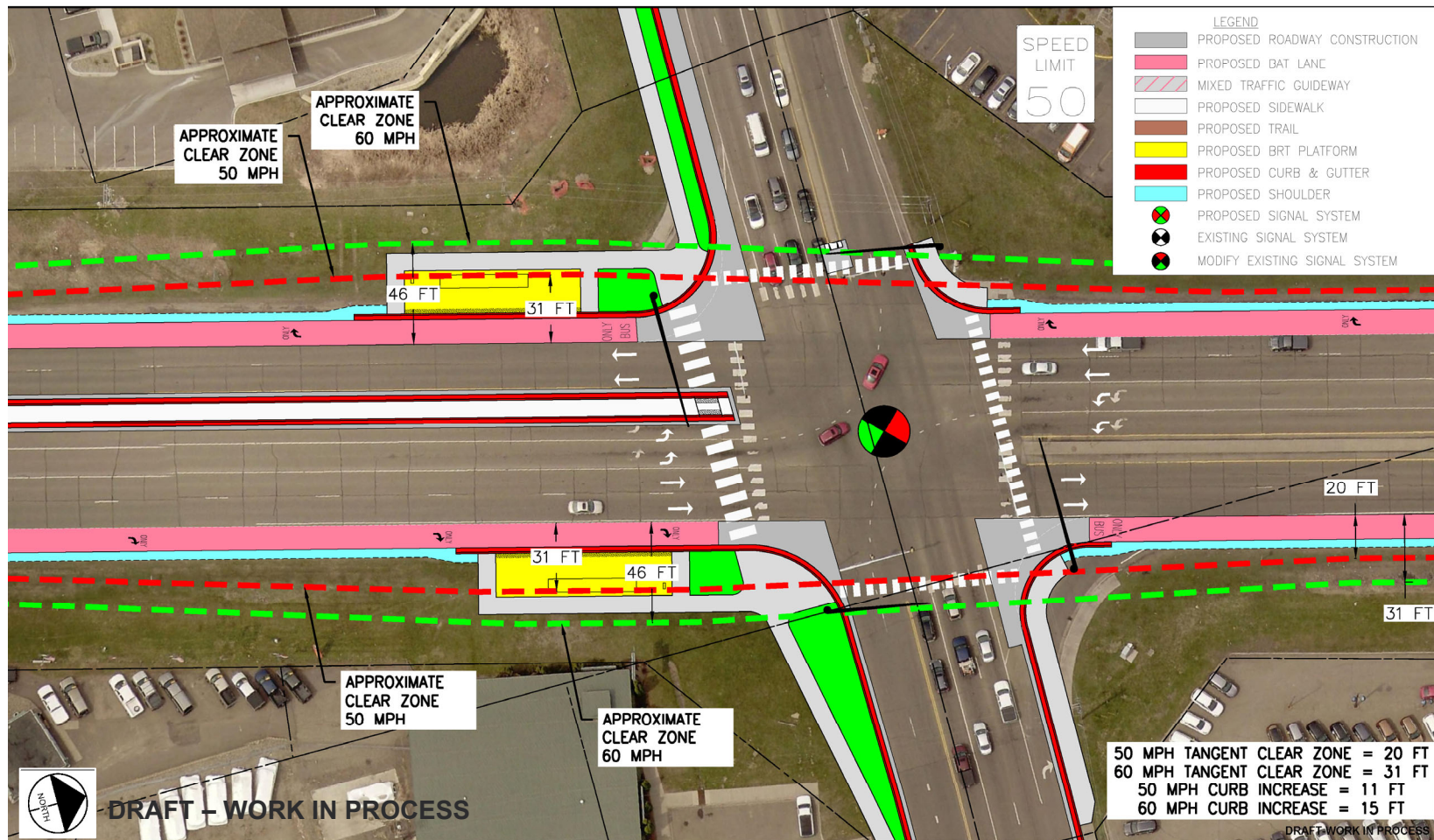
- The Environmental Assessment is based on the 15 percent plans that are considered final for this phase.
- Additional refinements as design advances will be reflected in future plans (25/30 percent plans).

Highway 61 Stations – Platform Design



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- Coordination with Minnesota Department of Transportation regarding clear zone and platform height.



Highway 61 Stations – Platform Design

- 15 percent design reflects 10-inch platform in clear zone.
- Considering design options (e.g., wider platform, location of vertical platform elements).
- Working through approach prior to Highway 61 layout submittal later this fall.
- Minnesota Department of Transportation functional groups and Metro District leadership involved in discussion.

Upcoming Engineering Activities

- Advancing stormwater analysis.
- Submitting remaining layouts to Minnesota Department of Transportation.
- Preparing preliminary bridge plans for Minnesota Department of Transportation review.
- Refining ridership forecast in response to ridership workshop input.
- Updating capital and operating cost estimates for inclusion in environmental assessment.



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Public Comment

Public Comment

- Attendees may submit comments by using the “raise hand” feature only during the public comment period. The host will unmute you in order of hands raised.
- When commenting, please:
 - Be respectful.
 - Be brief. Limit comments to **3 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.
- Submit additional comments or questions to info@rushline.org.



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Next Meeting

Next Meeting

- November 19.
- 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Virtual meeting.



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Thank you!

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 info@rushline.org

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

 651-266-2760