

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

AGENDA SECTION	WORK SESSION
MEETING DATE	APRIL 5, 2021

ITEM: BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) LINES		
DEPARTMENT: Public Works	BY/DATE: Kevin Hansen/April 1, 2021	
CITY STRATEGY: (please indicate areas that apply by adding a bold "X" in front of the selected text below)		
X_Safe Community	_Diverse, Welcoming "Small-Town" Feel	
_Economic Strength	_Excellent Housing/Neighborhoods	
_Equity and Affordability	X_Strong Infrastructure/Public Services	
_Opportunities for Play and Learning	_Engaged, Multi-Generational, Multi-Cultural Population	

BACKGROUND: 'NetworkNext' is a 20-year plan initiated by Metro Transit for expanding and improving the bus network serving the metro area. Transit improvements under consideration include improved local and express routes, integrated shared mobility options, and new arterial bus rapid transit (BRT) lines.

Bus rapid transit (BRT) provides an improved customer experience with frequent service and faster trips in our the Metro's busiest bus corridors. Metro Transit first studied a dozen potential BRT lines in 2011-2012. This study led to the implementation of the METRO A Line in 2016 and the METRO C Line in 2019. Metro Transit has reported both lines have been very successful in increasing ridership and customers satisfaction.

In 2020 and 2021, Metro Transit engaged the public to help identify the Metro's next BRT priorities. Each step was based on four principles that guided the planning process for BRT, rooted in public engagement, Metropolitan Council transit policy, and the performance of the bus network:

- Advance equity and reduce regional racial disparities
- Build on success to grow ridership
- Design a network that supports a transit-oriented lifestyle
- Ensure the long-term sustainable growth of the bus network

In February 2021, following months of analysis and community engagement, Metro Transit finalized recommendations for the next expansions in the BRT network:

- The METRO F Line will serve the Central Avenue corridor, modifying Route 10 from downtown Minneapolis to Northtown Mall via Central and University avenues.
- The METRO G Line will serve the Rice/Robert corridor, traveling between West St. Paul and Little Canada via Robert and Rice streets and replacing portions of routes 62 and 68.
- The METRO H Line will serve the Como/Maryland corridor from downtown Minneapolis to Sun Ray Transit Center in St. Paul via Como Avenue and Maryland Avenue, replacing and extending Route 3.

METRO F LINE: The Metro F Line has now been approved by the Metropolitan Council and will join a growing network of BRT lines. Approximately 25% of the total \$81 million dollar estimated cost has already been allocated to the F line for construction. Over the next four years Metro Transit will be pursuing funds for this

project, typically by a mix of Federal, State, and Metro Council funds.

- Metro Transit developed a corridor concept plan that identifies preliminary station locations and service plans for the F Line and modifications to existing routes in the corridor (attached). Highlights are as follows:
 - o BRT would replace bus route 10 on University Avenue north of 53rd Avenue.
 - Bus route 10 would continue to run but be modified from 53rd Avenue from downtown Minneapolis, and run at a reduced frequency at every 30 minutes.
 - Bus route 59 would be eliminated and replaced by the BRT.
 - There are six stops proposed for the BRT line in Columbia Heights: on Central at 37th, 41st, 45th 49th and 53rd Avenues and at University on 53rd.
 - o The BRT stop at 41st Avenue would be on-street, not in the transit hub.
 - Metro Transit's next step will be to develop a corridor plan that sites stations more specifically, down to the intersection corner.
 - A Technical Advisory Committee will be convened made up of corridor cities, counties, and MnDOT toward the end of 2021.
 - o Public engagement around the corridor plan would likely begin in the first half of 2022.
 - Following multiple public review periods, the final plan would be approved by the Metropolitan Council in 2023.
 - Following plan approval, construction plans will start in 2023, working closely with the local governments and MnDOT.
 - o Plans would be finalized in late 2024 for a spring 2025 construction start, pending full funding.
 - o The F Line would open for service in 2026, pending full funding.

The current concept plan for BRT Metro F Line will continue to be refined as Metro Transit moves through planning and closer to implementation, with local agency and public review as well.

ATTACHMENT(S): BRT Corridor Profile