

Date: March 17, 2023

To: Melinda Coleman, City Manager of Maplewood

From: Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager for Capital Programs

RE: Response to Maplewood Questions

The following details the responses to questions received from the Maplewood-led engagement regarding the METRO Purple Line BRT Project.

1. “Can you explain what the next steps are for the Purple Line project? Precisely what are the next decisions, approvals, funding requests, etc, and the timelines?”
 - Completion of the [Maplewood Purple Line Engagement Process](#). Potential action by Maplewood City Council.
 - Release of the final technical results of the [Route Modification Study](#) to project partners, stakeholders and the public for review and feedback. Project staff will be sharing these results during the April 6, 2023 meeting of the [Corridor Management Committee](#).
 - If the Corridor Management Committee selects and recommends a revised Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) by early June 2023, then the Metropolitan Council would submit a package of information related to that revised LPA to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for [evaluation and rating of project merit](#) by late August 2023. A funding commitment resolution from Ramsey County for the entire non-federal share of the project would need to be included.
 - In late 2023 or early 2024, the Metropolitan Council, as the local Metropolitan Planning Organization, would need to adopt the revised LPA into the [Transportation Policy Plan](#), the region’s long range transportation plan. Resolutions of support for the revised LPA would be needed from the county and municipalities directly served by the revised LPA.
 - Upon completion of final design (currently anticipated in late 2024), the Metropolitan Council would submit an application to the FTA for a construction grant agreement through the [Capital Investment Grants Program](#).
 - Construction would start in 2025. A federal construction grant agreement would be approved later in 2025. Revenue service would begin in 2027.

2. “The arguments made about the route's proximity to jobs, along with the disruption to endangered species, was compelling. Obviously, this project was first imagined as rail, so the existing alignment made sense. Given the project has evolved to BRT, has the Met Council considered rerouting on existing corridors?”

While the origins of the project in the late 1990s contemplated a rail project between Hinckley and Saint Paul through Rush City, the first evaluation of a busway does date back to the 2001 Rush Line Transit Feasibility Study. Between 2014 and 2017, 7 transit modes and 55 potential route segments were evaluated between Forest Lake and Saint Paul.

- Modes Evaluated: Local bus, arterial bus rapid transit (BRT), streetcar, light rail transit, diesel multiple unit (DMU), dedicated BRT, highway BRT
- Alignments Evaluated: I-35E, Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way, Hwy 61, White Bear Ave, Payne Ave, Prosperity Ave/Johnson Pkwy, Gold Line

May 2017: Rush Line Policy Advisory Committee recommended the selection of dedicated BRT on along Phalen Blvd, Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way and Hwy 61 as the Locally Preferred Alternative.

3. “What would happen to the project/process if the City of Maplewood were to formally withdraw their support, like the City of WBL?”

At a minimum, the Project would be delayed. The METRO Purple Line Corridor Management Committee would need to be convened to discuss and advise the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County on next steps. The Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County would need to take the Corridor Management Committee advisement under consideration.

4. “How has the Met Council studied various routes/options?”

From 2014 – 2017, Ramsey County studied multiple routing options during the Pre-Project Development Phase, available in the [Rush Line Corridor LPA Report](#).

A Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) was selected and supported by local stakeholders, demonstrated through [letters of support](#). The LPA was officially adopted May 25, 2017.

The project was transitioned to Metropolitan Council after the completion of the Environmental Assessment in December 2021. Metropolitan Council is leading the project development, final design and construction phases of the project using the adopted LPA, which was submitted to enter the Federal Transit Administration’s Capital Investment Grants program in December 2021.

5. “What is the future expected population of Maplewood and other East Metro cities? What is the impact on jobs/economy?”

Below is a table of the future expected population of Maplewood and East Metro cities.

TABLE 1: POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT GROWTH IN EAST METRO CITIES

City	2020 Population	2040 Population	Percent Growth	2020 Employment	2040 Employment	Percent Growth
Maplewood	42,088	48,600	15.5%	24,376	36,600	50.1%
Saint Paul	311,527	344,100	10.5%	161,222	213,500	32.4%
Vadnais Heights	12,912	14,100	9.2%	8,050	11,200	39.1%
White Bear Lake	24,486	25,240	3.1%	10,699	12,260	14.6%
Oakdale	28,303	36,000	27.2%	9,943	12,100	21.7%
Woodbury	75,102	87,800	16.9%	21,095	28,700	36.1%

The [2040 Maplewood Comprehensive Plan](#), which includes the METRO Purple Line upon Maplewood’s adoptions of its Locally Preferred Alternative in 2017, describes policies, goals, and calculations of land use needs for the city based upon growth projections for population, households and employment. In addition, the plan describes the Economic and Land Use considerations such as encourage higher densities around the Purple Line as well as adjacent to regional nodes like Maplewood Mall and M Health Fairview St. John’s Hospital.

6. “What is the breakout of aggravated assaults versus other crimes on BRT and on Metro Transit overall?”

Aggravated assault has remained low even as more BRT lines have begun service (Red Line in 2013, A Line in 2016, C Line in 2019, Orange Line in 2021, D Line in 2022).

TABLE 2: BRT CRIME STATISTICS

Time Frame	BRT Assaults	All BRT Crime	All Transit Crime	BRT Assault / All Crime	Ridership	Overall Crime Rate
2018	3	95	6,349	0.05%	80,653,414	0.008%
2019	6	97	7,549	0.08%	77,927,249	0.010%
2020	2	111	5,607	0.04%	35,862,536	0.016%
2021	4	111	4,592	0.09%	32,864,284	0.014%
2022	7	192	5,962	0.12%	38,794,642	0.015%
Jan 1–Mar 7, 2023	2	122	1,663	0.12%	6,451,786	0.026%
Average (of full year stats)	4.4	121	6,012	0.07%	53,220,425	0.011%

7. “Are there other examples of arterial BRT arterial solutions/services in the Metro? In other parts of the country?”

Yes, the routes indicated in the following link are all part of the [expanding METRO network](#). Yes, there are currently 29 arterial bus rapid transit projects being planned across

the country, according to the Federal Transit Administration’s Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Dashboard, tracking transit project seeking Federal CIG funding.

8. “The BRT in Roseville that runs north and South on Snelling, did it used to be a regular bus route? What are the statistics for crime that occurred on that bus line when it was a bus? When did it change from being a regular bus line to a BRT line? What are the crime statistics now for this BRT? Can these crime statistics be linked to the crime statistics of the light rail on University Avenue? Include answers for crime statistics in all categories.”

In June 2016, the METRO A Line BRT route began service in the same corridor as the local route 84. Local route 84 was reduced to 30-minute service. Crime statistics are aggregated by stops, not by route, and stops are often served by multiple routes. For these reasons we are unable to break down crime statistics by route.

Transit crime tends to be reflective of its community; attempting to make any correlation between service lines that cover a variety of cities would be speculative.

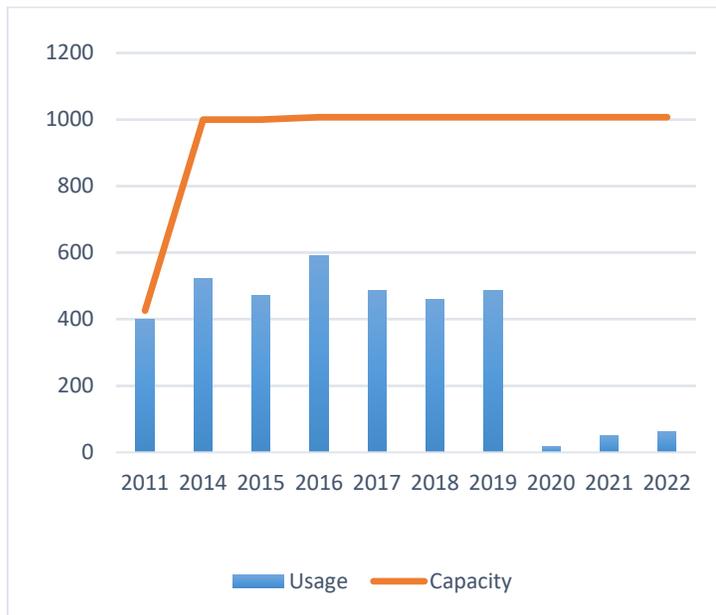
9. “How much did the Park and Ride ramp at Maplewood Mall cost to construct? What year was it constructed in? How many riders used it in 2016? 2017? 2018? 2019? 2020? 2021? And 2022? How much will it cost to tear it down? How much will it cost to build a new park and ride ramp at Birch Run Center in Maplewood? Describe the process by which the Met Council considered the demolition of the Park and Ride ramp at Maplewood Mall and/or building a new Park and Ride ramp at Birch Run Center in Maplewood? As part of that process, what internal committees did the proposal go through? What type of ridership numbers do you need to justify the building of a new Park and Ride ramp?”

The METRO Purple Line BRT Project will renovate and rehabilitate the existing Maplewood Mall Transit Center, not demolish and replace it. Approximately \$5 million is budgeted for station improvements, utility, landscaping, lighting allowance, and station communications. No transit facility is envisioned for Birch Run Station; One of the four routing options evaluated to the Maplewood Mall Transit Center included an extension of St. John’s Boulevard through Birch Run Station consistent with [the City’s adopted North End Vision Plan](#).

In 2012, the Maplewood Mall Transit Center park-and-ride surface lot was vertically expanded into a multi-level park-and-ride ramp for \$15.2 million, including Rush Line funding as the expanded capacity was in part to support the future Rush Line rail or bus transitway project. The 2012 expansion was intended to provide the necessary capacity for at least 50 years (2062), the asset’s expected useful life.

The figure below details the capacity and usage of the park-and-ride at the Maplewood Mall Transit Center between 2011 and 2022.

FIGURE 1: PARKING USAGE AT MAPLEWOOD MALL TRANSIT CENTER



10. “What is the gap between the number of riders that you have documented as using the metro public transit system and the amount of revenue that is collected from fairs, prepaid cards, etc that have been purchased by Riders or Riders anticipating their future usage of the metro transit?”

Transportation-related taxes and fees levied, collected, and allocated to fund expansion, operations and maintenance transit routes and roadways are insufficient. Therefore, both roadways and transit routes fail to pay for themselves. Both roadway and transit authorities levy user fees (i.e., tolls and fares, respectively) to reduce the gap, and both experience fare/fee evasion. Both roadways and transit routes are facilitating the provision of a public system to promote mobility. Mobility in all forms benefit the region by allowing businesses to economically thrive and residents to access goods and services.

There is not a perceived gap between the number of riders and the amount of revenue from fares. Ridership is not directly correlated with fare revenue due the variety of fare and pass programs available and due to the potential for one “fare” to generate multiple trips. In 2021, the system delivered 32.9 million rides, about 99,000 per weekday. Operating revenue totaled \$333.4 million, about 12% of which came from fares. This is in line with the planned revenue from fares through 2040. (See Transportation Policy Plan).

11. “In the presentation, you mentioned that understanding and serving origins and destinations is important to building a successful metro transit system. Regarding the Purple line, where do residents within 1/2 miles of the proposed Purple Line BRT stops go to work, go to school, go to the grocery store? How is this data different from the same data sets for the English Street (Maplewood) bus route, the route on White Bear Avenue (Maplewood) or the bus route on Hwy 61 (Maplewood)?”

Forecasts suggest growth in number of people, jobs, and travel activities in the study corridor by 2040 in Maplewood and the east metro area. Six percent of the ridership is

within Maplewood. Fifty-seven percent of the ridership is explained by transit riders traveling between Maplewood and Saint Paul. The other 37% of ridership is within Saint Paul only. The METRO Purple Line BRT Project does not have specific data within a ½-mile range for the suggested trip type due to the limitations of the software required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The project is using the FTA's Simplified Trips on Project Software (STOPS) ridership model to estimate ridership for the METRO Purple Line BRT Project. The STOPS model is adjusted to match local conditions using actual ridership experience. Inputs into the STOPS model are Census/ACS work trip data, Metropolitan Council Transit Survey, Population & employment by Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ), and a transit schedule of regional services. Output from STOPS is limited to ridership, auto vehicle miles traveled (VMT), new transit trips, access mode, and trip purpose. The STOPS model focuses on routine travel by permanent residents of the metro area for three trip purposes: home-based work, home-based non-work, and non-home based. The model forecasted trips does not specify trips by specific business such as schools or grocery stores.

12. "Isn't it true the Transitway Impacts Research Program- Report #21- conducted by the Center for Transportation Studies (University of Minnesota) dated Jan 2021 by Kristin Carlson and Andrew Owen used a 2-mile radius in its analysis of the origins for the Purple Line, while as for other BRT routes (B, D, E) the radius used for origins was ½ mile? See Section 3.7 Demographic Data and Methods page 16. How would the Purple Line compare to Lines B, D and E if a ½ mile radius was used for the origins of the Purple Line?"

This report was not designed to compare impacts of the arterial BRT projects and the dedicated BRT projects. The researchers used a much smaller study area for the Gold and Purple Line analysis than for the B, D, and E Line analysis. For the first stage focusing on the B, D, and E Lines, the report included workers residing within a half mile of a fixed-route transit stop anywhere within the Metro Transit service area. For the second stage of the study, the report included workers within two miles from just the Gold and Purple Lines and within a half-mile of any transit stop in this 2-mile buffer. The report states, "Since the study areas for the B, D, and E Line and Gold and Rush Line evaluations differ by 40,000 blocks, the travel time results found for the new baseline should not be compared to the metro-wide results. The Gold and Rush Line scenario represents a "zoomed in" lens on access changes to the neighborhoods surrounding the planned transitways" (page 28).

The findings from the second stage of the report show that when the Purple and Gold Lines are added to the network, the average worker in the Twin Cities can access 1.9% to 2.2% more jobs, while the average worker in Landfall can access 185-318% more jobs, Gem Lake 38-54% more jobs, Maplewood 25-31% more jobs, and Oakdale 11-22% more jobs. The results also show that adding the Purple and Gold Lines "improves the minimum travel time to the second-closest grocery store, healthcare facility, and high school for 3%-30% of workers living within a half-mile of transit stops within the Gold and Rush Line study area" (page 44).

13. “During your presentation, you mentioned Highway and Arterial BRT routes. Where are these routes (name and identify where found) and how do they differ from the proposed Purple Line? Do these routes run through commercially zoned properties? What is the percentage of commercially zoned properties to residentially zoned properties along these routes? For the current proposed local preferred route for the Purple Line, in Maplewood (not the Purple Line as a whole), what is the percentage of commercially zoned properties to residentially zoned properties? For the current proposed route for the Purple Line, from St. Paul to the Maplewood Mall Park and Ride, what is the percentage of commercially zoned properties to residentially zoned properties?”

Arterial BRT and highway BRT along with dedicated BRT are part of the [METRO](#), an [expanding network](#) of fast, frequent, all-day buses and trains.

- Arterial BRT primarily operate in mixed traffic (some bus-only lanes) with a mix of near level and non-level boarding station platforms: [A Line](#) (2016), [C Line](#) (2019), [D Line](#) (2022), [B Line](#) (2024), [E Line](#) (2025), [F Line](#) (2026), [G Line](#) (2027), [H Line](#) (2028), plus 7 additional candidate lines from [Network Next](#) (2030-2040)
- Highway BRT primarily operate in E-ZPass lanes with often times with a mix of near level and non-level boarding station platforms: [Red Line](#) (2013) on Cedar Avenue, [Orange Line](#) (2021) on I-35W
- Dedicated BRT primarily operate in exclusive dedicated busways with near level boarding station platforms: [Gold Line](#) (2025), [Purple Line](#) (2027)

All of the BRT lines serve a mix of commercial zoned and residentially zoned properties.

The METRO Purple Line Station Area Planning consultant team received zoning data from Maplewood and Saint Paul in May 2022. To report on Maplewood and Saint Paul’s zoning data in one summary table, the two cities’ many zoning districts were combined into four: Residential, Non-Residential (various Commercial, Business, and Industrial districts), Mixed Use, and Other (Open Space, Parks, Parking, etc.). The following tables show the acres of properties zoned in each of the four zoning district categories and resultant percent of total acres within ½ mile of the current locally preferred route in Maplewood, Saint Paul, and Maplewood + Saint Paul combined.

TABLE 3: MAPLEWOOD LOCALLY PREFERRED ROUTE (TO MAPLEWOOD MALL)

Zoning	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential	964	49%
Non-Residential	422	21%
Mixed Use	352	18%
Other (Open Space/Parks)	234	12%
Total	1,972	100%

TABLE 4: SAINT PAUL LOCALLY PREFERRED ROUTE

Zoning	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential	1,990	52%
Non-Residential	1,148	30%
Mixed Use	428	11%
Other (Parking, Capitol Area)	280	7%
Total	3,846	100%

TABLE 5: SAINT PAUL TO MAPLEWOOD LOCALLY PREFERRED ROUTE (TO MAPLEWOOD MALL)

Zoning	Acres	Percent of Total
Residential	2,954	51%
Non-Residential	1,570	27%
Mixed Use	779	13%
Other (Parking, Capitol Area)	514	9%
Total	5,817	100%

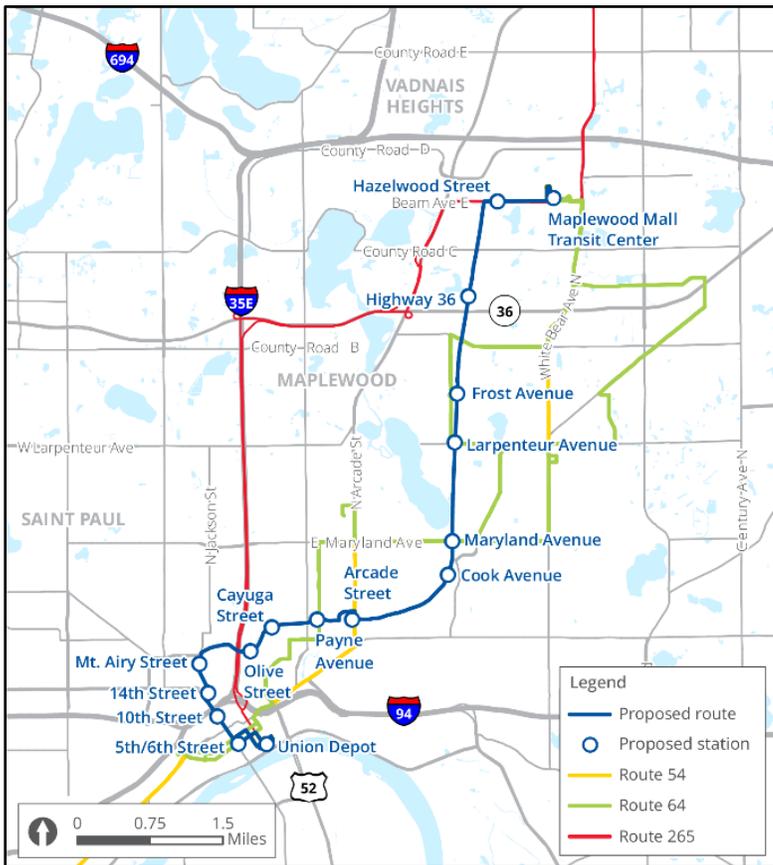
14. “In Maplewood, comparing a Purple Line route over the Bruce Vento Trail vs a Purple Line route using Highway 61, how many controlled intersections are there currently and how many uncontrolled intersections are there currently?”

The METRO Purple Line route along Bruce Vento Trail within the City of Maplewood will have 7 controlled intersections. A route along Highway 61 would have 14 controlled intersections. There are no uncontrolled intersections existing today on the proposed METRO Purple Line route or a would-be Highway 61 route in Maplewood. Intersections are counted from Larpenteur Avenue to the intersection of Beam Avenue and the Bruce Vento Trail.

15. “You indicated the ridership is picking up for routes 64, 265 and northern 54. Where are these routes? Isn’t it true that your presentation also indicated the 265 Express was suspended?”

See Figure 2 below for locations of routes 64, 265, and 54. Yes, route 265 is currently suspended.

FIGURE 2: ROUTES 54, 64, AND 265



16. “How is a “trip” defined? Isn’t it true that a “trip” can be as short as getting on at one bus stop and getting off at the very next stop? Of the percentage of Purple Line trips projected, what percentage of these trips projected have both stops (on and off) of the trip located in St. Paul only? How many trips are projected that include one stop of the trip in Maplewood and one stop outside of Maplewood (break down stops for St. Paul verses north of Maplewood) and how many trips are projected that include both the getting on stop and the getting off stop to be entirely in Maplewood?”

A forecasted trip on the METRO Purple Line is defined as a person boarding and exiting from the METRO Purple Line at any point during their journey from origin to destination. This includes someone who might transfer from another service (such as the METRO Green Line) to the METRO Purple Line while travelling from the University of Minnesota to Maplewood Mall. The table below describes the forecasted percentages of METRO Purple Line trips from Union Depot to the Maplewood Mall Transit Center.

TABLE 6: TRIP FORECAST

Trip Type	Opening Year Forecast	Horizon Year (2040) Forecast
Within Maplewood only	6%	7%
Within Saint Paul only	37%	33%
Between Maplewood and Saint Paul	57%	60%

17. “How many square feet of impervious surface is going to be created, in Maplewood, if the locally preferred route remains the Bruce Vento Trail? Provide a comparison to the square footage of impervious surface of the current Bruce Vento Trail. Provide data on the amount of concrete, bituminous and other infrastructure materials that will be necessary to build the Purple Line on the Bruce Vento Trail rather than using existing roadways, right of ways?”

The tables below show the existing and proposed areas of impervious in the Bruce Vento Trail corridor. No data exists for TH 61.

TABLE 7: EXISTING IMPERVIOUS SURFACE CONDITION

Existing Condition	Approximate SF
Existing Bruce Vento Trail	144,000

TABLE 8: PROPOSED IMPERVIOUS SURFACE CONDITION

Proposed Elements	Additional Approximate SF
Bruce Vento Trail and Connecting Trails (Generally Bituminous)	13,000
Sidewalks (Generally Concrete)	18,000
Transit Infrastructure (Generally Concrete)	287,000
Trailhead, Park and Transit Parking (Generally Bituminous with Concrete Curbs)	71,000

18. “Does the Met Council believe the City of Maplewood has withdrawn their support for the Purple Line? If yes, what is the basis for that belief?”

No, the Metropolitan Council does not believe the City of Maplewood has withdrawn their support for the METRO Purple Line BRT Project. While the title of the October 24th, 2022 resolution was “Withdrawing Support for the BRT Project as It Currently Exists within the City”, the Be It Resolved clause states “The City of Maplewood recommends that the modification study timeline be expanded to create an engagement plan to evaluate future transit options/routes that works effectively for all.”

19. “Isn’t it true that there is sufficient funding available today, to build the Purple Line BRT, in Maplewood, along or in conjunction with Highway 61 (rather than the Bruce Vento Trail) and that if Hwy 61 were used as the route through Maplewood, no Federal Funding is necessary?”

No, the committed local and anticipated federal capital funding for a dedicated BRT line using the Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way is not transferrable to an arterial BRT line using Highway 61.

20. “In the presentation, you talked about soil borings. In Maplewood, how is the relocating of all of the sanitary sewer and water lines along the Bruce Vento Trail going to be addressed so as to not disturb the current system’s operation, resident property concerns and cost? What is the projected cost to relocate all of the Maplewood sanitary sewer and water lines along the Bruce Vento Trail if the BRT guideway is to be constructed over the Bruce Vento Trail? Please compare that cost to the cost of relocating of any sanitary sewer and water lines along Hwy 61 if the Purple Line were to be constructed there instead?”

Only minor adjustments to Maplewood watermain and sanitary sewer infrastructure are anticipated. Where the METRO Purple Line BRT Project (Project) does cross or otherwise impact public facilities, needed adjustments are included in Project costs. This would be similar to any routing on Highway 61.

21. “Is the BRT project proposing to clear cut 100-foot-wide area of the Bruce Vento Trail? If not, what is being proposed? What is the re-vegetation plan?”

No, one-third or more of the corridor vegetation will remain. The vegetation plan includes preserving existing landscape wherever possible and revegetating the corridor to emulate a natural feel. Revegetation will be a mix of different size and species of trees and understory plants that are pollinator friendly, ecologically beneficial, seasonally diverse, low maintenance, and resilient.

Vegetation restoration will improve visibility for safe crossings (for bicyclists, pedestrians, vehicles, and wildlife) by opening sight lines through deliberate selection of plant height and density in key locations.

Figure 3 depicts an area of the Bruce Vento Trail corridor that shows the proposed vegetation 10-years after construction. The Project is also proposing improved intersection

sightlines and lighting, roadway crossings treatments, new trail amenities and trailhead parking, and additional sidewalk and trail connections.

FIGURE 3: RENDERED DEPICTION OF APPROXIMATELY 10-YEAR GROWTH FOR VEGETATION (VIEW NEAR HAGEN DRIVE LOOKING NORTH)



22. “What will the BRT project do to minimize impacts to endangered species? What outside parties are consulted with on this process?”

As part of the Environmental Assessment (2021), impacts to threatened and endangered species were reviewed, and consultation occurred with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures were developed with guidance and approval from US Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, which include:

- Winter tree clearing to avoid active season for bats
- Certain construction activities scheduled to avoid turtle hibernation and the active season for the Rusty Patched Bumble Bee
- Education for contractors to implement avoidance measures
- Protocols for contractors for reporting sightings of endangered species
- Wildlife-friendly erosion control methods

Enhancements post construction include the revegetation plan. Opportunities for additional pollinator habitat enhancements will be coordinated with entities such as the [U of M Bee Lab](#) and [MnDOT Office of Environmental Stewardship](#).

Continued coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will occur as needed.

23. “How is the BRT project working with the Lower Phalen Creek Daylighting Project?”

The project team has been coordinating with the Lower Phalen Creek Project (LPCP) and the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD), since 2019, to develop an approach that meets the regulatory needs of the Project, while accommodating, where feasible, the long-term goals of the LPCP and CRWD to daylight a portion of Phalen Creek. Project staff continue to meet with LPCP, CRWD and representatives from Saint Paul’s Parks and Recreation and Engineering Departments monthly to discuss Project’s design advancements and to coordinate ongoing collaboration opportunities for the daylighted creek project.

The current definition of the METRO Purple Line BRT Project includes construction of approximately 750 feet of the Lower Phalen Creek channel and additional landscape treatments consistent with the goals of the LPCP project.

24. “What safety and security issues currently are occurring on bus routes in the City of Maplewood?”

There are no significant issues reported on bus routes serving Maplewood. There is homelessness and narcotics use in the Maplewood Mall Transit Center; in response, Metro Transit has closed the upper levels and elevator lobby.

In looking at transit crime statistics for January 1–March 7 of 2021, 2022, and 2023, the numbers are very low. Damage to transit property is the biggest concern.

TABLE 9: CRIME STATISTICS BY TYPE COMPARING A 66-DAY PERIOD (JANUARY 1–MARCH 7) IN 2021, 2022, AND 2023

Crime type	2021	2022	2023	Total
All assault	0	1	0	1
Intimidation	0	2	1	3
Arson	0	1	0	1
Motor vehicle theft	0	1	0	1
Damage to property	0	5	1	6
Narcotics	0	2	0	2
Disorderly conduct	0	4	0	4
All other	0	3	2	5

25. “Can you explain the differences between local bus, express bus, micro transit, Metro Mobility vs BRT? What does post-COVID ridership look like for each service? What is customer feedback on the different services?”

Metro Transit provides Local Bus, Express Bus, Metro Transit micro, Bus Rapid Transit Service, and other rail transitway service.

- Local Bus: operates bidirectionally typically throughout the day in urban and suburban areas with many stops (some with shelters), short distances apart, typically every block (example Route 54). Fare is \$2.00 to \$2.50
- Express Bus: travels in a single direction per peak period between suburbs (often from park-and-rides) and urban centers with very few stops. Fare is \$2.50 to \$3.25

- Metro Transit Micro: on-demand, multi-passenger service to improve connections to existing transit service and point-to-point trips within a service area ([current pilot in north Minneapolis](#))
- Bus Rapid Transit: An enhanced local bus route with fewer stops, prepaid boarding, greater right-of-way priority, and more prominent stations

The Metropolitan Council and Others provide Metro Mobility, Transit Link, Mobility4All, and Newtrax.

- [Metro Mobility](#): shared ride public transportation service for riders who are unable to use regular fixed-route buses due to a disability or health condition. Fare: \$3.50 to \$4.50
- [Transit Link](#): shared-ride public transportation where regular route transit service is infrequent or unavailable. (Monday to Friday, 6 AM to 7 PM only)
- [Mobility4All](#): innovative new service providing personalized ride services for older adults
- [Newtrax](#): group transportation services to specialty groups

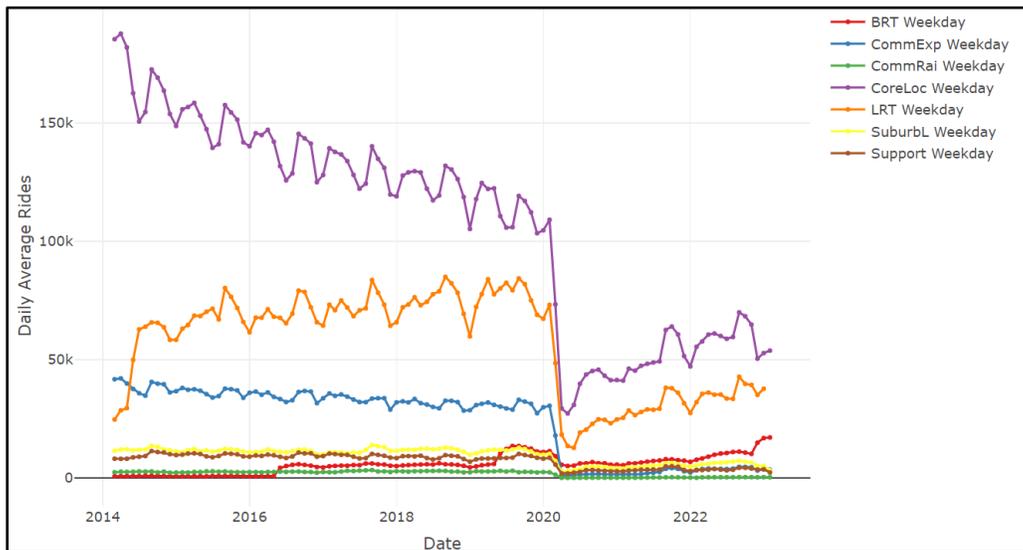
Overall, we heard from transit users that they prefer stops with amenities such as heat, light and shelter. They also prefer service that is reliable and easy to plan around:

- Trips throughout the day
- Arrives frequently
- Efficient options that also connect to other routes

Our bus rapid transit options have seen some of the best post-COVID ridership. For example, we opened the D Line in December 2022 and ridership is close to levels seen in the corridor in 2019.

Metro Transit's Customer Relations Department receives feedback related to Metro Transit services, including light rail and commuter rail. In 2022, the department documented 16,806 customer contacts, made up of complaints, compliments, and suggestions. The Blue Line, Green Line, and bus routes 5, 6, 10, 18, and 21 generated the most feedback, primarily related to service running late, early, on detour, and pass ups, or concerning the behavior of other customers.

FIGURE 4: DAILY AVERAGE RIDERSHIP ON METRO TRANSIT SERVICES FROM 2014 THROUGH 2022



26. “Does the Purple Line Project help achieve the goal of providing alternatives to single occupancy car travel as part of the Green Step Cities program?”

Yes. The City of Maplewood Green Step program website identifies improvement on 14 sustainability best practices (from reporting year 2020 to 2021) including:

- Decrease in City population vehicle miles traveled per person per day
- Decrease in Greenhouse gases City wide

The electric buses of the METRO Purple Line provide an alternative option to single occupancy vehicle travel and will help the city continue to make progress in reducing greenhouse gases and vehicle miles traveled.

27. “How does funding for the Purple Line work? Can you explain the process and funding sources for other Met Council transit and transportation options?”

The METRO Purple Line will be designed and constructed with funding from the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, Ramsey County, and the Federal government. The Project is working through the Capital Investment Grants Program, managed by the Federal Transit Administration, to seek the Federal funds for the Project. Maintenance and Operations of the METRO Purple Line will be funded by Ramsey County and the Metropolitan Council. County funding provides a stable investment for the construction and operation of the METRO Purple Line.

There is no dedicated source of funding for arterial BRT projects. These projects are designed and constructed through a mix of federal, state, and local funding as opportunities arise. Operations and maintenance are funded entirely by the Metropolitan Council.

Metro Transit’s annual operating budget relies heavily (approximately 40%) on Motor Vehicle Sales Tax revenue. While general state income and sales taxes continue to exceed even optimistic projections, gas taxes, motor vehicle excise taxes and tab fees that

provide for road construction and maintenance and transit systems are all coming in lower than was projected in 2022. Additionally, federal one-time COVID-19 relief transit funds covering operating shortfalls for existing services will end in 2026. Without relief, regional transit operations face a fiscal cliff in the years to come.

The Metropolitan Council has various sources of revenue for transit, detailed in the [Transportation Policy Plan—Chapter 4 Transportation Finance](#).

28. “What is the current projected cost for the Purple Line? (The last formal number I am aware of was 475 million)”

Information regarding capital cost estimates for each of the potential new end point options being evaluated as part of the BRT Route Modification Study was shared with the Corridor Management Committee at their June 2022 meeting (see [slide 13](#) for a summary). The \$475 value is a capital cost estimate found in the [Environmental Assessment](#) (see Table 3 on page 16) published in May 2021 for the METRO Purple Line ending in downtown White Bear Lake with a proposed multilevel, shared use park-and-ride parking ramp adjacent to the planned Highway 36 station.

29. “How many of the rides/riders are projected to start and end at the Maplewood Mall?”

The 2040 forecast from Union Depot to Maplewood currently estimates about 600 trips per day at the Maplewood Mall.

30. “How many covered bus stops do we currently have in Maplewood?”

There are six bus stops in Maplewood with shelters, including the Maplewood Mall Transit Center. Two more are being constructed as part of the METRO Gold Line BRT Project at the 3M campus. This is out of 224 total bus stops in the city.

31. “On slide 25 of the PowerPoint, you include the post-pandemic ridership numbers for only several of the lines? Please provide the projected ridership numbers for the rest of the lines including Blue, Green, Orange, Northstar, etc.”

You can explore historic actual ridership at the [Metro Transit Performance Webpage](#). The lines provided on slide 25 are the closest comparisons the METRO Purple Line.

32. “On the slide referencing the Sept-Oct 2022 boardings compared to pre-covid, please provide the numbers for the Orange Line.”

The METRO Orange Line began service in December 2021. Pre-COVID boardings are not available.

33. “On slide 21, it references the ridership composition of only some of the lines. Please provide the numbers for the Northstar line, the Red line and Orange line.”

The table below contains figures that align with the plot shown on Slide 21.

TABLE 10: RIDERSHIP ON NORTHSTAR, RED LINE, AND ORANGE LINE

Route	Service Type (legend on Slide 21)	2022 Ridership
Northstar	Northstar	77,078
Red Line	Highway BRT	125,806
Orange Line	Highway BRT	310,185

Note that in 2022 Metro Transit had to reduce service on Orange Line and Red Line due to a lack of available bus operators. This had a negative effect on ridership on these two routes.

34. “Who exactly is anticipated to be the ridership using the Purple Line and where are they traveling to?”

The key characteristics of anticipated METRO Purple Line riders include:

- 27% from households without access to an automobile (Over 400 households in Maplewood do not own a vehicle).
- 63% making trips to non-work destinations.
- 67% originating or ending in Maplewood.

These following characteristics describe overall Twin Cities Transit Users:

- 52% are ages 18-34.
- 18% have a disability (7.8% of Maplewood’s population under the age of 65 has a disability).
- 55% are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC).
- 64% come from household earning less than \$35k annually (More than 1/5 of Maplewood households live below the federal poverty level).
- Most transit customers who drove their cars to park-and-rides and rode express buses from the suburbs to downtown jobs pre-pandemic no longer regularly ride transit.
- Transit customers post pandemic cannot drive (20%), cannot afford to drive (50%), and do not wish to drive (19%).
- Errands/shopping post pandemic is the #1 reason for riding transit, now representing nearly ¼ of all transit trips. The share of transit trips post pandemic for medical appointments (6%) and school commutes (17%) has increased while work commutes (32%) has decreased.
- Transit customers post pandemic are seeking all purpose, all day, and all direction service to multiple destinations. Post pandemic, the METRO, a network of fast, frequent, all-day buses and trains, is rebounding faster than the system overall.

35. “On slide 26, you identify the Maplewood Mall as a major trip attractor on the Purple Line. Please explain the basis for this assessment.”

Maplewood’s North End (including Maplewood Mall, St. John’s Hospital and the surrounding area) is the second-largest job center along the corridor after downtown St. Paul. Existing transit data shows significant ridership at Maplewood Mall (295 daily boardings in 2022). Ridership forecasts support this behavior. Figure 5 below illustrates relative average weekday ridership across the system in Maplewood in 2022. The figure demonstrates the great number of trips that begin near the Maplewood Mall (and Maplewood Mall Transit Center) relative to the surrounding system.

FIGURE 5: AVERAGE WEEKDAY RIDERSHIP IN NORTHERN MAPLEWOOD IN 2022



36. “Have you done a cost benefit analysis for the Purple line? Please provide a copy of it?”

The project fully transitioned to the Metropolitan Council in December 2021, when it entered the Project Development Phase under the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program. The scope, schedule, and budget will continue to be evaluated as part of this phase.

The FTA requires all projects that are part of the CIG program to submit information and data so FTA can evaluate and rate the merits of the project during the Project Development Phase. Results are published by the FTA in [the annual report](#). The METRO Purple Line BRT Project has not yet submitted for a rating. The FTA evaluates projects based two primary criteria: Local Financial Commitment and Project Justification. This is FTA’s equivalent to a Cost-Benefit analysis. The Local Financial Commitment criterion is comprised of three sub-criteria: current capital and operating condition, commitment of capital and operating funds, and reasonableness of capital and operating cost estimates and planning assumptions/capital funding capacity. The Project Justification criterion is comprised of six sub-criteria: congestion relief, mobility improvements, cost effectiveness, environmental benefits, land use, and economic development.

Prior to Metropolitan Council leading the project, Ramsey County led the 2014 -2017 Rush Line Corridor Pre-Project Development Study ([Rush Line Corridor Pre-Project Development Study Report](#)). This study evaluated costs, benefits and impacts of transit alternatives. The

Pre-Project Development study resulted in the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative that best meets the needs of the communities along the corridor.

The Environmental Study Phase ([Environmental Assessment Study](#)) was conducted from 2018 – 2021. The purpose of the environmental process is to define the project in enough detail to understand its potential benefits and impacts, reduce those impacts as much as possible, and prepare an environmental document that explains why the project is needed, the alternatives that were considered, the project’s impacts to the natural and built environments, and mitigation strategies for those impacts.

37. “Given the _____ cost of the Purple line, what is the benefit to the city of Maplewood to have the Purple line run through our city?”

The Project supports sustainable growth and development like the North End Vision and Gladstone Redevelopment Plans. Upcoming development includes:

- Approved Myth Night Club redevelopment 4-story, 241 Unit Market Rate Housing Complex
- Approved Reuter Walton 5-story, 150 Unit Market Rate multi-family Housing Complex
- Proposed JB Vang affordable multi-family housing
- Future Moose Lodge and Sears redevelopments

The METRO Purple Line BRT Project enables the city to pursue transit-oriented development funding opportunities for affordable housing and other projects, such as the 2022 Livable Communities Demonstration Transit Oriented Development Grant awarded to the City in December 2022 for Gladstone Crossing.

Higher density development and redevelopment occurring throughout already developed areas requires support by a multimodal network that is insufficient today. The Project will support Maplewood’s priority of having reliable transit access by providing fast, frequent service throughout the day, including evenings and weekends.

The Project will support Maplewood’s priority of being a welcoming community for all by providing reliable service to those who rely on transit. The Project lays the groundwork for new or restructured local connecting bus routes and Metro Transit micro service areas. The Project is an essential component of a slate of transit service options to provide access throughout Maplewood, St. Paul, and the region.

38. “What other transportation alternatives exist for the east metro area? Explain.”

Currently in Maplewood, there are 6 bus routes providing Sunday service (383 Maplewood boardings), 9 bus routes providing Saturday service (713 Maplewood boardings), and 12 bus routes providing weekday service (1,030 Maplewood boardings). One local bus route (223) and five express bus routes (262, 263, 265, 272, 350) currently suspended. Several routes operating with reduced service. (\$2.50-\$3.25 per express bus trip; \$2.00-\$2.50 per local bus trip; “on-time” is less than 1 minute early to 5 minute late).

Additionally, [Metro Mobility](#) (weekdays 3:45am-2am, Saturdays 4:15am-1:45am; Sundays 4:15am-1:45am; \$3.50-\$4.50 per trip; shared ride service so “on-time” is within 30 minutes of scheduled pick-up). Riders of Metro Mobility must be certified based on a

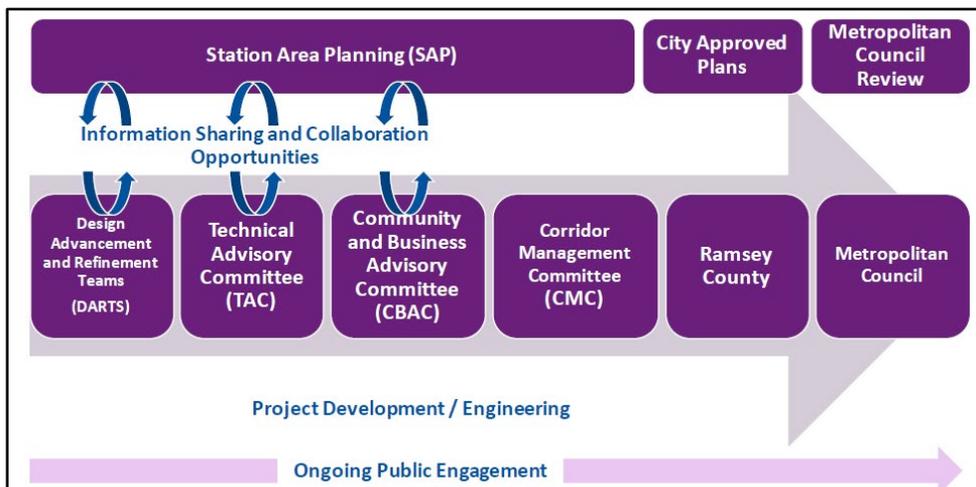
disability that impacts their ability to use regular route transit. and [Transit Link](#) (weekdays 6am-7pm; \$3.50-\$4.50 per trip; shared ride service so “on-time” is within 30 minutes of scheduled pick-up) operate within Maplewood.

Also see response to **Question #25**.

39. “What is the plan for a more formal engagement process on decision-making around the Purple Line?”

The Project has a formal engagement process to include staff, policy makers, residents, employees and business owners from the communities along the Project in several committees that give feedback on the Project design. See below graphic representation of this process. Additionally, the project has a Communications and Public Involvement Plan, available upon request, that outlines goals and strategies for community and stakeholder engagement (examples in bullet points below). This plan is part of the project’s Project Management Plans that are required and reviewed by FTA.

FIGURE 6: VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF PROJECT DECISION-MAKING PROCESS



Other ongoing public engagement and communications include:

- Individual and group business/property owner meetings
- Paper and online fact sheets/handouts/maps and translated materials
- Outreach to neighborhood/community groups
- Pop-ups/community events and hosted open house events
- Canvassing at existing transit facilities, residences, businesses, schools and community centers/organizations
- Website, social media, news release, email, postcard updates

40. “Have you considered an independent Transit Needs Study by a third-party or other group to verify projections/plans?”

Since the start of the environmental analysis phase in 2018, such things as ridership forecasts, capital cost estimates, design plans and schedules are developed by one set of

consultant subject matter experts under one contract under direction from certain agency staff and peer reviewed by a different set of consultant subject matter experts under a different contract under direction from different agency staff.

41. “Has Met Council or Maplewood considered a Transit Advisory Board made up of residents?”

The Project has a Community and Business Advisory Committee that is made up of people who live, work, own a business and are involved in their community throughout the project corridor, including Maplewood. This committee is part of the project’s formal decision-making process that makes recommendations to the Corridor Management Committee, which is made up of policymakers from the corridor. More information on this process can be found in the answer to question 39.

Additionally, the Metropolitan Council has several committees that include residents throughout the Metro, including equity and transportation-focused committees. The Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Equity Advisory Committee are both resident committees. The Transportation Advisory Board is made up of both policymakers and residents. More information on these committees can be found below, as well as include links for further information.

- **Transportation Advisory Board:** [The Transportation Advisory Board \(TAB\)](#) is a key participant in the region's transportation planning process. This board is where state, regional and local officials, transportation providers, and community members contribute to transportation planning and recommend projects for federal funding.
- **Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee:** [The Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee \(TAAC\)](#) advises the Council on management policies for public transportation services in the region from the perspective of riders with disabilities. The TAAC was created by the Minnesota Legislature. The committee includes riders and advocates for older people and the disability community, as well as representatives of service providers and other appropriate agencies.
- **Equity Advisory Committee:** [The Equity Advisory Committee](#) advises the Metropolitan Council in its work to advance equity in the metropolitan region. The Equity Advisory Committee members include people of different races, incomes, abilities, and backgrounds to ensure the Metropolitan Council is hearing from and accountable to the full range of voices and perspectives in the region.

42. “What is the overall transit plan system-wide and how does the Purple Line support that? What about other options (like those outlined by the NRLC Presentation)?”

[METRO](#) is the region’s network of fast, frequent, all-day buses and trains. Blue Line, the first line of the network, began operation in June 2004. Green Line, Red Line, Orange Line, A Line, C Line, and D Line have since opened. The [METRO network is continuing to expand](#) with extensions of Green and Blue lines, Gold Line, Purple Line, B Line, E Line, F Line, G Line and H Line all anticipated to be operational by 2030. Additional lines are anticipated to be added between 2030 and 2040.

The overall transit plan system-wide is described in [Network Next](#), a 20-year plan for expanding and improving the bus network. [Network Now](#) is a year-long effort initiated in early 2023 to identifying plans for improving service between 2024 and 2027.

43. “Charlie Zelle has been quoted as saying, ‘We don’t have a clear picture of long term future transit’. What steps have you taken to support the Purple Line Project as necessary? Do you have any reliable predicted number scenarios?”

The closest quote we could find to that written in the question is a quote from Chair Zelle in an October 31, 2021, Star Tribune article about Northstar: “We don’t have a clear picture of the long-term future of commuter transit demand and needs.” Commuter transit is specific to service that runs primarily during morning and evening rush hour to deliver people to and from work. The METRO Purple Line is not a commuter service, instead providing frequent, all-day service. The Project is budgeted for in the region’s long-range transportation plan (Transportation Policy Plan). The Federal Transit Administration requires that ridership projections be refreshed throughout the Project’s development.

Metro Transit saw average weekday ridership increase by 20% in 2022 throughout the transit system as compared to 2021. Nearly 38.8 million rides were provided in 2022, including:

- 26.3 million bus rides (+19%)
- 6.9 million Green Line rides (+13.5%)
- 5.4 million Blue Line rides (+19%)

The gains were driven in part by strong student ridership.

- Almost 1 million rides were taken with a Universal Transit Pass, introduced this fall at the University of Minnesota
- More than 1 million rides were taken with Student Passes, up 77% compared to 2021

[Learn more about Metro Transit ridership.](#)

44. “Why are you pressing the Purple Line in its current form and location, based on old/incomplete data when you know the community opposes the location?”

METRO Purple Line in its current form and location was defined and supported by the City of Maplewood and corridor project partners with resolutions of support for the Locally Preferred Alternative in 2017 based on a combination of technical evaluation and public feedback. As the METRO Purple Line BRT Project was advanced into preliminary engineering and through environmental review between 2018 and 2021, corridor project partners reaffirmed their support for the project’s design in 2020 through elected board level actions and formal comments on the Environmental Assessment document. Public involvement has occurred all along the way through various formal project committees and a variety of community engagement opportunities. The best available information at the time has been used to inform the decision-making process.

45. “Considering the unacceptable high numbers of serious crimes on the LRT and Metro Transit buses, what solid plans do you have to address these issues? Please supply at least 6 of the main points from your Safety and Security Plan.”

The Safety and Security Action Plan has 5 main points:

- **Work closely with law enforcement partners**
 - (1) Partnering with Bloomington Police and Airport Police to assist with patrol within their jurisdictions
 - (2) Working on renewing/revising Memoranda of Agreement with other law enforcement agencies
- **Make it more enticing to become a Metro Transit Police Officer**
 - (1) Sergeant assigned to coordinate recruitment activities
 - (2) Expanded tuition reimbursement program for Community Service Officers (law enforcement students who will become police officers)
 - (3) Actively recruiting lateral hires from other departments
- **Expand our use of contracted security**
 - (1) The Metropolitan Council approved a \$6 million contract on 3/15/2023
- **Introduce non-police personnel**
 - (1) Development of transit safety official program to put non-law enforcement personnel on the system to check fares and educate riders
- **Hire more cleaners to clean vehicles and facilities**
 - (1) Increases rider comfort and sense of safety
 - (2) Cleaner facilities give riders reassurance that the system is cared for

46. “Please list and explain all transit alternatives currently operating and available to Maplewood residents. Explain likely build out and expansion of these services to improve the services to our area and how they can be utilized to connect to future transit.”

See responses to **Questions #25 and #38**. Connecting Maplewood and Saint Paul’s East Side to the METRO (\$2.00-\$2.50 per METRO trip) now will be a catalyst for additional transit services (e.g., connecting bus routes, microtransit, express bus routes, etc.) in the near future.

47. “What has your data shown regarding ridership on various previously proposed BRT routes — would ridership be more or less along Highway 61, or White Bear Ave’s 3 existing routes than the proposed Purple Line route? Did you ask transit users their preferences on where a Bus Rapid Transit stop would work best for them?”

During the Pre-Project Development Phase (2014-2017) that lead up to the selection and recommendation of the locally preferred alternative (mode and alignment) by corridor project partners, alignment alternatives on segments of Highway 61 and segments of White Bear Ave were considered through the technical evaluation and public engagement processes.

For Highway 61 segments, the current and anticipated future character and nature of the corridor were not conducive to a transitway investment. In particular, the poor pedestrian environment and lack of opportunities for transit-oriented development were major determining factors. As a result, alignments on Highway 61 segments were not forecasted to be high ridership.

For White Bear Avenue segments, the existing public right-of-way was not deemed sufficient to accommodate a dedicated busway. Significant amounts of private residential and commercial properties along most of the segments would need to be acquired to sufficiently widen the public right-of-way. Staying within the existing public right-of-way through a roadway reconfiguration (or road diet) was not considered or evaluated at the time. As a result, the magnitude and extent of private property impacts outweighed the ridership forecasts.

The station locations for the locally preferred alternative were initially identified based on existing bus stops and major destinations and refined through public engagement efforts during the Pre-Project Development Phase (2014-2017) and Environmental Analysis Phase (2018-2021). Several station locations have been adjusted in response to stakeholder and public feedback including:

- 10th Street station—platforms locations adjusted based on feedback
- Arcade Street Station—Station location changed based on feedback
- Cook Avenue Station—Station added in the Environmental Analysis Phase based on feedback
- Maryland Avenue, Larpenteur Avenue, Frost Avenue and Highway 36 Stations—platform configurations selected based on feedback.

Additional Questions Received after March 8th

1. “For your surveys to determine who would use or not use the purple line, how did you distribute the surveys? What efforts did you take to hear from a diverse representation of Maplewood residents in regards to income, race, primary language, and disability status? How did your raw data compare to the raw data of the ridership surveys conducted by Ramsey County?”

Because the Route Modification Study has been extended and comment period postponed, the project has not conducted a survey regarding the Route Modification Study. The project did conduct a survey regarding the location of the Arcade Street station in St. Paul. For this survey, the below strategies were used to reach a diverse representation of folks who live, work or own a business around this station. Similar methodology and strategies will be used for future project surveys.

- Surveys were available in English and translated to Spanish, Hmong and Karen.
- Surveys were available and distributed electronically in an accessible format for individuals who utilize a screen reader.

- Postcard mailers were sent to 4,000 total residents and businesses around the station area. The mailers included a link to complete the survey online, as well as dates, times and locations of pop-up events in community spaces to take the surveys in person and talk to staff.
 - Surveys included demographic questions on race/ethnicity, gender, income, age and disability status. These questions were optional as to not create a barrier to completing the survey.
 - Surveys were available in printed format and electronically via iPads at pop-up events in community spaces.
 - Surveys were available in printed format and electronically via iPad's during canvassing/flyering/door-knocking at current bus stops, single and multifamily residences, businesses, schools and community centers/organizations.
 - The results of the METRO Purple Line Arcade Street Station Survey are consistent with [Metropolitan Council's 2021 Transit On-Board Survey](#) and [Metro Transit's current ridership reports](#). Survey respondents and ridership trends are showing that BIPOC communities, individuals with disabilities and folks with lower incomes are consistently and increasingly using public transit.
 - METRO Purple Line ridership calculations are projections based on data inputs into a model from the Federal Transit Administration. For more information on ridership modeling, see question #11.
2. "What steps need to be taken to seriously review and consider a transit plan where we have one BRT going north in one direction on a street such as Arcade (Hwy 61) and a BRT going south in one direction on a street such as White Bear Ave, with the connector point being the Maplewood Mall and both BRT legs of the route are connected by micro transit?"

Prior to the selection and recommendation of the Locally Preferred Alternative (METRO Purple Line's mode and alignment) in 2017 by elected or appointed representatives of corridor project partners supported by the policy boards of the corridor project partners, several transit modes and numerous route segments were identified, evaluated and screened through multiple rounds of technical analysis and public feedback.

Decades of international and national transit operating experience indicates one direction transit routes of any type operating in a loop are not desirable by the transit user who starts or ends their trip as a pedestrian and desires a time competitive, direct trip with as few transfers as possible. This suggested concept is inconsistent with transit service planning best practices and would be quickly screened out as impractical.

3. "I see handicapped people today using the Bruce Vento trail. It was mentioned at the meeting that the Bruce Vento Trail is not ADA compliant. What about the trail today, makes it not ADA compliant, please be specific. What needs to be done to make it ADA compliant, specifically. What is the cost of making those changes if NOT in conjunction with the construction of the Purple Line over the Bruce Vento Trail."

This was not a Metropolitan Council statement but rather a comment made by a resident of Maplewood during Public Testimony at the Maplewood Engagement Workshop #3 on March 8, 2023. The scope of work for the METRO Purple Line BRT Project in the Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way segment between Johnson Parkway and Beam Avenue includes relocating the trail next to the proposed transit guideway. Specific grades for the existing trail were not reviewed as the relocated trail will be ADA compliant.

ADA compliance for regional trails like the Bruce Vento Trail includes appropriately graded paths, amenities, and street crossings with detectable warnings. Some of these features are lacking today, most noticeably the lack of detectable warning tiles at many of the street crossings. The BRT project would create ADA compliance throughout the corridor, including more access to the trail including accessible parking locations.

If the METRO Purple Line BRT Project was not planned, any ADA concerns, evaluation, and cost for rehabilitating the Bruce Vento Regional Trail would be determined by Ramsey County within the City of Maplewood and by the City of Saint Paul for the trail within the City of Saint Paul as these are the owners/maintainers of the trail respectively.

4. “It is said the trail and the Purple Line will be ‘co-located’ however, to do that don't you have to dig up the current Bruce Vento Trail and move it over so you can achieve the concept of ‘co-location.’ Please explain the amount of grading, backfill, site preparation needed to create the berms, bridges for the Purple Line if the 100 ft trail right of way is used and also include that grading necessary to address the current topography of the ROW that includes steep slopes, wetlands and etc.”

For much of the Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way corridor, the Bruce Vento Regional Trail will be reconstructed in a different location within the 100 ft wide county owned property to where the trail is today. This is done to continue to provide separation of the trail and proposed transit guideway from the adjacent properties. Where existing berms are present, they may be lowered and retaining walls may be used to provide the appropriate space for grading. The specific grading, retaining wall and stormwater treatments are advanced through the design process, means and methods have not been fully determined and will continue to be refined through the design.

FIGURE 7: EXAMPLE OF GRADING OF THE CORRIDOR BETWEEN THE GATEWAY TRAIL AND SKILLMAN AVENUE (LOOKING NORTH)

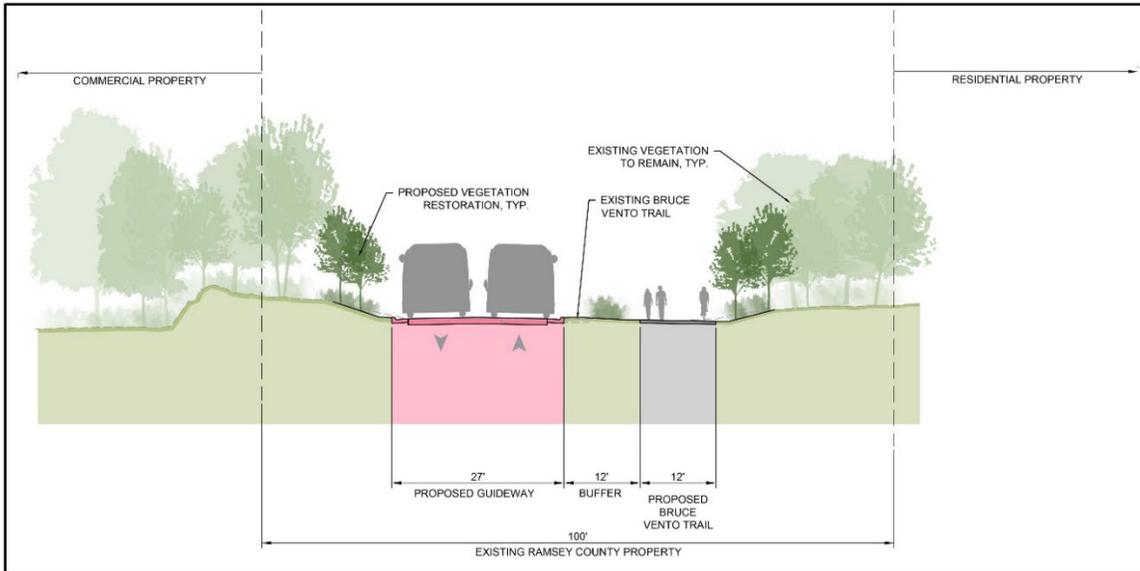
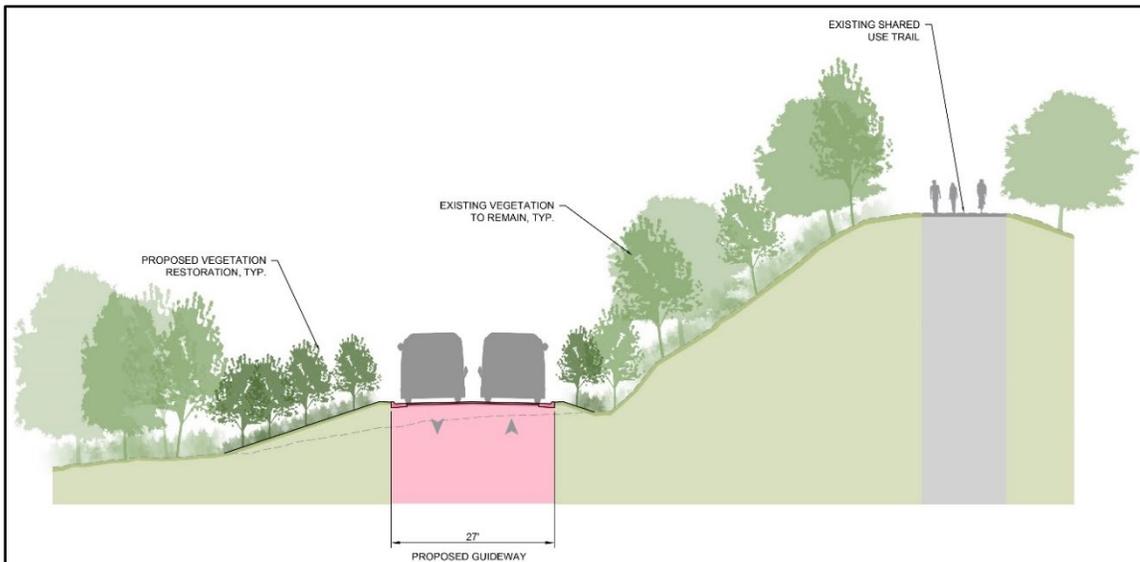


FIGURE 8: EXAMPLE GRADING OF THE CORRIDOR JUST SOUTH OF BEAM AVENUE WHERE THE EXISTING TRAIL WILL REMAIN IN PLACE (LOOKING NORTH)



5. “At the meeting, it was said that individuals most likely to use the bus are wanting to use the bus to get to ‘low barrier’ employment within 30 minutes of their home. Why does the current bus system not address or serve this need? Please explain the barriers to the Met Council to do so. Can the Met Council tell us where these ‘low barrier’ employment jobs, within 30 minutes of the expected riders’ homes are? How does the Met Council take these jobs into consideration when developing their current bus routes?”

This was not a Metropolitan Council statement but rather a comment made by an interested, non-affiliated party of Maplewood during Public Testimony at the Maplewood Engagement Workshop #3 on March 8, 2023. Unfortunately, Metro Transit cannot respond because it requires further study. We believe the type of job mentioned would include retail, service, medical and manufacturing jobs.

6. “Is Century College a viable destination for the Purple Line BRT?”

In response to a resolution passed by the White Bear Lake City Council regarding the BRT project in March 2022, a route modification study was initiated to explore alternative end point and routing options for a northern terminus station. At the request of Century College’s administration, one of the end point options under evaluation is the Century College campus. The college is currently served with hourly service (Route 219). Over the last 10 months, the project team has engaged with the college administration, faculty, staff and students to better understand and document the need for better transit service to the campus. The results of the technical evaluation and stakeholder engagement are anticipated to be shared in project committees, stakeholders, and the public in the coming months. Additional information is available on the [Route Modification Study webpage](#).

7. “If access to jobs, schools, and medical facilities is needed where is the input from local businesses and school and medical leadership? Have these groups been surveyed? Have they expressed a need for this BRT line?”

Representatives from these stakeholders have played active roles on various project committees across the project phases. For example, the Rush Line Policy Advisory Committee from the Environmental Analysis Phase (2018-2021) that guided the preliminary engineering and environmental review of the METRO Purple Line BRT Project included representatives from School District 622, Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare, Vadnais Heights Economic Development Corporation, Metro State University, East Side Area Business Association, LatinoLEAD, White Bear Area Chamber of Commerce, Century College, Nexus Community Partners, and Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce.

Another example, the [METRO Purple Line Partners](#) formed in 2021 includes representatives from Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, White Bear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce, East Metro Strong, HealthPartners, M Health Fairview St. John’s Hospital, Vadnais Heights Economic Development Corporation, East Side Area Business Association, Century College, Gillette Children’s Specialty Healthcare, Minnesota Hmong Chamber of Commerce, MICAH, All Parks Alliance for Change, Greater Saint Paul BOMA, Hmong American Partnership, CLUES, Latino Chamber of Commerce Minnesota, Move Minnesota, NEXUS Community Partners, Maplewood Mall, White Bear Center for the Arts, Lakeshore Players, Grandma’s Bakery, New Trax, Children’s Performing Arts, White Bear Lake

Environmental Advisory Commission, BlueGreen Alliance, North Oaks Company, Buerkle Automotive Group, Hmong Village, New Horizon Academy and MSS MN.

The current Community and Business Advisory Committee for the Project includes corridor residents and business owners. The project team through ongoing public involvement is engaging a variety of stakeholders throughout the corridor who are expressing desire for fast, frequent, all-day service and stations with enhanced amenities, and support for the METRO Purple Line.

8. “If the East side of St. Paul is isolated transit-wise, what could the city of St. Paul do to improve transit to nearby St. Paul?”

The City of Saint Paul has a long history, dating back decades, of partnering with Metro Transit and Ramsey County to identify, explore and implement transit service improvements within Saint Paul and connecting Saint Paul to its neighbors. This partnership has produced the operational METRO Green and A lines, in-construction METRO Gold Line, soon to be in-construction METRO B Line, and planned METRO Purple, G, and H lines. METRO Gold, Purple and H lines are the plan to serve Saint Paul’s East Side with fast, frequent, all-day service and stations with enhanced amenities that will be catalysts for future transit service improvements such as connecting local bus routes and potentially a microtransit project.

9. “What will be the impact on use of the Bruce Vento Trail if the Purple Line is built as planned?”

The BRT project will relocate the Bruce Vento Regional Trail within Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way. The reconstructed trail will have new trail surface with other trail related improvements cited in previous question responses. During final design of the BRT project, construction staging will be developed with a focus on minimizing disruption to the use of the trail. The natural space will be revegetated within the construction limits. See **Question #21**.

10. Will the citizens *feel*/ safe using the trail?

The MnDOT Bike Facility Design Manual will be used to design the trail facility, providing the required clearances between the bus guideway and trail facilities based on the use and speeds of the BRT guideway. At-grade trail crossings of existing roadways will be reconstructed, improving the overall condition of the crossing, providing better access to the trail (including improved ADA access) and providing an overall safer crossing condition through enhanced signage and crosswalk striping. The new trail infrastructure will provide an enhanced experience for the user. A fence between the busway and trail could be explored further to address some of the concerns expressed through this engagement process. The METRO Purple Line BRT Project will engage community members as the design advances to gain feedback on what facilities will make users feel most safe.

There are several regional trail locations in the Twin Cities that are adjacent to roadways or transitways that operate in a safe manner for vehicles and pedestrians. The METRO Gold Line BRT Project is adding trails along the Gold Line guideway in Maplewood.

11. Is there another example in the Twin Cities of a dedicated roadway to be used expressly for BRT?”

The Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way was purchased from the freight railroad for use as a future rail or bus transitway. The Bruce Vento Regional Trail was subsequently built in the corridor with a well-documented understanding that it would need to be relocated within the corridor when a rail or bus transitway were built. The University of Minnesota Transitway between the East Bank and Saint Paul campus is a former railroad that has been converted to a dedicated guideway for buses with a co-located trail. The METRO Gold Line BRT is constructing a dedicated guideway in Woodbury, Oakdale, Landfall, Maplewood, and St. Paul for buses through the east metro along the I-94 corridor.

12. “How do you enforce keeping non-BRT motorized traffic from using the Purple Line?”

Dedicated busways exist throughout the country and world in addition to the two local examples cited in the previous question. First, signage and pavement markings are included with the BRT project to inform the motorized and non-motorized traveling public that this space is reserved for transit use only. Second, active and passive reporting from BRT vehicle operators and transit facility security cameras will lead to deployment of transit law enforcement for compliance adherence.

13. “Who will be responsible for the maintenance of the Purple Line roadway and Bruce Vento Trail in regard to snow and trash removal?”

The Bruce Vento Regional Trail and underlying property within Maplewood will continue to be owned and maintained by Ramsey County. The Bruce Vento Regional Trail within the City of Saint Paul will continue to be owned and maintained by the City of Saint Paul. Ramsey County will continue to own the underlying property within the City of Saint Paul. The bus guideway will be owned by the Metropolitan Council who will also be responsible for maintaining the busway. The operation and maintenance of the METRO Purple Line will be jointly funded by the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County.

14. “How will the Met Council protect the Sergeant Joe Bergeron Memorial and any other existing memorials along the corridor?”

The Sergeant Joe Bergeron Memorial has been added to a mitigation commitment tracking tool to ensure protective measures are carried through design updates and the construction phase of the project.

Existing memorials, like the Sergeant Joe Bergeron Memorial, will be surveyed to determine their exact location. Once the survey is complete, the METRO Purple Line BRT Project team will coordinate with the memorial owner to determine the boundary of the memorial and verify that the proposed design does not disturb the existing memorial. Design updates will be reviewed with the memorial owner to discuss design advancements adjacent to the memorial site.

During construction, the contractor will be required to protect the memorial, maintaining an identified distance from the memorial with construction equipment and material. A fence around the memorial may be required during construction.