



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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Date: September 20, 2021
To: Heritage Preservation Commission
From: George Gause
Re: CLG comment for Metro Transit's B-Line Bus Rapid Transit

City Station Area Plans

In April 2014, the Planning Commission initiated a planning and zoning study for station areas. The Station Area Plans' study area contains several known historic districts and resources.

The Station Area Plans address historic resources in three main ways:

- Confirms that work should conform to the program for preservation.
- Area Plans call for buildings with historic character to be preserved.
- Avoiding impacts to locally designated historic buildings in choosing an alignment.

Background

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in cooperation with Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council is proposing the B Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project that will provide faster and more reliable transit service in the Route 21 corridor along Lake Street, Marshall Avenue, and Selby Avenue. BRT is a package of transit enhancements that adds up to a faster trip and an improved experience on Metro Transit's busiest bus routes.

Dedicated bus rapid transit, or BRT, is often considered the transit technology that is most like light-rail transit. Dedicated BRT includes a package of transit enhancements that deliver fast, comfortable, and cost-effective services using special roadways or lanes dedicated to the exclusive use of buses.

B Line stations will provide a comfortable, secure waiting space and a variety of customer amenities. These features include:

- Bike parking
- Real-time bus schedule information displays
- On-demand heat
- Trash and recycling bins
- Emergency telephones
- Security cameras
- Ticket machines

Metro Transit initiated the consultation process under the regulations for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The HPC may comment on the determination of effect, if any, the project will have on locally designated Heritage Districts, National Register of Historic Places properties or those properties determined to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register.

STAFF COMMENTS

For this discussion comments are only focusing on the proposed station areas. There are six proposed stations that will be within heritage districts or adjacent to heritage sites:

Lowertown HPC District

237 4th Street E.

340 Sibley

214 4th Street (Union Depot)

National Register listed

375 Selby (Hill NR District)

400 Selby (Hill NR District)

350 Robert (Manhattan Building)

This is the commissions first opportunity to comment on this aspect of B Line BRT. The station areas will include street and sidewalk work to maintain pedestrian sidewalk space and areas for buses to pull in from traffic lanes. Station may utilize existing parking spaces. Comments for this review are limited to the route/station areas and possible affects to these areas or nearby historic resources.

The station placement and street/sidewalk route should have little to no effect on historic resources. There may also be minor alterations to the plan between now and then. Staff asks that the commission delegate to staff the ability to comment on any minor issues that may arise with the project and representing the HPC at future stakeholder meetings.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move that the HPC concurs with the B Line BRT proposed station areas and delegate to staff the ability to comment on any minor issues that may arise with the project as per presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.

