
Transportation Committee Staff Report for Projects

Committee date: July 13, 2020

Project Name: Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit – 15% Plans

Geographic Scope: Union Depot to White Bear Lake

Project Contact: Frank Alarcon, Ramsey County

Project Webpage: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/roads-transit/transit-corridors-studies/rush-line-brt-project>

Project Description: Bus Rapid Transit with all-day, every 10-15 minute service in both directions, mostly in a dedicated guideway or dedicated lanes

Project Stage & General Timeline: 15 percent plans complete (now); Environmental Assessment published in Dec. 2020; Construction in 2024-2026; Open for service in 2026

Public Hearing Date & Location: August 5 at City Council (for resolution of support)

Cost & Primary Funding Source(s): tbd (likely \$400+ million), 50% federal and 50% Ramsey County

Transportation Committee Role:

- ☐ Inform project scope & approach ☐ Inform design ☐ Inform implementation
- ☒ Make recommendation

Explanation Make recommendation on a resolution of support for 15% plans to Planning Commission, who (along with Parks & Rec. Commission) will make a recommendation to the City Council. See draft PC resolution.

Attachments include:

- Draft Planning Commission resolution
- Rush Line flyer
- Rush Line 15 percent plans

Staff recommendation	<i>Recommend approval of draft Planning Commission resolution</i>
Action item requested of the Committee	<i>Make recommendation on draft Planning Commission resolution</i>
Committee recommendation	<i>To be filled in at the meeting</i>
Committee vote	<i>To be filled in at the meeting</i>



B R T



Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit

The Rush Line BRT Project is a proposed 14-mile transit route led by Ramsey County with stations between Union Depot in Saint Paul and downtown White Bear Lake. The Rush Line BRT will:

- Run seven days a week from early in the morning to late at night.
- Arrive every 10 minutes during rush hours and every 15 minutes other times.
- Provide fast and reliable transit service.
- Operate primarily in dedicated bus lanes.
- Have stations with amenities like shelter, light, heat, fare payment machines and real-time departure signs.
- Conveniently connect to METRO Green Line, local and intercity buses and Amtrak® service at Union Depot.
- Connect people to jobs, education, healthcare and recreation destinations.
- Support economic development.
- Serve more than 97,000 people who are diverse in income, race, ethnicity, age, ability and languages spoken. More than 18 percent of these households do not have access to a vehicle.
- Connect to 106,000 jobs within a ten-minute walk of the 21 planned stations.

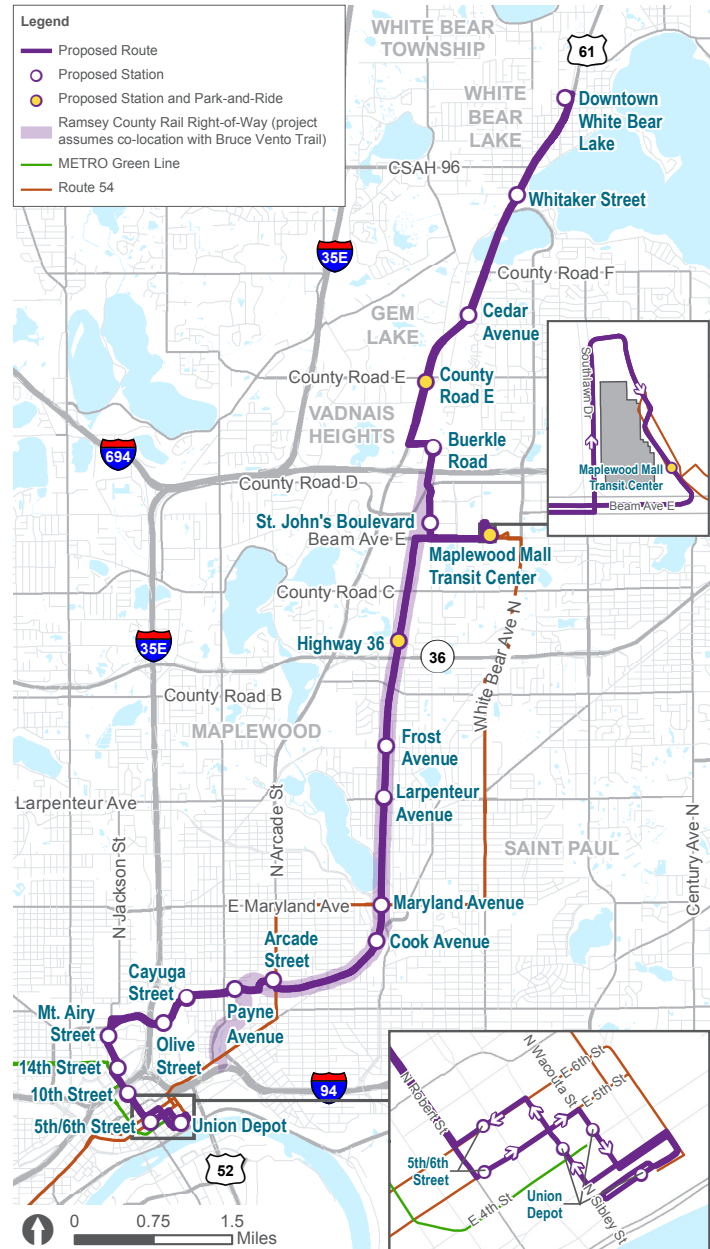


Photo Credit: Los Angeles Metro

Orange Line BRT, Los Angeles, CA

The Rush Line BRT Project includes further exploration of connector bus service north to Forest Lake, along with other transit system improvements.



Public Input

The Rush Line BRT Project seeks public input on:

- How are cultural, historic and natural resources maintained within the project area?
- How will communities along the route benefit from this investment?
- How will BRT operate alongside people walking, rolling, biking and driving?
- What kind of development and pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections do we want to see at and near stations?



Health Line BRT, Cleveland, OH



Environmental Analysis

The project is currently in the two-year environmental analysis phase (as shown below). This phase will advance the project's design while seeking to increase the potential benefits of the project and minimize potential social and environmental impacts along the route. Emphasis will be placed on increasing access to and from the BRT stations and thoughtfully planning for new development near stations.

The environmental analysis will follow state and federal processes and result in a 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.



Health Line BRT, Cleveland, OH

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION PROCESS



Sign up for email updates. Provide input. Ask questions. Learn more.

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number _____
date _____

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE RUSH LINE BUS RAPID TRANSIT PROJECT 15 PERCENT PLANS
WITHIN THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

WHEREAS, Ramsey County is leading the design of the Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit Project ("Project") through the Environmental Analysis Phase; in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the Metropolitan Council and its Metro Transit division (Metropolitan Council), Saint Paul, Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake, White Bear Lake and White Bear Township ("Municipalities"); and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Analysis Phase includes the preparation of an Environmental Assessment in partnership with MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council and the Municipalities; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County has been working collaboratively with MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council and the Municipalities and other stakeholders over the previous two years to resolve issues and develop a scope of work of project components (known as the 15 percent plans) for evaluation in the Environmental Assessment; and

WHEREAS, residents and businesses have participated in numerous committees, community meetings, pop-up events, and other public forums to provide feedback and assist with developing the 15 percent plans; and

WHEREAS, City of Saint Paul staff have reviewed the 15 percent plans and have provided comments and direction on plan refinements; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is pursuing design for the reconstruction of Robert Street between I-94 and the Mississippi River in 2024-2025, and its design may or may not accommodate dedicated bus lanes for the Rush Line project; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County has worked collaboratively with MnDOT, Metropolitan Council, and the Municipalities to address staff comments on the 15 percent plans; and

WHEREAS, Ramsey County is requesting that the Municipalities, as the agencies with local jurisdiction, provide a Resolution of Support or Letter of Support for the 15 percent plans; and

WHEREAS, the Municipalities will have additional opportunities to provide comments during the Environmental Assessment public comment period and on the subsequent 30%, 60% and 90% design plans prior to construction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Planning Commission generally supports the 15 percent plans for the Rush Line BRT Project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that future iterations of the Rush Line project's design for Robert Street should reflect the City's ultimate Robert Street reconstruction design; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission desires that Ramsey County, MnDOT, Metropolitan Council and the other Municipalities continue to work collaboratively with the City of Saint Paul to address issues and work with City of Saint Paul staff to satisfactorily resolve issues that have arisen or could arise as the Project design advances; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution be conveyed to the Mayor and City Council for their consideration as they entertain a resolution of support on behalf of the City of Saint Paul.

DRAFT