



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

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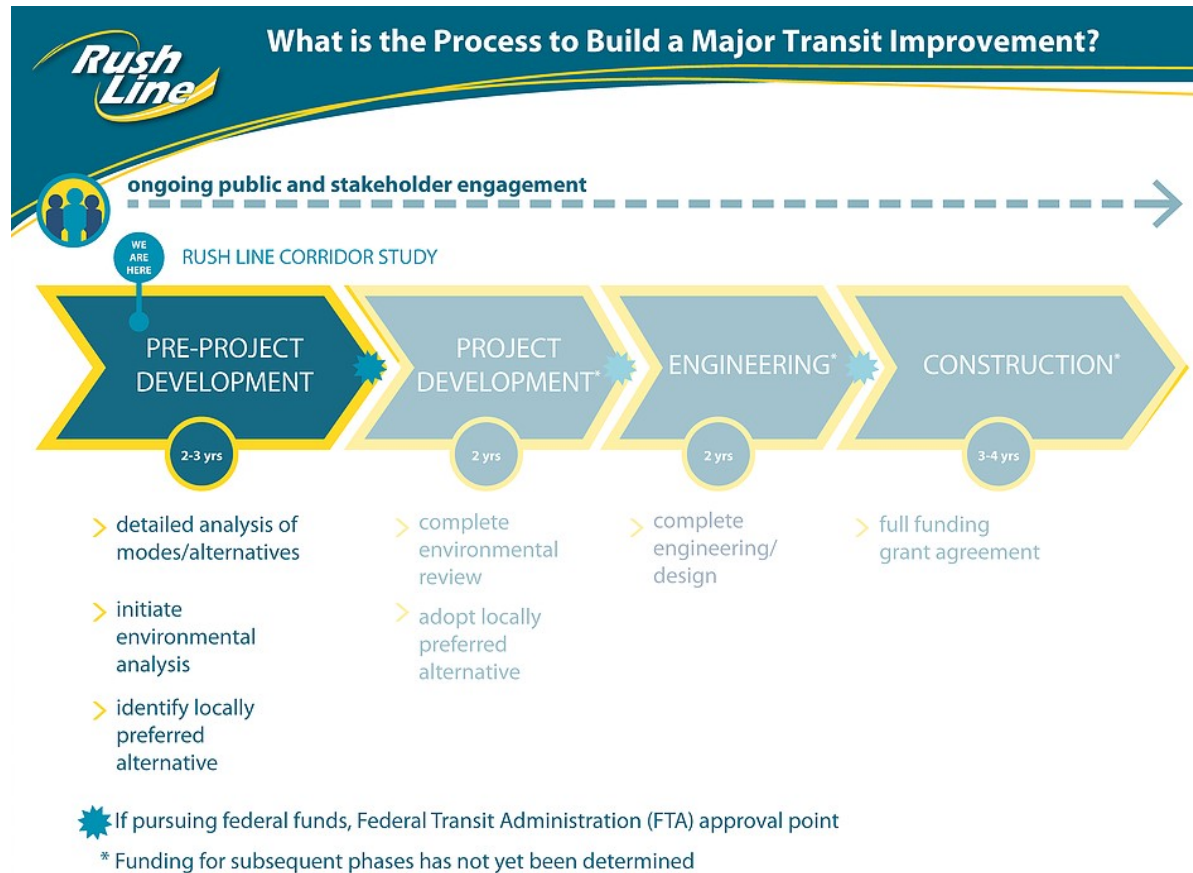
DATE: July 18, 2017
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Bill Dermody, City Planner
RE: Rush Line Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)

ISSUE

The City of Saint Paul is requested to take action to support the Rush Line Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

BACKGROUND

The LPA falls within the broader Rush Line Corridor study and development process as follows:



With regard to the LPA itself, the following is a general timeline for action:

April 27	Rush Line Corridor Task Force public hearing on LPA
May 25	Rush Line Corridor Task Force adopts LPA
July 17	Transportation Committee makes LPA recommendation
July 28	Planning Commission makes LPA recommendation
August 16	City Council public hearing and action on LPA resolution
Aug/Sept	Rush Line Corridor Task Force and Metropolitan Council actions

The LPA is a preliminary indication of local government preferences. Final municipal consent by each city is required later in the process, closer to the construction stage.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

On July 17, the Transportation Committee recommended that the Planning Commission adopt the attached draft Planning Commission resolution recommending City Council support for the LPA, which is Alignment 1 (Bus Rapid Transit along a specific route between Downtown Saint Paul and White Bear Lake).

Attachments

1. Draft Planning Commission LPA resolution of support
2. Transportation Committee staff report form
3. Rush Line LPA flyer
4. Rush Line LPA presentation



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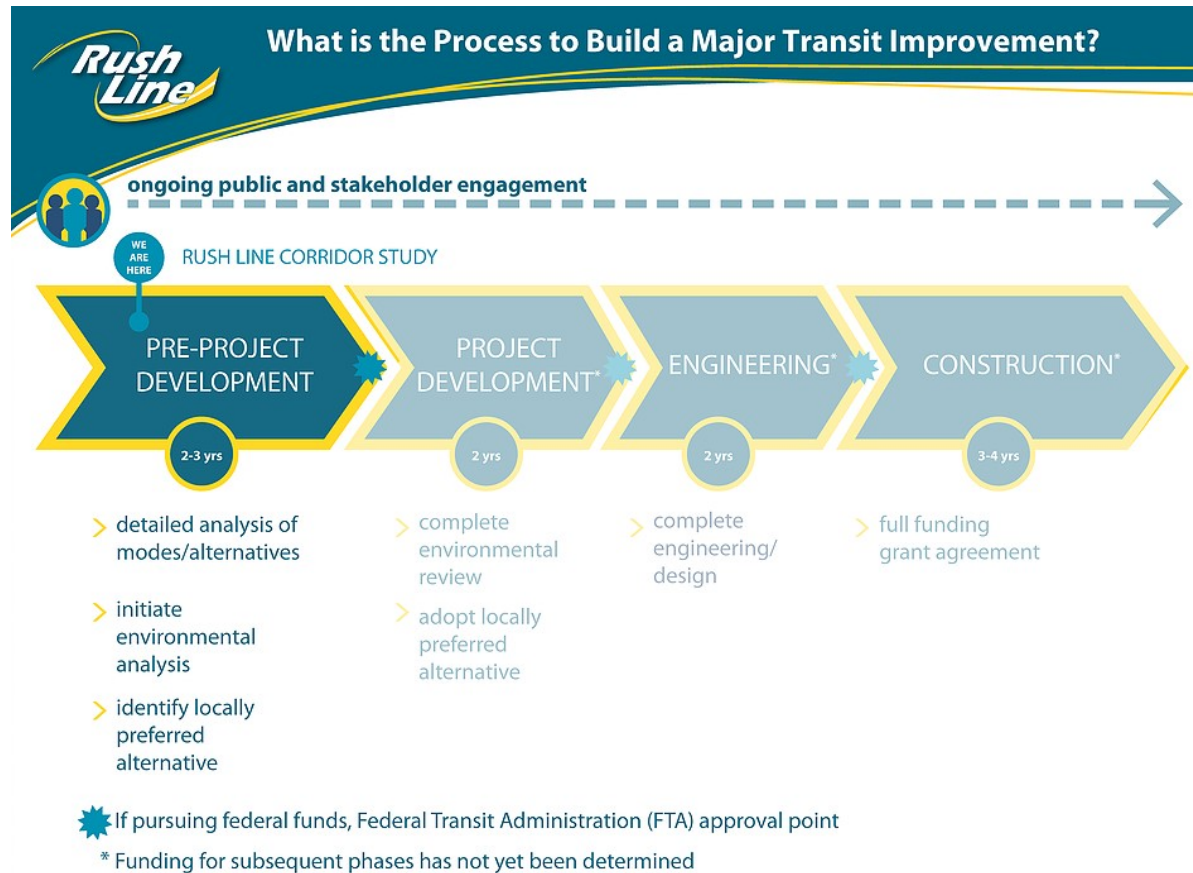
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Transportation Committee Staff Report for Plans and Policies

Committee date: July 17, 2017

Plan Name/Policy Name: Rush Line Pre-Project Development Study

Contact: Andy Gitzlaff, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority:
andrew.gitzlaff@co.ramsey.mn.us, 651-266-2772

Plan/Policy Webpage: www.rushline.org

Description: The Rush Line Corridor is an 80-mile travel corridor between St. Paul and Hinckley. A Pre-Project Development Study is underway to analyze bus and rail transit alternatives between Forest Lake and Union Depot in St. Paul. The study builds upon previous work completed for the corridor and will identify one mode and one alignment for adoption as the corridor's Locally Preferred Alternative. The PPD Study is a joint local and regional planning effort conducted by the Rush Line Corridor Task Force and led by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority.

General Timeline: The 2+ year PPD Study recently concluded with a proposed Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)

Public Hearing Date & Location: August 16, 2017 at Saint Paul City Council for a resolution of support for the LPA

Transportation Committee Role:

Inform scope & approach Review draft Make recommendation

Explanation Recommend a draft resolution for Planning Commission adoption and referral to the City Council that supports the LPA

Staff recommendation	<i>Approval</i>
Action item requested of the Committee	<i>Recommend draft Planning Commission resolution recommending approval of a draft City Council resolution of support for the Rush Line LPA</i>
Committee recommendation	<i>Approval</i>
Committee vote	<i>8-0</i>

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

WHEREAS, the Rush Line Corridor is an 80-mile travel corridor between St. Paul and Hinckley Minnesota, consisting of urban, suburban and rural communities; and

WHEREAS, a Pre-Project Development Study has been completed to analyze bus and rail alternatives in the 30-mile study area between St. Paul and Forest Lake, which has the greatest potential for significant transit improvements in the near term; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Rush Line Corridor Project is to provide transit service that satisfies the long-term regional mobility and accessibility needs for businesses and the traveling public and catalyzes sustainable development within the 30-mile study area; and

WHEREAS, the Pre-Project Development Study was a joint local and regional planning effort conducted by the Rush Line Corridor Task Force and led by the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority; and

WHEREAS, after a thorough technical analysis of 55 potential route segments and 7 transit modes and extensive public engagement through the Pre-Project Development Study, Alternative 1 has been identified as the locally preferred alternative; and

WHEREAS, Alternative 1 best meets the project's purpose and need and would likely qualify for Federal Transit Administration New Starts funding; and

WHEREAS, the Locally Preferred Alternative includes the definition of the mode, conceptual alignment and general station locations which can be refined through further environmental and engineering efforts; and

WHEREAS, Alternative 1 is defined as Bus Rapid Transit within a dedicated guideway generally along Phalen Boulevard, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way and Trunk Highway 61, extending approximately 14 miles, and connecting Union Depot in downtown St. Paul to the east side neighborhoods of St. Paul and the Cities of Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake and White Bear Lake (see attached figure); and

WHEREAS, Alternative 1 would be co-located with the Bruce Vento Trail through the portion of the route that utilizes the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way; and

moved by _____
seconded by _____
in favor _____
against _____

WHEREAS, the next phase of the project will include environmental analysis under the Federal and State environmental review processes to avoid, minimize, and mitigate potential impacts while maximizing mobility, accessibility and surrounding economic development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the public will continue to be engaged throughout the environmental review process and subsequent design, engineering and construction phases to ensure that the project is reflective of the needs of the diverse communities within the Rush Line Corridor; and

WHEREAS, a connector bus from White Bear Lake to Forest Lake and other bus service improvements will continue to be explored during the environmental analysis phase of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the comments submitted by agencies, adjacent communities, the business sector and the public during the Locally Preferred Alternative comment period and throughout the duration of the Pre-Project Development Study will be addressed accordingly in the environmental analysis phase of the Project; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan, in Figure T-C of the Transportation Chapter, identifies a generalized Rush Line Corridor heading northeast from Downtown Saint Paul as being a desired transitway within its Preferred Transit Network; and

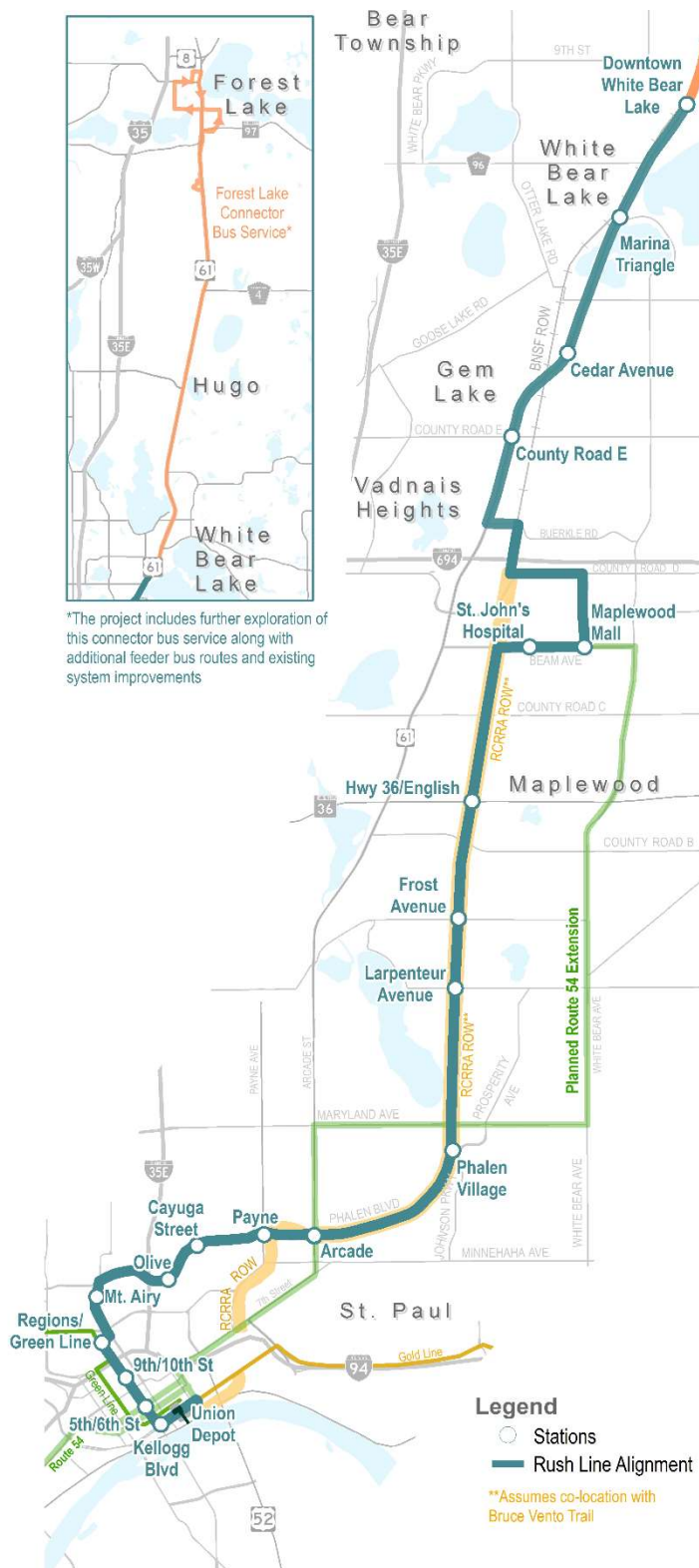
WHEREAS, the Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission recommended support for the LPA on July 17, 2017.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission recommends that the Saint Paul City Council adopt a resolution supporting the selection of Alternative 1 as the locally preferred alternative; committing the City of Saint Paul to undertaking and developing station area plans for the proposed BRT station areas within its jurisdiction based on market conditions, community input and Metropolitan Council guidelines and expectation for development density, level of activity and design; supporting the planned Route 54 extension and exploration of other transit improvements within the study area including, but not limited to, the future conversion of Route 54 to Arterial BRT and the consideration of a potential Modern Streetcar along E. 7th St to create a more comprehensive transit system; and that their resolution be forwarded to the Rush Line Corridor Task Force, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority and the Metropolitan Council for their consideration.

LPA Figure

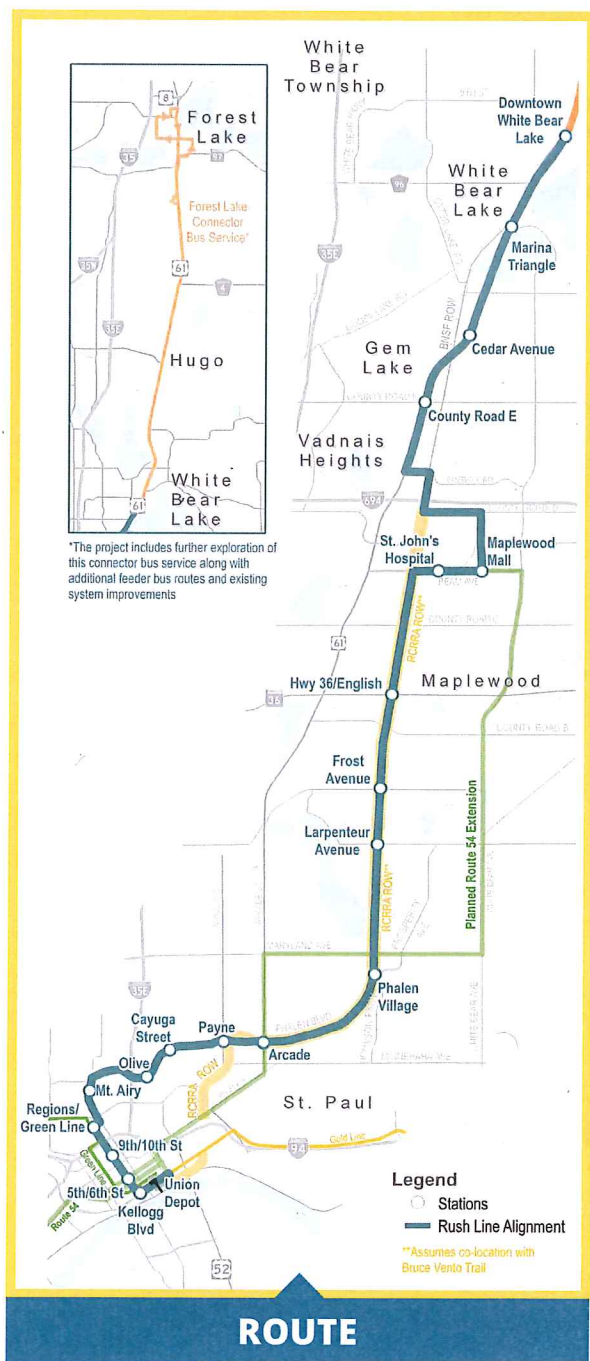


*The project includes further exploration of this connector bus service along with additional feeder bus routes and existing system improvements

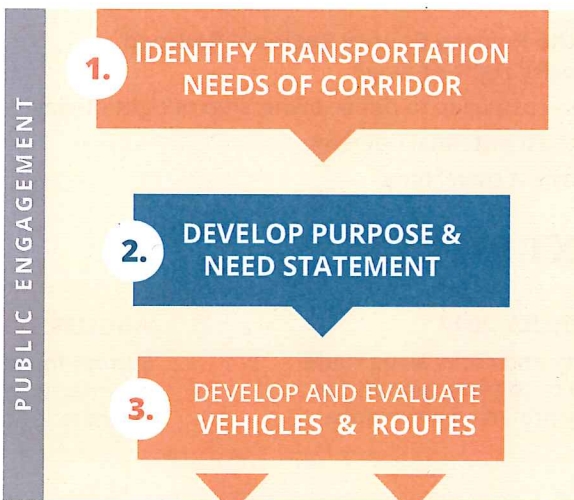


- Legend**
- Stations
 - Rush Line Alignment
 - **Assumes co-location with Bruce Vento Trail

RUSH LINE PRE-PROJECT DEVELOPMENT STUDY LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE SUMMARY



STUDY PROCESS



IDENTIFY TRANSIT INVESTMENT THAT BEST MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE CORRIDOR

Referred to as the *Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)*



Orange Line BRT, Los Angeles, CA
Photo Credit: Los Angeles Metro

The Rush Line locally preferred alternative is dedicated guideway bus rapid transit from Union Depot in St. Paul to White Bear Lake, generally along Robert Street, Phalen Boulevard, Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way (Bruce Vento Trail), and Highway 61.

- ▶ **Dedicated guideway bus rapid transit will share the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way with the Bruce Vento Trail.**
- ▶ **The locally preferred alternative is a cost-effective solution that meets federal transit administration benchmarks for funding**
- ▶ **The locally preferred alternative best meets the needs of the corridor**
- ▶ **Why bus rapid transit?**
 - Similar level of service, but half the cost of light rail
 - Fast and frequent
 - Reliable and convenient
 - Catalyst for economic development
- ▶ **Why the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way?**
 - Less costly due to public ownership of right-of-way
 - Highest potential ridership
 - Shortest travel time

- Greatest development potential due to permanence of dedicated guideway
- No private property acquisitions are anticipated

- ▶ **Why Phalen/Robert into downtown St. Paul?**
 - Serves the most jobs and equity populations (zero-car households, households below poverty)
 - Shortest travel time
 - Highest potential ridership
 - Convenient transfer to METRO Green Line expands transit access within the region
- ▶ **Why Highway 61 north of I-694?**
 - More cost effective than using BNSF Railway right-of-way
 - Serves more jobs
- ▶ **More than 5,000 people participated in the Rush Line study through community events, business outreach, presentations, pop-up events, social media, and online engagement forums.**

NEXT STEPS ▶

JUNE/JULY 2017

County and cities along route asked to confirm support for locally preferred alternative

AUGUST 2017

Submit locally preferred alternative and resolutions of support to Met Council

FALL 2017

More detailed environmental analysis and public engagement begins

LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE STATISTICS

APPROX. LENGTH: **14 MILES**

DEDICATED GUIDEWAY: **85-90%**
*(transit-only) *important to catalyze economic development*

NUMBER OF STATIONS: **20**
includes Union Depot and Maplewood Mall Transit Center

SCHEDULE: **5A-12A | 7 DAYS/WEEK**
starts at 6a on Sunday

FREQUENCY:
RUSH HOUR: EVERY 10 MIN.
NON-RUSH HOUR: EVERY 15 MIN.

CAPITAL COST (\$2021): **\$420M**
(+\$55M for other transit routes in guideway)

ANNUAL O&M COST (\$2015): **\$7.8-8M**

AVERAGE DAILY RIDERSHIP (2040):
5,700-9,700
higher ridership if other transit routes are in the guideway

TRAVEL TIME: **14 MIN.**
one way, White Bear Lake → Maplewood Mall

TRAVEL TIME: **30 MIN.**
one way, Maplewood Mall → St. Paul Central Business District

TRAVEL TIME: **6 MIN.**
one way, St. Paul Central Business District → Union Depot

PEOPLE LIVING IN STATION AREAS (2040):
60,200

JOBS IN STATION AREAS (2040): **106,700**

PEOPLE LIVING BELOW POVERTY
IN STATION AREAS (2014): **11,700**

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



www.rushline.org



info@rushline.org



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



**Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) Overview
Saint Paul Transportation Committee**

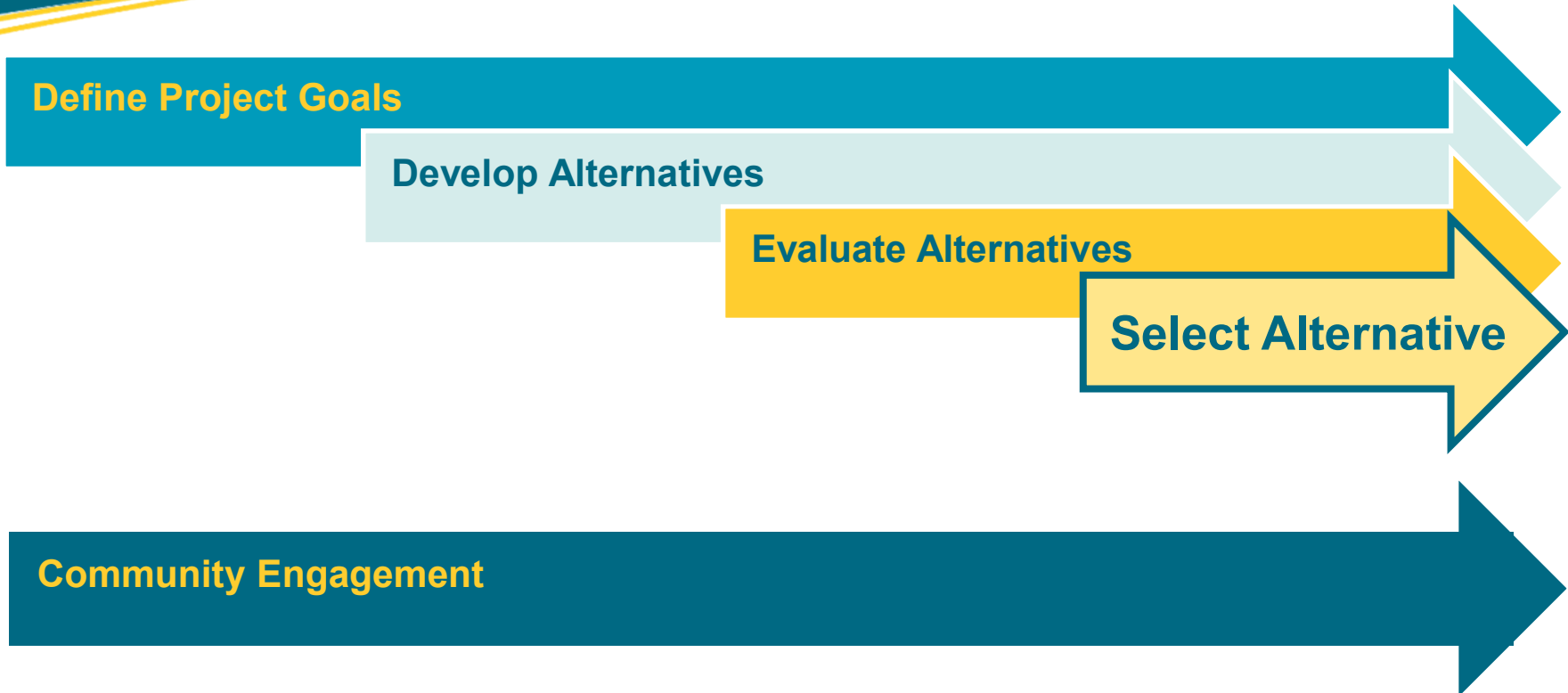
July 17, 2017

Project Purpose and Need

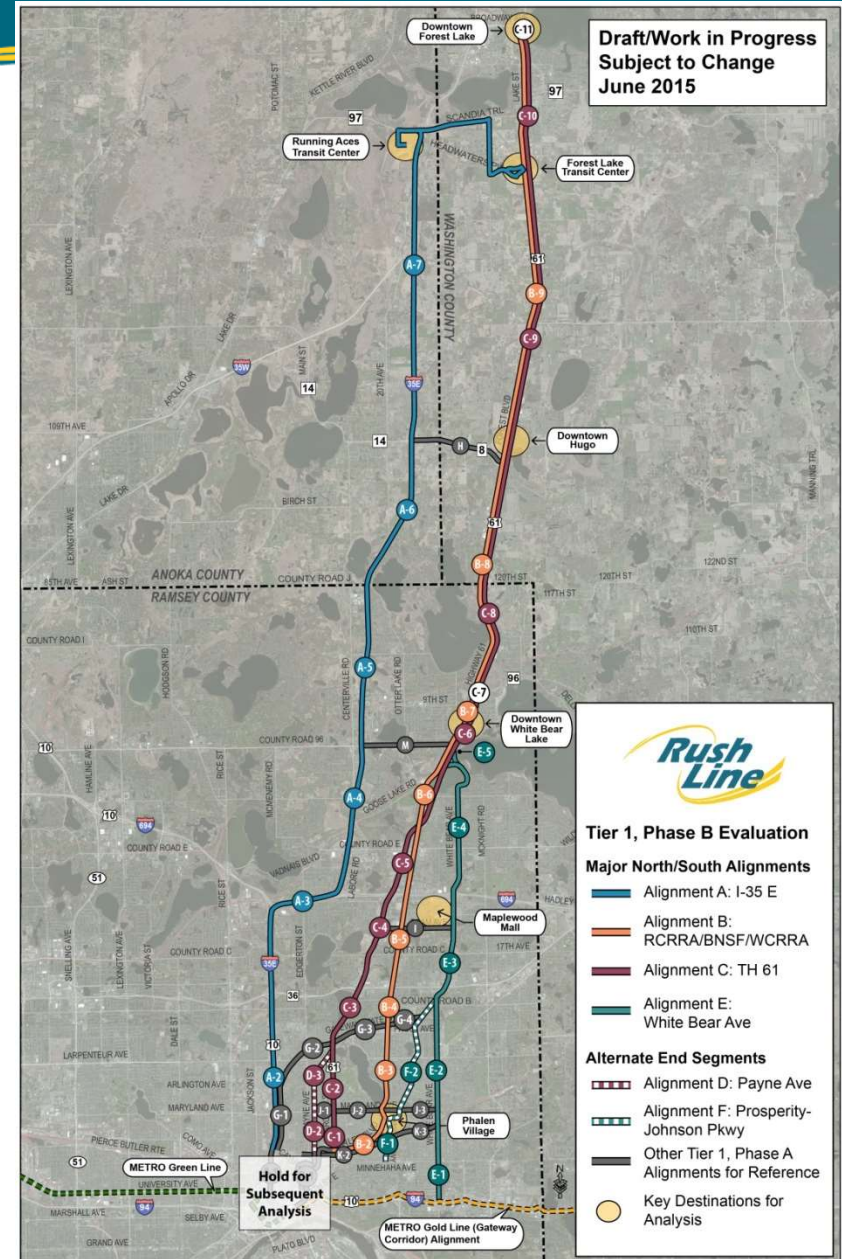
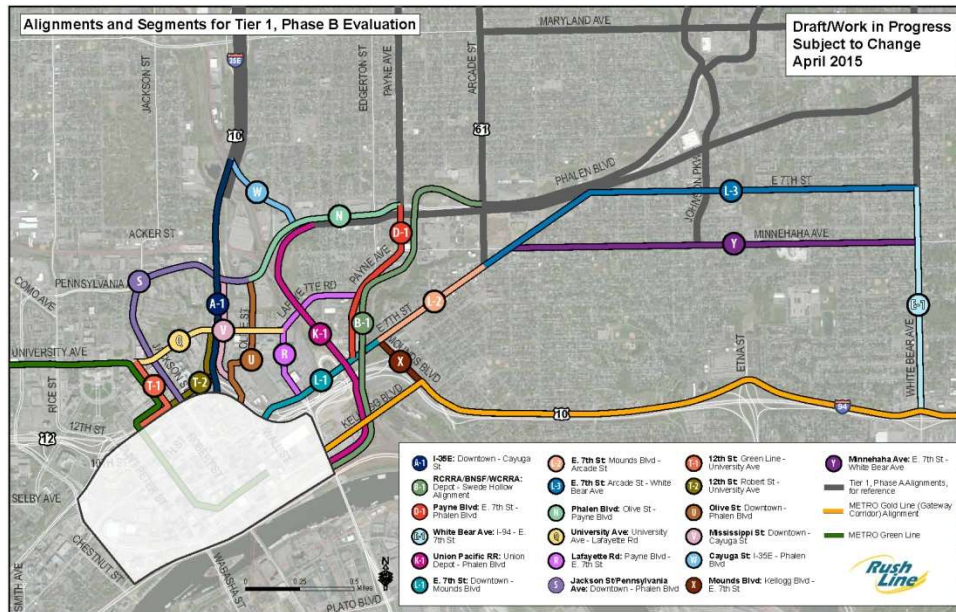
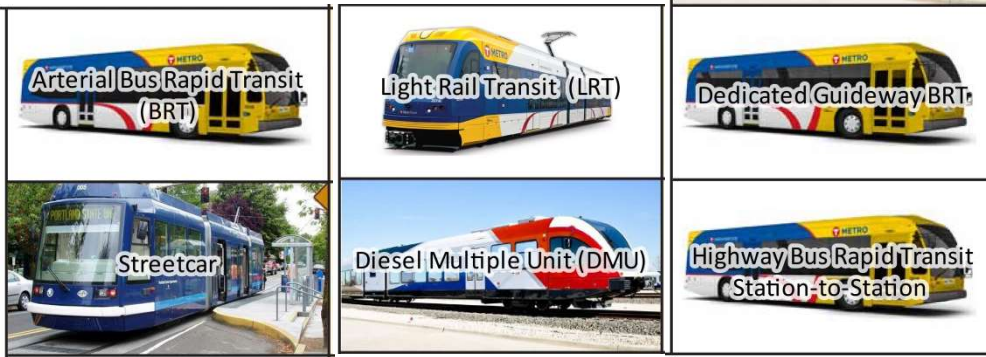
- Provide transit service that satisfies long-term regional mobility and accessibility needs for businesses and traveling public and catalyzes sustainable development
- Connect major destinations, activity centers and job concentrations
- Serve diverse and growing population



Study Process



Where We Started



Evaluation based on Project Goals...

Increase Transit Use



Ridership

New Transit Riders

Transit-Dependent Riders

Travel Time

Implementable Project



Construction Costs

Operations and Maintenance Costs

Cost Effectiveness

Improves Quality of Life



Wetland/ Water Resources

Noise/Vibration

Parkland

Cultural/ Historic Properties

Traffic Safety

Below Poverty Households

Transit-Dependent Households

Improves Sustainable Travel Options



Population at Stations

Bike/Ped Access

Bike/Ped Level of Travel Stress

Enhances Regional Connectivity



Access Changes

Traffic Operations

Transit Connectivity

Parking

Supports Local Vision



Corridors with Constrained Right-of-Way

Employment At Stations

Development Potential for Transit Oriented Development

Development Potential Survey

..and Community Engagement

More than **5,000 people** participated in the Rush Line study through over **200 community events** including workshops, business outreach, presentations, pop-up events, social media, and online engagement forums.



What we heard

- Provide all-day transit service
- Connect people to businesses, services, jobs and education
- Preserve natural spaces
- Concern about property and business impacts
- Pursue highest transit investment possible to make areas more desirable
- Transit options should also be cost-effective



Community input has shaped the process

- Which routes and transit vehicle options should be explored
- Where proposed stations should be located
- Which goals are the most important to community members
- How to minimize or avoid potential impacts



What is an LPA?

The LPA is:

- Preferred Route and Transit Vehicle
 - Service Plan
 - General Station Locations
 - Cost and Ridership Estimate

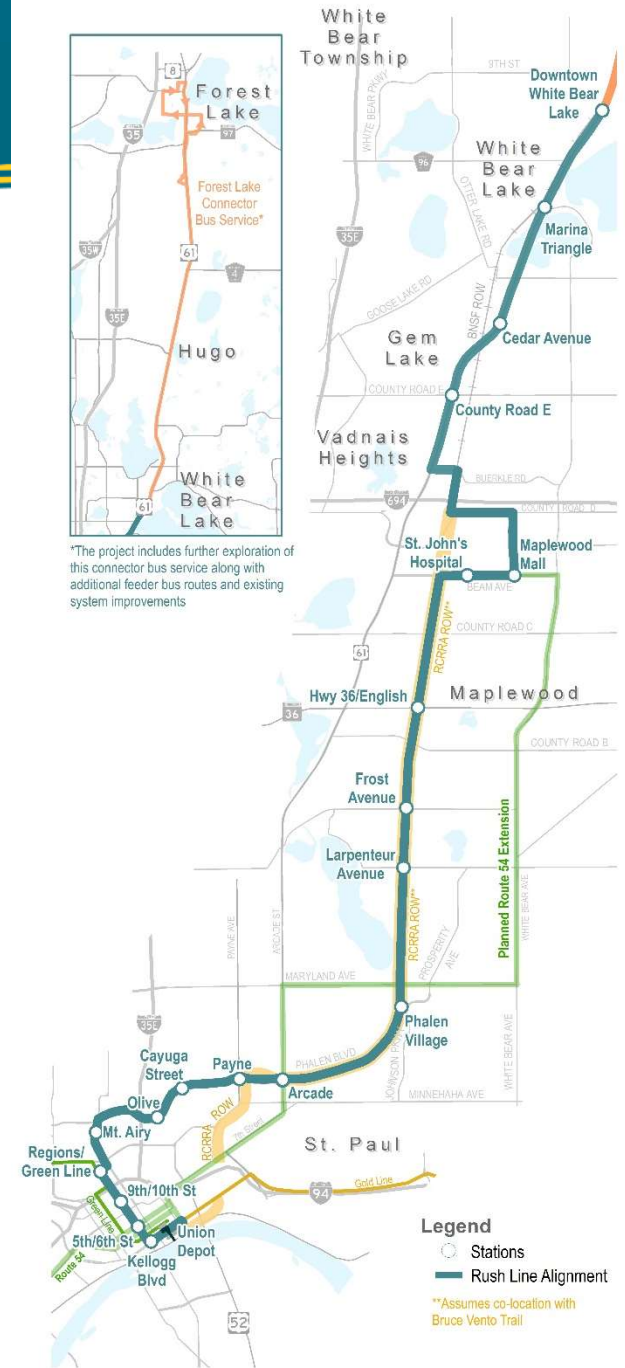
The LPA is NOT:

- Set in stone
 - Project elements can be further refined during next phase
- Final approval
 - Local partners will have additional review / approval opportunities



Preferred Transit Vehicle and Route

- Dedicated Guideway Bus rapid Transit (BRT)
- Phalen Boulevard and Robert Street into downtown St. Paul
- Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority right-of-way (shared with Bruce Vento Trail)
- Highway 61 north of I-694 into White Bear Lake
- Explore future connections to the north and other transit system improvements



Why Dedicated BRT?

- High quality service similar to LRT
 - Operates in own lane
 - Frequent and Reliable
 - Upgraded Stations and Vehicles
- Cost-effective solution
 - Less than 1/2 cost of LRT
- Catalyst for development at stations

Orange Line – Los Angeles



Why use Phalen into Downtown?



Serves the most jobs and equity populations (zero-car households, households below poverty)



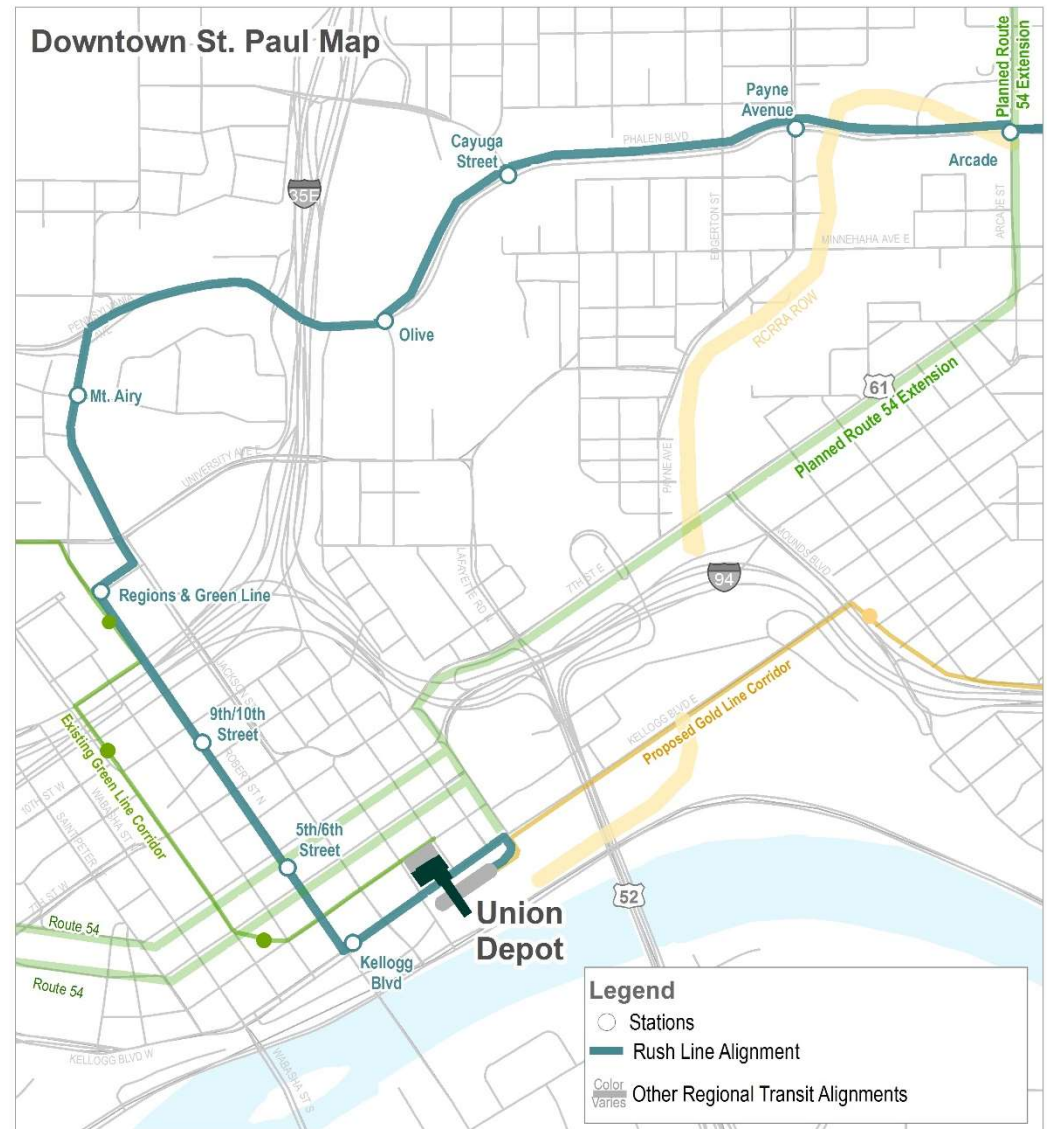
High ridership potential



Shortest travel time



Convenient transfer to METRO Green Line near Region's Hospital



Why Use RCRRA ROW?



Cost effective due to public ownership of right-of-way



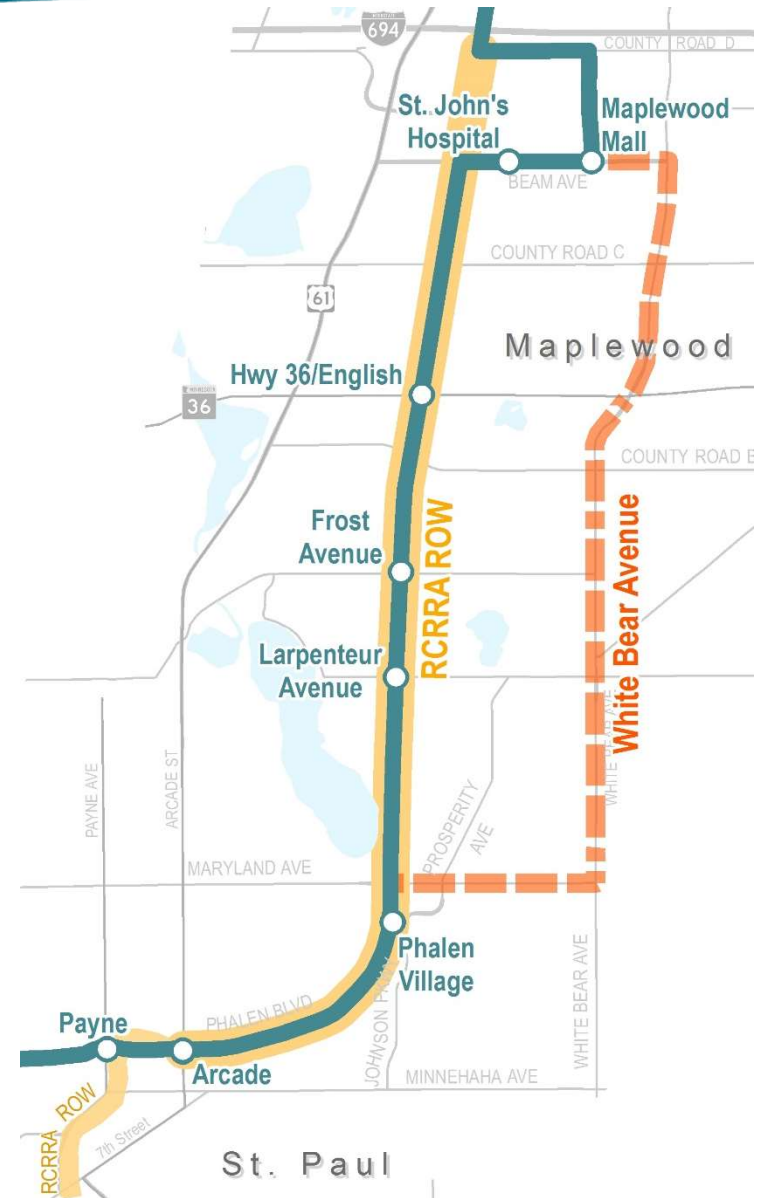
Longest route with fixed guideway, **maximizing development potential** at station areas



Competitive travel time between St. Paul and Maplewood Mall



Direct routing to **St. John's Hospital and Maplewood Mall** serves **over 7,000 jobs**



Why use RCRRA ROW?



BRT lanes **will share the RCRRA ROW** with the **Bruce Vento Trail**

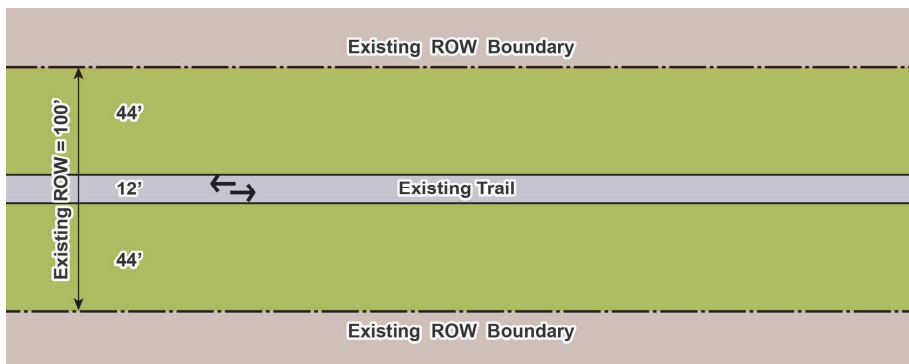


No private property acquisition anticipated because ROW is already in public ownership

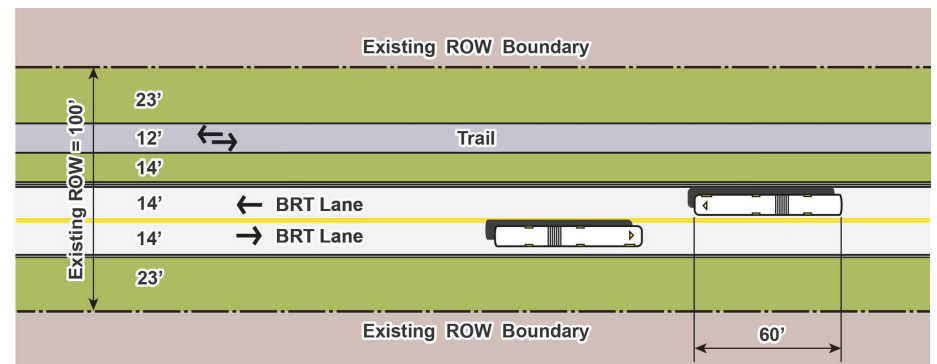


Potential environmental impacts can be addressed as design progresses

Current



Future Concept



LPA Statistics

Approx. Length: **14 miles**

Dedicated
Guideway: **85-90%**

of Stations: **20**
(includes Union Depot &
Maplewood Mall Transit Center)

Schedule: **5 am to midnight**
7 days/week

Frequency: **Rush hour: every 10 mins**
Non-rush hour: every 15 mins

Travel Time: **14 mins**
One way, White Bear Lake > Maplewood
30 mins
One way, Maplewood Mall > Robert/5th
6 mins
One way, Robert/5th > Union Depot

Capital Cost **\$420 M**
(\$2021): (+ \$55 M if other routes
in guideway)

Annual O&M **\$7.8 – 8 M**
Cost (\$2015):

Average Daily **5,700 – 9,700**
Ridership (2040): (higher ridership if other
routes use guideway)

People Living **11,700**
below Poverty
in Station
Areas (2040):

of Jobs in **106,700**
Station Areas
(2040):

of Residents **60,200**
in Station
Areas (2040):

Why the LPA?



Meets FTA **cost effectiveness and project justification** benchmarks



Fast, frequent and reliable travel option between corridor destinations



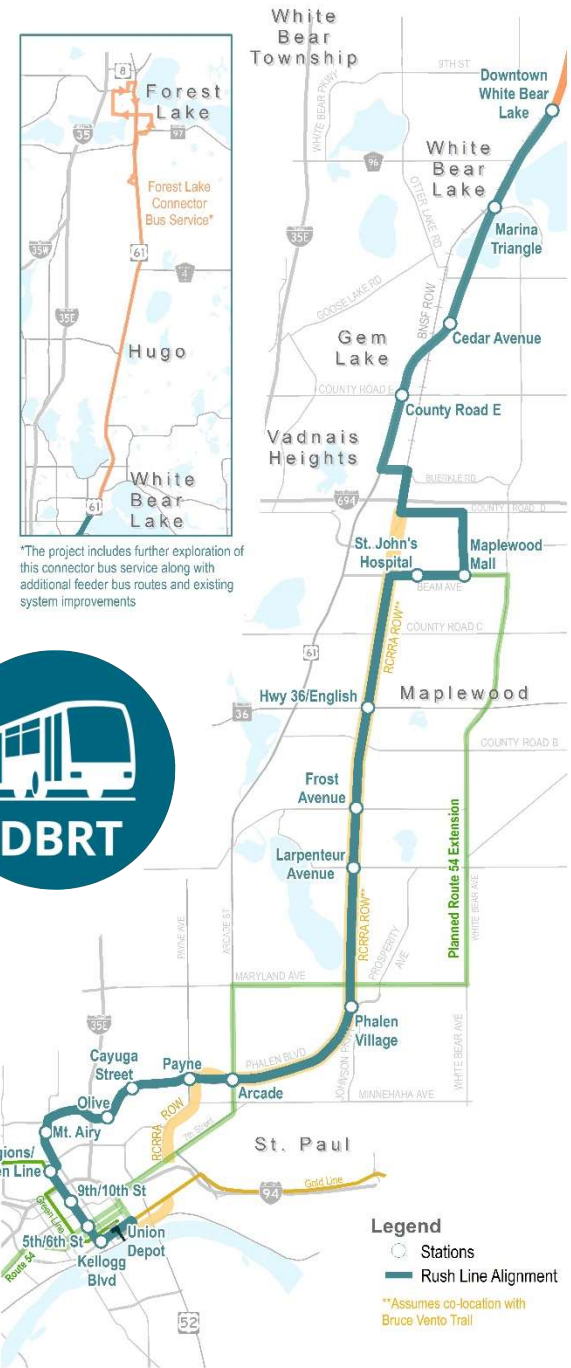
Maximizes development potential while minimizing costs



Highest potential ridership



Serves most jobs and equity populations



Serves Emerging Health Corridor

- 17 medical centers along route including Regions, St John's and Bethesda Hospitals, Gillette Children's, Health Partners, Health East and Allina Clinics



Input Received LPA

Opportunities

- Less expensive than other options
- Possibility to convert to LRT in future
- Faster travel times
- Preference for hybrid or electric buses
- Less visual and noise impacts and than LRT



Challenges

- Need to consider how people will access service at stations (walking, biking, driving)
- Concerns about potential impacts to existing green space, trail, and property values
- Concerns about safety in neighborhood and along route



What are others saying about the LPA Decision?

“Good transportation access is key in guiding redevelopment decisions” – **Sherman Associates**

“High quality transit in a dedicated guideway will create value for employers, employees, clients, customers, and residents along the corridor” – **St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce**

“The proposed Rush Line route and strategically placed stations will provide transportation options for our clients to connect with our state of the art health care services” – **HealthEast St. Johns Hospital**



Schedule

APRIL 2017	MAY 2017	JUNE/JULY 2017	AUGUST 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public hearing to receive feedback on the draft LPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project committees review public input and made a final LPA recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• County and cities along route asked to confirm support for LPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit LPA and resolutions of support to Met Council

- More detailed environmental analysis and additional public engagement to begin Fall 2017



Questions



STAY INVOLVED IN THE RUSH LINE STUDY

- ✦ Make yourself heard on preferred routes, transit vehicles and station locations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

 www.rushline.org

 info@rushline.org

 651-266-2760

 www.facebook.com/rushline

 @rushlinetransit

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