



# West Broadway Transit Study

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## Community Engagement Report

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for







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## Executive Summary

Over most of the last twelve months, SRF's Community Engagement team (Zan Associates, 4RM+ULA and Juxtaposition Arts) worked at over 30 events to gather input from over 1000 people the West Broadway Transit Study. These engagement activities were part of a collaborative planning process to identify and evaluate potential transit improvements along Washington Avenue and West Broadway Avenue in north Minneapolis and Robbinsdale. Three distinct zones, the North Loop, West Broadway and Robbinsdale/North Memorial were visited at bus stops, activity centers and community events. While each area has its own individual characteristics, participants in the engagements identified similarities in barriers to riding transit along the West Broadway Corridor including:

- Poor connections to desired destinations and/or other bus routes
- Long waits, poor frequency of service, and unreliable travel times
- Safety and personal security at bus stops and on existing buses
- Cost of fares
- Buses that are crowded and dirty
- Pedestrian access including long walks to stops and the lack of safe and convenient crossings of busy streets

In general, people are very positive about their neighborhoods, regardless of where they live in the corridor. Everyone values the people and the cultures where they live. Along West Broadway, many saw the access to existing shops, businesses and food as a positive, but would like to see more scaled economic development, building on the assets that already exist. People identified the small town feel and restaurants in downtown Robbinsdale as an asset. The North Loop's bicycle and walking access to many places was identified as its' best asset. Overall, people want to see vibrant neighborhoods and commercial areas that are safe and peaceful. Economic development of a scale suitable for the various segments of the corridor was supported. Along the West Broadway segment of the corridor, there is a desire to see more restaurants and places with healthy food, more local and independently owned businesses, more physical improvements (buildings, trees and plantings), and more activities for families and children.

Common themes regarding future transit service expressed throughout this process included:

- Safety on buses and at stops
- Better connections to other places and transit routes
- More frequent service, including earlier/later and more weekend service
- More station amenities, including lighting, heat and real time information



## Public Engagement

The focus of public engagement activities for the West Broadway Transit Study during Phase I (Spring/Summer 2015) was to engage people in the discussion of their views of assets in the West Broadway corridor and their views of barriers to transit use in the corridor. In the of Fall 2015, Phase II's focus of public engagement activities for the West Broadway Transit Study was to engage people in a discussion of the project goals, and priorities and ideas for transit service improvement along the West Broadway Corridor. This feedback will help inform the final stage of the transit study, as the Policy Advisory Committee makes a recommendation on the locally preferred alternative (LPA) in early 2016.

Public engagement activities included two public open houses (one which featured a video premiere), engagement at existing bus stops along the corridor, and tabling at local activity centers and community events throughout the Summer and Fall. Most people were not aware of the West Broadway Transit Study so the engagement activities provided many opportunities for letting people know about the project and how they might be engaged both now and in the future.

Common themes of interest centered on a need for improved safety (onboard the transit vehicle and areas surrounding and at the station) and a desire for more frequent, all day/all week service.

For those who did not indicate that they were frequent transit users, a stated need for increased regional transit connectivity was noted, and a preference for rail transit was repeatedly recorded. Although, the reasons for streetcar preference varied – some believed economic development along West Broadway would be greater with rail despite the higher initial cost, while others preferred the overall passenger experience of rail to that of bus service.

## Engagement Activity Opportunities

Public engagement included 32 on-street activities or events and two public open houses; including a video premiere. These activities began in March 2015 and concluded with a public open house and video premiere about the project in November 2015. The events included the following:

- Twelve engagement activities at existing bus stops – six during Phase I – Summer Engagement and six during Phase II – Fall Engagement. Fall Engagement locations for this type of engagement were selected based on the quantity of feedback received at bus stops selected during Phase I
- Seven engagement activities at activity nodes: North Loop Whole Foods (3), Corner Coffee, North Memorial Hospital, Downtown Robbinsdale and Cedar Lake Trail
- Thirteen tabling activities at community events: FLOW, Juneteenth, Whiz Bang Days, National Night Out, Downtown Open Streets, Urban League Family Day, West Broadway Farmer's Market (5), Masjid An-Nur Mosque Day of Dignity, and the North Memorial Hospital Vendor Fair
- Public Open House at West Broadway YMCA
- Public Open House/ Video Premiere at Capri Theater



## People Engaged in Process

Over the course of the project, 1,000+ people were proactively engaged in the West Broadway Transit Study through the above listed engagement activity opportunities.

## Engagement Activities

Implementation of different engagement strategies during both phases provided feedback based on Corridor Assets and Transit Barriers in Phase I, and Project Goals/Priorities and Transit Improvement in Phase II. Each strategy was utilized to gather information on common themes developed from feedback provided at the very first set of bus stop engagements. A 'zine, short for magazine, was developed by Juxtaposition Arts students that provided a common thread throughout the engagement – this became a takeaway piece to inform the community about the West Broadway Transit Study.

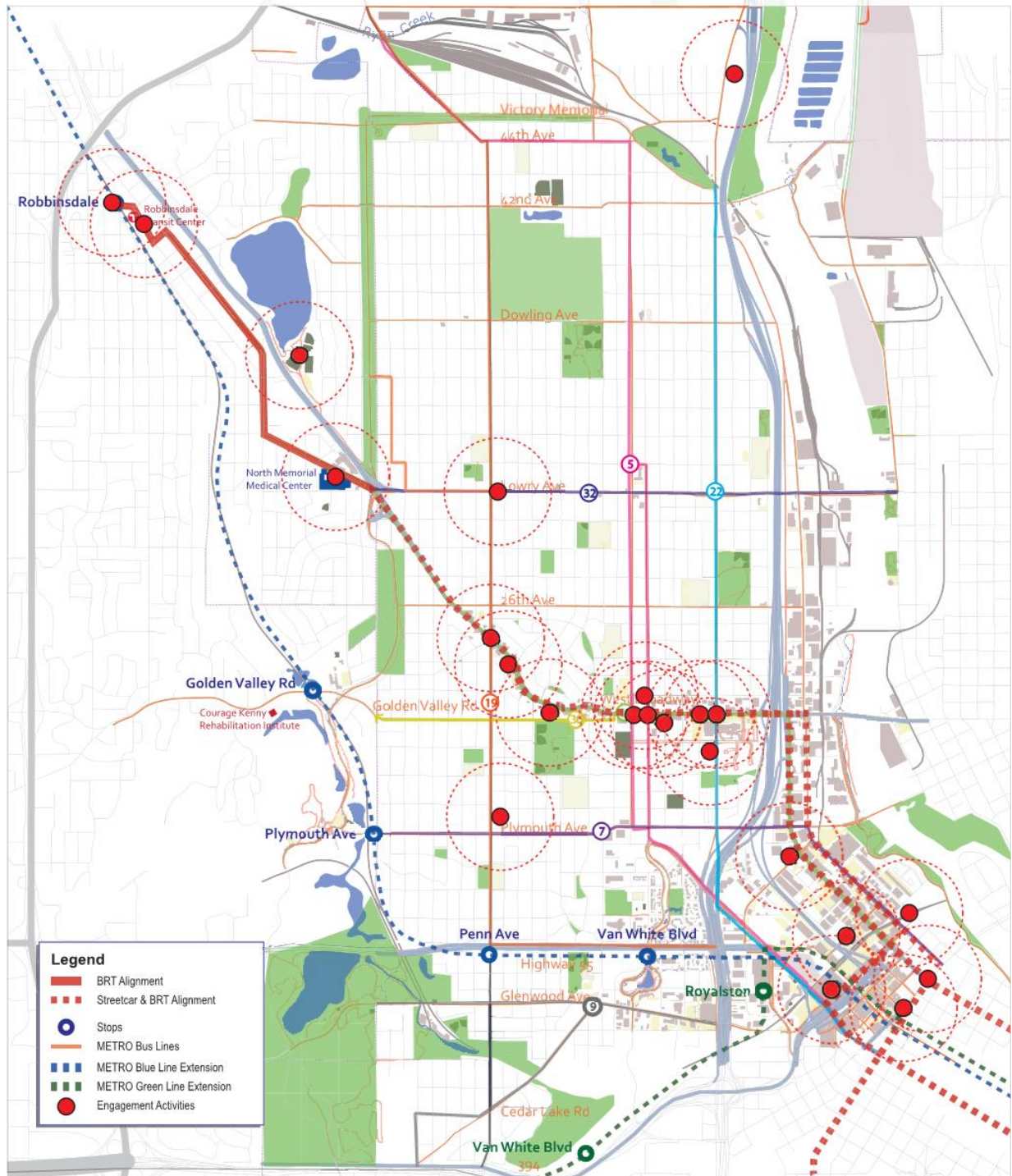
During Phase I, the focus for engagement was to increase awareness of the West Broadway Transit Study by engaging in dialogue with people about their views of assets in the West Broadway Corridor, and their views of barriers to transit use in the corridor. People were given a 'zine with the project map and information on the transit alternatives. A larger corridor map was also available for discussion purposes. People were encouraged to use different colored dots to identify where they lived, where they were going along the corridor, and favorite destinations (both on and off the corridor).

Engagement for Phase II centered on project goals, priorities and ideas for transit service improvement along the corridor. The 'zine was updated to provide additional information on the project timeline, an updated map, and contact information for representative members of the Policy Advisory Committee. People were encouraged to participate in a variety of interactive “game” activities to help identify priorities among goals and priorities among transit improvements.



# WEST BROADWAY TRANSIT STUDY

## Engagement Activities Locations



**Figure 1: Map of Engagement Activities**

Several locations were visited multiple times due to their level of foot traffic





## Promotion of Engagement Activities

Engagement activities were largely promoted through the Metro Transit website. Additional promotion for the Open Houses was through social media, including a targeted online advertising using Comcast Spotlight.

## Next Steps

As the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is being weighed by the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), several key messages should be considered:

- Job creation, economic development and access to jobs were a high priority among most people surveyed over the study period
- Revitalization of West Broadway is desired to create a healthy corridor
- Improvement on existing service, making fast and low cost improvements in the short-term while waiting for investment in the long term improvements to the corridor

Metro Transit can demonstrate its commitment to improvements to the West Broadway corridor by creating short-term improvements and communicating a timeline for implementation of the Local Preferred Alternative. Most important is open and continued communication with the community. With tools such as on-board newsletters and even newer tools, like utilizing Comcast Spotlight—this project could serve as a new model for study and project implementation for Metro Transit and its partners.



## Phase I – Spring/ Summer 2015

The first phase of engagement activities for the West Broadway Transit Study focused on engaging people in the discussion of their views of assets in the West Broadway corridor and their views of barriers to transit use in the corridor. Most people were not aware of the West Broadway Transit Study so the engagement activities provided many opportunities for letting people know about the project and how they might be engaged both now and in the future. It also allowed the Community Engagement team the opportunity to meet the Policy Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee Members. During this time, the Community Advisory Committee, was formalized and convened with the aid of Metro Transit.

### Public Engagement Opportunities

Public engagement included 19 on-street activities or events and a public open house. The events included the following:

- Six engagement activities at existing bus stops
- Six engagement activities at activity nodes: North Loop Whole Foods (2), Corner Coffee, North Memorial Hospital, downtown Robbinsdale and Cedar Lake Trail
- Seven tabling activities at community events: FLOW, Juneteenth, Whiz Bang Days, National Night Out, Downtown Open Streets, Urban League Family Day, and West Broadway Farmer’s Market
- Public Open House at West Broadway YMCA

### Bus Stop Engagement

People were engaged at six bus stops in the corridor: Emerson/Broadway, Aldrich/Broadway, Lyndale/Broadway, Penn/Broadway, Minnesota Public Housing Authority (10<sup>th</sup> and Washington) and Robbinsdale Transit Center. Approximately 130 people were engaged at these six locations. Four of these stops were in the West Broadway segment, one was in the North Loop area and one was in Robbinsdale. The purpose of this engagement was to understand the views of existing transit riders related to assets in the corridors and barriers to transit use. Transit riders were asked to indicate what routes they most commonly used and whether they rode frequently, occasionally or rarely.



**Figure 2: Frequency of Transit Use**



Among people we spoke with, the most common routes that people used were Routes 5, 14, 19 and 22. Other routes mentioned included 7, 2, 9, 21, 717 and Blue Line.

## Activities

Information was provided to participants about the West Broadway Transit Study, a corridor map was available for viewing, and people were engaged in conversations about the assets in the corridor, barriers to riding transit, and priorities for future transit improvements. People were encouraged to place colored dots on a map to identify where they live, where they were going along the corridor, favorite destinations and areas where they identified problems such as connectivity issues.

## Summary of Comments

### Assets in West Broadway Corridor

- Businesses, stores and shopping
- Food and food stores – the growing number of places to eat healthy food
- The culture and the people

### Barriers to Riding Transit

- Long waits (frequencies especially on weekends and evenings, and buses not being on time)
- Comfort (crowdedness, lack of amenities, fights, security/crime, bus stop comforts)
- Bus fares (too expensive)
- Long walks to buses
- Not able to get to places (especially in suburbs) where buses don't go
- Safe pedestrian crossings

### Future Transit Priorities

- Safety and security
- Timeliness
- More routes and frequency (24/7 service, run in more areas and more often)
- Better quality buses (cleaner, less crowded and better seating)
- More amenities (wifi, outlets, etc.)
- Fast and frequent service

### Priorities for West Broadway's Future

- Vibrancy
  - More restaurants and places with healthy food
  - More businesses, locally and independently owned
  - Physical environment improvements (buildings rehabbed, vacancies filled, trees and plants)
  - More activities for families and kids
- Peace – less violence
  - No violence, more kid friendly
  - More business, less crime



**ENGAGEMENT AT BUS STOP – WEST BROADWAY/EMERSON**

## Engagement at Activity Nodes

Public engagement was also conducted at six activity centers along the West Broadway corridor. These included two events at the downtown/North Loop Whole Foods grocery store, one event targeted to employees at North Memorial, one along the Cedar Avenue Trail, one in downtown Robbinsdale, and one at a coffee shop in the North Loop neighborhood. Many of the participants at these locations were not existing transit riders so these activities focused more on assets in the corridor, barriers to transit use, and key destinations. Approximately 140 people participated in these activities.

## Activities

Information was provided to participants about the West Broadway Transit Study, and people were engaged in conversations about the assets in the corridor, barriers to riding transit, and priorities for future transit improvements. An interactive corridor map exercise was used to help with discussion about key destinations and barriers. People used green dots to identify places where they live, work or frequent; they used red dots to identify locations where there are barriers to accessing transit. People were also encouraged to write specific comments on post-it notes and attach them to the maps.

## Summary of Comments

### Assets

- Robbinsdale: “small town” character, restaurants and connections to downtown Minneapolis
- West Broadway: businesses, stores, shopping, restaurants
- North Loop: proximity to downtown and bike/walk access

### Barriers to Riding Transit

- Connections to desired destinations
- Crowded buses
- Safety/security at bus stops
- Convenient and safe pedestrian access to stops



### Priorities for the Future

- Transit improvements (service, connections, frequency)
- Connection between North Memorial and downtown Robbinsdale and between North Memorial and destinations along West Broadway, including clinic at Emerson and places to lunch
- Economic development in West Broadway corridor



**POP-UP ENGAGEMENT – DOWNTOWN ROBBINSDALE**



**POP-UP ENGAGEMENT – CEDAR LAKE TRAIL**



## Public Meeting/Open House

Open House #1 for the West Broadway Transit Study was held on May 21, 2015 outside in a parking lot at the North Community YMCA. The purpose of the open house was to provide information on the West Broadway Transit Study purpose, content, and schedule; seek input on alternative alignments and station locations; and seek input on project goals, values and assets along the corridor, and transit experiences.

Most individuals attending the open house did not sign in, given the outdoor location of the event. It is estimated that approximately 30 adults and 30 or more youth attended. Eleven people signed in with several providing email information to receive project information. In addition, several Policy Advisory (PAC) and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) members attended along with a number of agency staff from Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale and Metro Transit, and consultant team members.

## Meeting Format

The open house was two hours in length and conducted in an open house format with visual display boards, interactive aerial map exercises, creative writing exercises, and children's activities. A Metro Transit bus was on site for viewing, boarding, and displaying materials. Staff from the consultant team and Metro Transit, as well as members of the PAC and CAC, facilitated activities and answered questions.

## Activities to Collect Comments/Feedback

The open house included the following activities to encourage feedback from participants:

- Display boards with flipcharts to provide written comments
- Map layouts with colored stickers for people to identify corridor assets and transit barriers
- Spin wheel to answer questions about the corridor and win prizes
- Six word stories to describe corridor assets or transportation barriers
- Comment cards for additional written comments
- Staff available for verbal conversations and comments

## Summary of Comments

### Goals for West Broadway Corridor

- Positive activity
- Places to go
- Art and sculptures
- Wider streets/sidewalks
- Better restaurants/food
- More facilities for children/teens
- More opportunities for African-American small business owners
- Unity and peace



### Assets in West Broadway Corridor

- Parks such as North Commons and Porter Field
- Special facilities such as the YMCA and Target Field
- Commercial areas such as downtown Robbinsdale, Penn/Broadway, Logan/Broadway and Emerson/Broadway

### Transit Barriers in West Broadway Corridor

- Plymouth/Emerson
- Vincent/Hwy 55
- 12<sup>th</sup> St/2<sup>nd</sup> Ave (downtown)
- Lack of east-west connecting transit service
- Need additional north-south service
- Negative activities on some routes

## Engagement at Community Events

During the last half of the summer, the focus was on public engagement at community events. The consultant team conducted activities specific to the West Broadway Transit Study at five events including Robbinsdale Whiz Bang Days, FLOW, NLNA National Night Out, West Broadway Farmer's Market and Urban league Family Day. Approximately 190 people were engaged at these five community events.

### Activities

Information was provided to participants about the West Broadway Transit Study, and people were engaged in conversations about assets in the corridor, barriers to riding transit, and priorities for future transit improvements. For most of the five events conducted by the consultant team, three activities were used to encourage conversation:

- An interactive corridor map exercise was used to help with discussion about key destinations and barriers - people used green dots to identify places where they live, work or frequent; red dots to identify locations where there are barriers to using transit
- A "Family Feud" game was used at some events to help people learn about the feedback received in previous engagement activities
- A "poker chip" exercise was used to gain input on the relative value of planned West Broadway station area features
- People were engaged in informal conversations during all activities

## Summary of Comments

### Barriers to Riding Transit

- Need car for work
- Connections to destinations and to other bus routes
- Safety and security at stops and on buses



- Cleanliness and maintenance of stops and buses
- Bus fares are too high
- Buses not arriving on time
- Safety for pedestrians crossing streets and getting to stops

### Assets in Corridor

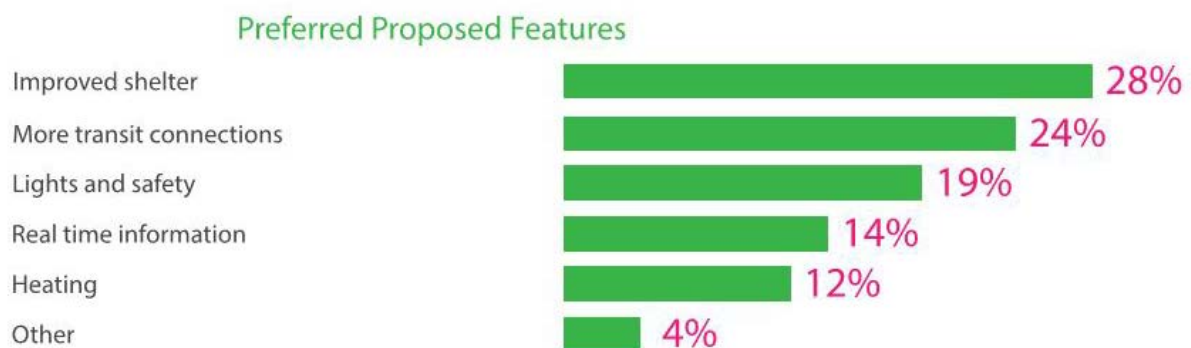
- Access to events and entertainment in downtown Minneapolis
- Businesses and shopping opportunities (West Broadway, downtown Minneapolis, downtown Robbinsdale)
- People and cultures

### Ideas for Future Transit Service and Facilities

- More amenities at bus stops would be good
- Use of alternative energy (both buses and at stops)
- Better lighting, more trees and more pedestrian focused streetscape
- More public art at stops
- More seating at stops
- More frequent and more reliable service

### Values of Proposed Station Features

This exercise was only conducted during four events, held later in the summer. The results are summarized in the table below.



**Figure 3: Preference of Proposed Transit Features.**





**FLOW**



**NATIONAL NIGHT OUT**

## Promotion of Engagement Activities

### Bus Stop, Activity Node Engagement and Community Events

A list of engagement locations and dates was posted on the Metro Transit project web page. Additional promotion was not used for bus stop engagements and activity nodes because these were intercept activities intended to engage people during their normal daily activities. Additional promotion of tabling activities was left to the discretion of the organization sponsoring the event.



## Open House

The open house were advertised on the study webpage ([www.metrotransit.org/west-broadway-transit-study](http://www.metrotransit.org/west-broadway-transit-study)), on Metro Transit's News Updates and Events webpage ([www.metrotransit.org/news-room](http://www.metrotransit.org/news-room)), Metro Transit's twitter account (<https://twitter.com/metrotransitm>), and Metro Transit's Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/MetroTransitMN>). Members of the Project Management Team (PMT), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), PAC, and CAC were asked to share information about the open houses through their websites and social media. Consultant team members also posted information on their respective websites and social media.

Over 500 open house flyers were distributed to over 70 businesses, community facilities, places of worship, major employers, nonprofit organizations, and apartment complexes along the proposed alignment corridors.

## Phase II – Fall 2015

People were engaged at 13 different times and on-street locations during this phase of the project in addition to the Public Open House/Video Premiere on November 3. The purpose of the engagement during this phase was to understand the views of existing transit riders and community members related to the West Broadway Transit Study project goals, and potential transit improvements along the corridor. Participants were asked to indicate which goals they felt were most important for the transit study to address, and which transit improvements were most important to implement.

The video premiere was an opportunity to bring larger awareness to the West Broadway Transit Study by leaving a digital footprint about the project alternatives, and, in particular, the community engagement work done by students at Juxtaposition Arts. A snippet was broadcast as a teaser prior to its premiere through Comcast Spotlight, a digital service that identifies and targets messages based on geographic location.

## Public Engagement Opportunities

- Six engagement activities at four existing bus stops: Hennepin/4<sup>th</sup> Street, West Broadway/Emerson, West Broadway/Aldrich, and West Broadway/Fremont
- One engagement activity at North Loop Whole Foods
- Six engagement activities at community events: West Broadway Farmer's Market (four), Masjid An-Nur Mosque Day of Dignity, and North Memorial Hospital Vendor Fair
- Open House/ Video Premiere



**ENGAGEMENT AT BUS STOP – WEST BROADWAY/EMERSON**



**ENGAGEMENT AT WHOLE FOODS – WASHINGTON/HENNEPIN**



**ENGAGEMENT AT MASJID AN-NUR MOSQUE DAY OF DIGNITY – LYNDALE NEAR WEST BROADWAY**



### Engagement Activities to Collect Comments/Feedback

Information was provided to participants about the West Broadway Transit Study through a project 'zine and a fact sheet that were distributed as take-away information. People were engaged in informal conversations about the goals of the transit study, and priorities for future transit improvements.

- Goal Priority Exercise: People were given six goal statements and asked to place their top three goals on a postcard. The postcards were collected, and people were also provided postcards that they could use to send in additional comments.
- Transit Improvement Priority Exercise: People were given three poker chips and asked to place their poker chips in one or more bags or boxes describing six different types of transit improvements.
- Map Exercise: A regional map of the corridor with proposed transit lines and major destinations was available, and people were encouraged to place stickers on their favorite destinations.
- People were engaged in informal conversations during all activities.

### Public Open House/Video Premiere Meeting Format

The open house was two hours in length and premiered a video about the two transit options, streetcar and arterial BRT, and the community engagement activities related to the West Broadway Transit Study. The video premiere was introduced by Gary Cunningham, Metropolitan Council Member and Chair of the Policy Advisory Committee, and Charles Carlson, Senior Manager, BRT/Small Starts Projects, Metro Transit. A short question and answer period followed the showing of the video. The video was shown at two different times during the event.

The rest of the event was conducted in an open house format with visual display boards, aerial maps with engineering layouts of the alternatives, visualizations of the proposed station design, and two video simulations showing how street and arterial BRT would operate along West Broadway. There were also interactive engagement activities as well as a photo booth where images of participants were captured and digitally displayed in the venue. Several CAC members who attended were interviewed and their interviews can be viewed on the project website (<http://www.metrotransit.org/west-broadway-study-library> and click on Video: West Broadway Community Engagement). Staff from the consultant team and Metro Transit, as well as members from the PAC, TAC and CAC, facilitated activities and answered questions.

### Activities at Open House to Collect Comments/Feedback

The open house included the following activities to encourage feedback from participants:

- People were given three gold stars and asked to “vote” for their top three goals by placing their stars on a display board.
- People were given three silver stars and asked to “vote” for their top three transit improvements by placing their stars in boxes labeled with different types of transit improvements.
- Verbal comments were recorded on video (<http://www.metrotransit.org/west-broadway-study-library> and click on Video: West Broadway Community Engagement).
- Comment cards were provided for written comments



- Staff and PAC, TAC and CAC members were available for verbal conversations and comments.

## Summary of Comments from On-Street Public Engagement and Public Open House/Video Premiere – Phase II

Much of the feedback collected during this phase of community engagement focused on the current transit user experience, and desired ways to improve it. Generally, people were interested in basic project information, and asked questions about funding and timing of proposed transit improvements. Overall, there was a very positive response to transit improvement along West Broadway. A brief summary of feedback heard during engagement is provided in the following paragraphs.

### Themes

In North Minneapolis along West Broadway, the most common themes heard during the engagement activities centered on concern about safety both on transit and at stops, and the desire to see greater economic development and increased vitality along West Broadway.

Common themes heard in the North Loop included interest in regional connectivity and access through improved transit service.

At North Memorial Hospital in Robbinsdale, common themes related to the lack of transit service to specific locations or at certain work hours, safety both on transit and at stops, and questions about the Bottineau Blue Line LRT extension.

### Project Goal Priorities

People were asked to identify their top three priorities for the project goals during the on-street engagement activities and at the public open house. The results are shown in Figure 4. Some people noted that all project goals are important. Additional comments received regarding project goals are summarized below.



### Appendix 4: Project Goals



### **Additional Comments about Goal Priorities**

#### Development and Revitalization

- *Affordable housing is very important.*
- *More development is needed along West Broadway.*
- *Lowry Ave and other corridors should capitalize on economic development and transit opportunity – need for system-wide equity.*
- *Benefits to the neighborhood are places or activities that are walkable from a transit stop: grocery stores/co-ops, cafes, shopping.*
- *More affordable housing should be located closer to the city center.*
- *Denser development and housing growth should be coordinated with transit service.*

#### Accessibility

- *More access is important, access to good jobs requires transit.*
- *Increase access to more jobs, people cannot always move near where they work.*
- *Residential development along Mississippi River north from downtown Minneapolis - how will these new residents get around?*
- *I choose where to live according to proximity to an LRT station.*

#### Transit Improvements

- *There are many cultures along West Broadway, most use transit and need service improvements.*
- *Transit should take less travel time.*
- *Less congestion with improved transit is needed.*

#### Environmental Concerns

- *In winter, public transportation becomes especially important. Personal vehicles use more fuel in the winter – this is a large expense and harmful to the environment.*
- *It would be nice to think about the effect this has on the environment.*
- *Protection of wetlands is important.*

### **Transit Service Improvement Preferences**

People were asked to identify their top three preferences for improvements to transit facilities and services. The results are shown in Figure 5. People had many comments and ideas about how to improve existing transit service and facilities in the corridor. Their comments are summarized below.



### Preferred Proposed Features



**Figure 5: Preferred Transit Improvements**

### **Additional Comments about Transit Improvement Priorities**

#### Safety

- *Safety along West Broadway on transit and at stations is a major concern – things can't change until the issue of safety is addressed (specific mention of Route 5, Robbinsdale transit station, service at the University of Minnesota, and transfer times at the Mall of America).*
- *There's no sense of community and it translates to how people act toward each other aboard the buses.*
- *Transit should be family friendly – at all times of day.*
- *Conflicts need to be stopped before they start.*
- *Physical presence of security (both onboard transit and at stations) is needed to enforce rules.*
- *We should promote respect/community between users of all ages.*
- *Safety at night is a major issue at stations, especially for women (of any age) where there are long waits for transfers.*
- *Health safety issues on transit are also a concern.*

#### Station Amenities

- *Heat at stations is an important amenity – doors, canopies and large enclosed stations. suggested*
- *Emergency phones*
- *Better lighting*
- *Cell phone charging capabilities and Wi-Fi on transit or at the station*
- *Concern about maintaining "fancy" stations*
- *Lack of restrooms - suggestion for cooperation with local businesses to provide them*
- *Accessibility considerations for transit users with disabilities*
- *Accurate information about next bus on cell phones and signs, and more posted schedules along the route*
- *Upkeep and maintenance concerns with current bus stops/amenities*



### Service Quality

- *Positive feedback about existing transit service*
- *Likes Metro Transit call-in number for up-to-the-minute arrival times*
- *Concern with current customer service attitude of bus drivers*
- *Handicapped riders need their own service, to keep regular service from slowing down, regular service more difficult to use for those with a handicap.*
- *Transit needs to be more family friendly, difficult to travel with children, loading/unloading*
- *Current bus route is overcrowded.*
- *Better information is needed about efficient transfers, existing routes, where route branches go (A, B, C, D).*
- *Would like transit improvements but does not want to make a transfer in downtown (route 14) - prefers the current single seat ride*
- *Better promotion of regular and reliable service*

### Frequency and Timing

- *Need more frequent, on-time service*
- *Less confusing routes, with fewer branches and later service*
- *Current bus service takes too long.*
- *Service needs to be faster, run more frequently with longer hours and more days of the week.*
- *Not everyone travels to work during rush hour, Monday - Friday.*
- *When working late, an hour is too long to wait for the bus or make a connection.*
- *More frequent/reliable service should be available throughout the region so people with special needs have more options on where they can live.*
- *Many people at North Memorial said they chose to drive to work instead of using transit, citing irregularity of work hours, long travel times, number of transfers, lack of transit in the suburbs where they live.*

### Connections

- *Improved connections to reach good jobs in suburbs via transit*
- *More transit connections from North Loop*
- *Connection to, and improved service in, Northeast Minneapolis*
- *Connections to Blue and Green LRT extensions*
- *Easy, rapid, all hours connection between Downtown Minneapolis and North Memorial*
- *Connection between Robbinsdale LRT station and North Memorial*
- *Other specific connections mentioned included connections to Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Center, Osseo, St. Michael.*

### Additional Comments about Mode Preference

The following comments were heard during both on-street engagement and at the public open house/video premiere regarding mode preferences. These were outside the above described goal priorities and transit improvement preferences exercises.

#### General

- *Like the idea of level boarding for either BRT or streetcar, for ease of travel with children*
- *Concern about cost of subsidies for public transportation*
- *Don't care which mode is chosen, as long as there is additional, frequent service along West Broadway*





### Streetcar

- *Want a streetcar, but doesn't believe such an expensive investment would be made on West Broadway. At most, feels community will get BRT*
- *Prefers the look of streetcar, preference for rail transit*
- *Streetcar preference: iconic look, safer for bike commuters, better public response, less confusion about route, sure and permanent, consistency/reliability, more people would ride, stigma with buses*
- *Streetcar investment shows Twin Cities is serious about transit*
- *Prefer streetcar*

### Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

- *What does BRT look like? What is the difference between BRT and express bus?*
- *Need to explain/promote BRT to the broader public to achieve ridership*
- *Preference for BRT service, enjoys the Red Line*
- *BRT better fits my needs, keep improvement low cost/high visibility*

## Promotion of Engagement Activities

A list of engagement locations and dates was posted on the Metro Transit project web page. Additional promotion was not used because these were intercept activities intended to engage people during their normal daily activities. Nearly 250 hardcopies and electronic copies of the open house flyer were distributed to over 70 businesses, community facilities, and places of worship, major employers, nonprofit organizations, and apartment complexes along the proposed alignment corridors.

## Electronic Communications

The open house was advertised on the study webpage (<http://www.metrotransit.org/west-broadway-transit-study>), on Metro Transit's Press Releases webpage (<http://www.metrotransit.org/press>), Metro Transit's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/MetroTransitMN>) and Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/MetroTransitMN>). Members of the Project Management Team (PMT), Technical Advisory Team (TAC), PAC, and CAC were asked to share information about the open house through their websites and social media.

## Online Advertisement

A snippet of the West Broadway Transit Study engagement video was used in a 15-second advertisement, which aired through Comcast on YouTube videos in zip codes in close proximity to the corridor. The advertisement was viewed 46,338 times from October 18 – November 3, 2015, and 133 people clicked through to the West Broadway Transit Study website to obtain additional information.



## Comcast Campaign Range

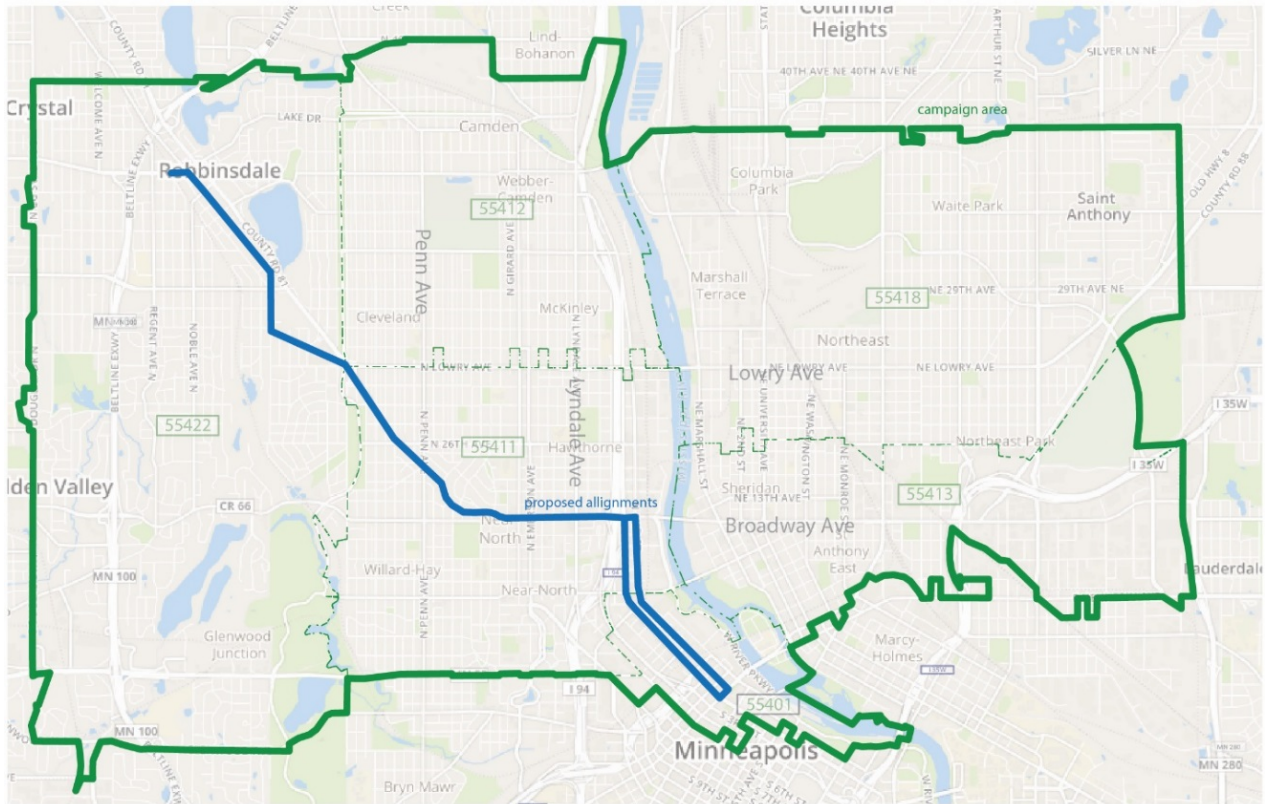


Figure 6: Comcast Campaign Map

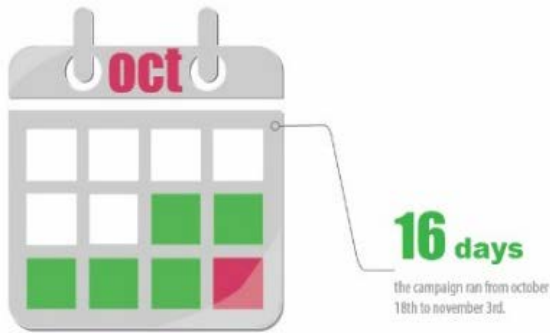
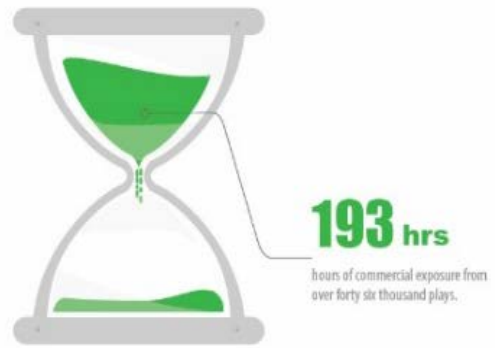


Figure 7: Comcast Campaign Summary



## Next Steps

As the Public Engagement portion of the West Broadway Transit Study comes to a conclusion, several strategies can be implemented to communicate to the CAC and PAC key messages from the community. These messages should be considered when recommendations are being made on a locally preferred alternative (LPA) and carried forward with the LPA recommendation to the Metro Council. These key messages can be reinforced by:

- Showing the engagement video presented at the November 3rd Video Premiere Open House
- Showing additional interviews videotaped at the Video Premiere Open House, and with others

Key Messages heard throughout the duration of the study include:

- Concern about existing transit service and facilities along the corridor.
- There is a need for improved safety, both on the bus and around stops.
- There is strong support for revitalization along the West Broadway corridor – this includes economic development, job creation, and access to jobs.
- There is a desire for longer duration of service, increased service at off-peak times and more connectivity throughout the transit system.
- Short-term improvements, through existing Metro Transit funding and programs will show the community commitment to change along the corridor.
- A timeline needs to be communicated for longer term investment commitment for the new transit alternative.

The need to keep people interested and engaged in the West Broadway Corridor's development was also communicated time and time again. Below are strategies we heard from within our team and within the community.

- On-board transit newsletter (maybe an issue devoted entirely to this project targeted to the top routes in North Minneapolis)
- Video update to incorporate some of the CAC interviews and the PAC recommendation
- Distribution of information (flyers or newsletters) to local businesses and neighborhood organizations
- News releases
- Email distribution to all people for whom we have contact information from the on-street engagement and public open houses
- Door-to-door engagement in the neighborhoods (suggested by a CAC member)
- Bus stop engagement follow-up (maybe update the 'zine and distribute at the key bus stops and other locations where we did on-street engagement)
- Repeat Comcast-type campaign with short new video about LPA and link to website



## Key Considerations for Moving Forward

Other factors for Metro Transit to address as they continue to work with their community and governmental partners on this and other transit projects in North Minneapolis include:

- Short-term improvements are critical (perhaps through Better Bus Stops program or other programs) – so that people know that Metro Transit is going to DO something now.
- Economic development IS important to most people in the community – it will be important to communicate – how this did or did not factor into the decision-making and what Metro Transit will do, in partnership with other agencies/jurisdictions, to help achieve these goals.
- Timeline for implementation – it is important to manage expectations and demonstrate how progress can be made, both short-term and long-term.
- Continued community dialogue – the work completed during the West Broadway Transit Study is only a beginning, and it set the expectation for ongoing community dialogue about both transit and economic development issues.



# West Broadway Transit Study

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## Appendices

Transit Map

Flow of Decision Making

Community Advisory Committee

Publicity



# West Broadway Transit Study

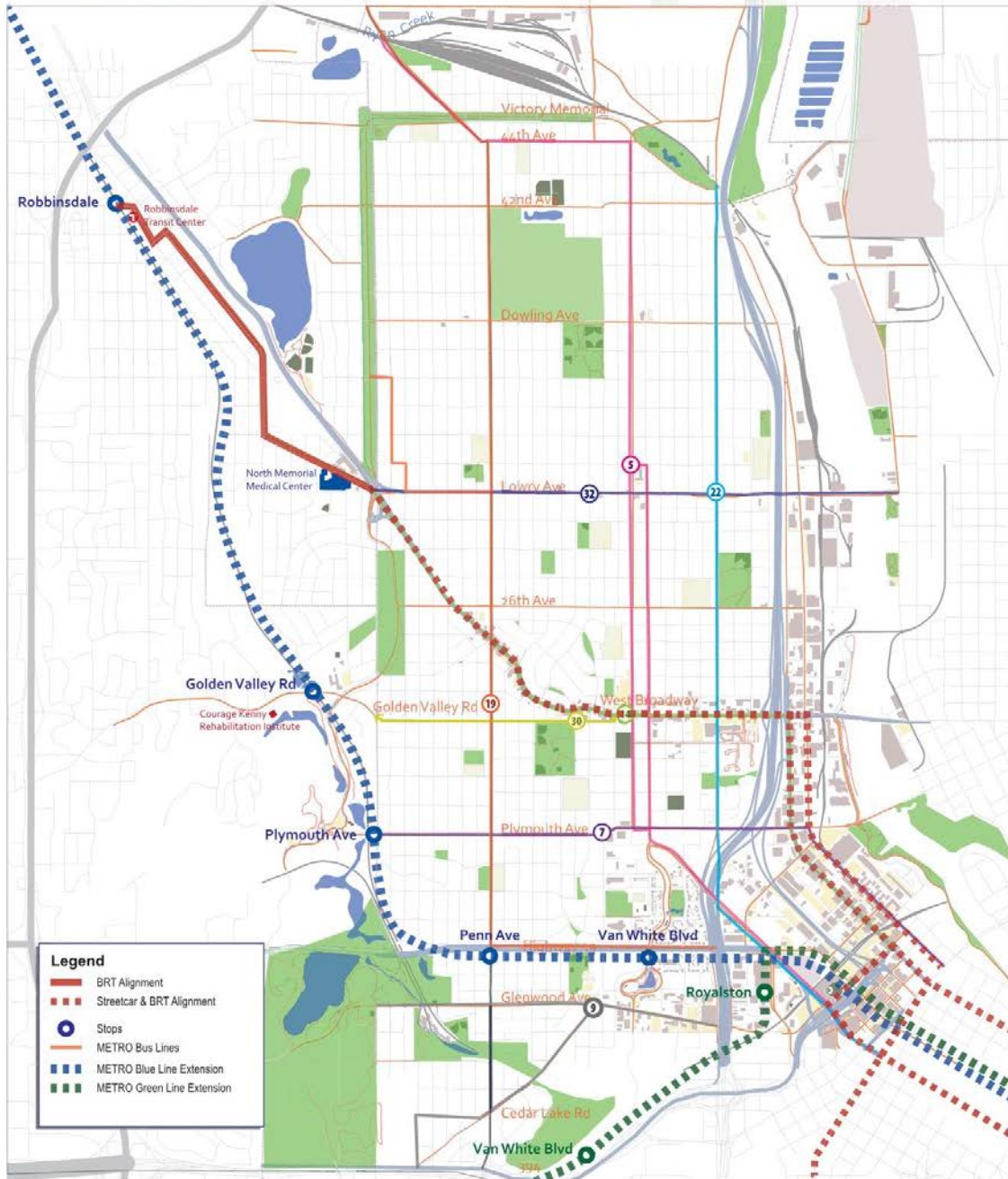
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## Transit Map



# WEST BROADWAY TRANSIT STUDY

Transit map and proposed alignments



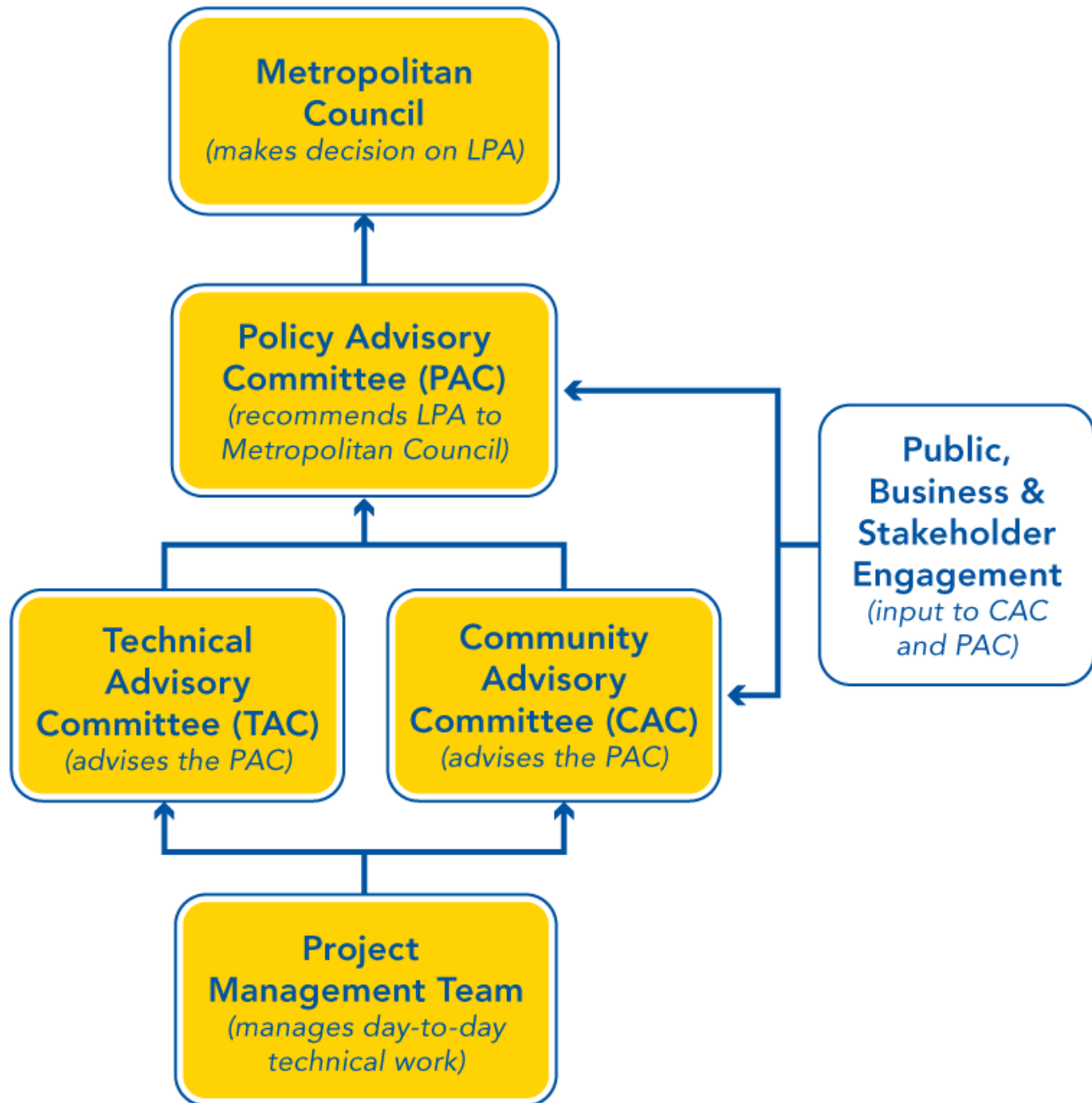




# West Broadway Transit Study

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## **Flow of Decision Making**





# West Broadway Transit Study

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## **Community Advisory Committee**



## Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

The role of this committee was to bring a community voice to the planning process. The CAC is designed as an essential connection between residents, property owners, businesses and employees in the project area and the planning process that will affect their community. Although the CAC does not have direct decision-making authority, it nominated two of its members to serve as voting members of the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC will, in turn, make a final recommendation to the Met Council. The application process for CAC membership was conducted in March 2015.

The membership of the CAC was drawn from *people* with clear and demonstrated connections to the many other people in the corridor rather than as representatives of *organizations* in the corridor. However, part of their role was to connect with the various area community-based organizations and carry forward the perspectives of the full community, their neighborhoods and their colleagues as well as their own views in committee discussions. Members of the CAC were also asked to provide input on broader community outreach initiatives and strategies to reach residents and businesses within a walkable distance from the corridor, also considered the study area. This committee met 4 times over the course of 2015 and is scheduled to meet one more time before the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) in the Spring of 2016.

Name	Organization
Adrienne Doyle	Resident, Youth Member
Alexis Pennie	Resident, Fowell, <b>CAC Co-Chair</b>
Angela Williams	Resident, Willard-Hay, <b>CAC Co-Chair</b>
Bishop Howell	Shiloh Temple International Ministries
Cameron Downey	Resident, Youth Member
Catherine Fleming	Business Owner, Project Sweetie Pie
Cathy Spann	Jordan Area Community Council
Charmaine Wahlstrom	Business Owner, 1500 W Broadway Bakery



Name	Organization
Cheri Brady	Resident, Robbinsdale
Dacia Durham	Resident, Near North
Harry Maddox	Neighborhoods Organizing for Change
Hawwa Youngmark	Resident, Youth Member
Jahliah Holloman	Resident, Youth Member
Karen Rosar	North Loop Neighborhood Association
Kristen Murray	Juxtaposition Arts
LaShella Sims	Resident, North Minneapolis
Leon Wallace	Resident, Jordan
Nadar Abu-Amno	Business Owner, Brix Grocery Store W Broadway
Rich Mencil	North Memorial Hospital
Rob Hanson	West Broadway Coalition
Scottie Tuska	Jordan Area Community Council Board Member
Sean Fahey	Resident, Mary Hills, Golden Valley
Sue Friedman	Business Owner, Friedman's Shoes
Susan Warner	Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute
Will Lumpkins	Northside Residents Redevelopment Council



# West Broadway Transit Study

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## **Finance and Commerce**



## Finance and Commerce

# Two alignments moving forward in West Broadway study

By: [Cali Owings](#) July 20, 2015 4:00 pm 0



Staff photo: Bill Klotz

Streetcars or rapid buses could serve West Broadway Avenue in North Minneapolis. An economic development analysis will help determine which mode would generate more investment.

Metro Transit has pared down options for transit on West Broadway Avenue to two streetcar and bus rapid transit alternatives that could extend from downtown Minneapolis through the north side to downtown Robbinsdale.

The [two alternatives](#) will move into full concept development as part of the study. The arterial BRT route would run between downtown and the Robbinsdale Transit Center with stops spaced out every quarter- or half-mile. In downtown, the buses would use Hennepin Avenue and Seventh and Eighth streets. The streetcar line would use Nicollet Mall and the same tracks as the Nicollet-Central Avenue streetcar planned in Minneapolis.

A streetcar line would reach North Memorial Hospital in Robbinsdale and follow roughly the same path with the same stops as arterial BRT.

The [study](#) of transit options on West Broadway is about halfway complete. Metro Transit staff members eliminated other options that would go to Golden Valley Road because they wanted to focus on West Broadway and serving the West Broadway and Penn Avenue intersection. Bus connections to Golden Valley Road will be explored in the study because Golden Valley Road is a link to the future Bottineau Light Rail Transit line to Brooklyn Park.

Part of the \$615,000 study is a detailed report on the economic development potential of both modes, which will be used to evaluate the alternatives. The study is expected to conclude with a locally preferred alternative at the end of this year.



# West Broadway Transit Study

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## Sun Post





# Sun Post

## West Broadway transit improvements open house

Published October 29, 2015 at 11:11 am

Residents are invited to learn more about a continuing study of transit improvements that could be made along the West Broadway Avenue corridor at an open house 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 3, at the Capri Theater, 2027 West Broadway Ave., Minneapolis.

Metro Transit and partnering organizations will provide an update on the West Broadway Transit Study that began earlier this year and invite feedback from the community. A video about transit options for the West Broadway Avenue corridor will also be premiered at the event. The video was created by Bully Creative Shop and Juxtaposition Arts.

The West Broadway Transit Study was initiated to look at streetcar and arterial bus rapid transit possibilities along West Broadway Avenue between Penn Avenue and downtown Minneapolis. The study is also considering potential connections to the METRO Blue Line Extension and transit-oriented development potential.

Informed by study results and community feedback, residents and city leaders will recommend preferred transit improvements to the Metropolitan Council this fall. The council is expected to vote on the recommended improvements by the end of the year.



# West Broadway Transit Study

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## Star Tribune



# Star Tribune

## Streetcar vs. rapid bus study for West Broadway nears completion

By Eric Roper

NOVEMBER 4, 2015 — 1:23PM



*Above: A bus stop on West Broadway Avenue (Eric Roper)*

With future light-rail lines expected to largely bypass the heart of north Minneapolis, transit planners are finishing analysis on two other transportation options for the area: streetcars and rapid buses.



Planners showcased their work Tuesday on the two alternatives for West Broadway, the commercial spine of the economically depressed North Side. But funding — particularly for a \$229 million streetcar line — remains elusive.

The study revisits a debate that occurred in 2012 as Minneapolis agreed to a route for the Bottineau light-rail project that followed Olson Hwy. at the southern edge of north Minneapolis toward parkland and ultimately the western suburbs. That was chosen over another, more logistically challenging route that would have traveled north from the Olson Highway up Penn Avenue, then west on West Broadway toward North Memorial Medical Center.

“Bottineau only has two stations in north Minneapolis,” Peter Wagenius, the mayor’s chief policy aide, told a gathering Tuesday evening. “And two stations in the middle of a highway isn’t usually the way economic development and job growth happens.”

That’s why the city [pushed for the streetcar study](#), as well as an examination of new rapid bus service on Penn, Fremont and Emerson avenues. The most likely to be completed in the near future is the Penn Avenue rapid bus line, a new Metro Transit concept rolling out on Snelling Avenue this year, which is tentatively expected to be constructed in 2017.

A rapid bus line would feature fewer stops, preboarding payment, real-time arrival information at stops and traffic signal priority. Streetcar lines have similar amenities, but feature light rail-like vehicles running on tracks in mixed traffic.

### **Higher streetcar costs**

According to the study, a West Broadway rapid bus line would cost about \$40 million to build and \$5.5 million annually to operate. The streetcar, meanwhile, would cost \$229 million and \$9.6 million to operate.

The streetcar would also serve 900 fewer riders than the rapid bus by 2040, the study found, partly because only the bus would extend to the Bottineau line stop in Robbinsdale.

The proposed streetcar route ends at North Memorial Medical Center because of funding constraints and recent road reconstructions in Robbinsdale, Metro Transit staff said Tuesday. The shorter streetcar route also requires maintaining more regular bus service, which also affected ridership.

The lack of available funding for streetcars has drawn concern from officials in the past. “I think this has crossed the line into crazy,” Hennepin County Commissioner Mike Opat said at a meeting in August. “We’re going to show pictures of a streetcar and lots of great buildings around it and a development scenario around West Broadway without any plan to pay for it.”

But Metropolitan Council Member Gary Cunningham, a leader of the West Broadway study, dismissed the funding skepticism at Tuesday’s meeting.



“I know there are people out there that say, ‘Well, where are you going to get the money and all this kind of stuff?’” Cunningham said. “But I actually think the people of north Minneapolis, where I grew up ... we can dream about what the future could be.”

### **Other streetcar priorities**

If a streetcar is selected as the study’s preferred transit mode, it would not be Minneapolis’ first priority for constructing a streetcar line.

#### [West Broadway Study Area](#)

The city is already redirecting property taxes from several new developments — including downtown’s Nic on 5th and 4Marq projects — to help pay for a streetcar line on Nicollet Avenue.

And those funds would only cover about \$60 million of the \$200 million Nicollet Avenue streetcar.

“In essence, with [the West Broadway study] we’re asking the question: When the Nicollet-Central streetcar is built, presuming people like it, what might we do next?” Wagenius said. “Is it automatically assumed that we extend that line to the northeast and to the south? Or could we go in this direction?”

It remains unclear if a streetcar or rapid bus will be recommended for West Broadway. Supporters of streetcars believe they will attract more economic development.

“While developers generally believe both streetcar and BRT [bus rapid transit] could positively affect the corridor’s development trajectory, 6 of 9 developers interviewed believe a streetcar would be more transformative,” said an August memo drafted by consultants SRF Consulting Group for the study.

Catherine Fleming, a member of the community advisory committee at Tuesday’s meeting, was not convinced.

“I’m neither an opponent or proponent of the streetcar. I don’t see any solid evidence that it’s provided any additional economic development in the areas where it’s been,” Fleming said. “However, having said that, I think it’s aesthetically pleasing. It would give a sense of class to this area, which it doesn’t have right now. So I’m not opposed to it.”

She said North Side transit improvements are desperately needed, however, particularly a circulator-style neighborhood connector bus route. “We’re desperate for transit here,” she said.

Eric Roper • 612-673-1732



Twitter: @StribRoper



*Above: Members of the public at Tuesday's meeting (Eric Roper)*



## West Broadway Transit Study

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### **Insight News/ Twin Cities Daily Planet**



# Insight News/ Twin Cities Daily Planet

## Transit Improvements are coming to West Broadway

By Shaina Brassard ([Insight News](#)) | December 1, 2014

[Print](#) [Email](#)



*A modern streetcar in Portland, Oregon.*

Mass transit is an important resource to North Minneapolis residents in particular. According to recent census data, 27% of households in the area do not own a car, compared to 18% of households in Minneapolis as a whole.





Of the 200 Metro Transit bus routes, 4 routes that run on or cross West Broadway are among the 12 most popular. One of those, Route 14, travels along West Broadway between Robbinsdale and downtown Minneapolis and has approximately 6,300 weekday riders. Investments in transit infrastructure to improve travel speed, increase reliability, enhance the ride and create faster connections will benefit the thousands that already rely on transit, and make transit a more viable mode of transportation for additional residents.