

Planning has begun for an extension of METRO Orange Line south from Burnsville to the Kenrick Avenue park and ride in Lakeville. Station locations, routing, costs, and implementation timeline will be refined as part of this upcoming work.

## Relationship to the Orange Line Project

The METRO Orange Line is a 17-mile planned highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line that will connect Minneapolis, Richfield, Bloomington, and Burnsville along I-35W. The Orange Line will provide frequent, all-day service in both directions, seven days a week. The Orange Line is currently in engineering and design, with construction beginning in 2017. BRT service is planned to open in 2019. As proposed, the Orange Line Extension (OLX) concept would add six miles and stations to the line.

Although related, OLX work within Metro Transit will require new funding in order to staff and implement the project. Any scope addition of to the base Orange Line project significantly jeopardizes the project schedule, progress on environmental work, funding plan, and competitiveness for federal Small Starts funding. The plan for OLX, a transitway improvement project, depends on the current Orange Line project moving forward with MnDOT construction occurring in 2017. Scope addition issues include the following items:

- The Orange Line began environmental work in September 2014, the project's documented categorical exclusion (DCE) is on track for a May 2016 completion. Scope or geography changes would restart the environmental process, setting the Orange Line back 14 months. The 2016 OLX planning public engagement process will help inform the existing project concept, providing agreement on the locally-preferred scope components prior to beginning OLX environmental work.
- Over \$36M has already been committed to the Orange Line project from the State of Minnesota, Hennepin County, the Counties Transit Improvement Board, Metropolitan Council and federal government. It is problematic to change the scope and geography of the project after funding agreements and contracts are in place. However, project partners are exploring a separate funding path for a quicker implementation of OLX.
- The Orange Line engineering contract, which was awarded on November 18, 2015, does not include any scope, schedule, or funding for OLX engineering. OLX engineering will begin after the project plan is adopted.
- MnDOT is currently conducting a concept study for a Lakeville MnPASS extension. This analysis will be coordinated with OLX planning to prevent either redundant or conflicting transit investments in this area.
- There are many other federal and local New Starts and Small Starts transit projects competing for the same federal funding as the Orange Line. Any delay in schedule could jeopardize competitiveness for the Orange Line project. It is expected that OLX would be funded with a mix of federal and local money, and would not need to go through a multi-year Small Starts process.

## Scope Assumptions

The Orange Line Extension project concept is loosely defined, with a strong need to develop a project plan to gather consensus from the public and policy makers about the exact location of stations and guideway improvements. For cost estimating purposes, Metro Transit assumes the OLX concept includes the following components:

- Orange Line terminal extended south to Lakeville Kenrick Park and Ride with potential surface parking expansion;
- One new station at Burnsville Center on existing public right-of-way;
- \$9.2 million capital improvement project, \$2.7 million additional annual operations; and
- 1,000 additional average weekday riders (includes 150 riders moving from Red Line, and 300 riders moving from Route 467).

At current growth rates, Metro Transit estimates Lakeville Kenrick parking usage will reach the facility's current 750-space capacity in the early 2020s. Proposed surface lot spaces would satisfy predicted demand through 2045. Future updates to the Metro Transit park-and-ride model will inform revisions to this estimate.

## Scoping Issues to Be Resolved During Planning

- Environmental documentation. The extension is a separate project and would be covered by a separate environmental document, but close timing of the two processes could be seen by federal stakeholders and/or the public as segmentation of corridor environmental work.
- Burnsville Access. Burnsville Center access to OLX would be provided via transfers from MVTA service and walk-up connections through Burnsville Center property and along local streets. There are currently no sidewalks along the proposed extension route. There has been no planning for building or leasing parking in this area to date.
- Routing. The alignment to/from I-35W to a station at or near Burnsville Center requires further study.
- Runningway. MnPass Lanes are not present in the extension area, resulting in a gap in BRT runningway. This is currently under study by MnDOT.
- Parking. Surface or structured parking expansion at Lakeville Kenrick requires site identification, if parking expansion will be necessary.

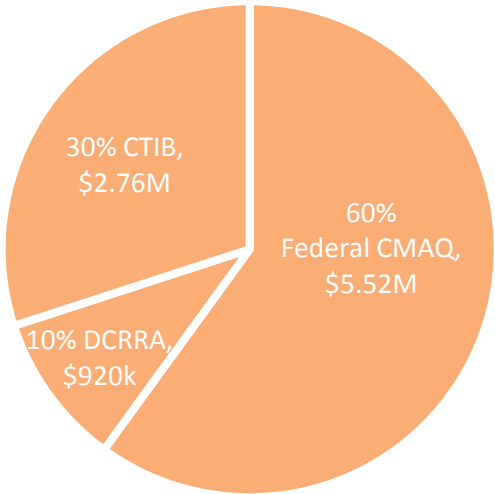
## Estimated Capital Costs and Funding Participation

The Orange Line Extension has a preliminary estimated capital cost of \$9.2 million. Funding for the capital project is anticipated through Dakota County Regional Railroad Authority, Counties Transit Improvement Board, and locally-awarded federal funding sources.

| Description  | Capital Cost (millions) |
|--|-------------------------|
| BRT Vehicles   | \$3.7                   |
| Burnsville Center Station  | \$1.75                  |
| Corridor-wide systems work   | \$0.75                  |
| Lakeville parking expansion (Assumes surface spaces on existing public ROW)        | \$1.250                 |
| Unallocated contingency  | \$0.75                  |
| <b>Estimated OLX Construction/Systems Subtotal</b>                                 | <b>\$8.2</b>            |
| Soft Costs: planning, environmental documentation, design, construction management | \$1.0                   |
| <b>Estimated OLX Capital Project Total</b>   | <b>\$9.2</b>            |

The Orange Line Extension is not currently included in the Counties Transit Improvement Board Program of Projects. CTIB participation would require inclusion of the extension project in future program updates considered by the CTIB Board. In addition, a minimum 10% local share (DCRRA) is required.

A federal grant may provide up to 60% of capital project funding in program year 2020 or 2021. These funds are allocated locally by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). Current plans call for a regional solicitation for 2020-2021 federal funds in 2016, with funding decisions in 2017. Other funding sources may be required if TAB does not select the OLX grant application for funding.



**Estimated Operating Costs**

Depending on service plan specifics, additional operating costs estimated for OLX range from \$1.5 million to \$2.7 million annually. Passenger fares could offset roughly 10% of this cost, and remaining costs are anticipated to be funded 50% State and 50% CTIB. State and CTIB funds are not currently identified for OLX operations.

**Kenrick Park and Ride History**

2009: Opening of Kenrick park and ride in Lakeville with 12 trips per day on Route 467

2013: Increased service to Lakeville on Route 467 to 28 trips per day; route 467 exceeds 1,000 riders per day

2015-2016: Increase express service including midday, Route 467 ridership projected at 1,140 in 2016.

## Potential Implementation Timeline

2015 -2016: Design Orange Line for opening-day success and compatibility with OLX, OLX scoping and funding identification

2016-2017: Planning for OLX implementation, begin environmental documentation, begin land use planning

2018 or 2019: Engineering (one year design phase, following environmental work)

2020 or 2021: Construction (one year depending on program year awarded)

2022: Begin revenue service

## Project Implementation Checklist

|    | Task                                      | Timeframe           | Proposed Lead |
|----|---|---------------------|---------------|
| 1  | Cooperative Funding Agreement             | Jan 2016            | DC & MT       |
| 2  | CTIB Readiness Evaluation                 | Jan – Feb 2016      | Metro Transit |
| 3  | CTIB Program of Projects                  | April – July 2016   | Metro Transit |
| 4  | 2020-21 Regional Solicitation Application | Summer 2016         | Metro Transit |
| 5  | Public Engagement Plan                    | May 2016            | DC & MT       |
| 6  | OLX Project Plan                          | Jun 2016 – Dec 2016 | DC & MT       |
| 7  | NEPA Path and Process                     | 2016 – 2017         | Metro Transit |
| 8  | Transitway station area land use planning | 2017 – 2022         | DC & Cities   |
| 9  | Engineering and Design                    | 2018 – 2019         | Metro Transit |
| 10 | Construction                              | 2020 – 2021         | Metro Transit |
| 11 | Transit Service Planning                  | 2021                | MT & MVTA     |
| 12 | Revenue Service                           | 2022                | Metro Transit |
| 13 | Public Engagement Process                 | 2016 – 2022         | DC & MT       |
| 14 | Funding                                   | 2016 – 2020         | DC & MT       |

1. Cooperative funding agreement between Dakota County Regional Rail Authority and Metropolitan Council
  - Define roles and confirm the lead agency or agencies for each project task.
  - Transfer funding to Metro Transit to fund project activities.
2. CTIB Readiness Evaluation
  - Complete detailed financial worksheets based on preliminary estimate of OLX Capital Costs
  - Request that OLX would be a Transitway Improvement Project, defined as “improvements to an existing CTIB Transitway that increase ridership, safety, efficiency or capacity of the Transitway.”
  - This path assumes the first phase of Orange Line is a built project. Agreement from CTIB staff and policymakers on this assumption is critical.
3. CTIB Program of Projects
  - Secure Dakota County resolution of support for project.
  - Request to CTIB incorporate OLX into the Program of Projects as a Transitway Improvement Project.
  - Secure Dakota County and CTIB funding commitments.
    - Metro Transit completes CTIB Risk Assessment & Mitigation Plan, an annual requirement prior to any capital grants being requested.
4. Application for 2020-21 Regional Solicitation Transit Expansion grant
  - Incorporate project into Metropolitan Council Transportation Improvement Plan.

- Metro Transit leads application for the Regional Solicitation, with support from Dakota County.
  - Grants are awarded in 2018.
5. Public Engagement Plan
    - Form an interagency OLX Technical Advisory Committee.
    - Engagement will help raise the visibility of the project in the public realm, understand the community needs and project goals, and guide the project plan process to be consistent with local preferences.
    - Determine the role, if any, of the 35W Solutions Alliance, or explore the role of a new Corridor Management Committee or Policy Advisory Committee.
  6. OLX Project Plan
    - Define the purpose and need for the project.
    - Study alternatives for station location and alignment options.
    - Identify preferred station locations, alignment, fleet, and other scope issues.
    - Refine detailed capital cost estimates by standard cost category.
    - Develop a preliminary service plan and refine operations cost estimate.
    - Solicit public input and host a formal comment period on the plan document.
    - Metropolitan Council adoption, and refinement of locally-preferred alternative in the Transportation Policy Plan as needed.
  7. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Path and Process
    - Based on the project plan scope, submit a project description to the Federal Transit Administration in order to receive a determination on the NEPA path.
    - Complete all environmental work per federal and state standards.
  8. Transitway station area land use planning
    - Engage cities of Burnsville and Lakeville in transitway area land use planning, per Thrive 2040 requirements.
  9. Engineering and Design
    - Complete conceptual and final design of all capital elements, including systems and technology.
  10. Construction
    - Advance all capital construction.
  11. Transit Service Planning
    - Engage City of Lakeville regarding interest in and viability of a local transit system.
    - Engage public on local service connections to the Orange Line Extension.
    - Better understand Dakota County transit markets and relationship of the Orange Line, OLX, and Lakeville express service.
  12. Revenue Service
    - Open for revenue service from downtown Minneapolis to Lakeville Kenrick Station.
  13. Public Engagement (ongoing)
    - A well-informed and engaged public throughout the project implementation process will make for a stronger project and more useful transit system for all.
  14. Funding (ongoing)
    - Dakota County and Metro Transit will work together to pursue funding opportunities for the project.



# Orange Line

## FUTURE EXTENSION

