

APPENDIX C: AGENCY COMMENTS

Formal written comments on the *D Line Station Plan* were submitted by the following agencies or organizations.

- City of Richfield (October 24, 2017 and January 11, 2018)
- City of Minneapolis (March 17, 2018)



October 24, 2017

MAYOR
PAT ELLIOTT

CITY COUNCIL

EDWINA GARCIA

MICHAEL HOWARD

MARIA REGAN GONZALEZ

SIMON TRAUTMANN

CITY MANAGER
STEVEN DEVICH

Katie Roth, Project Manager
Metro Transit
BRT/Small Starts Project Office
560 North 6th Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55411

RE: Metro Transit D Line Project

Dear Ms. Roth:

The City of Richfield is excited about the future construction of the new D Line. We welcome the improved service to our residents and anticipate an emergence of new transit users with the future enhancements. We understand that providing limited stops is what makes the line faster; however, the City supports Metro Transit's initial design of Portland Avenue's four transit stops as presented in 2013. The City believes stops at each of the following locations are essential for the success of the D Line's service through Richfield along Portland Avenue:

- 66th Street
- 70th Street
- 73rd Street
- 77th Street

Our goal is that the improvements along this corridor will enhance the livability and quality of life for Richfield residents by providing improved connectivity and mobility options. It would be a true oversight if the stations were located over 0.5 miles apart resulting in an underserved community.

Finally, as you are likely aware, the Richfield Fire Station is located on Portland Avenue at 68th Street. This means that every call our emergency services respond to requires travelling along Portland Avenue. For this reason, the future location of the stations and the bus drivers along this route must make it their top priority to clear the medians when emergency vehicles are present on the corridor.

We wish you success with this planning process and look forward to working with you on the implementation of the project.

Sincerely,

Pat Elliott
Mayor

Steven L. Devich
City Manager

CITY OF RICHFIELD

Memorandum

DATE: January 11, 2018

TO: Scott Janowiak, Metro Transit

FROM: Matt Brillhart

SUBJECT: Draft *D Line Station Plan* – City staff comments

City of Richfield staff is concerned with the lack of a station at 70th Street. The resulting gap (0.9 miles) between the stations at 66th Street and 73rd Street exceeds Metro Transit's half-mile spacing guidelines. A station at Portland Avenue & 70th Street was included in the 2012 *Arterial Transitway Corridor Study (ATCS)*. The City's preference is that the Portland Avenue & 70th Street station be described in the *Station Plan* as being "deferred", rather than being excluded entirely. The City is aware that current bus ridership to be relatively low along this portion of the existing Route 5. While the existing land use near 70th Street is primarily low density single-family residential and is not currently designated for higher density redevelopment, there are two elementary schools located on 70th Street, approximately 1/3-mile to the east (Richfield Dual Language and Richfield STEM). Additionally, buffered bike lanes were recently added to 70th Street, improving multimodal connections to a potential station at Portland Avenue & 70th Street.

Once the D Line service is operational, local bus service on the Route 5 is proposed to be reduced to 30-minute headways, representing a significant reduction in service for any riders not within walking distance of D Line stations at 66th Street or 73rd Street. Given Metro Transit's recent and ongoing budget instability due to actions taken by the Legislature, the City is concerned that local bus service along Portland Avenue could see its frequency cut back even further or eliminated entirely as a result of system-wide service cuts. Should these service cuts take place, the addition of a D Line station at 70th Street should be reconsidered.

City of Minneapolis Comments on D Line BRT Draft Station Plan: 2/14/2018

The City of Minneapolis appreciates the opportunity to comment on the D Line Draft Station Plan. It is understood that additional opportunities exist to modify the Station Area Plan, and City staff look forward to working with Metro Transit staff to advance the final station area plan.

Station location and spacing considerations

Appendix A of the draft plan includes a summary of 14 stations within Minneapolis that were included in the 2012 Arterial Transitway Corridor Study but ultimately not recommended in the draft plan. The City of Minneapolis generally supports Metro Transit's effort for consolidating stations in order to provide a balance between access and service. However, the following comments relate to "no build" recommendations that leave a greater than one-half mile distance between stations, or which involve a Neighborhood Commercial Node. The City acknowledges that the goal of this plan is for an average of one-half mile station spacing, and that some variation to this distance is inevitable due to specific site characteristics.

- **47th Ave N at Osseo Rd:** The City requests that Metro Transit provide more supporting information on the alternatives to the 47th Ave N at Osseo Rd station and the difficulty of siting a station equidistant between the two adjacent stations. Several alternative locations for this station were considered with the previous C Line BRT station plan, though ultimately no C Line station was recommended in this segment of Osseo Rd. The C Line station plan seems to indicate that these alternatives would be revisited with the D Line station plan. However, it is unclear from the D Line draft station plan whether further exploration or engagement of the alternatives took place. The City recommends providing a statement summarizing the results of any additional analysis and engagement for a station at 47th Ave N and Osseo Rd. The City also recommends that Metro Transit look for future opportunities to include a station in this segment, if surrounding land use were to significantly change.
- **7th St N and 11th Ave N:** The City requests that Metro Transit provide more supporting information on the alternatives to the 7th St N at 11th Ave N location and the difficulty of siting a station equidistant between Olson Memorial Highway and Plymouth Avenue North. The City would like to emphasize the high ridership in this area, and note that additional transit service alone is not a sufficient justification for a "no build" recommendation in this segment. The City recommends that Metro Transit provide a statement summarizing the results of any additional analysis and engagement for a station at 7th St N at 11th Ave N or alternative locations. The City also recommends that Metro Transit explore whether a future station in this segment could result in increased ridership or service connections, including access to routes on I-94.
- **48th St E & Chicago Ave S:** The City recommends a station within the 48th St E and Chicago Ave S business node for the following reasons:

- The City of Minneapolis defines 48th St E and Chicago Ave S as a Neighborhood Commercial Node. The large quantity and diversity of businesses as well as multifamily housing within this node make it a prime location for a station location. It is one of only two Neighborhood Commercial Nodes with “No Build” recommendations along the D Line route, the other being Chicago Ave S at 54th St E. The City believes that the quantity and diversity of businesses in this node warrant an exception to the average half-mile spacing goal within the station plan.
- The draft station plan states that parking considerations were an additional factor for a “no build” recommendation at 48th St E and Chicago Ave S. The City manages curbside uses, including street parking and loading. The City’s Complete Streets Policy supports prioritizing the public right of way for people who walk, bike and take transit over those that choose to drive motor vehicles. Transit extends the range of travel for people when they walk or bicycle, provides greater efficiencies and operational benefits than motor vehicles, and is accessible to those unable to walk, bicycle, or drive. The City supports a D Line station at the 48th St E and Chicago Ave S business node and believes the benefits to transit service at this node outweigh the potential impacts to street parking in the node. City staff note that mitigation strategies discussed within the Draft Station Plan would minimize the overall number of parking spots needed for a D Line Station at this node.
- The City would like to express that including a D Line BRT station within the existing 48th St E business node would support City goals for implementing infrastructure, public services and community assets that support business and commerce.
- **54th St E & Chicago Ave S:** The City supports Metro Transit’s recommendation to not build a station at this location due to the quarter-mile proximity to the 56th St E station, multiple existing driveways that conflict with station siting, and the limited number of businesses in this commercial node.
- **60th St E & Chicago Ave S:** The City supports Metro Transit’s recommendation to not build a station at this location due to the quarter-mile proximity to the Portland Ave S at 60th St E station and the surrounding low-density residential land use.

Additional station siting comments

The City of Minneapolis acknowledges the general station platform locations identified along the future Emerson Ave N, Fremont Ave N and 7th Ave N protected bikeway alignments. The City requests that Metro Transit explore station designs that incorporate innovative solutions for reducing bicycle and transit conflicts in key locations along these priority bikeway corridors.

Additional staff comments

The City of Minneapolis is committed to partnering with Metro Transit on the D Line BRT, as evidenced by its participation on the Technical Advisory Committee and through its coordinated effort to improve pedestrian access and safety along the Emerson/Fremont segment of the corridor. The City will also look to further coordination and support through final design and construction of the D Line BRT.