Meet the METRO B Line

Longfellow Community Council
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Route 21/53: Positives and Negatives

Positives:
- 10,000 weekday rides on Route 21 (2nd highest ridership). 700 daily on Route 53.
- In some places: Route 21 has 20% of people in vehicles while being less than 2% of total vehicles.
- Connects to important community destinations and other major transit routes.

Negatives:
- Average Route 21 spends 50% of its time stopped.
- Average speeds can be as slow as 8mph.
- Ridership has been declining.
METRO B Line Goals

- Provide faster, more reliable trip times in the Route 21 corridor
- Improve transit experience at stop and on vehicles
- Expand equitable access to destinations
- Provide efficient connections to the existing and planned transit network

B Line would use METRO Gold Line stations in downtown St. Paul. The potential for B Line routing to downtown St. Paul will be studied in 2019.
What is the METRO B Line?

- Planned 4th arterial bus rapid transit line
- Substantial replacement of Route 21, region’s second busiest
- 8.2-mile corridor (12.6 miles with potential extension to downtown St. Paul)
- Service every 10 minutes, approximately 20% faster than existing Route 21
- Targeted opening 2023, pending full project funding
- $26 million identified to date; Budget to be updated following corridor definition
Route 21 (Today): Front-door boarding, all fares collected on board

B Line: All-door boarding, all fares collected at station
Arterial BRT Stations

What do stations look like?

A Pylon markers help riders identify stations from a distance.

B Real-time NexTrip displays provide bus information, and on-demand annunciators speak this information for people with low vision.

C Utility boxes near station areas house necessary communications and electrical equipment.

D Shelters provide weather protection and feature on-demand heaters and integrated lighting. Shelter sizes will vary based on customer demand (small shown here).

E Ticket machines and fare card validators collect all payment before customers board the bus.

F Emergency telephones provide a direct connection to Metro Transit security. Stations also feature security cameras.

G Stations feature trash and recycling containers.

H Platform edges are marked with a cast-iron textured warning strip to keep passengers safely away from the curb while the bus approaches. Many stations also feature raised curbs for easier boarding.

I Platform areas are distinguished by a dark gray concrete pattern.

J Some stations have sidewalk-level light fixtures to provide a safe, well-lit environment. Fixtures will match existing lights in the surrounding area.

K Benches at stations provide a place to sit.

L Stations have bike parking loops.
What makes BRT faster?

- Limited stops, frequent service
  - Currently ~1/8 mile between stops
  - B Line stations will be spaced every third to half mile on average
  - Service about every 10 minutes throughout most of the day and evening

- Pay before boarding, board through all doors

- Curb bumpout bus stops

- Transit advantages
  - Transit signal priority
  - Queue jump lanes
  - Bus approach lanes
  - Dedicated bus-only lanes
Upcoming Planning Questions

- Should the B Line extend to downtown St. Paul? If so, which alignment should it use around Midway area?
- At which intersections should each future station be located?
- At which side of the intersection should each platform be located?
- Where should stops be placed to best balance speed and access?
- Which locations should be selected for implementation of transit advantages?