

Better Bus Route 74

Engagement Summary

May 2026

Background

Route 74 is a local bus route providing service between 46th Street in south Minneapolis, Highland Park, downtown St. Paul, and Maplewood.

Metro Transit's Better Bus Route program improves the customer experience through better accessibility at the bus stop and simplifying the route alignment and schedule. Proposed changes include:

- Consolidating bus stops for up to quarter-mile spacing
- Changes to simplify the route alignment and add service where it's most used, including:
 - Restructuring the route east of Hazel St.
 - Discontinuing 74G, 74K, and 74S service, with alternate service available on Route 215
 - Starting and ending all trips at Sun Ray Transit Center
 - Discontinuing service at Wilder Hi-Rise via Jefferson Ave., and Edgcumbe Rd., with alternate service available on Route 83
- Expanding the no-parking zone around select stops to ensure buses can fully pull to the curb at the bus stop
- Improving service to every 15 minutes most of the day on weekdays and Saturdays
- Installing concrete pads to improve accessibility for customers
- Installing new shelters at qualifying bus stops

Purpose and goal

The purpose of this public engagement effort was to seek feedback on proposed changes to Route 74. Among the items for consideration:

- Education about the benefits of the Better Bus Route program
- Understanding how proposed bus stop and route changes would affect customers
- Identifying infrastructure, community spaces, organizations, or other factors that would change decisions around stop locations



Methods of engagement

The target audience was customers, especially those that used the stops that are proposed for removal or consolidation. Outreach methods included:

- Rider Alerts sent to Route 74 subscribers
- Rider Alerts with a QR code to the project website were posted at bus stops proposed for removal
- Emails to current Go-To Card and mobile app users
- On-board outreach was done, but significantly reduced due to the federal immigration enforcement activity throughout the metro area in February

Communications

Date	Activity
2/13	Website posted with information about Better Bus Route project and link to survey
2/18	Electronic Rider Alert message went out to 347 subscribers via text or email
2/20	Bus stops signs posted with survey information in English, Spanish, and Somali
2/24	Email sent to 1,772 registered Go-To Card holders
3/10	Email with survey information sent to 5 neighborhood associations
4/16	Tabled at Highland District Council Annual Meeting

Survey respondents

Over the course of six weeks, we received 291 survey responses and eight emailed comments. Nearly 60% (170) of survey respondents provided additional written comments about Route 74 and other topics. The demographics of customers surveyed were self-identified as follows:

Race/Ethnicity	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%
Asian or Asian American	4.47%
Black, African, African American	4.81%
Hispanic, Latinx, Latino	2.75%
White	66.32%
Other race, ethnicity, or origin	<1%
Did not answer	25%

Age	Percent
Under 18	2.41%
18-24	9.28%
25-34	23.37%
35-44	18.90%
45-54	6.53%
55-64	12.71%
65-74	3.09%
75-84	1.72%
Did not answer	22%

Of 291 surveys collected, 211 responded to the question about disability status. Roughly 41% of those who responded indicated having a disability or impairment.

Eighty-four percent of survey respondents take Metro Transit at least a few times a week, including 50% who are daily riders. Roughly 94% of respondents are Route 74 customers, and 6% ride another route affected by the proposed stop changes.

The top three zip codes represented were 55105 (21%), 55102 (18%), and 55106 (17%). These represent several St. Paul neighborhoods including Mac-Groveland, West 7th, and Payne-Phalen, respectively.

Summary and analysis

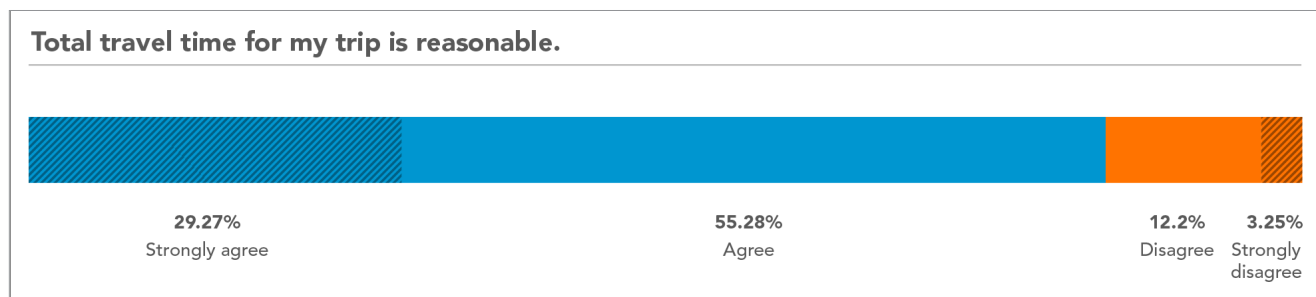
Overall, customers were generally happy with the performance of Route 74. More than 75% thought it was reliable and fast enough to meet their needs. However, several customers viewed the frequency of the route as deficient.

Specific to the changes being proposed through the Better Bus Route project, we received 170 written comments about 21 different bus stops. The stops with the most mentions were Randolph & Kenneth near St. Catherine University, and Randolph & Brimhall Street near Snelling Avenue.

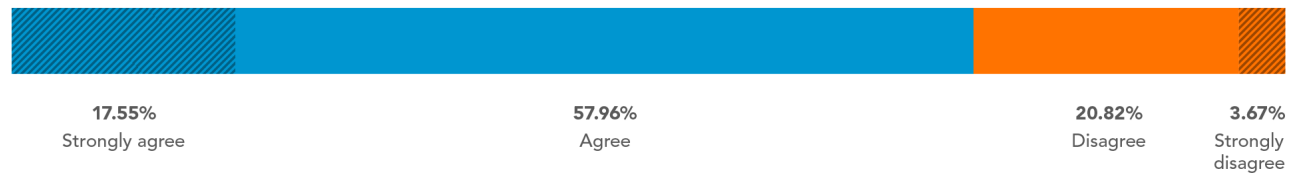
Finally, we also received many comments about other aspects of Route 74 including requests for greater frequency and connections to other routes. While these may not be specifically addressed through the Better Bus Route project, they can help inform future decision-making on Route 74 and other local bus service.

Survey Data

Respondents had a favorable view of Route 74 service, with 84% agreeing that the total travel time was reasonable, and 75% answering that Route 74 buses arrive on time.



Route 74 buses arrive on time.



Respondents also reported positive responses on clarity of route (89% agree or strongly agree) and placement of stops (83% agree or strongly agree).

It is clear where a trip on Route 74 will take me.



Route 74 stops are well-placed.

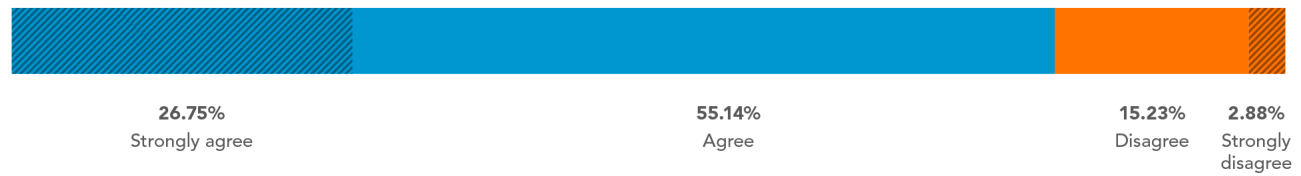


While over 80% of respondents indicated that Route 74 operates early enough and late enough for their needs, about 37% said Route 74 does not operate with enough frequency. Increasing frequency on weekdays and Saturdays is one goal of the project.

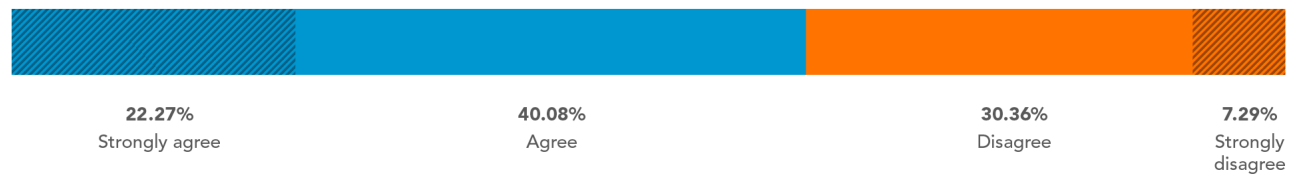
Route 74 runs early enough to meet my needs.



Route 74 runs late enough into the evening for my use.



Route 74 buses are frequent enough to meet my needs.



Customer priorities

58% of respondents told us they prefer a shorter walk or roll to a stop over a faster trip. There was also a slight preference for a bus that is more likely to be on time (55%) over a shorter walk or roll to a bus stop (45%).

Most respondents (64%) would be willing to walk or roll at least five additional minutes to a new bus stop if their current stop were removed. For reference, walking one long block (1/8 mile) takes about 2.5 minutes at a casual pace.

How we are using what we heard

Transit planners are using this feedback to examine the proposed stop locations prior to finalizing their recommendations. Once finalized, Route 74 changes will go into effect in mid-August. Based on public engagement feedback, the stop at Randolph Avenue and Kenneth Street will be retained.

Appendix A: Sample quotes from survey responses

Stop spacing changes

- Anything that makes this bus faster is good in my view, especially stop spacing along West 7th St. The stops that are before traffic lights can be particularly frustrating, since the bus usually doesn't make it through the light when someone gets on there.
- Plenty of students, staff, faculty, alumni, and guests rely on this stop to get on and off campus. The stop at Prior & Randolph may look close enough on a map, but it's very difficult to access

for folks on campus. It's just the nature of how campus is laid out. The Kenneth stop, on the other hand, is easy to access because it's right off a paved campus sidewalk and next to a main gated entrance.

Frequency

- I would be thrilled for the 74 to run every 15 minutes on weekends. It is very stressful to try to time when I leave the market to when I get to the bus stop - especially when it's very cold, very hot, or raining.
- If a bus is more frequent, I will walk farther. If a bus is more frequent, I will deal with transfers. If a bus is more frequent, I don't care as much about how long the total trip time takes or the stop amenities.

Other sample comments

- The A-Line on Snelling has plenty of buses & is mostly on time, but the connection to the 74 at Snelling & Randolph heading towards downtown St Paul is a nightmare! ...We commuters must be able to rely on frequent buses that run on time.
- There needs to be some way for westbound 74 routes to communicate with westbound 46 routes. Especially during evening rush hour, even though there should be a transfer window of 5-12 minutes from the 74 to the 46, it's often a stressful transfer with seconds to spare and even frequent times when the 46 is pulling out as the 74 is pulling in. With the 46 being the primary westbound bus option at the 46th St Station, it makes sense to make sure these transfers are easier to create longer east/west transit option in south Minneapolis/St Paul.