Network Now
Public In-Person Workshops
Sophia Ginis | Director of Community Affairs
Cyndi Harper | Manager of Route Planning, Service Development
What is Network Now?
Setting the course for the next five years

- Metro Transit network and level of service over the next five years
  - priorities
  - scenarios
- Framework for decision-making recognizing *constraints*
Over the next year we will:

• Conduct a regional discussion of values and principles for transit service
• Tell the story of adaptation and resilience in transit service, 2020-2022
• Identify plans for improving transit service and service changes through 2027
Project phases

Engagement on Values & Principles

Confirm the network of today

Propose how we adapt our service

Recommend plan

Through early summer 2023 → Summer/fall 2023 → Winter 2023 → Spring 2024
What is included

• Changes to existing route service
• Frequency or span of existing and planned METRO lines
• Discontinued service and facility closures
• New or redesigned routes
• Speed and Reliability actions

What is not included

• Changes to the construction or alignment of planned METRO lines
• Northstar commuter rail
• New capital projects
• Fare policy changes
• Projects outside Metro Transit service area
• Long-term or regional planning
• Transportation Policy Plan revisions
How has transit changed since March 2020?
2020 COVID 19 response

• Adjusted to State and industry guidance
  – Followed executive orders
  – Operational changes
  – Required face masks

• Balanced equity, health and travel needs
  – Essential trips only
  – Prioritized service for people most reliant on transit
Service changes due to COVID-19
Spring 2020 – Summer 2021

Spring 2020
- 62 routes suspended
- Bus & rail service reduced by 40%
- Overnight service discontinued
- Riders on-board limited to 25% capacity
- Rear-door boarding and no on-board fare collection

Fall 2020
- LRT returns to every 10 minutes
- Local bus back to 90-100% of former service levels

Summer 2021
- Governor’s peacetime emergency order ends
- 11 routes restored
- Service improved throughout the region
A new challenge: workforce shortage

When yellow line is higher than red line, trips are missed
Service changes due to workforce issues
Fall 2021 – Fall 2022

Fall 2021
- LRT reduced
- 15 routes suspended
- Orange Line opens
-5% system reduction

Spring 2022
- Suspended low ridership route branches
- Reduced frequency on core transit network
-4% system reduction

Summer 2022
- Reduced frequency on 9 routes
- Restored some Route 467 trips

Fall 2022
- 4 routes and 8 branches suspended
- D Line opens
- Frequency and span reductions
-8% system reduction
Transit Market Areas: places transit can be most successful
Guiding principles for service changes

• Maintain the reliability of our scheduled service
• Identify service where customers have an alternative
• Minimize ridership loss
• Minimize impacts on low-income communities and communities of color
• Balance network frequency and coverage
Today’s transit network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL RIDES</th>
<th>38.8 million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE WEEKDAY RIDESHIP</td>
<td>118,609</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>22,999,396</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE WEEKDAY</td>
<td>72,885</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUS</th>
<th>6,954,678</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLUE LINE</td>
<td>5,411,954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRT</td>
<td>3,351,537</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORTHSTAR</td>
<td>77,077</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROUTES</th>
<th>159</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95 ACTIVE, 64 SUSPENDED</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN-SERVICE MILES</th>
<th>22.9 million</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>31 CORE LOCAL</th>
<th>47 SUPPORTING LOCAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 BUS RAPID TRANSIT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 LIGHT RAIL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 COMMUTER RAIL</td>
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= Temporarily suspended as of 12/31/22
Significant changes to supply and demand in transit

• Supply is the amount of service provided
  – Service hours operated by route type, demographics, geography

• Demand is reflected in ridership and in changes to the transit market
  – Ridership by type of service, time of day, day of the week
  – Impacts of telecommuting, especially on commuter routes
  – Park and ride usage has plummeted
Service changes by route type

- **BRT**: Light decrease in August 2019, slight increase in March 2023.
- **Commuter Express & Northstar**: Significant increase in August 2019, slight decrease in March 2023.
- **Light Rail**: Minor decrease in April 2019, significant decrease in March 2023.
- **Local Bus**: Significant increase in April 2019, slight decrease in March 2023.
The amount of service dropped a lot in the suburbs and increased slightly in core areas.
Ridership dropped significantly but is growing again.
Ridership is not as concentrated in traditional rush hours
Ridership now varies more by day of week
Why have commuter routes changed so much?

- Role of telecommuting
- Parking costs and availability/ease of driving
- Riders tend to have other alternatives
- Small share of overall transit riders
Underutilized transit stops and facilities

- 11,000 signed stops
  - 1,500 have all service suspended
- 60+ park and rides of varying capacity
  - 17 have all service suspended
  - Another 10 have local service only
How to participate
We want to hear from you!

- Take the [survey](public) (public)
  - The feedback we receive will help inform a decision-making framework
  - The framework will help us make service decisions for the next five years
Interactive Activity

• Act as a bus service planner for Metro Transit

• Round 1: Eliminate 2 bus trips out of 10 options
  – Result: The route still exists but buses come less often

• Document the results
  – Which 2 trips did you eliminate
  – Why you chose those trips
  – Takeaways from the activity
Information about trips

- Service type: core local, BRT, suburban local or commuter
- Ridership: high, medium or low
- Distance to closest alternative route
- Average rider income: high, medium or low
- Number of trips per hour
Types of service

• **Commuter** express service runs between suburbs and downtown or other significant destinations where parking is limited and expensive. Runs primarily in the rush hours. Often supported by park and rides. Limited stops between the residential areas served and the primary destination.

• **Bus Rapid Transit** serves Minneapolis/St. Paul and inner-ring suburbs. Runs all-day in both directions to serve multiple travel purposes. Stations are generally 1/3-1/2 mile. Significant capital investments provide faster trips with off-board fare payment, all-door boarding, transit advantages and extra amenities at stations.

• **Local service** runs all-day in both directions to serve multiple travel purposes. Stops are generally 1/8-1/4 mile apart.
  - **Core local** serves Minneapolis/St. Paul and first-ring suburbs
  - **Suburban local** service travels only within the suburbs
Interactive Activity

• Act as a bus service planner for Metro Transit

• Round 2: Add 3 bus trips
  – Start with all trip options again
  – You may add three of just one type of trip, two of one type and one of another, or one each of three different options

• Document the results
  – Which 3 trips did your group add?
  – Why did you choose those trips?
  – Takeaways from the activity
Project e-mail: NetworkNow@metrotransit.org

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