

Engagement Summary Phase 1

Blue Line Franklin Station Renovation Design

Project #62101

1/26/2026

The Franklin Avenue Station Redesign is a Metro Transit project focused on improving safety, accessibility, comfort, and the overall station experience for riders and the surrounding community. The station is a critical access point on the METRO Blue Line, serving nearby neighborhoods, employment centers, community destinations, and regional transit connections.

Phase 1 engagement was intended to understand how people currently use the station, identify barriers to access and comfort, and gather community priorities to inform future design concepts. Feedback collected during this phase will directly shape design principles, station improvements, and next-step alternatives for consideration.

Who did we hear from?

The project team used a mix of in-person and online engagement tools to gather feedback from station users, nearby residents, and community members. In-person workshops and the open house were promoted through direct outreach to organizations and community leaders, door-to-door flyering of neighborhood businesses and residents, and email outreach to bike and transit advocacy groups.

Recognizing the importance of Franklin Avenue Station to Indigenous and American Indian communities, the project team prioritized direct, relationship-based engagement alongside broader public outreach. Franklin Avenue Station is located within the Franklin Avenue East Cultural District, reinforcing the station's role as an important place for cultural presence, mobility, and community connection.

- 1 Community-based organization (CBO) conversations and workshops, including intentional engagement with Indigenous and American Indian community members. These sessions focused on lived experience, cultural context, and priorities related to station safety, access, comfort, and placemaking.
- 2 At pop-ups and an open house near Franklin Avenue Station, participants shared experiences related to station use, safety, accessibility, and comfort.



Photos from open house and CBO workshop



Community Conversations & Workshops
September - November, 2025
30+ participants



Open House
December 2, 2025
60 participants



Feedback survey
November - December, 2025
125 participants



Neighborhood / station area pop-ups
October 27 & 30, 2025
43 participants

What we heard in-person:

Feedback from surveys, open houses, and pop-ups was coded and thematically analyzed. The themes below reflect the most frequently mentioned topics and will inform design principles and future station concepts.

Comments categorized by theme and shown by relative emphasis across engagement activities.

Safety for users

Safety was the most consistently raised issue across all engagement activities. Participants cited concerns related to drug use, soliciting, violent behavior, and feeling unsafe at the station, particularly at night. Safety concerns were the primary reason many respondents stopped using the station, despite its convenient location.

SAFETY

Access to station

Participants identified multiple access challenges, including fencing along Franklin Avenue, unsafe or uncomfortable crossings, difficulty navigating ramps, stairs, and elevators, unsafe bike access from Franklin Avenue, and limited access from the south side of the station. Many noted that access barriers worsen safety concerns and discourage station use.

ACCESS

Comfort of use

Concerns about cleanliness, lighting, and general upkeep were frequently mentioned. Participants emphasized that improving cleanliness and comfort is essential to making the station feel safer and more welcoming.

COMFORT

Placemaking and cultural identity

Participants expressed a desire for the station to better reflect the surrounding community through public art, cultural elements, and active, welcoming spaces. Many noted that placemaking could help increase positive activity and improve perceptions of safety.

IDENTITY

Station use and activity

Some participants noted that non-transit uses of the station contribute to safety concerns, while others emphasized the importance of activating the space with more people, community resources and positive uses. Feedback reflected a range of perspectives on how best to balance these needs.

ACTIVITY

What we heard online:

The questions below were selected for this summary to show how people currently experience Franklin Avenue Station today. Together, they capture key barriers to station use, existing strengths, and opportunities to improve comfort, safety, and overall station experience. Full survey results can be found in Appendix A.

Why do you use the station less?

This question helps identify barriers that discourage station use and highlights the factors most strongly influencing people’s decisions to avoid or reduce use of the station.

“Outside of not needing it for regular commute, like many, the overall vibe and safety aspect. Regardless of anyone and time of day, they should feel safe and secure.”



What do you like about the station?

This question captures the station’s strengths and existing assets, helping identify what is working well and should be preserved or improved upon in future designs.

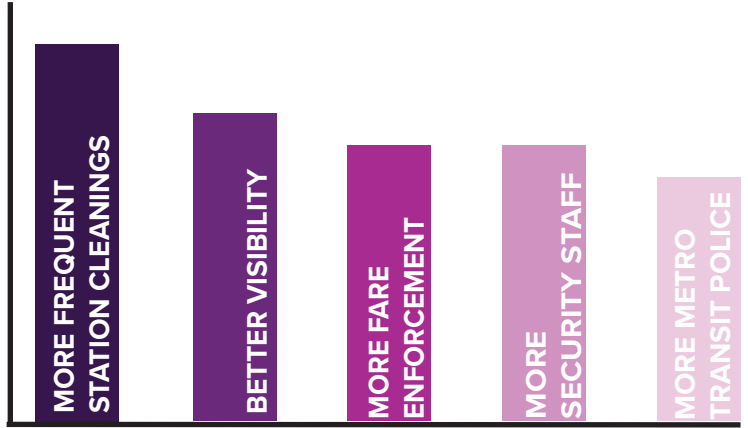
“It’s accessible from the Hiawatha LRT, so if I’m biking and want to catch a quick ride north or south, I can easily hop on the train with my bike.”



What would make you feel safer at the station?

This question gathers ideas for improvements that could enhance comfort, safety, and sense of belonging, informing strategies to create a more welcoming and inclusive station environment.

“Station is isolated and not visible, does not feel safe. Station needs more frequent cleaning.”



Rank the following accessibility improvements you would most like to see:

This question helps identify improvements that would make accessing the station easier, safer and more comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

“Walking at the intersection of Cedar Ave S feels pretty terrible here. Takes a long time to cross to the opposite corner.”



Using feedback to inform design

The project team will be using the feedback received during Phase 1 engagement to directly shape design principles, station improvements, and next-step alternatives for consideration. Community priorities, concerns and needs will be used to inform the look and feel of Franklin Avenue Station.

As the project team moves forward in developing a design for Franklin Avenue Station, 8 key takeaways from engagement which will be informing the design are as follows:

- The station should be a safe space for all people.
- The station should be clean and pleasant to use.
- Access to the station should be easy, safe and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities.
- Station improvements must prioritize the needs of the surrounding neighborhood in addition to station users.
- Improvements must be made in step with efforts to strengthen the community.
- Improvements should provide a sense of place, and promote and support cultural identity.
- There should be signage and way finding orienting transit users to landmarks, businesses, experiences and art in the neighborhood.
- The station should provide a connection to the natural landscape.

Next steps

Phase 2 engagement will begin in late winter / spring 2026. During this phase, the project team will provide a proposed design for the station to the public, and asking for feedback on ways the design can be improved to best meet the priorities and preferences of the community. Feedback will be collected online and in-person through pop-ups and larger events such as open houses.

Sign up for email updates on the project by scanning the QR code or visiting the website:
metrotransit.org/franklin



Photo from a pop-up at Pow Wow Grounds

Stay Informed Interested in the project? We'd like to hear your thoughts.



Franklin@metrotransit.org



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Below is a list of all questions asked on the online survey. For multiple choice questions, the 3 answers selected most often are shown. For open-ended questions, the 3 themes which appear the most often in community member's responses are shown.

How often do you use the Franklin Avenue Station?

- A few times a year (38%)
- A few times a month (28%)
- I no longer use the station (23%)

If you no longer use the station, or use it less, please describe what has changed.

- Safety concerns (59%)
- Station cleanliness (22%)
- Open drug use (20%)

How do you get to / from the Franklin Avenue Station? (Select all that apply)

- Bus (54%)
- Walking / rolling (53%)
- Bike, e-scooter, e-bike (30%)

Why do you use the Franklin Avenue Station? (Select all that apply)

- The station is a transfer point for me (57%)
- Access activities, shopping, community experiences near the station (40%)
- I live near the station (29%)

What do you like about the Franklin Avenue Station?

- Station location (48%)
- Ease of transfer (14%)
- Bike access (12%)

What challenges have you or someone you know faced when trying to access or use the station?

- Safety concerns (60%)
- Station cleanliness (32%)
- Open drug use (29%)

Based on time of day or night, how does your station experience change?

- Safer in the day / less safe at night (63%)
- No difference (15%)
- Never been at night (2%)

If you use Franklin Avenue to access the station, what road conditions would improve your experience?

- Remove fencing on sidewalk (34%)
- Improve sidewalk condition (14%)
- Safer road crossings (13%)

Rank the following accessibility improvements you would most like to see:

1. Safer road crossings (50%)
2. Sidewalk ramps (23%)
3. More reliable elevators (17%)

What would make you feel safer at the station? Select all that apply.

- More frequent station cleanings (96%)
- Better visibility: more lighting, fewer hiding spots or tucked away places (81%)
- More fare enforcement staff (62%)

What would make youth feel more welcome?

- Improve safety (59%)
- Cleaner station (30%)
- Artwork (30%)

How can the station better support families?

- Safer crossings / walkways (56%)
- Additional resources (food vending, bathroom) (18%)
- More seating and stroller friendly areas (16%)

How can the station better support families? (open ended)

- Improve safety (44%)
- Add bathrooms (22%)
- Provide family resources (19%)

What is your preferred bus stop or train stop?

- Franklin Avenue (14%)
- None (11%)
- Stops where I feel safe (8%)

Which project priority is most important to you?

- Customer experience and safety - Prioritize comfort, cleanliness, visibility, way finding, and personal safety (54%)
- Mobility - Improve bus, walking, and bike access and connections in the station area, (16%)
- Neighborhood Connection- strengthen neighborhood connections and support community-led development in the station area (14%)

What would you like to see included that isn't listed in these priorities?

- Remove sidewalk fencing (14%)
- Add bathrooms (12%)
- Access control to station (10%)

What else would you like Metro Transit to know about the Franklin Avenue Station?

- Safety concerns (37%)
- Make improvements in surrounding area (14%)
- Remove fencing (8%)

Optional demographic questions were asked at the conclusion of the survey.