Business Item

Transportation Committee

Committee meeting date: November 23, 2026 **For the Metropolitan Council:** December 2, 2026

Business Item: 2026-205

METRO H Line – Adopt METRO H Line Final Corridor Plan

District(s), member(s):	District 7 (Osman), District 10 (Lindstrom), District 13 (Lee), District 14 (Carter)
Policy/legal reference:	PIC 2-2 - Accountability to the Public Policy
Staff prepared/presented:	Lesley Kandaras, General Manager, 612-349-7513
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Division/department:	Metro Transit / Arterial BRT

Proposed action

That the Council approve the METRO H Line Final Corridor Plan to establish the number and location of stations included in the project; and direct staff to complete a supplemental analysis of the H Line alignment between Lexington Avenue and E Como Boulevard considering two options: (1) the adopted alignment via Van Slyke Avenue, Chatsworth Street, and Como Avenue, and (2) an alternative alignment via Nagasaki Road; and report findings and recommendations to the Metropolitan Council through an H Line Corridor Plan addendum for future approval.

Background

The METRO H Line is a planned bus rapid transit (BRT) line that will provide faster and more reliable transit service in the Route 3 corridor between downtown Minneapolis and Sun Ray Transit Center along Washington, Como, Maryland, and White Bear avenues.

The Council previously adopted the H Line alignment in March 2021 (Business Item 2021-52) that resulted from the Network Next plan (2019-2021). The H Line Final Corridor Plan identifies station locations for the H Line BRT corridor. Station locations result from planning activities throughout 2025-2026, including public outreach and engagement, interagency coordination, and transit analysis within the corridor.

The H Line Draft Corridor Plan was published for public review on March 23, 2026. Comments on the Draft Corridor Plan were accepted through May 4, 2026, with communications and outreach activities conducted throughout the comment period. Metro Transit received 1,122 comments on the plan (via online survey, email, phone) in addition to a petition letter sent by organized neighbors and four comment letters from agency partners.

The Council authorized the release of the H Line Recommended Corridor Plan, incorporating revisions from the draft, on August 24, 2026 (Business Item 2026-150). Comments on the

Recommended Corridor Plan were accepted through October 7, 2026, with communications and outreach activities conducted throughout the comment period. Metro Transit received 1,339 comments on the plan (via online survey, email, phone) in addition to 10 letters from agency partners, district councils, and organized groups.

Staff read and categorized each of the comments received during the Draft and Recommended Corridor Plan public comment periods, as well as those submitted by agency partners. Staff have completed additional analysis of alternatives at multiple station locations and have developed the H Line Final Corridor Plan. All feedback received, along with additional analysis and recommendations, are included in the Final Corridor Plan document.

The Final Corridor Plan defers decisions on stations in the vicinity of Como Lake. Based on feedback on the Draft and Recommended Corridor Plans, and in response to a letter from the City of Saint Paul, this action would direct staff to perform a supplemental analysis of the H Line alignment in the Como Park area between Lexington Avenue and E Como Boulevard considering two options: (1) the adopted alignment via Van Slyke Avenue, Chatsworth Street, and Como Avenue, and (2) an alternative alignment via Nagasaki Road. Staff would report findings and recommendations from this supplemental analysis to the Metropolitan Council through an addendum to H Line Corridor Plan, anticipated in early 2027.

Rationale

The H Line Final Corridor Plan is the result of transparent and meaningful discussion with the public about the H Line ahead of finalizing station locations. Approval of the H Line Final Corridor Plan will establish station and platform locations on the H Line corridor, providing direction and supporting project advancement through detailed design and engineering.

Thrive lens analysis

The H Line will upgrade Route 3, one of Metro Transit's highest ridership bus routes. It will enhance transit in the Como Avenue/Maryland Avenue corridor, currently served primarily by Route 3, as well as portions of Routes 54, 64, and 80.

On Feb. 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. Using the Thrive lens, investment in high-quality transit options in the corridor will advance the Thrive outcomes of Prosperity, Equity, and Stewardship.

The H Line advances Prosperity by making the region more economically competitive through increased workers' access to employment and support to employers by increasing available workforce with affordable, convenient transportation.

The H Line advances Equity by improving transit access to jobs, parks, and opportunities for people with low incomes and communities of color. About half of Route 3 customers live in low-income households, and about 45 percent of Route 3 customers are people of color.

The H Line advances Stewardship by coordinating and designing project improvements efficiently with regional partnerships from MnDOT, Hennepin and Ramsey counties, the cities of Minneapolis, Lauderdale, Falcon Heights, and Saint Paul, the University of Minnesota, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Funding

There is no funding attached to this action. Adoption of the H Line Final Corridor Plan will establish the station count and scope of the H Line project.

Small business inclusion

There is no contracting, and therefore no small business inclusion, associated with this action.