Business Item

Transportation Committee

Committee meeting date: November 9, 2026 **For the Metropolitan Council:** November 18, 2026

Business Item: 2026-207

2026 Network Now Framework Amendment

District(s), member(s): District 1, Judy Johnson
District 3, Dr. Tyronne Carter
District 5, John Pacheco Jr.
District 6, Robert Lilligren
District 7, Yassin Osman
District 8, Anjuli Cameron

Policy/legal reference: PIC 2-2 Accountability to the Public Policy

Staff prepared/presented: Lesley Kandaras, General Manager, 612-349-7513
Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager, 612-349-7507
Katie Roth, Assistant General Manager, 612-349-7772
Adam Harrington, Director, 612-349-7797
Jonathan Ahn, Assistant Director, 612-349-7137
Ryan Heath, Manager, 612-349-7183

Division/department: Metro Transit, Planning and Project Delivery, Service Development

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council endorse the 2026 Network Now Framework Amendment.

Background

The Council endorsed the Network Now Framework on March 26, 2025, as Metro Transit's vision for transit service through 2027. Since its endorsement, Metro Transit has implemented approximately half of the improvements identified in the Framework, growing service by approximately 23% as of December 2026.

This Amendment builds on the Framework by advancing Network Now principles, applying lessons learned, and investing in additional connections to the extended Green Line and to planned Highway 55 service. 13 routes will be updated to reduce duplicate service, simplify routing, and improve frequency or span of service and one new route will be created:

- **Route changes to nine routes:** Existing routes 2, 9, 30, 36, 38, 46, 615, 705, 716 and 758 are proposed to change. In addition, new Route 757 is modified from what was planned in the original Network Now Framework.
- **Improved and/or expanded frequency on four routes:** Routes 38, 705, 757, and 758 are proposed to have more frequent service and/or have service at expanded times of day compared to what was planned in the original Network Now Framework.
- **One newly proposed route:** A new Route 617 is proposed to connect to the Green Line.
- **Discontinued routes and segments:** Routes 755 is discontinued and largely replaced by

other routes. Segments of service on Route705 are also discontinued. The current single weekday round-trip on Route 25L is discontinued.

Metro Transit released the draft plan for public comment on August 25, 2026, and collected comments through October 4. A total of 459 comments were received. There was general support for the proposed changes with specific concerns expressed on certain routes. In response, Metro Transit updated plans for routes 38, 615, and 617 and added changes to Route 2.

Overall, this amendment increases service by 2.4% across the Metro Transit service area over the original Network Now Framework.

Rationale

Endorsement of the 2026 Network Now Framework Amendment establishes direction for connecting services to the extended Green Line and to planned Highway 55 service.

Thrive lens analysis

On Feb. 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. Under the Thrive lens, the Amendment supports:

- Stewardship and sustainability by enhancing low-carbon transit connections that will maximize access to large regional transit investments. The amendment significantly strengthens Green Line Extension connecting services by bringing new routes and route extensions to stations and adding frequency to other routes. Stations west of downtown Minneapolis will see 62% more planned connecting bus trips on weekdays and over 70% more connecting bus trips on weekends, compared to the original Network Now Framework. Several routes will be restructured or streamlined. Simplifying alignments makes reliability goals easier to achieve. Adding frequency means that the impact of any service disruption is lessened. Both lead to a more positive customer experience, driving ridership and maximizing investment in service.
- Prosperity and livability by strengthening transit service to improve quality of life and access to opportunity for residents. The amendment brings new access to all-day transit coming at least every 30 minutes on weekdays for 14,000 people. These residents will have the opportunity to travel farther and at more times of day on Metro Transit than they did before, opening up access to jobs, critical services, and recreational opportunities. Many of the routes in the amendment will see added service in the evening and on weekends. Some routes or branches in this area today operate as infrequently as every 2 hours. With these changes all local routes in this part of the network would operate every 60 minutes or better.
- Equity by engaging with riders affected by this plan. Through the engagement period, Metro Transit staff conducted 81 hours of engagement on-board transit and four public meetings to gather feedback. Of the respondents to the survey, 78% ride transit almost every day or multiple times per week and 43% reported having zero cars available to their household. This indicates that Metro Transit was able to reach customers who are most impacted by this amendment and incorporate their voices into the changes proposed.

Funding

The service proposed under this amendment can be delivered within the draft Metro Transit 2027 operating budget planned for Council adoption in December 2026. Following endorsement, a future quarterly budget amendment will adjust the 2027 budget to account for revised expectations of delivering the Network Now Framework as amended by the end of 2028, rather than 2027.

Small business inclusion

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