



CRYSTAL

Develop Recommendations Empower Action & Mobilize

The DREAM Report
Crystal
2025



Blue Line Extension...
Your Connection to MORE!







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F2 Becker Park, Crystal, MN

'By acting now we will assuredly make mistakes. But if we don't act now, I'm afraid we will not have even the opportunity to make the mistakes a little later.'
- FDR first 100 days.



F3 Minneapolis Streetcar Parade, Downtown Minneapolis, MN (1954)

WE'VE BEEN HERE BEFORE.

At the turn of the last century, trains and trolleys were an integral part of the Industrial Revolution, ushering in the modern age. The rapid movement of people, goods and services spurred economic growth, and socio-economic vitality with expanded regional and cultural connections. Our region is not new to world class public transportation. Our Streetcar system connected the Twin Cities metropolitan area well before the development of the freeway system and expansion of individual vehicles. From Woodbury to Medicine Lake, people could get almost anywhere riding the rails provided by the people. Fast forward 100 years, and we are again faced with the challenge - and the opportunity - to move people, goods, and services in response to the growing population and opportunities across the region.



F4 Metro Transit, BLE

This time, with the lightning speed of light rail technology and intentional design, the Light Rail Blue Line Extension will connect residents to the southwestern and northwestern parts of our region. This also means moving more people across greater distances in less time to the people, places and opportunities that matter.



Dream if You Will...

CRYSTAL: STEADY, ACCESSIBLE, AND READY FOR WHAT'S NEXT

ROOTED IN MID-CENTURY GROWTH

That legacy still defines much of Crystal's identity. Quiet streets, modest homes, and long-tenured residents give the city a sense of familiarity. But aging infrastructure and housing stock also present challenges, as does the need to modernize without losing what long-time residents appreciate.

FOCUSED ON LIVABILITY AND LOCAL SERVICE

Crystal consistently invests in basic city services. Its police department is known for community outreach,⁽³⁾ and the city maintains more than 240 acres of parkland, with popular destinations like Bassett Creek Park offering green space in every direction.⁽⁴⁾ The Crystal Community Center remains a hub for civic life, hosting sports leagues, senior programs, and neighborhood meetings.





Still, the city lacks a true downtown, and retail options are often auto-oriented or outdated. Efforts to encourage redevelopment and small business growth have seen mixed results, though some corridors show signs of reinvestment.

SHIFTING DEMOGRAPHICS, NEW ENERGY

Like much of the region, Crystal is becoming more diverse. About one-third of residents identify as people of color, including growing Black, Asian, and Latino populations.⁽⁵⁾ This has brought new voices and cultural perspectives into schools, businesses, and community organizations.

The city has worked to become more inclusive, but change hasn't always been easy. Neighborhoods differ in access to amenities, and some residents remain hesitant about new development or density. As Crystal grows more diverse, so too does the conversation about what kind of community it wants to be.

SMALL BUSINESS & AVIATION ACCESS

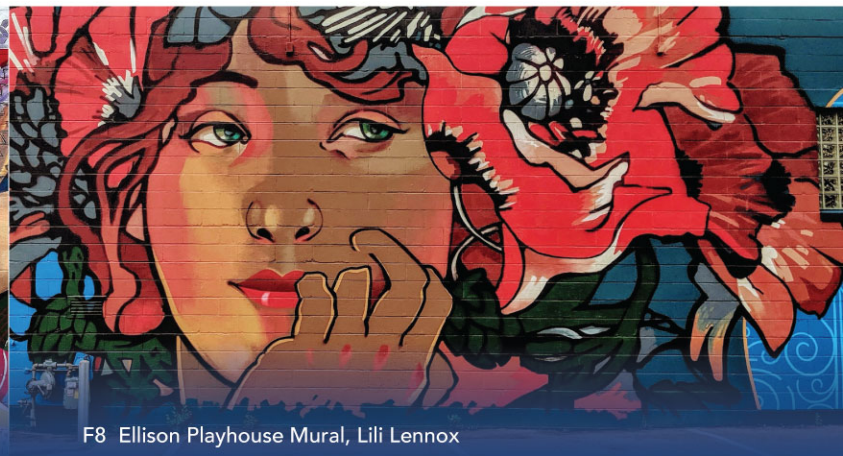
Crystal has a modest but stable small business scene, especially in health services, construction trades, and professional services. It's also home to Crystal Airport, one of several general aviation airports in the metro, which supports small aircraft operations and a flight school.⁽⁶⁾

QUIETLY OPTIMISTIC

Crystal may not be a destination city, but for those who live here, that's often the point. It's a place built on routine, relationships, and the comfort of knowing what to expect. As the region changes around it, Crystal is beginning to ask what comes next – and how to shape growth that reflects both who it has been and who it might become.



F7 Diversity Mural in Crsytal, MN



F8 Ellison Playhouse Mural, Lili Lennox

OVERVIEW OF DREAM CRYSTAL SESSIONS

A Quiet Community at a Pivotal Crossroads

The City of Crystal is changing. New voices are emerging. Demographics are shifting. And Crystal is asking itself what kind of community it wants to become. The METRO Blue Line Extension (BLE) offers a moment of opportunity. With a single stop planned just outside Becker Park, Crystal is not only gaining transit access – it is entering the conversation about what smart, inclusive, community-driven growth can look like.

Voices from the Community: DREAM Sessions as a Guide

The DREAM sessions brought out the best of Crystal: honest, practical, and quietly hopeful. Residents expressed a desire for revitalization - but not at the cost of affordability or community character. Many want better transportation, but also want to feel safe, informed, and in control of local development.

These conversations helped clarify what Crystal values most: transparent communication, neighborhood protections, and a balanced approach to growth. Residents are open to change - as long as they're part of shaping it.

Carrying the Vision Forward

The Blue Line Extension gives Crystal a rare opportunity to elevate and update its long-range goals. By building on past planning and aligning with resident input, the BLE offers a practical way to make Crystal more connected, more accessible, and more responsive to the needs of its changing population.

This is not about turning Crystal into something it's not. It's about helping the city become even more of what it already is: a safe, welcoming, and livable place to call home.



[illegible]

CRYSTAL'S FUTURE, BUILT FROM WITHIN: A BLUE LINE EXTENSION STRATEGY

HOUSING PRESERVATION, GROWTH, AND AFFORDABILITY

Protecting What Works

Crystal added 58 affordable units in 2024 and another 44 are approved for construction in 2026. This exceeds the Metropolitan Council goal of 25 affordable units to be added from 2021-2030. The city is committed to preserving this housing while maintaining options like duplexes, townhomes, and apartments. Licensing and inspection programs are in place to protect the quality of naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) and ensure safe, livable conditions for renters.

Adding Housing Choices

To meet growing and changing housing needs, Crystal supports the addition of move-up homes, multifamily apartments, and senior co-ops. These options provide flexibility for residents at different life stages and income levels.

Planning for Growth Near Transit

Crystal's land use plan includes designated redevelopment areas with the potential to accommodate higher-density housing. The city is especially focused on the area around the future Bass Lake Road LRT Station.

A Commitment to Affordability

Between 2021 and 2030, the city plans to create at least 25 new affordable units, based on Area Median Income (AMI) targets. Through its Economic Development Authority (EDA), Crystal acquires and resells properties to support this growth and offers home improvement assistance to existing homeowners.

Leveraging Funding Tools

Crystal is actively pursuing housing development funding through mechanisms like Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Livable Communities Act (LCA) grants, Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and local programs like AHIF and HOME.

DREAM if you will... The Future!





TRANSPORTATION ACCESS & MOBILITY

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Goals

Crystal is supporting the METRO Blue Line Extension, particularly around the planned Bass Lake Road station. The existing TOD zoning overlay is already helping to make the most of this investment, enabling higher-density development, reduced parking requirements, and more mixed-use buildings that align with transit access.

Building a Multimodal City

The city is taking steps to enhance pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure near the LRT station. These improvements not only improve access to the train but also promote healthier and more connected neighborhoods.

Roadway Partnerships and Upgrades

Crystal is coordinating closely with Hennepin County and MnDOT on roadway improvements to aging infrastructure in the city, including jurisdiction transfers and planning. Crystal is ensuring road projects serve all users, including drivers, cyclists, transit riders, and pedestrians alike. Where full road reconstruction isn't planned, the city is considering strategic safety and streetscape upgrades to improve traffic flow and neighborhood walkability.

EQUITABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH & STRATEGIC REDEVELOPMENT

Targeted Redevelopment Strategy

Crystal has identified four key redevelopment zones with a focus on Bass Lake Road, Highway 81, Douglas Drive, and adjacent corridors. These areas offer major potential for new investment and commercial revitalization.

Zoning for Flexibility and Growth

Recent zoning changes allow for mixed-use development, reduced parking minimums, and taller building heights. The city is also creating incentives to support infill development and encourage land use intensification in key areas.

Modern Infrastructure for Growth

The city is aligning its infrastructure investments—roads, water, and sewer—with development plans. At the same time, it is preserving existing industrial land where freight and light manufacturing remain viable, keeping local economic diversity intact.

CRYSTAL'S PATH FORWARD: ROOTED, RESPONSIVE, & READY

With a foundation of livability and a future shaped by regional investment, Crystal is embracing this moment of change. By focusing on housing options, multimodal access, and economic opportunity, the city is ensuring the Blue Line Extension becomes a catalyst for growth that reflects community values and priorities.

SYNOPSIS OF WHAT CRYSTAL RESIDENTS WANT

OVERVIEW:

In our first DREAM Session for Crystal, we listened to ideas, hopes, and priorities for a more connected, vibrant, and inclusive community. This summary shares what we heard.

LIVE (14)

- Doctors' offices and health access
- A central community center
- Affordable and inclusive services
- Mental health care
- Housing assistance
- Youth services
- Mobility and device support
- Accessible, reliable transit
- Family-friendly development
- Health benefits from walking
- Greater mobility and independence (especially for seniors)
- Better access to education and services
- Cheaper alternatives to driving or ride-sharing
- Environmental benefits of reduced driving

WORK (10)

- Free marketing for local businesses
- Digital visibility and signage
- Increased foot traffic
- More hiring opportunities
- Business growth and exposure
- Safer business environments
- Economic ripple effects from development
- Connection to the VA (veteran employment/services)
- Jobs programs for youth and adults
- Supporting diverse, small businesses

PLAY (15)

- Breweries with games
- Coffee shop
- Music venue
- Restaurants
- Places for kids
- Museum
- Parks
- Gym
- Third spaces (community hangouts)
- Library
- Bookstore
- Waterpark
- Amphitheater
- Festivals
- Markets

EVOLVE (13)

- Music, laughter, and joy
- Community interactions
- Positive public energy
- Recognition of first responders
- Cultural expression and exchange
- Intergenerational spaces
- Bringing more people to the area
- Cleaner air and climate benefits
- Access to regional destinations
- Reduced dependency on cars
- More freedom through transit
- Community pride
- More ways to experience different cultures

POLICY (17)

- Policies that improve safety and accessibility
- Braille and vocal features in infrastructure
- Senior mobility and transit freedom
- Access to social and family networks
- Integrated, people-first transit policies
- Promoting respect and community care
- Inclusive urban planning and design

Total # of ideas = 76

THE CITY OF CRYSTAL : COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & GOALS

Main Initiatives & Goals from Crystal's 2040 Comp Plan:

HOUSING

Preservation and Affordability

- Preserve the city's existing single-family homes, which make up ~75% of housing stock and are relatively affordable.
- Maintain other housing types like duplexes, townhouses, and apartments, while eliminating blighted or obsolete properties.
- Implement rental licensing and inspection programs to uphold quality in naturally occurring affordable housing.

New Development

- Encourage new housing types like move-up single-family homes, multifamily apartments, and senior co-ops.
- Support redevelopment near transit stations (especially Bass Lake Road LRT Station) with densities of at least 25 units per acre.
- Identify redevelopment areas in the land use plan that can meet future housing demands through higher-density residential uses.

Affordable housing

- Plan for **25 new affordable housing units between 2021 and 2030**, broken down by Area Median Income (AMI)
- Use the city's Economic Development Authority (EDA) to:
 - Buy and resell lots for new housing
 - Provide home improvement assistance
- Utilize funding tools like:
 - Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
 - Metropolitan Livable Communities Act (LCA) grants
 - Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
 - Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
 - Encourage Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) via zoning code changes.
 - Participate in housing-related partnerships and funding programs (e.g., AHIF, HOME).

TRANSPORTATION

Transit Oriented Development

- Support Blue Line LRT Extension through Crystal along Bottineau Blvd with a station at Bass Lake Road
- Encourage TOD zoning overlays allowing for mixed-use, reduced parking, and higher densities near transit

Multimodal Planning

- Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity, particularly around the Bass Lake Road LRT Station.
- Develop non-motorized infrastructure

Roadway Improvements

- Collaborate with Hennepin County and MnDOT on road maintenance and jurisdiction transfers.
- Implement "Complete Streets" principles to improve safety and accessibility for all users.
- Consider streetscape and safety upgrades, especially where full road reconstructions are not planned.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment

- Identify and promote four key redevelopment areas especially around Bass Lake Road and Highway 81, Douglas Drive and adjacent corridors Land Use Flexibility
- Adopt zoning changes to allow for: Mixed-use development, Reduced parking ratios, Higher building heights (up to 5 stories), Incentives for infill and intensification

Job Concentration & Market Readiness

- Encourage land use intensification in commercial zones for job growth
- Use results from commercial market analyses and developer input to guide policy (Appendices B & C)
- Retain and grow businesses by addressing freight routing, delivery access, and land use compatibility

Supportive Infrastructure

- Program local infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) in sync with development goals
- Preserve existing industrial sites suitable for freight and manufacturing where feasible



How will you ride?



Get from A-B as easy as 1-2-3

Your connection to MORE!

Learn more @ blueextension.org



Federal Transit Administration signs off on Blue Line Extension environmental review

MINNEAPOLIS – The Blue Line Extension Light Rail Transit project has achieved a critical milestone with federal environmental approval, clearing the way for final design and construction while setting a new standard for supporting communities and businesses impacted by construction.

The Federal Transit Administration signed the Amended Record of Decision for the Blue Line Extension's Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS), concluding years of comprehensive environmental review and community engagement.

This federal action also allows for the project to include groundbreaking measures to support residents and businesses before, during, and after construction of the line:

- **\$5 Million Business Support Program:** Construction-impacted businesses will be eligible for up to \$30,000 each in rent assistance, helping maintain economic stability during the multi-year construction period.
- **\$5 Million Community Investment Fund:** This program will provide funding to community-serving organizations for things like rent and housing cost assistance, specifically designed to help existing residents remain in their neighborhoods.

"This is the first time this type of support for residents and businesses impacted by construction has been included in a major project in Minnesota," said Hennepin County Board Chair Irene Fernando. "The Blue Line Extension will connect thousands of people to new opportunities to work, go to school, and access healthcare. It is a generational investment in communities where many people rely on transit to get where they need to go every day."

"Light rail projects, more than any other mode of transit, generate significant economic and community investment. This project will unlock long-overdue investment in some of our state's most vibrant communities. The strategies included in this project's environmental documents will help make sure this investment benefits the people there today and the generations that will follow," Fernando said.

Additionally, the environmental documents outline strategies to address other environmental, economic, and social impacts and opportunities of the Blue Line Extension, including things like noise and vibration, parking, property impacts, and more.

"This milestone represents a significant investment in our region's future," said Metropolitan Council Chair Charlie Zelle. "It brings us closer to advancing our regional transit vision to create jobs, improve mobility, and strengthen communities."

A public engagement process will launch this fall to inform the development and design of these community support programs, ensuring maximum benefit for residents and businesses once a Full Funding Grant Agreement is awarded.

The Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County continue to work closely with federal partners to advance the project toward construction while maintaining a community-focused approach.

About the METRO Blue Line Extension

The METRO Blue Line Extension is a proposed 13.4-mile light rail line that will connect downtown Minneapolis to the communities of North Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park. This transit project will provide enhanced connectivity and improved transportation options for residents and visitors throughout the northwest metro corridor.

For the latest information on community meetings, outreach efforts, and to stay informed about upcoming Blue Line Extension project announcements, please visit [BlueLineExt.org](https://www.metrotransit.org/blue-line-extension).

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

BLUE LINE EXTENSION PROJECT UPDATE



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2025

Winter 2024 - Summer 2025

Cultural Placekeeping Design Groups

Spring 2025

Outreach on strategies to address impacts

Spring 2025

Design review & feedback

Summer 2025

Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement / Amended ROD

Summer 2025

Updated Ridership Projections & Cost Estimate

2025 - 2026

Final Design

MINNESOTA'S NEXT LIGHT RAIL

The METRO Blue Line Extension Light Rail Transit project will connect Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park, and surrounding communities to fast, frequent, all-day service across the METRO system by providing a one-seat ride from Brooklyn Park to MSP Airport and Mall of America, connecting vibrant destinations and communities along the way.



2025 MILESTONES

In 2025, the METRO Blue Line Extension project team will continue engaging with residents and businesses as this generational transit investment moves forward with the feedback collected in the previous year. Major milestones in 2025 will include:

- Continued community engagement to develop strategies to address impacts in Minneapolis
- Complete 60% design
- Publish the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS) that outlines the project's commitments to address impacts
- Amended Record of Decision (ROD) that signals the federal final approval of the environmental review process
- Property acquisition and relocation process begins Project rating application request to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to finalize the project's eligibility for federal funding

In these next phases, project staff will continue to work with the community to inform decisions to ensure the project delivers maximum community benefits and utility.



WHAT PROVISIONS WOULD CRYSTAL TRANSIT USERS LIKE TO SEE?

HOMEOWNERS



- Homeowners want to be sure they will receive financial and additional resource support in the event of displacement.
- They welcome infrastructure improvements but want to know what provisions will be made to maintain access to/from their homes
- Added transit stops create more access, great solution to growing traffic congestion

RENTERS



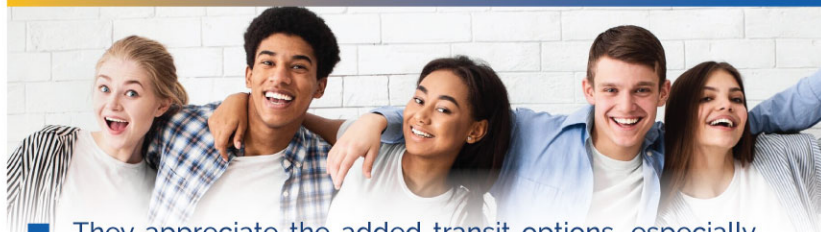
- Some renters are concerned about lack of communication from absentee/out-of-state landlords not sharing BLE information with them
- They want to know what support will be available to them for displacement
- They welcome added transit options
- Want to learn about BLE job opportunities
- They would like opportunities to explore homeownership

ELDERS



- Elders would like accessible parking near station
- Can shuttles be available to grocery stores? parking?
- They would like the trains to be ADA accessible
- They would like to see acknowledgment of addiction, resources for homelessness and addicts
- A place to wash hands, public restrooms
- Close proximity to healthcare, grocery, post office, businesses, senior housing, jobs

YOUTH



- They appreciate the added transit options, especially those without a driver's license or car
- Would like Wi-Fi access
- The opportunity to connect to job opportunities in other parts of the city, county
- The opportunity to connect with friends and family, recreation
- They want to explore job or business opportunities around BLE

BUSINESS OWNERS



- Business owners along the corridor want to be consulted, included in decision-making process
- They would like support mitigating disruption of business i.e. shuttle service during construction for employees and customers, and temporary parking solutions
- They want to know what concrete anti-displacement resources are available to them
- They welcome the prospect of increased business, new customers once BLE is completed
- They like the vitality that would come with TOD and added amenities, resources
- Opportunities to launch business and training programs around BLE

DISABILITY COMMUNITY



- Access - Ramps, elevators
- Verbal commands - independence
- Payment accessibility - free?!
- Language options
- Maps more legible, textured, for everyone
- Color cues to stops
- Language translation for info
- Same benefits as teens and elderly



BUSINESS RESOURCES

Major construction is planned to start in 2027 and be complete around 2030. We know that construction can present short-term challenges for businesses and residents in the area, and Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County have a long history of supporting businesses to help them prepare for these opportunities and navigate the challenges.

Before, during, and after the project, business owners are encouraged to reach out to Elevate Hennepin, a business-support platform from Hennepin County. Businesses can get up to 25 hours of insight or consulting from each advisor on topics, including:

- Access to capital
- Accounting
- Business certification
- Business strategy
- Business technology
- Financial management
- Human resources
- Legal questions
- Marketing consulting
- Starting a business

Elevate Hennepin offers a wide range of business services, including cohort learning opportunities.

For more info on Elevate Hennepin, visit:
elevatehennepin.org

ELEVATE
HennepinSM

The Council will mitigate potential hardships faced by businesses during the construction period through the Implementation of a Business Assistance Program to reduce the burden on small businesses prior to and during construction. The program would offer:

- Business canvassing to identify needed support services
- Provision of signage and customer wayfinding
- Business support fund, with a maximum of \$30,000 for each affected business up to a program maximum of \$5 million
- Funds could be used to support rent or mortgage payments to offset construction impacts
- Provisions in the Construction Mitigation Plan and Construction Communication Plan, including:
 - Outreach coordinators to communicate between the Project office, contractors, and businesses
 - Contractor employee parking plan
 - Retaining business access throughout construction
 - Utility shutoff minimum notification requirements
 - Phasing construction where possible to reduce business impacts
- Creation of a Met Council marketing program, including:
 - Ads on buses and LRVs
 - Coordination with local businesses to create an "open for business" marketing campaign
 - Neighborhood-scale and location specific marketing to attract people within walking distance of businesses
 - Local coupon book

RESIDENT RESOURCES

HELP FOR HOMELESSNESS

Hennepin Shelter Hotline:
612-204-8200

hennepin.us/homeless-resources

GET SUPPORT FOR A FINANCIAL CRISIS

hennepin.us/emergency-supports,
612-596-1900

MENTAL HEALTH & SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES

Access to a variety of services to support your well-being and recovery:

hennepin.us/mentalhealth, 612-348-4111

CONNECTIONS TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Resources to help meet your basic needs, such as food and clothing:
hennepin.us/waypoint

HELP FOR SENIORS OR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Supports to stay in your home and connect to your community:

hennepin.us/seniors-disabilities, 612-348-4111

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES & SINGLE ADULTS

Get food, cash and health care benefits: 612-596-1300

Connect to child care assistance: 612-348-5937

hennepin.us/economic-supports

GET HELP FINDING EMPLOYMENT

Job fairs and employment skill-building opportunities

hennepin.us/employmentservices

SERVICES FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Resources to help youth achieve independence:
hennepin.us/youth

SERVICES FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Resources to help youth achieve independence:
hennepin.us/youth

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

hennepin.us/publichealth, 612-343-8900

GET HELP IF YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE

Human Services Navigator phone line:
612-543-5500

OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

hennepin.us/OMS, 612-348-2193

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

hennepin.us/publichealth, 612-343-8900

GET HELP IF YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE

Human Services Navigator phone line:
612-543-5500

OFFICE OF MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

hennepin.us/OMS, 612-348-2193





Event Calendar

**MAY
10**
@10am



BUS TOUR - pick up @ UROC
2001 Plymouth Ave N, Minneapolis, MN

**MAY
13**
@5pm

**MAY
15**
@5pm



DREAM Week
W Broadway / 21st Ave
(5/13) UROC
2001 Plymouth Ave N, Mpls, MN
(5/15) TC Urban League
2100 Plymouth Ave N, Mpls, MN

**MAY
20**
@5pm

**MAY
22**
@5pm



DREAM Week
NorthLoop / RiverNorth
North Loop Garage
600 8th Avenue N,
Minneapolis, MN

**MAY
27**
@5pm

**MAY
29**
@5pm



DREAM Week
Brooklyn Park
Ebenezer Church
9200 W Broadway,
Brooklyn Park, MN

**JUNE
03**
@5pm

**JUNE
05**
@5pm



DREAM Week
Robbinsdale / Crystal
Elim Church
3978 W Broadway,
Robbinsdale, MN

**JUNE
07**
@10am



BUS TOUR - pick up @
9200 West Broadway Ave, Brklyn Prk, MN

**AUG
09**
@5pm



**DREAM Youth
Summit**
**U of M Urban Research &
Outreach-Engagement Center
(UROC)**
2001 Plymouth Ave N, Minneapolis, MN

**AUG
09**
@10am



BUS TOUR - pick up @
2001 Plymouth Ave N, Minneapolis, MN

**OCT
04**
@9am

REGIONAL SUMMIT
@ UROC 2001 Plymouth Ave N, Mpls

Community Economic Development
DREAM Report Review & discussion



DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS EMPOWER ACTION & MOBILIZE

The DREAM model is grounded in Human-Centered Design (HCD) principles engaging participants at three levels - station area, city/community, and the entire Blue Line region with the intent of achieving shared sustainable prosperity for all BLE residents.

Embedded within the DREAM model is a commitment to amplify multigenerational collaboration, environmental innovation & sustainability, collective community care & support (safety) and shared sustainable prosperity. These cornerstones provide a strong and inclusive foundation to gain the necessary wisdom, understanding, and trust as we create the conditions for community revitalization, and progress.

Sessions will take place in 5 hours over 2 days generating community produced ideas that will create policy and program recommendations for local officials and civic leaders to consider and build a better community with the light rail extension and community development investment.

BACKGROUND

In 2024, Northside residents, business owners, youth and elders, gathered for a series of inspired visioning - DREAM sessions. Led by the DREAM Team - Brett Buckner, Anika Robbins and Stan Alleyne, over 488 DREAMS emerged through the process. From mixed housing developments, wellness and entertainment businesses, green space, and more, it's clear Northsiders have a DREAM of their own!

2025 COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT PLAN

In 2025, cities along the Blue Line corridor had a chance to DREAM! Dream sessions are scheduled throughout summer 2025 and 2026 to help residents imagine what's possible for their communities.

DREAM SESSIONS

The DREAM model is a strategic visioning framework. Through guided facilitation, participants gather for 5 hours over 2 days, generating community-produced ideas that will create remarkable policy and program recommendations for local officials and civic leaders to consider. The DREAM report is produced at the conclusion of each community's DREAM session and shared with community members and policymakers.

CULTURAL PLACEKEEPING

A creative approach to engaging corridor communities, community members have an opportunity to serve on a community advisory group to inform station design. A series of monthly workshops connects participants with the project design team to curate design ideas and represent the history and culture of each respective area for consideration in station area design.

LISTENING SESSIONS

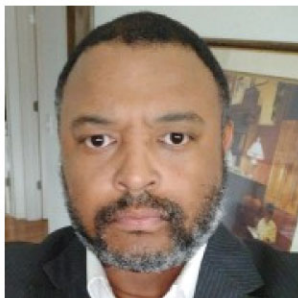
A series of community listening sessions will be hosted at select locations along the Blue Line corridor throughout Summer/Fall 2025. Community members will have a chance to learn about the project while sharing perspectives, history, and what they'd like to see in their communities.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

See BLUE!

Look for the DREAM Team at a community festival near you! Festival attendees get to learn about the Blue Line Extension - up close and personal - with project staff, the DREAM Team, and others.

DREAM TEAM



Brett Buckner



A proud third-generation Minnesotan and life-long resident of North Minneapolis, Brett Buckner is the Managing Director of OneMn.org - A Policy Think Tank dedicated to equitable community economic development across Minnesota.

Brett is a graduate of Metropolitan State University with a Master's in Advocacy and Political Leadership, and is a Roy Wilkins Community Fellow at the Humphrey School.



Anika Robbins



Anika Robbins is the Lead Strategist & Producer of ANIKA & Friends, an events and marketing firm celebrating 20 years.

Robbins is a native Minnesotan. She is also a Roy Wilkins Fellow and served as Chair of the Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission. She has also consulted on earlier Blue Line Extension engagement in the Northwest Suburbs. She has been involved with several development projects, designing campaigns around health, civic engagement and economic development.



Stan Alleyne



Stan Alleyne serves as Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer for Alleyne, Matlock & Associates (AMA), a company centered on social impact as well as strategic and equitable solutions to complex issues. Stan has expertise in both the private and public sectors, and most often serves as a strategic advisor to the chief executive officer, school superintendent, government officials, and C-suite leaders.

Stan moved to North Minneapolis in 2008, where he continues to reside. He previously served as chief of communications for Minneapolis Public Schools.

Special thanks to the BLE Cohort

Nkongo Cigolo, Catherine Gold, Kyle Mianiulli, Richelieu Morris, The multi-jurisdictional team representing Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County and City of Crystal

DREAMCrystal Sessions were hosted by:

Elim Lutheran Church
3978 W Broadway, Robbinsdale, MN 55422



To learn more and stay connected with the Blue Line Extension Project, visit: www.yourblueline.org & www.bluelineext.org



Thanks to the City of Crystal and everyone who participated in the BLE DREAM Sessions



The DREAMCrystal Report was produced on behalf of the DREAM Team by



Anika Robbins
Ndidi Marie
Stan Alleyne
Chelsea Thomas
Amy Sousa



SOURCES

U.S. Census Bureau. Crystal City, Minnesota QuickFacts. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/crystalcityminnesota>
City of Crystal History. <https://www.crystalmn.gov>
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