

DREAM MPLS

Develop Recommendations Empower Action & Mobilize

The DREAM Report Minneapolis 2025



Blue Line Extension...
Your Connection to MORE!







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F2 Kayaking on the Mississippi River, River North

'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 spurs economic growth, and socio-economic vitality with expanded regional and cultural connections. Minneapolis 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 center Minneapolis as a major artery, connecting 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...

THE NORTHSIDE STORY

F5 West Broadway (1964)

TRAIL OF TRAUMA : A HISTORY OF SYSTEMIC TRAUMA AND CHRONIC DISINVESTMENT

Uniquely positioned just northwest of the Federal Reserve Bank, one of the world's important economic assets, North Minneapolis has been penalized, experiencing chronic disinvestment since the late 1960s. Once a thriving predominantly Jewish community - thanks to loosening anti-semitic covenants prevalent at the time - Plymouth Avenue and West Broadway were once bustling thoroughfares with businesses and trades. Remnants of that era are evident in the grand homes in Highland Park and Theodore Wirth neighborhoods.

F6 Plymouth Ave Riots (1967)

WHAT HAPPENED?

The 1960s were already a turbulent time. Minneapolis, like many cities at the height of the civil rights movement, was also experiencing racial tensions. A new generation emerging from the quiet respectability of racism and white supremacy of the 1950s, were rebelling against the social order and policies of the time. Low wages, lack of employment or housing opportunities, heightened tensions. Issues further exacerbated by rank police violence against the community.

RACE DISCRIMINATION & POLICE VIOLENCE

Several unjustified murders of unarmed community members by the Minneapolis Police Department have fueled generations of mistrust between public institutions and the African American community in particular. The fateful night of July 19th, 1967 was the spark that set the Northside ablaze. Reports of 2 young Black girls beaten by Minneapolis police during the Aquatennial parade in downtown Minneapolis, sparked protests, riots and looting down Plymouth Avenue. Ongoing racial tensions, the assassination of U.S Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy, in quick succession to the assassination of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, led to a second wave of 'white flight', with many fleeing to nearby Golden Valley and St. Louis Park. The lack of cooperation and coordination by officials to provide safety and security further sealed the fate of the Northside, closing it off from the rest of the city...from the rest of the world.^{1,2}

The feeling within the community after the riots confirmed the feeling of despair, the feeling of being hunted, and the feeling of being dehumanized all over a \$20 bill.

EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMIC DISPARITIES

The lingering effects of the past, collided with the stagnant economy of the 1980s. Many financially stable community members left for the northwestern suburbs. Since 1998, the Northside has continued to hemorrhage over 7,000 jobs and 150 businesses causing unemployment, blight, increased crime and violence.

HOUSING INEQUITIES

The modest gains, and any upward mobility or wealth achieved on the Northside (or by African Americans), was swiftly erased. In 2007 and 2008, the community suffered another blow as the housing bubble not only burst for many new homeowners, many suffered a malicious scheme that extorted homes from community members. African American Women - particularly seniors, retirees and widows - were impacted the most.

In 2011 a tornado ripped through a portion of North Minneapolis, claiming the lives of 2 community members, causing tens of millions of dollars in damages. The scars and effects are still visible on many homes, businesses - and people - throughout the area.

F7 2011 Tornado, North Minneapolis

EDUCATION DISPARITIES

During that period, plans were announced to close the oldest high school in North Minneapolis: North High school. Student enrollment decreased to 68 students for a school designed for over 1,200 students.

According to a report by the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ), North Minneapolis families chose to have their children attend over 50 different schools beyond the borders of North Minneapolis. Current enrollment in Minneapolis Public Schools is 29,000 - a 17% decline over the past 5 years. Approximately 19,000 students have left for charter schools and open enrollment in other districts. Trust and faith in Minneapolis Public Schools have yet to be restored within the community.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

Just over 50 years later, the simmering tensions between MPD and the community were reignited. In 2020, the murder of George Floyd set off three nights of civil unrest throughout the Twin Cities - including the Northside. Many millions more in damages. The community's lack of trust in the Minneapolis Police Department now widened to a chasm. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic the same year only further exacerbated conditions on the Northside.



F9 George Floyd Memorial

FROM PAIN TO POWER

Despite a painful shared history, a diverse group of community members gathered at the University of Minnesota's Urban Research Outreach Center to DREAM—Develop Recommendations, Empower Action and Mobilize. Over four sessions, they shared 480 hopes, fears, and ideas around the Blue Line Extension (BLE) light rail project, mindful of how past infrastructure harmed low-income and communities of color.

Together, they envisioned thriving communities built on catalytic investment, voiced strong support for the BLE, and generated actionable recommendations. Most importantly, they chose to design with JOY, not fear.

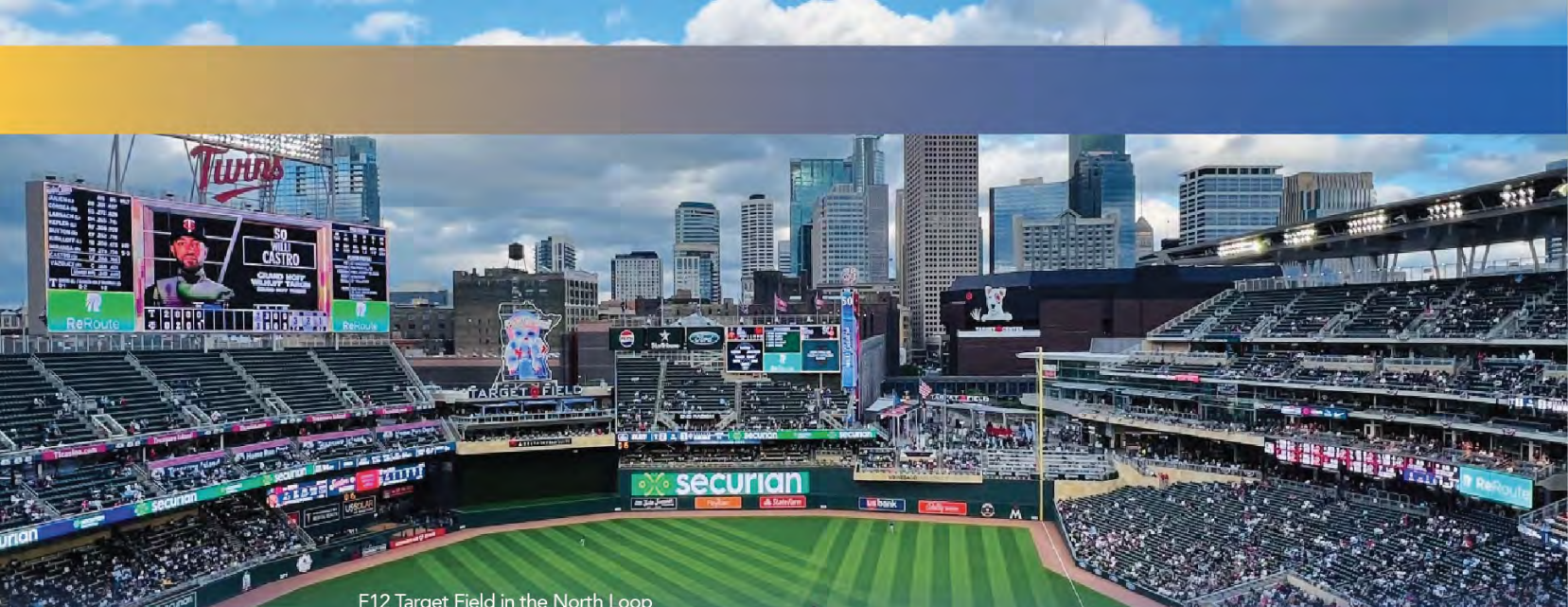


WHAT NORTHSIDE RESIDENTS WANT

Forgivable loans **BETTER LANDLORDS** Life coaching
Sidewalk Sales Stalls **CREATIVE SPACES** Cultural Boutiques
'Village' Bodegas Movement Center
Coffee Cafés **GYMS** go karting
Farmers Market
homeless resources
sit-down restaurant
candy store
skating
nail shop
safe
cannibis spa
insurance agencies
retail shopping
HOTELS
WINE
SPOKEN CLUBS
Project Sweetie Pie Emporium
SAFER INTERSECTIONS
Arcades
Sponsorships
JOY
TRADE SCHOOL
parking
ICE CREAM SHOP
Finance
Therapists
The Uncle's Garage
Unhoused Resource Center
Connect to Ground Round
Real Estate Center
financial literacy center
Northside Mall
Beale Street
GAMING CENTER
cultural markers
historical markers
well-lit
Soul
Swank
Food Court
massage
acupuncture
Holistic Health
minute clinic
Senior & Adult Lifestyle Centers
Bourbon Street
The Farmery
Kemp's Market
Cigar Bar

"Northside is overdue for its GLOW UP!"

"Hennepin County Board Chair, Irene Fernando"



F12 Target Field in the North Loop

WHAT NORTH LOOP RESIDENTS WANT



"How can we make North Loop more welcoming to families and seniors...more connected to North Minneapolis?"

-North Loop DREAM participant

UPPER HARBOR TERMINAL PROJECT

The bustling industrial corridor of the North Loop Warehouse District stretches northward along the Mississippi River. This vital artery once teemed with diverse industries, including robust food processing plants, lumber mills, fabricated metal product manufacturers, industrial machinery producers, and facilities specializing in rubber and plastics. A significant component of this vibrant economic landscape was the Port of Minneapolis, which served as a crucial node for the distribution of wholesale goods, connecting the city to broader regional and national markets. ⁽¹⁾

F13 Mississippi Watershed Management Organization

Today, the area has been earmarked for extensive redevelopment as part of the City of Minneapolis Coordinated Plan, specifically under the Upper Harbour Terminal Project. Among the key developments envisioned are modern food manufacturing facilities, the creation of mixed-income housing, and a state-of-the-art performing arts amphitheater, contributing to the area's overall revitalization, transforming it into a dynamic, mixed-use district.

RIVERNORTH DISTRICT ON BROADWAY

The RiverNorth District on Broadway represents another transformative project strategically located along the Blue Line Extension corridor in Minneapolis. This initiative seeks to heal historical divisions by reconnecting a community that has been traditionally separated from two invaluable assets: the Mississippi River, and the vibrant economic and cultural heart of the City of Minneapolis itself - the Northside.

At its core, RiverNorth is envisioned as a beacon of sustainable development. It is designed to foster economic growth, through employment opportunities and the development of innovative business and manufacturing ventures. A critical aspect of the RiverNorth project is the potential to reverse historical institutional harms including the impacts of housing and environmental injustices. By prioritizing community wealth building, the initiative aims to create lasting positive impacts for residents built on principles of sustainability, equity, and long-term well-being. ⁽²⁾

The Blue Line Extension...

F14 Updated BLE Route along Washington to 21st Ave

DREAM if you will... The Future!

F15 Plans for the RiverNorth District on Broadway

Your Connection to MORE!

F16 North Loop Street Car, Courtesy of Hennepin County Library

NORTH LOOP: A NORTHSIDE RENAISSANCE STORY

FROM INDUSTRIAL HUB TO URBAN OASIS

Nestled along the western bank of the Mississippi River, the North Loop, also known as the "Warehouse District," stands as a vibrant testament to Minneapolis's dynamic history and its remarkable capacity for reinvention. Once the epicenter of a thriving manufacturing and distribution hub, the district's strategic location made it an indispensable nexus for trade and commerce, with its intricate network of rail lines and waterways serving as vital arteries connecting the south, east, and the Pacific Northwest. Iconic brands such as Gold Medal Flour, Creamette, and John Deere, proudly called the North Loop home, their operations contributing to the district's industrial prowess and national renown. ⁽³⁾

A MODERN-DAY REVIVAL: WHERE HISTORY MEETS INNOVATION

After decades of quiet decline, a new chapter is being written in the North Loop's storied past.

Today, this historic district is experiencing a profound renaissance, transforming from a dormant industrial landscape into a coveted urban oasis. While technically still a part of the city's 5th Ward, the North Loop has cultivated a distinctive identity that sets it apart. The echoes of its industrial heritage are now harmoniously blended with the vibrant pulse of contemporary life.

This revival is marked by an explosion of new residential and commercial developments breathing fresh life into the district. Once-abandoned warehouses have been repurposed housing chic boutiques, restaurants, office spaces, and upscale residences. New infrastructure, including proximity to major sporting venues and the efficient light rail system, will further integrated the North Loop into the broader fabric of Minneapolis. This enhanced accessibility has not only attracted a diverse, urban community but has also fostered a strong sense of neighborhood charm. The North Loop proudly pays homage to its rugged, industrial roots while simultaneously embracing the future, offering a unique blend of historical character and modern sophistication. ⁽⁴⁾

F17 North Loop Neighborhood, Minneapolis

NORTH LOOP

THE CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS: 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & GOALS

The DREAM strategies around the BlueLine Extension align closely with the goals of the Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan, ensuring that growth is inclusive, sustainable, and equitable. Here's how:

- **INCLUSIVE & EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT:** The emphasis on workforce goals, with the goal of a significant portion of local labor during planning, construction, and operations, directly supports the Minneapolis 2040 goal of eliminating racial and economic disparities.
By prioritizing local hiring and community-led investment opportunities, village and district developments should promote shared prosperity and ensure that economic benefits are distributed to the community that survived through the challenges and pain.
- **HOUSING SUPPORT & DISPLACEMENT PREVENTION:** The strategies for rent freezes, property tax relief, and mandatory inclusionary zoning align with the plan's focus on increasing affordable housing and preventing displacement. These measures ensure that existing residents can remain in their neighborhoods, even as new developments, residents, opportunities, economic growth and infrastructure improvements upgrade the community.
- **SUSTAINABLE & RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE:** The integration of advanced infrastructure, such as sustainable district power production (wind, solar, geothermal), underground utilities, and carbon-neutral activities, is in direct alignment with the Minneapolis 2040 emphasis on sustainable growth. The focus on expanding urban food production, tree planting, and landscaping also contributes to the plan's environmental sustainability goals.
- **TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD):** Stations and mixed-use developments at the proposed node support the Minneapolis 2040 vision of creating transit-oriented, walkable, and bikeable neighborhoods. These intentional pairings reduce car dependency, enhance public transportation, and promote accessible, high-density living.
- **PUBLIC SPACES & COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY:** The proposed I-94 Landbridge, creation of public squares and community gardens throughout the line are key components of the DREAM and align with the Minneapolis 2040 goal of re-connecting communities and creating vibrant public spaces. These projects will foster social cohesion, provide cultural and recreational opportunities, and improve access to natural environments.
- **ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:** The strategies to raise building heights, expand square footage along corridors, establish advanced manufacturing hubs, support local food production, and apprenticeships align with the Minneapolis 2040 goals of maintaining economic competitiveness and providing workforce development. These initiatives would create new business starts, job opportunities, attract investments, and support community development.

TRANSFORMING TOWARDS A DREAM

Workforce Goals: Meaningful local workforce participation from the local community during planning, construction, and operational phases of the Blue Line Extension will advance community wealth building. This focus on local hiring is intended to create sustainable job opportunities and economic growth within the community, fulfills a major commitment to the community and elevates the individuals as well as community's economic capabilities to live, work and play in the community.

- **LAND BUY & GRANT BACK:** To support the construction and expansion of the BlueLine corridor, properties needed for the project must be purchased at market rates by the responsible agency and once the project is complete, these properties would be granted back to the original owners with the objective of fostering new development on the site, thereby reinvesting in the community.
- **RENT FREEZE & DISPLACEMENT MITIGATION:** To minimize involuntary economic displacement, rents for businesses and affected residential properties should be frozen during the planning, construction, and the first year of operations. This concept, inspired by the Destination Crenshaw project in Los Angeles, is designed to protect existing residents and businesses from the financial pressures often associated with large-scale infrastructure projects.
- **PROPERTY TAX RELIEF & AFFORDABLE HOUSING:** The plan includes providing property tax relief to ease the financial burden on local residents. Additionally, mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinances should be instituted, ensuring a permanent source of revenue to fund the preservation and creation of affordable housing. Potential funding mechanisms include a real estate transfer tax or commercial linkage fees.
- **EVICITION PROTECTION:** Just cause eviction control legislation must be enforced to protect renters from displacement due to rapidly rising rents or changing ownership. This protection is essential to maintaining the community fabric and ensuring that long-time residents can remain in their homes. If necessary, relocation resources must be provided to each family ensuring their transition is as harmless as possible.
- **HEALTHCARE & HOUSING SUPPORT:** The project should establish affordable healthcare plans supported by community-sponsored funding, ensuring that residents have access to necessary medical services. Furthermore, support for affordable housing starts could be bolstered by a community investment fund, providing financial backing for the development of new, affordable homes.

NORTHSIDE BECOMES A VIBE...

The DREAM is brought to life through imaginative planning, inclusive investment, and innovative engineering. This approach should guide the development of Transit-Oriented Developments (TOD) projects and mixed-use districts that foster community connectivity, economic growth, and sustainable living.

- **Creating the 'Village(s)' and Transit-Oriented Development Projects:** Everything within 15 minutes? Yes. In order to have a high quality of life, feeling as if you have access to everything you need within minutes, is critical to any person's belief they live in a strong vibrant community.
- In line with the West Broadway Alive plan, the transformation of areas such as RiverNorth (from Plymouth to 26th, east of Washington to the river), Lynda le Crossing, and Davis/Hawthorne Crossing into vibrant hubs designed to provide the necessary amenities for all residents confirms the belief that they live in a world class community.
- The youth and family development hub at North Commons, as well as Penn/Five Points, would anchor critical entertainment and lifestyle development activities, creating nodes of activity that are well-connected to public transit.
- Serious consideration to create a joint facility between the Minneapolis Park Board and the YMCA to provide the best possible service for the community. The Minneapolis Public Schools should be involved in the development and use the facility year-round.
- **Additional LRT Stations:** The addition of BLE LRT stations at strategic locations, including the Davis Center and Washington & Broadway (RiverNorth) in response to partner and community feedback, will catalyze TOD opportunities, making it easier for residents and workers to access the village districts and promote sustainable, transit-friendly development.
- Improved street lighting, wayfinding, and pedestrian amenities will help connect people to the Penn Avenue Station and Capri Theatre and the new NEON site to the east.
- To support increased density and development, district parking options could be constructed in key areas such as RiverNorth, Davis, and Penn/West Broadway. These areas could accommodate the parking needs of residents, visitors, and businesses, while also allowing for more developable space within the corridors.
- The Davis Center has the space and need as the largest employer in North Minneapolis serving hundreds of employees and visitors on a daily basis. The parking lot can be transformed into district parking for the corridor and add a pivotal point of Broadway, which would support a significant need throughout the corridor.
- Five point hub anchors Capri and NEON along with other Five Point businesses are in desperate need of a parking solution. Further, the area could support an additional mixed-use housing complex adjacent to the hub anchors.
- Just one block west of the river, the new RiverNorth campus, an emerging manufacturing district, would provide new employment, commercial retail, and living opportunities adjacent to the river.
- Serious consideration should be given to the use of 2nd street as a connector between the North Loop neighborhood, and upper Harbor connecting through the New River North district. Amenities for pedestrians, bicycles, cars, and transit service should be explored.
- **Raise the Roof:** Development along critical corridors could be intensified by increasing the numbers of floors for mixed-use complexes and businesses. These buildings would maximize available space, creating opportunities for residential, commercial, and retail uses. To efficiently manage parking needs, these complexes should include underground parking or connections to nearby district parking ramps.
- **Building the I-94 Landbridge:**
The creation of a landbridge over I-94, stretching north of Broadway to 22nd Avenue, would reconnect the community with the river, mending historical divides and fostering a sense of unity. This landbridge could become a public square, providing a vibrant, communal space that serves as both a physical and symbolic link between neighborhoods.



WORK	PLACE	PLAY	PEOPLE	SERVICES	LIVE
Trade school Barber school Technical assistance funding Travel agency Good living wage jobs Job opportunities Mentorship programs Teen training into jobs Community office/co-work space Makerspace/tool library Job opportunities for disabled Investing opportunities Northside-specific internships Hiring incentives for youth Tech education Manufacturing jobs Forgivable loans Tax relief for local business owners More local employment Business directory Rethink retail Retail in LRT stations Business corridor Sponsorships Sponsored training before age 18 Business tours YMCA/N Commons (employment) Educational spaces/programs	Community thriving businesses Grocery store options Food co-ops Farmers market Community gardens Comfortable outdoor spaces Wayfinding and signage Informational areas Beautification/restoration Lighting and signage Local goods/services Building restoration Public plazas Plaza seating Social spaces Local business diversity Mixed restaurant/retail variety Community hubs Access to leisure Different gathering spaces Interactive cultural spots Improved sidewalks/alleys Public Park amenities Community gathering spaces More duplex/townhome development A central park Community-supported developments Expanded parking access Urban farming & food jobs Beautification incentives Job-linked development Placemaking around LRT stations Safe crossings & intersections	Sit-down restaurants Outdoor seating Movie theater (multiple mentions) Cannabis lounge for seniors State-of-the-art spa Talent & performing arts center Dance studio/hall Roller rink indoor/outdoor Safe teen hangouts Grab-and-go food options Ice cream shop Arcades Nightclubs Vibrant nightlife (24-hr music) Art, lighting Indoor restaurant/arcade Entertainment options Music events Amphitheater Zoo, arboretum Video gaming (VR/AI) Teen clubs Dance hall for seniors Cooking classes Indoor/outdoor games Arts entertainment/classes Cultural celebrations Sensory playground Community building Movies on train Women's sports Bowling alleys Tours of Northside	Programs - children w/ special needs Services for differently abled Job opportunities for disabled Inclusive spaces Early mentorship Coaching Resident-led businesses Intergenerational support Youth engagement Youth development programs Employment programs for teens Local leaders' investment Peer mentors Youth clubs Coaching for employment Childcare workers Health support staff Training for local youth Community policing changes Cultural ambassadors Youth in civic process Community chaperones	Dentist office Massage & acupuncture Addiction services Handy person/trades classes Accessibility services (blind support) Services for recently disabled Services for differently abled Community healthsupport Doctors' offices Community support for newly diagnosed w/ disabilities Accessibility programming Grocery access Youth life skills Child/youth mentoring Daycare Counseling/mental health Accessibility outreach Physical therapy Tech support Health & wellness Gym access Addiction treatment Substance support on transit Coaching Grant navigation help Job placement Resume training Business mentorship Peer mentorship Parenting support Services directory Outreach case workers Onboard transit safety staff Social services coordination VR education coaching Youth housing services Community liaisons Resident services centers Financial wellness classes	Multigenerational housing Senior living w/ daycare Playground for grandchildren Housing w/ outdoor space Duplexes & townhome options Better landlords Affordable housing Workforce housing Homeowner incentives Teen housing security Senior housing (non-low income) Assisted living w/ amenities Spa, dry cleaners Cooking classes for seniors & youth Life skills coaching at early age Mental & physical health resources Senior clubs Peacefulness, scenery Safer intersections Parking availability Community-oriented cul-de-sacs Teen clubs (8 p.m. - 12a.m.) VR/AI youth spaces Youth work programs

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Through the collaboration with DreamTeam, the Northside community has been deeply involved in the BLE transit-oriented development planning. Asian Media Access has partnered with DREAMTeam to engage with Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) neighbors and youth in a comprehensive community assessment process. Using innovative Augmented Reality (AR) technology, AMA youth developed 15 AR assets highlighting cultural entities along the Blue Line. Through QR codes, community members can access the history of each cultural entity through visual and audio content with their cell phones. For the upcoming year, AMA plans to amplify AAPI voices by developing a cutting-edge VR exhibition that will help urban planners and officials to better envision a Pan Asian Cultural District along the Blue Line.

Ange Hwang, Asian Media Access

EVOLVE	SPACES	ENVIRONMENT	POLICY	INFRASTRUCTURE	STATIONS
Better schools w/ local children Schools trusted by the community Center for differently abled Programs for kids w/ special needs Services for addiction recovery Youth/teen programs Occupational therapy Life coaching Engagement on transit Early age trades training Inclusive educational programs Arts incorporation into safety Less liquor/smoke shops Cooking classes (youth-focused) Safety personnel on LRT Subsidized fares for youth Tech training education VR/AI learning spaces Job readiness programming Mental/physical healthcare training	Socializing spots Sitting areas Gathering spaces Safe crossings Parks Scenic routes Greenspace Walkability Amphitheater A central park Sensory playground Inclusive ADA zones Waterparks Sports fields Youth/teen hangout spaces Bowling alleys Indoor gathering spots Places to meet friends Art & event spaces Public rest areas Safe play areas Youth arcade VR stations Communal seating Night market areas Art zones	More trees More greenery Community gardens Urban farming Flowers everywhere Parks Scenery improvements Clean walkways Water fountains Air & water quality Community garden spaces Landscaping Energy-efficient housing Green development standards Recycling facilities Solar stations Sustainable building rehab Waterpark ADA Arboretum Tree canopy expansion Pollution reduction	More grant money for home improvements Forgivable loans Hiring youth incentives Tax relief for resident-business owners Youth fare subsidies Transit interaction policy shifts Accessible housing investment Accessibility/safety policy Liquor/smoke shop zoning Development incentives for local businesses	Improved sidewalks/alleys Transit connections Land bridges Accessibility routes Braille handrails Pedestrian bridges ADA elevators Lighting in parking lots Ramps & lots Transit lighting/security Better train signals Digital signage Infrastructure maintenance Traffic calming Balanced bike/pedestrian/transit Clear crosswalks	More seating at stations Safe station design Signage (large, legible) Audio w/ signage Charging stations Movies on train Better warning systems More clear crossings Business use in stations WIFI access

WHAT MINNEAPOLIS RESIDENTS WANT

WHAT PROVISIONS WOULD MINNEAPOLIS 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



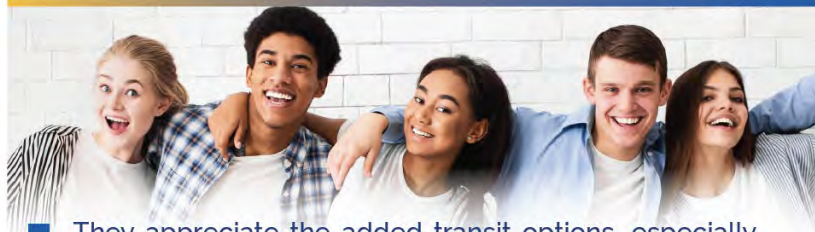
- Some renters are concerned about lack of communication from absentee/out-of-state landlords not sharing BLE information with them
- They want to know what support will be available to them for displacement
- They welcome added transit options
- Want to learn about BLE job opportunities
- They would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

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.



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).



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 Metropolitan 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

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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 designed 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.



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

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 Minneapolis

DREAMMinneapolis Sessions were hosted by:

University of MN Urban Outreach & Research Center, Twin Cities Urban League, and North Loop Garage



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



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



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



Anika Robbins
Ndidi Marie
Stan Alleyne
Chelsea Thomas
Amy Sousa



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