Welcome

METRO Orange Line Connecting Bus Study

February 11, 2021
Today’s Topics

• METRO Orange Line
• Connecting Bus Study
  - Background
  - Proposed Concept Plan
  - Equity analysis
  - Next steps and timeline
• Q&A
METRO Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

• 12 stations, 17 miles
• All day, daily, frequent station-to-station BRT on I-35W
  – 5:00 am to 12:00 am
  – Every 10 minutes in Rush Hours
  – Every 15 minutes in Off-Peak
• Replaces most of Routes 535, 597
• Access to 50,000 jobs and 80,000 residents outside of downtown Minneapolis
• Under construction
  – Opening late 2021
METRO Orange Line Construction – Knox Ave Transitway

Knox Avenue Transitway – Fall 2020

Final condition
METRO Orange Line Construction - Stations

I-35W & 98th St Station

Final Condition
Connecting Bus Study Goals

- Link Orange Line with significant number of residents, jobs, services
- Grow ridership in an equitable way
- Simplify route network
- Enhance mobility and connectivity of the transit network
- Complement existing commuter express service in the corridor
Fall 2019 Pre-Concept Plan Outreach

- 500+ Surveys online and paper
- Electronic Rider Alerts
- Social media postings
- *Connect* Metro Transit e-newsletter
- Three open houses
- What we heard
  - 65% have heard of Orange Line
  - 62% ride every day or most days
  - 70% work trips, 70% peak period trips
  - Most rode Routes 4, 18, 46, 535, 539, 597, Blue Line, Green Line
  - Most said Orange Line would “favorably affect” their travel
  - Key destinations Normandale College, Lyndale and Penn Ave and 94th/James Ave area employers
Changes Since Fall 2019

• Impacts due to COVID-19
  - Budget and resources
  - Transit ridership and demand
  - Travel patterns and needs
  - Some routes suspended

• Adjustments to the plan and process
  - Focus on replacing Route 535, 597 local branches, service directly related to Orange Line
  - Review goals
  - Incorporate new engagement feedback, strategies
  - Role of suspended routes
Concept Plan

- Fall 2020 resources
- Replace routes 535, 597
- Provides access to suburban jobs and schools
- Simplified Routes 515, 540
- Most commuter routes continue to be suspended
- If funding becomes available, service options include
  - Route 537
  - Add weekend service on routes 534, 542
  - Improve frequency on routes 515, 538, 540, 542, 547
Routes 7 and 515: Richfield

- Route 515 simplified to one pattern
- Route 515E branch to VA Medical Center eliminated (other options available)
- Route 515 Bloomington Ave service improved
- No service on Longfellow Ave.
Routes 534 and 553: Lyndale Ave

- Replace Route 535 local service
- New Route 534
  - 98th St., Lyndale Ave. and American Blvd.
  - Select trips via 94th/James Ave (Central Bloomington Industrial Park)
  - Every 20 min. in the peak and 30 min. in the off-peak on weekdays
- Route 553 extension to 98th St. Station
Routes 538, 540 and 542: I-494 Corridor

- Replace Route 535 local service on 76th/77th St, American Blvd
- Route 540 simplified to one pattern
- Restore Route 542 - extended to Hwy 169 and streamlined to stay south of I-494
Route 536, 537 and 539: 98th St Cross-towns

• Replace Route 535 local service on 98th St

• Route 539
  - Direct link between Orange Line and Normandale College via 98th St
  - No service on 90th St.

• New Route 536 replaces service on Penn, Old Shakopee Rd. and France Ave.

• Route 537 restored in Scenario B
Routes 547, 548 and 597: SW Bloomington

- Orange Line replaces Route 597 express service
- New local routes make timed connections with Orange Line
  - New Route 547 replaces Route 597C, E local branches
  - New Route 548 replaces Route 597B
FTA Title VI Service Equity Analysis

Methodology
• Based on residential demographics
• Measures percent increase in weekly trips

Results
• Increase in service for average resident
• Minorities receive 82% of the benefits non-minorities experience
• Low-income groups see 80% of the benefits non-low income people receive
• Does not reflect access to jobs, other important destinations
• Percentages include suspended routes

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<th>Population</th>
<th>% Population</th>
<th>Trips Change</th>
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<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>113,665</td>
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<td>Non-Minority</td>
<td>180,984</td>
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<td>Low Income</td>
<td>43,295</td>
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<td>Non-Low Income</td>
<td>243,943</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>294,649</td>
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Which jobs can be accessed in 45 minutes?
Who can access these jobs?

Scenario  
Existing  
Concept

Average access to jobs in 45 minutes

BIPOC  
White  
Low-Income  
Mid-Income  
High-Income

AM Peak

Midday
Timeline and Next Steps

- Outreach & Engagement ................................. January-February 2021
- Plan Revision .................................................. March-April 2021
- Recommended Plan Outreach ........................ May 2021
- Final Plan Approval ........................................ June 2021
- Implementation .............................................. Late 2021
Key Outreach and Engagement Strategies

Public Comment Period: January 25-February 22, 2021

• Website
  - Concept Plan Report
  - Video presentation
  - Map-based survey to guide feedback
• In-person intercepts
• Postcard mailer
• Target ethnic and local media
• Virtual meetings
• Partner with community organizations, college, employers
• Internal outreach
More Info

• Website: metrotransit.org/olcb
• Service.development@metrotransit.org
• Survey: surveymonkey.com/r/OLConnectingBus

Public Comment Period: January 25-February 22, 2021
Q & A
Employer Resources

- Bus pass programs – Metropass
- Telework resources and guidance
- Preferential carpool / vanpool parking management
- Free outdoor bike rack
- Bike-to-Work events
Commuter Resources

- Customized transit itinerary + free ride passes
- Transit Assistance Program (TAP)
- Carpool, vanpool matching and tips
- Bike-to-work materials and trail construction updates
- Sign up for monthly commuter newsletter
- Guaranteed Ride Home
Feb. 25 webinar
Telework During COVID-19: Lessons Learned Over the Past Nine Months

Website launching soon:
www.tctelework.com
Contact Us

Kate Meredith
Commuter Services
Kate@494corridor.org
952-405-9425
494corridor.org