

From: Metropolitan Council
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Rush Line BRT is now Purple Line BRT

Greetings from the METRO Purple Line bus rapid transit (BRT) project! The project, previously managed by Ramsey County, recently entered the project development phase of the federal program that funds capital projects, which means it will now be managed by the Metropolitan Council.

See more about the project status in the December news update included below.

You are receiving this message because you previously subscribed to Rush Line transit project updates. You will continue to receive project updates now that it is the METRO Purple Line, [or you may unsubscribe](#).

Thank you for your interest in this project as it has developed. We look forward to reporting more about this project in the months and years ahead.



METRO Purple Line receives key federal approval

St. Paul – The [METRO Purple Line](#), a Bus Rapid Transit line that will operate between St. Paul and White Bear Lake, has received approval to enter the Project Development phase of the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program. Project leadership now transitions from Ramsey County to the Metropolitan Council.

"The Metropolitan Council is proud to prioritize this East Metro investment," Metropolitan Council **Charlie Zelle** said. "With our local government partners, including Ramsey County, we look forward to seeing the significant economic, social and environmental benefit the Purple Line will bring to our region."

Supporters heralded the development as a boost for employers who believe fast, frequent, all-day BRT service will attract and retain workers. "A lot of jobs cannot be performed at home in this corridor, which has three hospitals and a shopping mall," said **Shannon Watson**, vice president of public affairs for the St. Paul Area Chamber. "That is not likely to change, making the Purple Line a lifeline for people going to work, outpatient visits and running errands."

"Workers and employers, residents, students, and seniors are demanding high-quality transit as they look at where they want to live, work and grow their businesses," Ramsey County Commissioner **Victoria Reinhardt** said. "Purple Line BRT is a key transportation solution to help our vibrant East Metro communities stay competitive and connected to the entire region."

Formerly known as the Rush Line, the 15-mile Purple Line will connect St. Paul, Maplewood, White Bear Township, Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake and White Bear Lake. BRT lines feature frequent service with enhanced stations and buses.

As currently planned, the Purple Line will serve 21 stations, mostly following Robert Street and Phalen Boulevard from downtown St. Paul, Ramsey County rail right-of-way (shared with the Bruce Vento Regional Trail) and Highway 61 north of Interstate 694 into White Bear Lake.

Major employers along the Purple Line include Regions and Gillette Children's Specialty Healthcare hospitals in St. Paul, M Health Fairview St. John's Hospital in Maplewood and the Maplewood Mall. Other destinations include Lowertown, the St. Paul central business district, Payne-Phalen, Hmong Village, Phalen Regional Park and downtown White Bear Lake.

Next steps

In early 2023, federal approval will be sought to move into engineering, allowing design work to be completed. The Federal Transit Administration will then review the project's scope, schedule and budget.

In 2024, a federal funding application will be submitted and construction will begin. The Purple Line is expected to open in 2026.

The FTA and Ramsey County would each pay about half of the total project cost, now approximately \$475 million, with opening operating costs shared equally by the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County.

Ridership reassessments required, trail to be preserved

Project staff have heard concerns about ridership projections and how the project will affect the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.

Planners expect the Purple Line will see about 7,000 average weekday rides by 2040. "It's reassuring to know the FTA requires reassessment of ridership as the project advances and especially before the Metropolitan Council submits its final application for federal funding," Project Director **Craig Lamothe** said.

Through co-location of the line and the Bruce Vento Regional Trail, the safety of trail crossings at local roads will be improved. "I am so pleased that the METRO Purple Line will preserve the trail named after my late husband who represented Minnesota's Fourth District in Congress from 1977 to 2000," said Metropolitan Council Member **Susan Vento**, whose district includes much of the line. "Bruce would have just loved it."

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