Bronze Line Project

What is bus rapid transit?

Bus rapid transit brings additional station amenities, faster transit service, and a more comfortable ride. This includes:

More frequent service:

- Provides all-day service that operates seven days a week with buses arriving every 10-15 minutes during peak and midday times

A faster ride:

- Pay before you board so the bus leaves the station faster
- Raised platforms help you step or roll on and off easily
- Fewer stops than local routes and bus lanes that help keep the bus moving
- Buses are given priority at key traffic signals to “ask” for green lights

Stations with enhanced amenities:

- Shelters will provide comfortable waiting space and a variety of amenities: NexTrip real-time departure signs, maps, heating, lighting, bike racks, and added security with cameras and emergency telephones

Unique and recognizable buses:

- Buses with wider aisles, wider doors for easier boarding, and folding seats to make room for wheelchairs and strollers

Why is Bronze Line needed?

- Serving the needs of people who rely on transit
- Supporting those who can’t afford, are unable, or choose not to drive
- Meeting increasing demand for reliable, high-frequency transit
- Planning for sustainable growth and development
- Tackling traffic congestion by expanding reliable transit services and guiding transit-oriented, walkable development
- Expanding multimodal travel options
- Addressing air quality and greenhouse gas emissions by shifting independent car trips to transit trips

How much will it cost to ride the Bronze Line?

Bronze Line will have the same fare as METRO/local bus service. There will be no extra charge for this service. Seniors, youth, Medicare card holders and people with disabilities qualify for reduced fares.

Can general traffic use the bus lanes?

Dedicated bus lanes will be marked with signs prohibiting general traffic. General traffic will not be allowed to use the dedicated bus lanes between Arcade Station and Maryland Avenue in St. Paul. Side-running, on-street bus lanes will be open to general traffic to make right turns onto streets or into driveways. General traffic is not allowed to use on-street bus lanes to pass traffic or travel through intersections.

Need Help?

What is Metro Transit doing to improve safety and security on the transit system?

To better serve customers and staff, build confidence among prospective customers, and position Metro Transit as a great place to work, a concerted effort is being made to improve public safety on transit. Agency-led efforts are summarized in the Safety & Security Action Plan.

How is the Bronze Line being funded?

The METRO Bronze Line will be using local funding to design and construct the project. Ramsey County will contribute 90% and Met Council will contribute 10% of the capital costs.

What is the environmental process with this project?

An Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) is expected to be completed for the new project through the State of Minnesota's Environmental Review Program to satisfy the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act. An EAW describes a project, its potential effects on air, land, and water resources, and ways to reduce potential environmental impacts. All required environmental permits and approvals are expected to be obtained for the new project.

When will construction begin? When will the Bronze Line open?

An overall schedule for designing, constructing and opening the new project is currently under development. More information about the longer-term schedule will be shared once it is available. Construction is not currently expected before 2028.

Johnson Pkwy. Bridge FAQ

As the Bronze Line project moves into the design and engineering phase, we want to answer some frequent questions about the Johnson Parkway Bridge.

Why is the Bronze Line Project planning to build a bridge over Johnson Parkway? What are the benefits?

The bridge will allow Bronze Line busses and trail users to cross Johnson Parkway without going through the Johnson Parkway and Phalen Boulevard intersection. This will help provide reliable transit service while maintaining existing neighborhood street connections and avoiding additional traffic changes on nearby streets.

How does the Johnson Parkway Bridge fit into the overall investment made in the Bronze Line?

The Johnson Parkway bridge is one part of a larger, multigenerational investment in St. Paul's east side. Through the Bronze Line Project, we are investing in both roadway, transit, bike/trail, and pedestrian improvements.

The project will make significant improvements along Maryland Avenue and White Bear Avenue, which are both Ramsey County roads, while also providing faster and more reliable transit service.

The Bronze Line is 100% locally funded, with no federal funding. Ramsey County is providing the majority of the project funding for roadway and transit improvements in St. Paul and Maplewood. Metro Transit is also providing funding for transit improvements in Maplewood.

Once completed, Metro Transit will own and operate the METRO Bronze Line BRT. The roadway, transit and additional infrastructure improvements being made as part of the project will serve the east Metro for many years to come.

Is the Johnson Parkway Bridge new to the project?

No. A bridge over Johnson Parkway has been part of the project for many years and was included in the project's previous environmental review and preliminary design work. The current bridge layout has been the project's base assumption since 2017.

A trail connection was also added to the bridge to provide a new connection for people walking, rolling, and biking.

What other options have you looked at instead of the bridge?

The project studied several options for crossing Johnson Parkway at street level. These options were shared with residents and community organizations during engagement in 2023 and 2024. The project heard concerns about how the street-level options could affect traffic, neighborhood access, pedestrian safety, green space, and nearby properties. The project also heard support for keeping the bridge.

Why was the bridge selected instead of an at-grade crossing?

The bridge provides a direct crossing of Johnson Parkway for buses and trail users without adding buses to the Johnson Parkway and Phalen Boulevard intersection or changing access to nearby neighborhood streets.

The street-level options would require other changes, including changes to traffic patterns and neighborhood access, and would create additional places where buses, vehicles and pedestrians interact.

Who will use the Johnson Parkway bridge?

The bridge will be used by Bronze Line buses and people walking, biking and rolling on the trail. It will not be open to general vehicle traffic.

Bronze Line buses are planned to operate frequently throughout the day, with the most frequent service during peak travel times.

Why does the bridge need to be redesigned?

An earlier bridge design was developed several years ago. During that work, the project discovered that one of the proposed bridge supports conflicts with a large underground sewer pipe.

Because of that conflict, the bridge needs to be redesigned. This gives the project team an opportunity to look again at the location, height, and shape of the bridge as the design moves forward.

How will the Johnson Parkway bridge affect Wakan Tipi and the Phalen Creek daylighting project?

The Bronze Line project is coordinating with Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi on the Phalen Creek daylighting project. The goal is to design the Johnson Parkway bridge to avoid impacts to the planned creek, trails, and other improvements.

As the bridge is redesigned, the project team will look closely at the location of the bridge and its supports to make sure the two projects can work together. Coordination with Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi will continue as the bridge design develops.

What parts of the bridge design can still change?

The bridge design is not final. During the next phase of design, the project team will look at possible changes to the location, height and shape of the bridge. The bridge is planned on Ramsey County-owned property that is approximately 100 feet wide in this area, which provides some flexibility to adjust the bridge location as the design develops.

The team will also develop details such as landscaping, screening and the overall look of the bridge. The community engagement team will ask residents and other community members for input on landscaping and the appearance of the bridge.

The design will also need to account for existing roads, underground utilities, nearby properties and the Phalen Creek daylighting project. The project team will consider these factors, along with community input, as the bridge design is developed.

What happens during the next phase of design?

The project is moving into the design and engineering phase. Over the next several months, the design team will take another look at the Johnson Parkway bridge, address the sewer conflict, evaluate possible changes to the location, height, and shape of the bridge, and develop more detailed plans.

Community engagement will continue throughout the design process. Residents and other community members will have opportunities to learn more, provide input on landscaping and the appearance of the bridge, and see how the design develops.

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