

METRO Orange Line BRT
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Small Starts Project Development
Information Prepared November 2014

Metro Transit proposes to implement bus rapid transit (BRT) in the 17-mile Interstate 35W corridor between downtown Minneapolis and Burnsville. The project would serve 11 stations, six of which are already in use and five that would be constructed as part of the project. All stations would include passenger shelters, real-time passenger information and off-board fare collection. The project would also include signal priority at intersections with general purpose traffic, special branding at stations and on vehicles, and the purchase of 11 60-foot articulated buses. The project's current estimated capital cost is \$150.7 million, of which \$64.63 million (43 percent) is anticipated from the Small Starts program.

The project would provide frequent daily BRT service in one of the region's busiest commuter corridors, in which existing bus routes provide an average of 14,000 weekday trips. BRT service would use stations in or adjacent to the expressway right-of-way, short segments of bus-only lanes and existing high occupancy/toll lanes to provide competitive travel times. Metro Transit believes the project would promote compact, walkable development in station areas and leverage incremental investments in transit service and amenities that have been made in the corridor over the last several years.

Metro Transit identified a locally preferred alternative in 2010 that was adopted into the region's fiscally constrained long range transportation plan in the same year. Metro Transit anticipates completing the environmental review process with receipt of a Documented Categorical Exclusion in mid-2016, receiving a Small Starts Grant Agreement in mid-2017, and starting revenue service in late 2019.