

Study measures job access for Twin Cities transitway scenarios

Why was the study needed?

This project asked where—and by how much—job accessibility changes when new transitways are added to the Minneapolis–Saint Paul area transit network. The findings may inform planning and investments to best serve metro residents.

What are the scenarios?

One scenario compares the baseline to the Phase 1 network. Four scenarios compare the Phase 1 network to the Phase 2 network.

- **Baseline:** the transit network operating in May 2019.
- **Phase 1 network:** the baseline plus the **C Line** aBRT and two lines under construction: the **Orange Line** BRT and the **Green Line** LRT extension.
- **Phase 2 network:** the Phase 1 network plus the **B Line** aBRT, **D Line** aBRT, and **E Line** aBRT. These three lines are evaluated individually and as a combination.

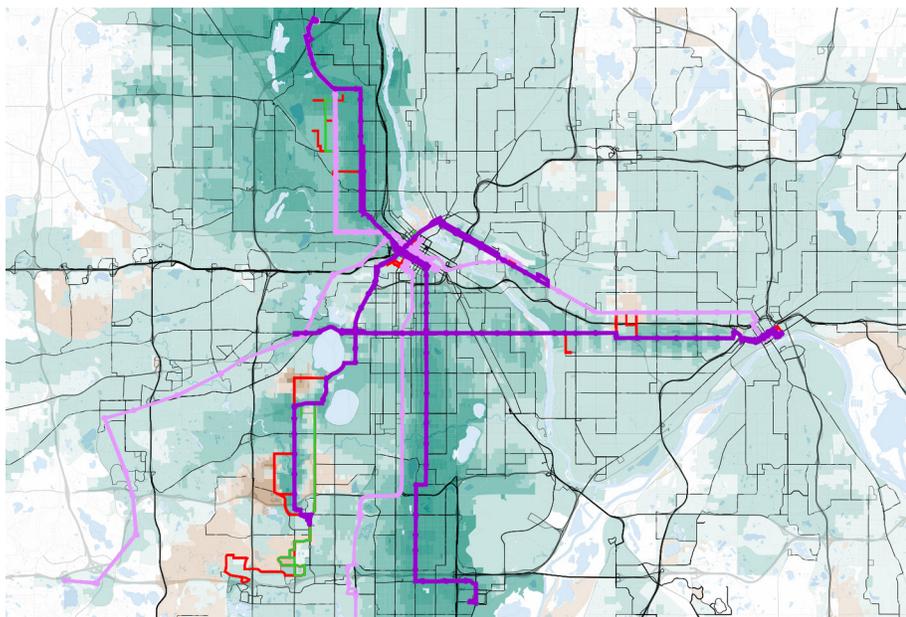
General findings

- All scenarios improve accessibility across the region.
- The improvements are felt most by workers living near transit stops.
- Across the Twin Cities, workers may experience an average job accessibility increase of 2.29 percent when the Phase 1 network is complete.

Findings for B, D, and E Lines

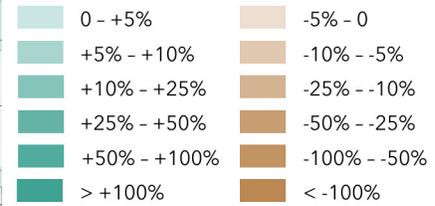
- Adding the B, D, and E lines increases accessibility for workers on average by another 5.51 percent.
- The D Line has the greatest impact on connecting more workers with jobs in shorter travel times.
- The B Line appears to provide a backbone of transit service. Saint Paul workers gain the most accessibility benefits as a result of B Line connections and frequency.
- The E Line and the changes to local Route 6 introduce accessibility gains of more than 100 percent in some neighborhoods but decrease accessibility by up to 35 percent in areas that lose Route 6 service.





Change In Job Access

With B, D, and E Lines



Routes



“We know that when we add fast, frequent BRT service to these important local routes, we can shorten wait times and travel times for our riders. This analysis shows that these improvements cascade through the bus system to improve connections in areas not immediately adjoining the transitways in question—resulting in widespread benefit to employees and employers across the Twin Cities.”

—Eric Lind, Manager, Research & Analytics, Strategic Initiatives, Metro Transit

What routes were studied?

- **C Line** arterial bus rapid transit (aBRT): Penn Avenue from Minneapolis to Brooklyn Center; began service June 2019.
- **Orange Line** BRT: I-35W from Minneapolis to Lakeville; opening late 2021.
- **Green Line extension** (light-trail transit): Minneapolis to Eden Prairie; expected in 2023.
- **B Line** aBRT: Lake Street connecting Minneapolis and Saint Paul; opening 2024.
- **D Line** aBRT: Emerson/Fremont and Chicago Avenues between Brooklyn Center and Bloomington; construction in 2021-2022.
- **E Line** aBRT: Hennepin and France Avenues from Minneapolis to Edina; opening 2024.

What wasn't included in the study?

The research did not account for local bus schedule coordination with the prospective transitways. Any changes to the transit schedules provided for this study may increase or decrease accessibility results depending on route alignment, stop spacing, frequency, and many other factors.

Park-and-rides were not included in the study, but people who drive to transit would experience an increase in access to jobs under the proposed transitway additions.

About the research

The research was sponsored by the Metropolitan Council as part of the National Accessibility Evaluation Pooled-Fund Study, a multi-year effort led by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Project investigators were Kristin Carlson, researcher with the U's Accessibility Observatory (AO), and Andrew Owen, AO director. The final research report—*Accessibility Evaluation of Transitways in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region*—is available at cts.umn.edu/Research.

About the Observatory

The Accessibility Observatory measures multimodal access to jobs annually for the nation and provides local scenario evaluation and research services.