



## **GOLD LINE JOINT POWERS BOARD AGENDA**

**Wednesday, August 27, 2025, 10:00 - 11:00 AM**

**Location Change:**

**Ramsey County Courthouse, 2nd Flr, Conference Room A,  
15 West Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55102**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **ACTION ITEMS -**
  - a. Meeting Agenda
  - b. April 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes \*
  - c. Approval of the 2026 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget \*
  - d. Approve Staff Recommendations regarding the future of the Gold Line Joint Powers Board \*
- IV. **INFORMATION ITEMS -**
  - a. Gold Line Joint Powers Board 2024 Audit \*
  - b. METRO Gold Line Project Update
  - c. Communications Update and Work Plan for Remainder of 2025 \*
  - d. Next Meeting – TBD, Q4 2025
- V. **ADJOURNMENT**

\* Attachments

**GOLD LINE JOINT POWERS BOARD  
MINUTES  
April 23, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Karwoski called to order the Gold Line Joint Powers Board (JPB) meeting at 10:37 a.m. The meeting was held in a Conference Room at the Gold Line Project Office, located at 121 7<sup>th</sup> PI E #102, St. Paul, MN 55101.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Chair -- Stan Karwoski, Washington County Commissioner  
Vice Chair -- Mai Chong Xiong, Ramsey County Commissioner  
Michelle Clasen, Washington County Commissioner  
Rafael Ortega, Ramsey County Commissioner

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Sara Allen, Mike Rogers, Lyssa Leitner, Aaron Zellmer, Sara Favreau, Patrick Collins, Scott Schwahn, Hoang Truong, Aaron Zellmer

Others Present: Alicia Vap, Steve Barrett, Elizabeth Jones, Morgan Abbott, Stephen Smith, Kathleen Murphy, Jennifer Jordon

**Announcements**

None.

## **ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

### **Action Items**

#### **Election of Officers**

Chair Karwoski requests nominations for Chair. Commissioner Ortega made a motion to nominate Commissioner Xiong. Commissioner Ortega made a motion to approve the nomination of Commissioner Xiong for Chair. Seconded by Commissioner Clasen. All in favor. Motion carried.

Chair Xiong called for nominations for the position of Vice Chair.

*Commissioner Karwoski nominated Commissioner Clasen, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. All in favor. Motion carried.*

#### **Approval of Agenda**

*A motion to approve the agenda was moved by Commissioner Ortega, seconded by Commissioner Clasen. All in favor. Motion carried.*

#### **Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

*A motion to approve the minutes from the December 2, 2024, Meeting was made by Commissioner Clasen, seconded by Commissioner Karwoski. All in favor. Motion Carried.*

#### **Approval of the 2025 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Financial Services Agreement**

Patrick Collins, Gold Line Joint Powers Board legal counsel, provided an overview of the agreement and offered to answer any questions. No questions were asked.

*Commissioner Ortega made a motion to approve the 2025 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Financial Services Agreement, seconded by Commissioner Clasen. All in favor. Motion carried.*

#### **Approval of Amendment #1 to the 2025 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget**

Aaron Zellmer, Washington County Accounting Division Manager, gave an overview of Amendment #1. The 2024 Administrative Budget is now closed, and as a result of underspending in 2024, a remaining fund balance of \$93,200 remains. The fund balance will reduce the 2025 contributions of each county from \$129,000 to \$82,400. No questions were raised.

*Commissioner Clasen made a motion to approve Amendment #1 to the 2025 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. All in favor. Motion carried.*

#### **Resolution GLJPB #2025-01, Resolution Recognizing Gold Line Project Director Alicia Vap**

Washington County staff, Sara Allen, read the resolution of recognition.

Members of the Gold Line JPB provided congratulations and commendations for Ms. Vap's leadership, bringing the Gold Line through construction and operation. Mary Richardson complemented Ms. Vap, stating that she was one of the best directors she had ever worked with in over 30 years of work with transit projects.

*Commissioner Clasen made a motion to approve Resolution GLJPB #2025-01, seconded by Commissioner Ortega. All In favor. Motion carried.*

### **Gold Line Joint Powers Board Communications and Government Relations Update**

Brian McClung, of McClung PR, provided an update. The Chambers will continue to be a resource to promote ongoing interest and public engagement. Group rides are also an option, during the summer. Commissioner Karwoski encouraged Mr. McClung to continue utilizing resources for public engagement. Chair Xiong suggested that he use the press, as there are numerous business hubs along the route. Commissioner Clasen would like to see more stories about people using the Gold Line regularly, and feels these stories have a significant impact.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Next Meeting** – August 27, 2025, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM, at the Gold Line Project Office, 121 7<sup>th</sup> PI E #102, St. Paul, MN 55101.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara Favreau, Clerk

---



**GOLD LINE JOINT POWERS BOARD  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. III. c.**

**8/27/2025**

**Approval of the 2026 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget**

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:**

Approval of the 2026 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget.

**BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION**

The proposed 2026 Administrative Budget totals \$208,000 which represents a reduction of \$50,000 from the adopted 2025 Administrative Budget.

As set forth in the Joint Powers Agreement, financial contributions to the annual budget are allocated 50% to each Ramsey and Washington Counties. The proposed contribution to the 2026 Administrative Budget for each county is \$104,000. Note that, as in previous years, the proposed contributions will be reduced by any unspent funds carried forward from 2025. Article VII of the Joint Powers Agreement requires a unanimous vote for the adoption of the budget.

Note: The JPB adopted an 18-month 2025-June 2026 Capital Budget at the December 2024 meeting. Therefore, a Capital Budget adoption for 2026 is not needed at this time. An amended 2026 budget will be brought to the JPB at an upcoming meeting that reflects the Board's direction on agenda item III.d.

**PREVIOUS ACTION ON REQUEST/OTHER PARTIES ADVISED**

4/23/2025 - Approval of Amendment #1 to the 2025 Gold Line Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget.

**RECOMMENDATION (SELECT ONE)**

Approval.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget, Years: 2025 & 2026

## Joint Powers Board Administrative Budget

	2025 APPROVED BUDGET	2025 AMENDED APPROVED BUDGET	2026 PROPOSED BUDGET
<b><u>JPB REVENUES</u></b>			
Ramsey County & RCRA	\$129,000.00	\$82,400.00	\$104,000.00
Washington County & WCRA	\$129,000.00	\$82,400.00	\$104,000.00
Fund Balance	\$0.00	\$93,200.00	\$0.00
<b><i>Total Revenues</i></b>	<b>\$258,000.00</b>	<b>\$258,000.00</b>	<b>\$208,000.00</b>
<b><u>JPB EXPENSES</u></b>			
Audit	\$13,000.00	\$13,000.00	\$13,000.00
Communications & Government Relations	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$0.00
Contingency	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
Financial Services	\$45,000.00	\$45,000.00	\$45,000.00
Insurance	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Legal Services	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00	\$75,000.00
Strategic Planning & Policy Development	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Travel (Washington DC Trip)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b><i>Total Expenses</i></b>	<b>\$258,000.00</b>	<b>\$258,000.00</b>	<b>\$208,000.00</b>
<b><u>FUND BALANCE</u></b>			
Fund Balance - Beginning	\$0	\$93,200	\$0
Use of Fund Balance	\$0	(\$93,200)	\$0
<b><i>Fund Balance - Ending</i></b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>



**GOLD LINE JOINT POWERS BOARD  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. III. d.**

**8/27/2025**

**Approve Staff Recommendations regarding the future of the Gold Line Joint Powers Board**

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:**

Approve Staff Recommendations regarding the future of the Gold Line Joint Powers Board.

**BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION**

Please see attached memo.

**PREVIOUS ACTION ON REQUEST/OTHER PARTIES ADVISED**

**RECOMMENDATION (SELECT ONE)**

Approval.

**ATTACHMENTS**

# MEMORANDUM

Date: August 21, 2025

To: Gold Line Joint Powers Board

From: Washington and Ramsey County Staff, along with JPB legal team

Now that METRO Gold Line (“Gold Line”) has commenced operations, we present this memorandum detailing the on-going responsibilities of the Gold Line Joint Powers Board (“JPB”), along with our recommendations for the future of the JPB.

With all joint powers boards, it is important to start with a review of the organizational documents.

## Joint Powers Agreement

The purposes of the Joint Powers Agreement (“JPA”) are to establish the JPB to receive and distribute funding, provide financial oversight over expenditures, and provide a mechanism to jointly address issues. The annual budget for the JPB must be adopted by August 15 of each year, and the JPB may contract with one of the parties (Washington or Ramsey County) to provide contract management, along with legal, budgeting and accounting services. The JPB serves on the change control board and is tasked with establishing procedures for contingency management. The JPA will terminate upon a resolution adopted by the respective Board of Commissioners for Washington County and Ramsey County.

## Joint Powers Board Bylaws

The JPB shall meet at least quarterly at days and times established at the first regular meeting of each year. At this first regular meeting, the JPB shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair to serve one-year terms.

## Executive Change Control Board Operating Procedures

The JPB serves on the Executive Change Control Board (“ECCB”), along with the Chair and one member of the Metropolitan Council. Pursuant to the JPA, the JPB established ECCB Operating Procedures that govern the use of contingency throughout the project and automatically expire upon completion of project close out. Meetings shall be established by resolution of the ECCB.

## Financial Services Agreement

In accordance with the JPA, the JPB entered into a financial services agreement with Washington County to provide contract management, along with legal, budgeting and accounting services. Currently, \$45,000 is budgeted for financial services and \$75,000 for

legal services. The financial services agreement terminates on June 30, 2027, upon termination of the JPA, or upon agreement of the parties.

#### Construction Grant Agreement with Metropolitan Council

The JPB entered into a Construction Grant Agreement (“CGA”) with Metropolitan Council (the “Council”) that terminates on June 30, 2026. All non-fully performed obligations of the Council under the CGA survive termination of the CGA, including requirements relating to property acquisition and disposition. The primary outstanding CGA Metropolitan Council (Grantee) obligations are as follows:

- A. Completion of the project (2.05)
  1. Landscaping contract: Initial installation has been completed. There is a two-year maintenance and warranty period. Estimated completion is the third quarter of 2027.
  2. Woodlane Parking Structure and Station: There are punch list and open items to be completed. Landscaping maintenance is scheduled through June 2026. Estimated completion of all items is the third quarter of 2026.
  3. Before and after study: This is an FTA requirement that can begin the “after” data-collection two-years after the project begins operations and needs to be submitted to FTA within 36-months after project close-out.
  4. Right of way (“ROW”) acquisition: There are twenty-one remaining parcels that need to be acquired. Property declarations need to be recorded on all acquired parcels. Estimated completion is within 2 to 4 years, although it could take longer to complete all acquisitions.
  5. Civil Construction Contract: Outstanding punch list and corrective actions are anticipated to be completed by December 2025. Contract close-out is anticipated to be completed by the summer of 2026.
  6. Other Contracts and Agency Staffing: There will be additional costs through the remainder of project close-out to reflect the need for smaller contracts like ROW legal support and agency staffing.
  
- B. Estimated Grantee expenditures under the CGA (subject to revision pursuant to an updated Exhibit C)
  1. Remainder of 2025 through 2027: Most of the project work and contract close-out is anticipated by the end of 2027. Future revisions of Exhibit C will include known costs for all remaining work and columns to reflect remaining risk exposure and budget surplus. We do not anticipate needing to use the budget surplus to complete the project. As of the writing of this memo, there is approximately \$6.5 million in remaining risk exposure and over \$30 million of budget surplus. Assuming the budget surplus funds are not needed to complete the project, the remaining project expenses are approximately \$14.8 million and the remaining JPB contribution from September 2025 through December 2027 is approximately \$4 million.

2. 2028 and beyond: There may be expenditures related to ROW acquisitions/settlements and associated staff time, but those funds are accounted for in the risk column in the cashflow.

C. Contingency Management (6.02): As of June 2025, the remaining amount of contingency is \$37.25 million (Year of Expenditure dollars), including \$25.39 million in allocated contingency and \$11.86 million in unallocated contingency.

#### Disbursement of grant proceeds (Article III)

The CGA requires payment based on Exhibit C. Exhibit C has previously been formatted to require monthly payments to the Council. There is no requirement for monthly payments. The average disbursement amounts for the remainder of 2025 and all of 2026 and 2027 range from under \$0 to under \$500,000. This is compared to previous monthly disbursements of \$2 million to \$10 million. Due to the relatively low dollar amounts, we recommend quarterly disbursements starting in 2026 to reduce the administrative burden of processing invoices.

A. Liability (8.04) – Under 8.04 of the CGA, each party to the CGA is responsible for its own acts and omissions, along with the acts and omissions of its officers, employees, contractors and volunteers. There is one potential claim known at this time and no other known liabilities.

B. Outstanding risks: As summarized in the Monthly Project Report submitted to the FTA, there are a small number of outstanding risks to the Project, all of which have mitigation strategies identified by the Grantee. At this stage of project completion, it is unlikely that significant costs or delay will arise from the identified risks. Potential risks include delay in the delivery of the electric buses and potential claims relating to tax increases.

C. Ongoing Grantee obligations: Reimbursement and repayment of ineligible expenses, if any (2.06B); Drafting required monthly reports (2.06C); Reimbursement of JPB (2.12); Drafting reconciliation and final report (2.14); Future Acquisition, Sale/Conveyance and Maintenance of Real Property (Article IV); and compliance with tax-exempt or tax favored bond requirements (Article V).

#### Other Contractual Obligations

Currently, the JPB has contracts with Brian McClung (McClung PR) and Mary Richardson. Both contracts terminate on December 31, 2025.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

While most of the work on the Project is complete, there are several significant, outstanding obligations requiring ongoing JPB oversight.<sup>1</sup> The advantages of continuing the JPB include continuity in policy-maker oversight in the final completion of the Gold Line project; utilization of current level of expertise; an established forum for joint decision-making; and the need for required representation on the ECCB.

For these reasons, we recommend the following:

1. The JPB continue operations through 2027 or until all financial obligations are fulfilled. The Board should reevaluate its decision in mid-2027 to determine if a change of course is needed or wanted.
2. The JPB Bylaws be amended to provide for one annual meeting to elect officers, establish meeting schedule and locations, and adopt the budget. Meetings can also be called by the Chair, as needed.
3. The CGA be amended to extend the term through December 31, 2027 or until all close-out obligations are fulfilled and to establish a fifth grant activity period to reflect the extended CGA term. The amendment would reflect the most current Exhibit C cashflow. We anticipate the CGA amendment will be brought to the JPB in late 2025 or early 2026.
4. The Financial Services Agreement with Washington County be amended to extend the term to correspond to the term of the JPA.
5. The consulting contract with Mary Richardson be extended to December 31, 2026.

### Action Requested

We request that the JPB approve these recommendations and direct staff to prepare documents for JPB action at an upcoming meeting.

<sup>1</sup> When the Parties to the Joint Powers Agreement agree to terminate the Joint Powers Agreement, it will be necessary for the Board to assign the Construction Grant Agreement to one of the Counties and for that County to assume the responsibilities of the Grantor under the CGA. (Assignment and Assumption Agreement.) The primary purpose of the assignment and assumption is to ensure that an entity is identified that will be responsible for overseeing the disposition/sale of real property purchased with Project funding. The entity will also be responsible for sharing any sale proceeds with the other county. Note that when the assignment occurs, the Metropolitan Council must file a Memorandum of Assignment on all recorded property declarations. The assignment of the CGA should occur prior to the termination of the CGA and prior to the termination of the JPA.



**GOLD LINE JOINT POWERS BOARD  
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. IV a.**

**8/27/2025**

**Gold Line Joint Powers Board 2024 Audit**

**BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:**

Review of a Gold Line Joint Powers Board 2024 Audit.

**BACKGROUND/JUSTIFICATION**

Joint Powers Board Accounting and Finance staff along with Doug Host, Assurance Principal from CliftonLarsonAllen, LLC (CLA) will present the 2024 Gold Line Joint Powers Board (GLJPB) Audit findings and report.

No significant findings were reported.

**PREVIOUS ACTION ON REQUEST/OTHER PARTIES ADVISED**

N/A.

**RECOMMENDATION (SELECT ONE)**

Information.

**ATTACHMENTS**

2024 GLJPB Independent Auditor's Report

GLJPB Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2024



Board of Commissioners  
Gold Line Joint Powers Board  
Stillwater, Minnesota

We have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities and major fund of Gold Line Joint Powers Board as of and for the year ended December 31, 2024, and have issued our report thereon dated April 24, 2025. We have previously communicated to you information about our responsibilities under auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and *Government Auditing Standards*, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit in our Statement of work dated October 23, 2024. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

### **Significant audit findings or issues**

#### ***Qualitative aspects of accounting practices***

##### *Accounting policies*

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by Gold Line Joint Powers Board are described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

No new accounting policies were adopted and the application of existing policies was not changed during December 31, 2024.

We noted no transactions entered into by the entity during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

##### *Accounting estimates*

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. There were no accounting estimates affecting the financial statements which were particularly sensitive or required substantial judgments by management.

##### *Financial statement disclosures*

Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. There were no particularly sensitive financial statement disclosures.

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

***Difficulties encountered in performing the audit***

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

***Uncorrected misstatements***

Professional standards require us to accumulate all misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Management did not identify and we did not notify them of any uncorrected financial statement misstatements.

***Corrected misstatements***

Management did not identify and we did not notify them of any financial statement misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures.

***Disagreements with management***

For purposes of this communication, a disagreement with management is a disagreement on a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditors' report. No such disagreements arose during our audit.

***Management representations***

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the attached management representation letter dated April 24, 2025.

***Management consultations with other independent accountants***

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the entity's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditors' opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

***Significant issues discussed with management prior to engagement***

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to engagement as the entity's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our engagement.

***Required supplementary information***

With respect to the required supplementary information (RSI) (collectively, the supplementary information) accompanying the financial statements, on which we were engaged to report in relation to the financial statements as a whole, we made certain inquiries of management and evaluated the form, content, and methods of preparing the information to determine that the information complies with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, the method of preparing it has not changed from the prior period or the reasons for such changes, and the information is appropriate and complete in relation to our audit of the financial statements. We compared and reconciled the

supplementary information to the underlying accounting records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves. We have issued our report thereon dated April 24, 2025.

\* \* \*

This communication is intended solely for the information and use of Board of Commissioners and management of Gold Line Joint Powers Board and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "CliftonLarsonAllen LLP".

**CliftonLarsonAllen LLP**

Minneapolis, Minnesota  
April 24, 2025

April 24, 2025

CliftonLarsonAllen LLP  
220 South Sixth Street, Suite 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55402-1436

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Gold Line Joint Powers Board, which comprise the respective financial position of the governmental activities, major fund information as of December 31, 2024, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements, for the purpose of expressing opinions on whether the financial statements are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (U.S. GAAP).

Certain representations in this letter are described as being limited to misstatements that are material. Misstatements, including omissions, are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, as of April 24, 2025, the following representations made to you during your audit of the financial statements as of and for the year ended December 31, 2024.

#### **Financial Statements**

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities, as set out in the terms of the audit engagement agreement dated October 23, 2024, for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP. The financial statements include all properly classified funds and other financial information of the primary government and all component units required by generally accepted accounting principles to be included in the financial reporting entity
2. We acknowledge and have fulfilled our responsibility for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
3. We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.
4. Methods, data, and significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates and their related disclosures, including those measured at fair value, are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement, or disclosure that is reasonable in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
5. Significant estimates have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of U.S. GAAP. Significant estimates are estimates at the financial statement date that could change materially within the next year, if any.

6. Related party relationships and transactions, including, but not limited to, revenues, expenditures/expenses, loans, transfers, leasing arrangements, and guarantees, and amounts receivable from or payable to related parties have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of U.S. GAAP.
7. No events, including instances of noncompliance, have occurred subsequent to the financial statement date and through the date of this letter that would require adjustment to, or disclosure in the financial statements, if any.
8. We have not identified or been notified of any uncorrected financial statement misstatements.
9. We are not aware of any pending or threatened litigation, claims, or assessments or unasserted claims or assessments that are required to be accrued or disclosed in the financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP, and we have not consulted a lawyer concerning litigation, claims, or assessments.
10. Guarantees, whether written or oral, under which the entity is contingently liable, if any, have been properly recorded or disclosed in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
11. Arrangements with financial institutions involving repurchase, reverse repurchase, or securities lending agreements, compensating balances, or other arrangements involving restrictions on cash balances and line-of-credit or similar arrangements, have been properly recorded or disclosed in the financial statements.
12. Receivables recorded in the financial statements represent valid claims against debtors for transactions arising on or before the financial statement date, and the carrying amounts of those receivables and related allowances are determined in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
13. We have no plans or intentions that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets, liabilities, or equity.
14. We believe that all material expenditures that have been deferred to future periods will be recoverable.

#### **Information Provided**

1. We have provided you with:
  - a. Access to all information, of which we are aware, that is relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements such as records (including information obtained from within and outside of the general and subsidiary ledgers), documentation, and other matters.
  - b. Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit.
  - c. Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
  - d. Complete minutes of the meetings of the governing board and related committees, or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared.

- e. All communications from regulatory agencies, grantors, lenders, and other funding sources concerning noncompliance with, or deficiencies in, financial reporting practices
  - f. All communications from regulatory agencies, grantors, lenders, and other funding sources concerning noncompliance with the provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements.
  - g. Access to all audit or relevant monitoring reports, if any, received from funding sources.
2. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
  3. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
  4. We have no knowledge of any fraud or suspected fraud that affects the entity and involves:
    - a. Management;
    - b. Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
    - c. Others when the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
  5. We have no knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, grantors, regulators, or others.
  6. We have disclosed to you all known instances of noncompliance or suspected noncompliance with laws and regulations and provisions of contracts and grant agreements, or waste or abuse whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.
  7. We are not aware of any pending or threatened litigation, claims, or assessments, or unasserted claims or assessments, that are required to be accrued or disclosed in the financial statements in accordance with U.S. GAAP, and we have not consulted a lawyer concerning litigation, claims, or assessments.
  8. There are no other material liabilities or gain or loss contingencies that are required to be accrued or disclosed in accordance with U.S. GAAP.
  9. We have disclosed to you the identity of all the entity's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware, including any side agreements.
  10. We have a process to track the status of audit findings and recommendations.
  11. We have identified to you any previous audits, attestation engagements, and other studies related to the audit objectives and whether related recommendations have been implemented.
  12. We are responsible for compliance with the laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grant agreements applicable to Gold Line Joint Powers Board, including tax or debt limits and debt contracts; and we have identified and disclosed to you all laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grant agreements that we believe have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial

statement amounts or other financial data significant to the audit objectives, including legal and contractual provisions for reporting specific activities in separate funds.

13. There are no violations or possible violations of budget ordinances, laws and regulations (including those pertaining to adopting, approving, and amending budgets), provisions of contracts and grant agreements, tax or debt limits, and any related debt covenants whose effects should be considered for disclosure in the financial statements, or as a basis for recording a loss contingency, or for reporting on noncompliance.
14. The entity has complied with all aspects of contractual or grant agreements that would have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of noncompliance.
15. We have complied with all restrictions on resources (including donor restrictions) and all aspects of contractual and grant agreements that would have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of noncompliance. This includes complying with donor requirements to maintain a specific asset composition necessary to satisfy their restrictions.
16. We are responsible for determining whether we have received, expended, or otherwise been the beneficiary of any federal awards during the period of this audit. No federal award, received directly from federal agencies or indirectly as a subrecipient, was expended in an amount that cumulatively totals from all sources \$750,000 or more. For this representation, "award" means financial assistance and federal cost-reimbursement contracts that non-federal entities receive directly from federal awarding agencies or indirectly from pass-through entities. It does not include procurement contracts, user grants, or contracts used to buy goods or services from vendors.
17. We have followed all applicable laws and regulations in adopting, approving, and amending budgets.
18. The financial statements include all component units as well as joint ventures with an equity interest, and properly disclose all other joint ventures, jointly governed organizations, and other related organizations, if any.
19. The financial statements properly classify all funds and activities.
20. All funds that meet the quantitative criteria in GASB Statement Nos. 34 and 37 for presentation as major are identified and presented as such and all other funds that are presented as major are particularly important to financial statement users.
21. Components of net position (net investment in capital assets; restricted; and unrestricted) and classifications of fund balance (nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned and unassigned) are properly classified and, if applicable, approved.
22. Investments, derivative instruments, and land and other real estate held by endowments are properly valued.

- 23. Expenses have been appropriately classified in or allocated to functions and programs in the statement of activities, and allocations have been made on a reasonable basis.
- 24. Revenues are appropriately classified in the statement of activities within program revenues, general revenues, contributions to term or permanent endowments, or contributions to permanent fund principal.
- 25. Interfund, internal, and intra-entity activity and balances have been appropriately classified and reported.
- 26. Special and extraordinary items are appropriately classified and reported, if any.
- 27. Deposits and investment securities and derivative instruments are properly classified as to risk and are properly valued and disclosed.
- 28. We have appropriately disclosed the entity's policy regarding whether to first apply restricted or unrestricted resources when an expense is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted net position is available and have determined that net position is properly recognized under the policy.
- 29. We acknowledge our responsibility for the required supplementary information (RSI). The RSI is measured and presented within prescribed guidelines and the methods of measurement and presentation have not changed from those used in the prior period. We have disclosed to you any significant assumptions and interpretations underlying the measurement and presentation of the RSI.

Signature: Car Azgals Title: Accounting & Finance Director

Signature: Sharon Yeaght Title: Deputy Director Accounting & Finance

*We strive to provide exceptional services that enhance quality of life and promote a safe, healthy, and welcoming community for all.*

Government Center | 14949 62nd Street North | P. O. Box 6 | Stillwater, MN 55082-0006  
 P: 651-430-6030 | F: 651-430-6060 | TTY: 651-430-6246  
[www.washingtoncountymn.gov](http://www.washingtoncountymn.gov)

*Washington County is an equal opportunity organization and employer*

**DATE:** August 20, 2025  
**TO:** Gold Line Joint Powers Board  
**FROM:** Brian McClung, McClung PR  
**RE:** Communications Update and Work Plan for Remainder of 2025

### Business Community & Stakeholder Outreach

- **Advocacy Toolkit completed and in use.** We finalized and published the Gold Line BRT Advocacy Toolkit to support business/community partners with messaging, calls to action, sample content, story collection, and event ideas.
- **Chamber engagement.** Toolkit shared with the St. Paul Area Chamber, Woodbury Area Chamber, Oakdale Area Chamber, MN Hmong Chamber of Commerce, and the East Side Area Business Association (ESABA).
- **Ridealong in development (Woodbury).** We've had productive conversations with the Woodbury Area Chamber. They're interested in a Gold Line BRT ridealong for their Board of Directors (or a larger member group). They're discussing scope and timing and will get back to us; we're prepared to coordinate routing, wayfinding, a short station briefing, and a business stop.
- **Story capture.** Toolkit includes a ready-to-use story intake form and prompts ("Before the Gold Line, I used to...", "I ride the Gold Line to..."), which we'll promote through chambers to gather rider and business impact stories for social and earned media.

### Strategic Communications

- **Message focus.** Emphasize reliability, access to jobs/education/healthcare, business visibility along the corridor, and affordability; lift up real riders and businesses in all materials.
- **Content pipeline.** Using Toolkit's content library (posts, quotes, "Discovery Ride" ideas) with chamber co-branding; we'll encourage partners to tag @MetroTransitMN and use #GoldLineMN / #GoldLineBRT for amplification.

### Earned Media & Recent Coverage

- **Star Tribune (July 17, 2025):** "Riders have been slow to hop on the new Gold Line bus route, but there are signs of an uptick," noting ~1,100 average daily rides Mon–Sat and 770 on Sundays in the first months, and highlighting positive rider testimonials and the 2027 Minneapolis extension as a growth driver.
- **MinnPost (June 25, 2025):** "New B and Gold Lines illustrate the wide range of possibility for bus rapid transit," framing Gold Line as a key part of the Twin Cities BRT network and the 3M/east-metro access rationale.
- **Streets.mn (June 17, 2025):** Quarterly Transit Report notes Network Now work and references upgrading Route 94 as a Gold Line extension concept – supportive context for a future one-seat ride across the metro.

- *(Background for reference: past coverage on the planned extension to Minneapolis was strongly positive; we flagged this trend in prior updates.)*

### **Social & Digital**

- Promoting short rider spotlights (students, service workers, 3M employees, seniors) and “Discovery Rides,” aligned to business corridors and chambers’ calendars. Toolkit-ready captions and graphics are available for partners to repost.

### **Upcoming Activities (Next 4–6 Weeks)**

1. **Woodbury Chamber Ridealong:** Lock date/time, finalize invite text, RSVP flow, and brief route agenda; prepare quick facts one-pager and media note.
2. **Chamber cascade:** Offer smaller ridealong/“Ride & Learn” opportunities to St. Paul Area Chamber, Oakdale Area Chamber, MN Hmong Chamber, and ESABA; prioritize corridors where businesses can host a short stop.
3. **Story drive:** Work with partners to collect rider/business stories via the Toolkit form; select 3–5 for release to media and social.
4. **Metrics snapshot:** Pair early ridership trend context with qualitative stories for a balanced narrative; continue tracking media mentions and partner activations.

### **Board Support**

- **Participation:** If schedules allow, Board members are welcome on the Woodbury Chamber ridealong (or subsequent partner rides).
- **Story leads:** Share suggested riders or businesses to feature – especially in Oakdale, Maplewood, or East Side.
- **Signal boost:** Repost chamber/partner content and rider spotlights to broaden reach.

# Gold Line BRT Advocacy Toolkit

Promoting Economic Growth, Access, and Opportunity from Woodbury to St. Paul

## Table of Contents

1. Overview
  2. Messaging & Talking Points
  3. Calls to Action
  4. Content Library (Social Media, etc.)
  5. Storytelling & Amplification
  6. Events & Engagement Ideas
  7. Data & Impact Resources
- 

## 1. Overview

METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) launched in March 2025, becoming the first BRT line in Minnesota to operate primarily in a dedicated bus-only lane. Stretching from Woodbury to downtown St. Paul, the Gold Line improves access to jobs, healthcare, education, and commerce for thousands of riders.

The Gold Line was developed with strong local, regional, and federal support. Now that it's operational, it's time to highlight the benefits for local businesses, workers, and residents – and to ensure its continued success through community engagement and storytelling.

## 2. Messaging & Talking Points

Messaging Framework:

- Start with local benefits
- Center on values (mobility, opportunity, sustainability)
- Use real people and businesses in stories

**Top-Line Messages:**

- Gold Line BRT is connecting people to opportunities – from workplaces to small businesses to schools and medical care.
- Gold Line BRT provides reliable, high-quality, frequent transit that is connected directly to the transit system that brings our entire Minneapolis-St. Paul region together.
- East Metro communities are growing, and the Gold Line helps to ensure more equitable and accessible growth.

- From students to seniors, from restaurant workers to retail shoppers, the Gold Line is helping people get where they need to go — affordably, reliably, and sustainably.
- This kind of transit is needed to help connect people with jobs. To compete for economic growth, we need high quality, frequent transit service, in the East Metro.

### 3. Calls to Action

#### **Actions:**

- Share a personal or business story about how the Gold Line helps you or your community.
- Post photos, videos, or quotes on social media using #GoldLineMN and tag your chamber.
- Invite employees, customers, or neighbors to take a “Discovery Ride” together.
- Encourage employers or organizations to take part in [Metro Pass](#), Metro Transit’s commuter benefit program.

#### **Deeper Engagement:**

- Host a “Ride & Learn” event at your business with Gold Line staff.
- Write a letter to the editor about the benefits your business or family is experiencing.
- Reach out to local elected officials to share your support for continued investment in transit access.

### 4. Content Library

#### **Sample Social Media Posts (use @GoldLineBRT or #GoldLineBRT)**

##### **Instagram/Facebook**

“Thanks to Gold Line BRT, it’s easier than ever for customers to reach us – and for our staff to get to work.” – [Business Name], [Location]

Meet \_\_\_\_\_, a student at Metro State who now commutes daily from Woodbury using the Gold Line. “It saves me money and stress. I can read or study instead of being stuck in traffic.”

Local businesses along the Gold Line corridor are seeing customers come in from the BRT line — proof that transit drives economic growth.

Explore your neighborhood this summer via the Gold Line. Try a @GoldLineBRT challenge — shop local, stop for lunch, and ride home!

##### **Twitter/X (280 characters max)**

Riders are discovering the power of @GoldLineBRT – saving money, reducing stress, and connecting to new opportunities. Have you taken a ride yet?

## 5. Storytelling & Amplification

**Collecting Stories** – Encourage Chamber/ESABA members and the public to share:

- How the Gold Line impacts their daily routine
- How it helps their business attract talent or customers
- What it means for youth, seniors, or people without cars

We have created this Google Form to collect stories:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1B8V\\_kg-eU3tpYRHjGlgJxPSC8\\_0FPgWW\\_B6lOsKeZs/edit](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1B8V_kg-eU3tpYRHjGlgJxPSC8_0FPgWW_B6lOsKeZs/edit)

It includes story prompts like:

- “Before the Gold Line, I used to...”
- “The Gold Line has helped my business by...”
- “I ride the Gold Line to...”

## 6. Events & Engagement Ideas

- **Discovery Rides:** Partner for ride-alongs with business owners or civic leaders.
- **Gold Line Summer Challenge:** Explore 5 local stops and win a local business gift card.
- **Media Moments:** Invite media to visit a business receiving more foot traffic or hosting a Gold Line happy hour.

## 7. Data & Impact Resources

Create a one-pager with:

- Number of riders since March 2025
- Top 5 most-used stations
- Business corridor growth/development data (if available)
- Map of connections to key locations (schools, hospitals, shopping centers)