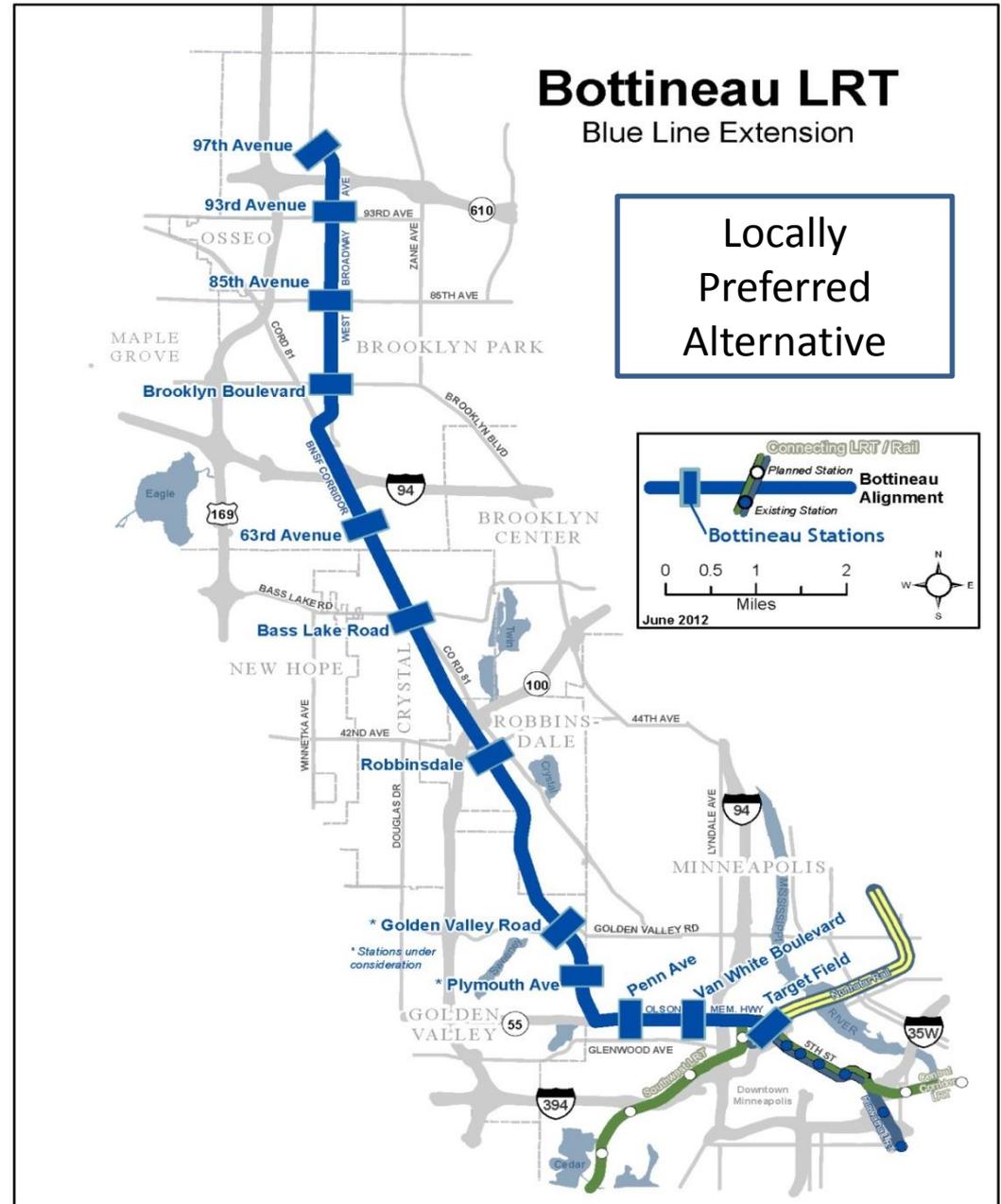


Bottineau Transitway Health Impact Assessment

Prepared by Crystal Myslajek
December 2013

The Bottineau Transitway

- High frequency LRT
- Will be an extension of the Hiawatha LRT (Blue Line)
- 13 miles, downtown Minneapolis to northwestern suburbs
- 10-11 new stations
- Operation in 2019/2020



Community Health

What do transportation and land use have to do with health?

- **Health** starts in the **environments** where we live, work and play
 - Our environment has a significant impact on our health, from traffic injuries/fatalities to obesity and respiratory illness
- **Transportation investments** (like highways, public transit and sidewalks) shape our environments
 - Transportation and station area **investments that consider health can bring benefits to a community**
 - such as increased quality of life and better health



Community Health

Health disparities

- Avoidable differences in health between communities that are caused by a wider set of forces: historical and contemporary injustices in economics, social policies, politics, and our built environment
 - In Hennepin County, low-income communities and communities of color have higher rates of preventable health problems than do higher income and White populations.

Community Health

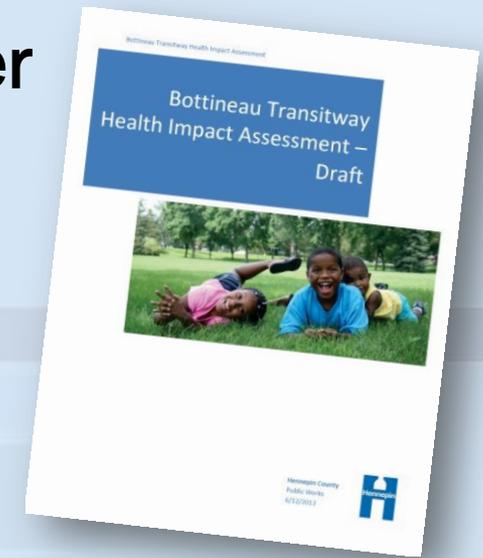
Health equity

- Results when everyone can achieve their full health potential and avoidable differences in health are eliminated.
 - Station area plans should advance community health and health equity.



About Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

- A set of steps to examine the **potential effects of a proposed policy or project** on the health of communities
- Used to **help stakeholders consider health** when health might not otherwise be included in the conversation
- HIA is a **new approach**



Bottineau HIA: Process

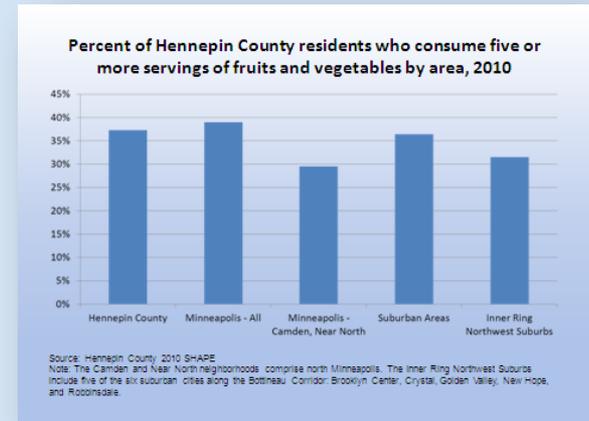
- Collected stakeholder input through:

- Advisory Committee
- Focus groups
- Stakeholder interviews
- Public meetings
- Results from other community studies
- Project consultants:

African Career, Education and Resource, Inc., Northwest Hennepin Human Service Council, and NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center

- Data on population, health, and land uses

- Employment, population, and transit ridership forecasts



Bottineau HIA: Topics

- Employment
- Affordability: Housing + Transportation
- Education
- Healthy Food
- Physical Activity
- Traffic Safety



Bottineau HIA: Topics

- Physical Activity
- Employment
- Affordability: Housing + Transportation Costs
- Education
- Traffic Safety
- Healthy Food



Bottineau HIA: Findings

Physical Activity

- The transitway could increase people's daily physical activity
 - Nationally, people who use transit get 24 minutes of exercise per weekday just by walking to and from transit.
 - Improved environments for biking and walking
 - Improved access to Theodore Wirth Park
- Why this matters for health
 - Exercise is vital for good health, but half of adults in Hennepin County do not get the recommended levels of exercise

Bottineau HIA: Findings

Employment

- The transitway could improve access to jobs
 - Increased connections to jobs and economic growth
 - Construction, and operation and maintenance jobs
- Why this matters for health
 - When people have quality jobs that provide a living wage they tend to live longer and have better physical and mental health.



Bottineau HIA: Findings

Affordability: Housing + Transportation Costs

- The transitway could make the combined costs of housing and transportation more affordable
 - Transportation and housing costs are the two largest expenses for American families
 - Transportation is a hidden cost
- Why this matters for health
 - High costs put families at risk for foreclosure and homelessness
 - Lower transportation costs means more left over in families' budgets for resources like nutritious food and health care



Bottineau HIA: Findings

Education

- The transitway will provide access to colleges and vocational schools
 - North Hennepin Community College, Summit Academy, MCTC, the U of MN, and other schools throughout the region
 - High transportation costs are barriers to attending college
- Why this matters for health
 - More education means better chances to securing jobs that pay well, are not dangerous, and do not have unhealthy conditions
 - With more education, people gain knowledge and skills that help them access health information and resources

Bottineau HIA: Findings

Traffic Safety

- The transitway could improve traffic safety
 - Transit is one of the safest forms of transportation available
 - Improved places for walking and biking (such as more crosswalks and bike lanes) reduce the risk of traffic injuries and deaths
- Why this matters for health
 - Injuries from motor vehicle crashes affect quality of life and have huge costs for the injured and their families.
 - In 2011, 5,089 people were injured in crashes in the cities along the Bottineau Transitway.

Bottineau HIA: Findings

Healthy Food

- The transitway could improve access to healthy food
 - New development in communities could include grocery stores, farmers markets and other food vendors.
- Why this matters for health
 - Good nutrition is vital to health
 - Less than 1/3 of residents living in Corridor cities eat recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables
 - When people have access to healthy food they are better able to include these foods into their diets



Bottineau HIA: Key Findings

- **Community health and health equity can be improved** through the Bottineau LRT project
 - The impact of the transitway on health will depend on the **land uses surrounding the new stations**
 - The impact of the transitway on low-income and minority communities will depend on efforts to **ensure their access** to light rail

Bottineau HIA: Top Recommendations

1. Identify **low-income and transit-dependent communities** that could connect to the transitway
2. Continue **community participation** throughout planning process, including with underrepresented groups
3. Target **residential and commercial growth** in the station areas that will benefit current and future communities
4. Incorporate **pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure** improvements into station area plans
5. Preserve and support the development of **affordable and mixed-income** housing near transit locations

Next Steps

- Hennepin County will carry forward **HIA findings and recommendations** into station area planning by:
 - Integrating **health-focused design and community engagement** into station area planning
 - Bringing a **focus on healthy communities and health equity** into ongoing **coordination efforts** with our community and government partners

Station Area Planning

How can you participate?

In order for station area planning to be successful, we need to hear from everyone.

Here is how you can participate:

- Attend future meetings in your community (may be hosted by community groups, or by project partners)
- Look for future community workshops, focus groups, and surveys during station area planning

Station Area Planning

How can you learn more?

- Stop by the information table
- Sign-up for email updates
- Visit:
 - HIA: <http://www.hennepin.us/bottineauhia>
 - Transitway and Station Area Planning:
<http://bottineautransitway.org> or
<http://www.metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Projects/Future-Projects/Bottineau-Transitway.aspx>

Contacts

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