

## Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

This Public Involvement Summary describes the public involvement activities that took place under a series of strategies and summarizes feedback received as a result of those activities. As applicable, a detailed record of the public comments received through the various activities is included in the appendices of this report.

This report is organized by the following public and stakeholder engagement strategies used to garner feedback for this study:

- **Technical and Community Advisory Groups:** The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provided oversight and advised project staff by reviewing documents and materials and provided input throughout the different phases of the study.
- **Community Partners:** In May 2021, SEWRPC initiated a partnership with community- and neighborhood-based organizations who have a longstanding presence in underserved neighborhoods in the corridor. Through an agreement that included payment for services, the community partners assisted with the study team in providing outreach along and near 27th Street.
- **Stakeholder Outreach:** In addition to members of the TAC and CAC, the study team held several individual and group meetings with key stakeholders to focus on issues of specific concern.
- **Project Website:** Throughout the duration of the study, a project website ([mkenorthsouth.com](http://mkenorthsouth.com)) was maintained and frequently updated. The website was used as an information hub for the study and was utilized heavily during each round of public involvement to both share and gather information.

- **Rounds 1, 2, and 3 of Public Involvement:** Research and analysis for the study was grouped into three phases, each of which included a round of public involvement, giving stakeholders and the public an opportunity to review progress and provide input that then informed the subsequent phases of the study. Each round of public involvement included public meetings and web-based public involvement opportunities. Where applicable, Community Partners, the CAC, and the TAC provided outreach assistance.
- **Social Media and Newsletters:** The project team shared information about the study through SEWRPC, Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS), and other stakeholders' social media accounts and wrote newsletter articles for SEWRPC, MCTS, and other newsletters.

Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 2

# TECHNICAL AND COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUPS

The Technical Advisory Group (TAC) and the Community Advisory Group (TAC) met three times each during the study to review study progress and provide feedback and guidance as applicable. The meetings were conducted prior to public involvement meetings and at critical decision points to allow members to provide input on information before it was presented to the public, help guide public involvement activities, and provide expertise.

### COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

The CAC was comprised of Business Improvements Districts, Neighborhood Improvement Districts, other community organizations and stakeholders within the existing corridor and future alternative alignments. The CAC was responsible for reviewing documents, handouts, and information prior to outreach meetings and served as a liaison back to the groups they represent to help ensure accurate project information is conveyed and feedback is collected. The CAC was encouraged to invite the study team to present latest study information to their constituents. Members of the CAC, as of the third and final CAC meeting on October 20, 2021, are listed below:

- Cheryl Blue, Executive Director, 30th Street Industrial Corridor Corporation, Inc.
- Markasa Tucker, Director, African American Roundtable
- Mike Bautch, Vice President, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 998
- Mario Mireles, Senior General Manager, Bayshore
- Dr. Patricia McManus, President & CEO, Black Health Coalition
- James Davis, Executive Director, Bublr Bikes

- Yvonne McCaskill, Coordinator, Century City Triangle Neighborhood Association
- Dr. Patricia Najera, Executive Director, Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative
- Chytania Brown, CEO, Employ Milwaukee
- Marjorie Rucker, Ethnic and Diverse Business Coalition
- Joe Tesch, Forest County Potawatomi Community
- Kiatoukaysy Lo Neng, Executive Director, Hmong American Friendship Center
- Brian Peters, Community Access & Policy Specialist, Independence First
- Dennis Grzezinski, Attorney, Law Office of Dennis Grzezinski
- Catrina Crane, Director of Workforce, Menomonee Valley Neighborhood Association
- Melody McCurtis, Deputy Director of Priorities/ Organizer, Metcalfe Park Community Bridges
- Barbara Little and Adele Nance, MICAH Transportation Taskforce, MICAH
- Teri Zywicki, CEO and President, Milwaukee Center for Independence
- Nick DeMarsh, Milwaukee Transit Riders Union
- Dr. Eve Hall, President & CEO, Milwaukee Urban League
- Fred Royal, President, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Lindsay St. Arnold Bell, Associate Director, Near West Side Partners, Inc.
- Robin Reese, Manager, North Avenue Marketplace
- Sarah Bregant, Urban Planning Specialist, Northwest Side CDC
- Karyn Rotker, Poverty, Race & Civil Liberties Project Attorney, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Wisconsin Foundation
- David Steele, Executive Director, MobilISE
- Tara Cavazos, Executive Director, South 27th Street Business Association
- Tammy L. Rivera, Executive Director, Southside Organizing Center
- Dr. Jie Yu, Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Dr. Robert Schneider, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
- Brianna Sas-Perez, Executive Director, VIA

## **TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

The TAC was comprised of public officials from the local communities and governmental agencies that may be affected by the transit enhancement alternatives. Members of the TAC provided comments and guidance related to alignments and transit technology, and public engagement. The TAC also assisted with data

sharing and technical consultation, as needed. Members of the TAC, as of the third and final TAC meeting on October 21, 2021, are listed below:

- Nate Piotrowski, Community Services Director, Village of Brown Deer
- Matthew Maederer, Director of Public Works/Village Engineer, Village of Brown Deer
- Glen Morrow, City Engineer/Director of Public Works, City of Franklin
- Heath Eddy, Planning Manager, City of Franklin
- Todd Stuebe, Director of Community Development, City of Glendale
- Charlie Imig, Director of Public Works, City of Glendale
- Jeff Katz, City Engineer and Director of Neighborhood Services, City of Greenfield
- Jeffrey Polenske, Commissioner of Public Works, City of Milwaukee
- Tanya Fonseca, Long Range Planning Manager, City of Milwaukee
- Doug Seymour, Director of Community Development, City of Oak Creek
- Mike Simmons, City Engineer, City of Oak Creek
- Aaron Hertzberg, Director of Administrative Services, Milwaukee County
- Mark Kane, Community Planner, Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Mitch Batuzich, Transportation Planner, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Dewayne Johnson, Director, Southeast Region, Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Tony Barth, Systems Planning Chief, Southeast Region, Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Ian Ritz, Chief, Transit Section, Wisconsin Department of Transportation

## Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 3

# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

In May 2021, SEWRPC initiated a partnership with community- and neighborhood-based organizations who have a longstanding presence in underserved neighborhoods in the corridor. Through an agreement that includes payment for services, the community partners assisted the study team in providing outreach along and near 27th Street. The community partners helped develop outreach materials and provide study information, such as study fact sheets and handouts, via neighborhood mail drops and at local festivals, farmer's markets, and other community events. The community partners assisted in conducting surveys along and near 27th Street, including a PurpleLine bus stop survey, and will attend the study public meetings to be available for residents' questions and comments.

Community Partners are listed below:

- Metcalfe Park Community Bridges
- Near West Side Partners
- VIA, formerly known as Layton Boulevard West Neighbors
- Northwest Side Community Development Corporation
- Century City Triangle Neighborhood Association
- Clarke Square Neighborhood Initiative

The primary objectives for Community Partners were to (1) engage traditionally underrepresented populations, (2) encourage their participation, and (3) obtain their input. To meet these objectives, Community Partners agreed to conduct outreach and engagement activities in several ways, including:

- Presenting information, sharing materials, and gathering input (alongside project staff, if necessary) at events or community gathering places
- Conducting surveys at existing MCTS PurpleLine bus stops
- Completing “mail drops” in the corridor

## **OUTREACH AT COMMUNITY EVENTS OR GATHERING PLACES**

Community Partners completed outreach for the study at the following events and gathering places.

(List of activities to be added.)

## **BUS STOP SURVEY**

The study team worked with Community Partners to conduct a bus stop survey for the study in June and July 2021 at high-ridership bus stops along the existing PurpleLine bus corridor. Representatives from four Community Partner organizations and SEWRPC staff covered 27 stops along the corridor, distributing printed surveys with eight questions, which asked respondents about how they currently use the bus and what they would like to see in an enhanced transit service in the corridor.

Approximately 1,500 total printed surveys were distributed, and 490 completed surveys were collected.

The survey was available in both English and Spanish. An online version of the survey was also available and could be accessed by using a smart cell phone to scan a QR code that was posted at bus stops and on the physical surveys that were distributed at the bus stops. The completed physical surveys could be handed to the community partners or the bus drivers on the PurpleLine, or could be mailed in using the postage-paid address label on the printed survey. A report of the survey responses is provided in Appendix A.

## **MAIL DROPS**

Community Partners completed mail drops of a two-sided, one page fact sheet with the study website to share study information in the areas listed below.

(Summary of mail drop activities to be added.)

## Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 4

# STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

In addition to outreach to and with the CAC, TAC, and Community Partners, the study team met with several individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups to focus on issues of specific concern. Stakeholders included local elected officials, neighborhood and community associations, business-improvement districts, and transportation-focused organizations and groups. Table 4.1 lists meetings held with individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups.

### **BUSINESS OUTREACH**

In November 2021, the study team invited business owners along the corridor to a virtual meeting to discuss the study and gather feedback that may be specific to business needs and concerns. The study team used a Milwaukee County property owner database to send letters to all properties labeled as commercial uses within a two-block radius of the study corridor. This resulted in sending letters to approximately 1,000 business owners or occupants. Representatives from three businesses attended the meeting; however, all invitees were provided with information about the study and a link to the project website where feedback could be submitted throughout the study duration.

**Table 4.1  
Stakeholder Meeting List**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Individual Stakeholder or Stakeholder Group</b>
11/2/2020	Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Liz Sumner
11/11/2020	Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Steven Shea
11/12/2020	Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Russell Goodwin
11/12/2020	Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Patti Logsdon
11/12/2020	Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Joseph Czarnecki
11/13/2020	Milwaukee County Board Chair Marcelia Nicholson
11/16/2020	City of Milwaukee Alderman Bauman
11/17/2020	Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Sequanna Taylor
11/20/2020	Milwaukee County Board Supervisor Shawn Rolland
11/23/2020	City of Milwaukee, Alderman Spiker
12/1/2020	City of Milwaukee, Alderman Stamper
12/2/2020	Milwaukee County Transportation, Public Works, and Transit Committee
12/3/2020	Amalgamated Transit Union 998
12/4/2020	City of Milwaukee Alderman Murphy
12/7/2020	City of Greenfield – Officials from Engineering Division and Community Development and Zoning Division
12/9/2020	City of Milwaukee, Common Council President Johnson
12/9/2020	City of Glendale – Administrator and officials from Public Works Department and Community Development Department
12/9/2020	City of Milwaukee Alderman Borkowski
12/15/2020	Wisconsin Department of Transportation and City of Milwaukee Traffic Engineering Staff
12/16/2020	Village of Brown Deer – Officials from Community Development Department and Public Works Department
12/18/2020	City of Milwaukee, Officials from the Department of Community Development
12/22/2020	City of Milwaukee, Commissioner of Public Works
1/13/2021	Menomonee Valley Partners
1/19/2021	Near West Side Partners
1/19/2021	Greenfield City Council
1/20/2021	VIA CDC
1/21/2021	30th Street Industrial Corridor Corp
1/25/2021	Federal Transit Administration Officials
1/27/2021	City of Oak Creek – Officials from the Department of Public Works and the Department of Community Development
1/28/2021	Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Southeast Region staff
2/8/2021	Glendale City Council
2/17/2021	Neighborhood and Business Improvement District Representatives
2/19/2021	Southside Organizing Center (Facebook Live Event)
3/1/2021	MICAH Transportation Taskforce
3/3/2021	Independence First Hosted Transit Update Event
3/9/2021	VIA CDC
3/16/2021	WisDOT Meeting regarding the traffic analysis for WisDOT Project 2265-18-00 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Street
3/24/2021	Metcalfe Park Community Bridges (Facebook Live Event)
5/27/2021	Bicycle and Pedestrian stakeholders from government and non-profit organizations
6/15/2021	Southside Organizing Center Forum
7/3/2021	Amani Neighborhood
7/12/2021	Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Southeast Region, Project Development staff (Coordination on 27th Street resurfacing project)
8/7/2021	Hmong American Friendship Association Back-to-school Event
8/10/2021	Northwest Side CDC Framer's Market/Health event at Ascension Health
8/11/2021	Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Southeast Region, Project Development staff (Coordination on 27th Street resurfacing project)

8/21, 9/4, 9/18, 9/25, 10/9 2021	Public Outreach Booth at Fondy Farmer's Market
9/14/2021	City of Milwaukee, Alderman Spiker and South 27th Street Business Association
9/16/2021	WisDOT Meeting regarding WisDOT Project 2265-18-00 on 27 <sup>th</sup> Street
9/20/2021	City of Milwaukee, Alderman Bauman
9/20/2021	City of Milwaukee, Alderman Murphy
9/21/2021	City of Greenfield, Mayor Olson
9/21/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Coggs-Jones
9/21/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Sumner
9/22/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Borkowski
9/22/2021	Village of Brown Deer Community Services Director
9/29/2021	City of Glendale, City Administrator Safstrom
9/29/2021	City of Oak Creek, Director of Community Development and Public Works Director
9/29/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Logsdon
9/29/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Weishan
9/30/2021	WisDOT Meeting to provide an update on the study
10/4/2021	City of Milwaukee, Common Council President Johnson
10/5/2021	City of Milwaukee, Commissioner of Public Works and Department of City Development Long-Range Planning Manager
10/6/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Czarnecki
10/7/2021	Near West Side Partners and Property Owner Rick Weigand
10/20/2021	Milwaukee County Committee on Transportation, Public Works, and Transit
10/28/2021	Menomonee Valley Partners
11/18/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Haas
11/18/2021	VIA Annual Gathering
11/23/2021	Milwaukee County Supervisor Wasserman
12/2/2021	Tour of Employers and New Development in Franklin and Oak Creek with Community Development Director and Staff, Public Works, and Economic Development Directors
12/10/2021	City of Milwaukee Redevelopment Authority
1/14/2022	Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Southeast Region, Project Development staff (Coordination on 27th Street resurfacing project)
2/2/2022	City of Milwaukee, Department of Public Works Staff (Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordination)
3/14/2022	City of Oak Creek
	(Additional meetings will be added as they occur.)

## Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 5

# PROJECT WEBSITE

Throughout the duration of the study, a project website (mkenorthsouth.com) was maintained and frequently updated. The website was used as an information hub for the study and was utilized heavily during each round of public involvement to both share and gather information. The website was available in both English and Spanish and could be viewed on a desktop computer, tablet, or mobile device. The website consisted of five main pages (Home, Equity, Engage, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), Library, and Contact) and information on each page was updated as the study progressed.

### PROJECT INFORMATION ON THE WEBSITE

A brief description of the information that was available to the public through the website is provided below.

- The **Home** page included a brief explanation of the study, featured information about the existing PurpleLine during the first phase of the study and later a summary of the project needs under the heading “Why Enhance Transit Along 27th Street?”, a study timeline, a list of the members of the Project Management Team, TAC, CAC, and Community Partners, and a preliminary project timeline.
- The **Equity** page described the demographics of the study area (which was updated as the study area changed), a summary of the project purpose, and described the public engagement strategies that were being used to reach underserved communities along the corridor.
- The **Engage** page served as the hub for all things related to public involvement for the study. Public meeting materials, including links to recorded public meetings were posted there. When virtual public involvement meetings were planned, this page hosted meeting details and registration links. Web-

based public engagement opportunities such as surveys, which are described further in Chapters 6 through 8, were also posted here, as well as link to the Contact page (see below) where feedback could be provided.

- The **FAQ** page provided answers to frequently asked questions about the study such as why the area along and near 27th Street was being studied, explanations of the different transit technologies that were being considered, and how the project could potentially be funded.
- The **Contact** page provided an opportunity for the public to provide feedback throughout the duration of the study, sign up to receive project updates, and find additional contact information for the study team including the email address [info@mkenorthsouth.com](mailto:info@mkenorthsouth.com).

Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 6

# ROUND 1 OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Round 1 of public involvement took place from February 23, through April 18, 2021, and focused on providing participants with an overview of existing conditions in the study corridor (which consisted of the area within 0.5 miles of the existing PurpleLine) and discussing draft purpose and need statements and preliminary route and technology options. This round of public involvement consisted of two virtual public meetings (held in lieu of in-person meetings in keeping with COVID-19 precautions), an online survey, and an interactive web map where comments could be submitted.

### VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETINGS

Virtual public meetings took place on Tuesday, February 23, and Wednesday February 24, 2021, and were hosted on the GoToWebinar platform. Attendees were required to register for the meeting in advance through the project website. Live Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters were present on the meetings to provide interpretation services to anyone who needed it.

### Meeting Notification

The project team notified the public about the virtual meetings in several ways, including:

- Sharing a press release with several local media outlets, including minority papers, which was published by *Urban Milwaukee* and the *Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service*
- Sending an e-blast to the study contact list and Commission contacts in Milwaukee County, which included 388 people

- Posting information to the project website and the SEWRPC website
- Sending an email through the City of Milwaukee’s E-Notify listserv
- Sharing information on social media through MCTS and the Commission’s accounts
- Creating social media packets for CAC and TAC members to share on their social media accounts
- Playing pre-recorded public service announcements in English and Spanish on MCTS PurpleLine buses notifying riders of the virtual public meetings for several weeks prior to the meeting

### **Meeting Format**

The meeting was entirely virtual, hosted on the GoToWebinar platform with participants having the ability to interact with the project team by either virtually raising their hand to notify the host they would like to speak, or by typing questions or comments in a question panel within the GoToWebinar platform. The meeting format is described in more detail below:

#### **1. Logistics and Introductions**

Project staff provided a walk-through of the webinar tools to help participants understand how to participate in the meeting if they were not familiar with the GoToWebinar software, and brief introductions of project staff and interpreters were provided.

#### **2. Project Overview Presentation**

Project staff then provided an overview of the study, which largely focused on providing an overview of the study and the existing conditions in the corridor.

#### **3. Overview of Preliminary Route Options**

Using the interactive transportation web-mapping tool, Remix, project staff provided an overview of preliminary route options that were being considered for the study and participants had an opportunity to ask questions or provide comments on the routes while staff added them in real-time to the map. A screen capture of the Preliminary Route Options Map in Remix with public comments is provided in Figure 6.1. During this phase of the study, both rail and bus options were being

considered, and as such, preliminary on-street route options and preliminary rail corridor route options were shown in separate maps.

#### **4. Question and Answer Period**

Participants then had an opportunity to ask additional questions about the study or provide comments.

#### **5. Live Comments on Virtual Whiteboard**

For the final portion of the meeting, questions about existing transit in the corridor and draft purpose and need statements were shared on a virtual whiteboard (using Microsoft Whiteboard), and participants could ask questions and provide feedback either verbally or in writing using the questions panel on GoToWebinar and staff added the comments to the whiteboard in real-time. Figure 6.2 shows an image of the virtual whiteboard from the meeting.

After the conclusion of the meeting, an online survey was shared with all participants to share any additional comments and links to the interactive Remix maps were also available through which participants could provide additional comments on the preliminary route options. Questions and comment prompts for the online survey were identical to what was asked in the meeting.

#### **Meeting Attendance**

Thirty-two people attended the meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, from 6:00 to 7:30 P.M. and 43 people attended the meeting on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, from 1:00 to 2:30 P.M. The study team received 44 responses to the online survey and 31 comments on the interactive web maps during the comment period. As part of the registration for virtual public meetings and in a question in the follow-up survey, individuals had the option to provide their zip code to help the study team understand whether participants lived within or near the study area. Map 6.1 shows the number of meeting participants and survey respondents by zip code in Milwaukee County. While there was fair representation of participants who lived in zip codes along the corridor, there were also a significant proportion of participants from outside the corridor—specifically Downtown Milwaukee, the East Side and Riverwest neighborhoods, Wauwatosa, and neighborhoods in southeast Milwaukee.

Figure 6.1: Screen Capture of Interactive Remix Map

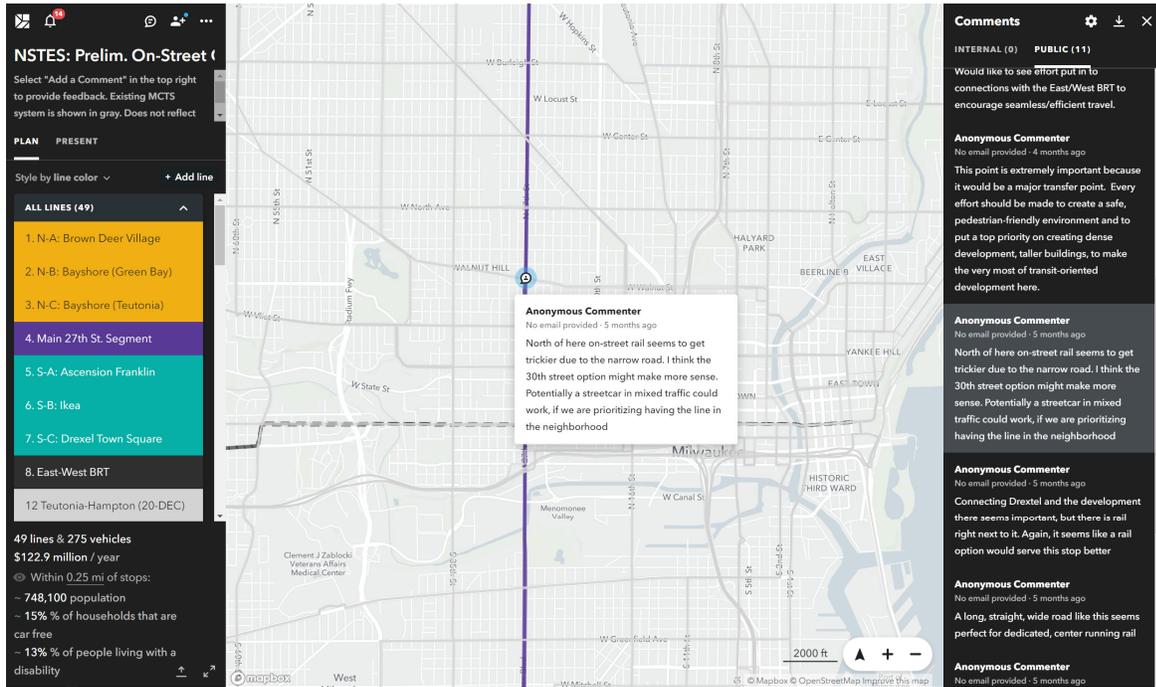
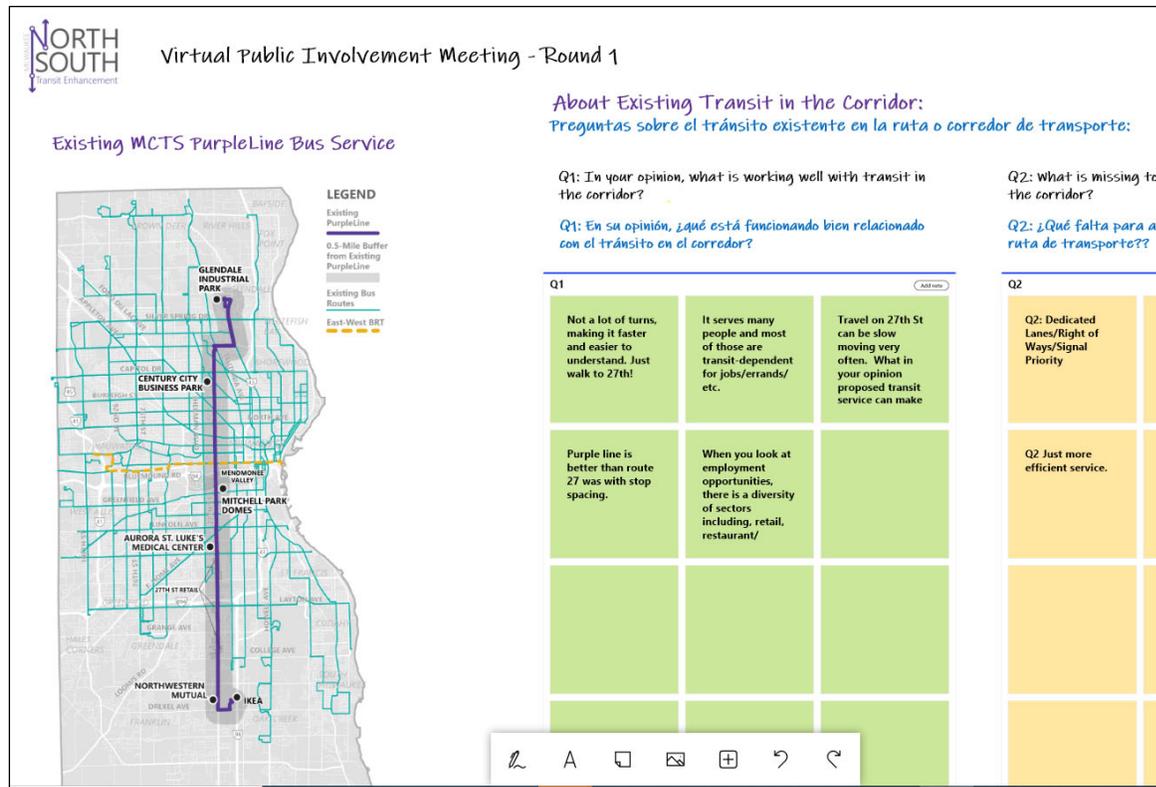
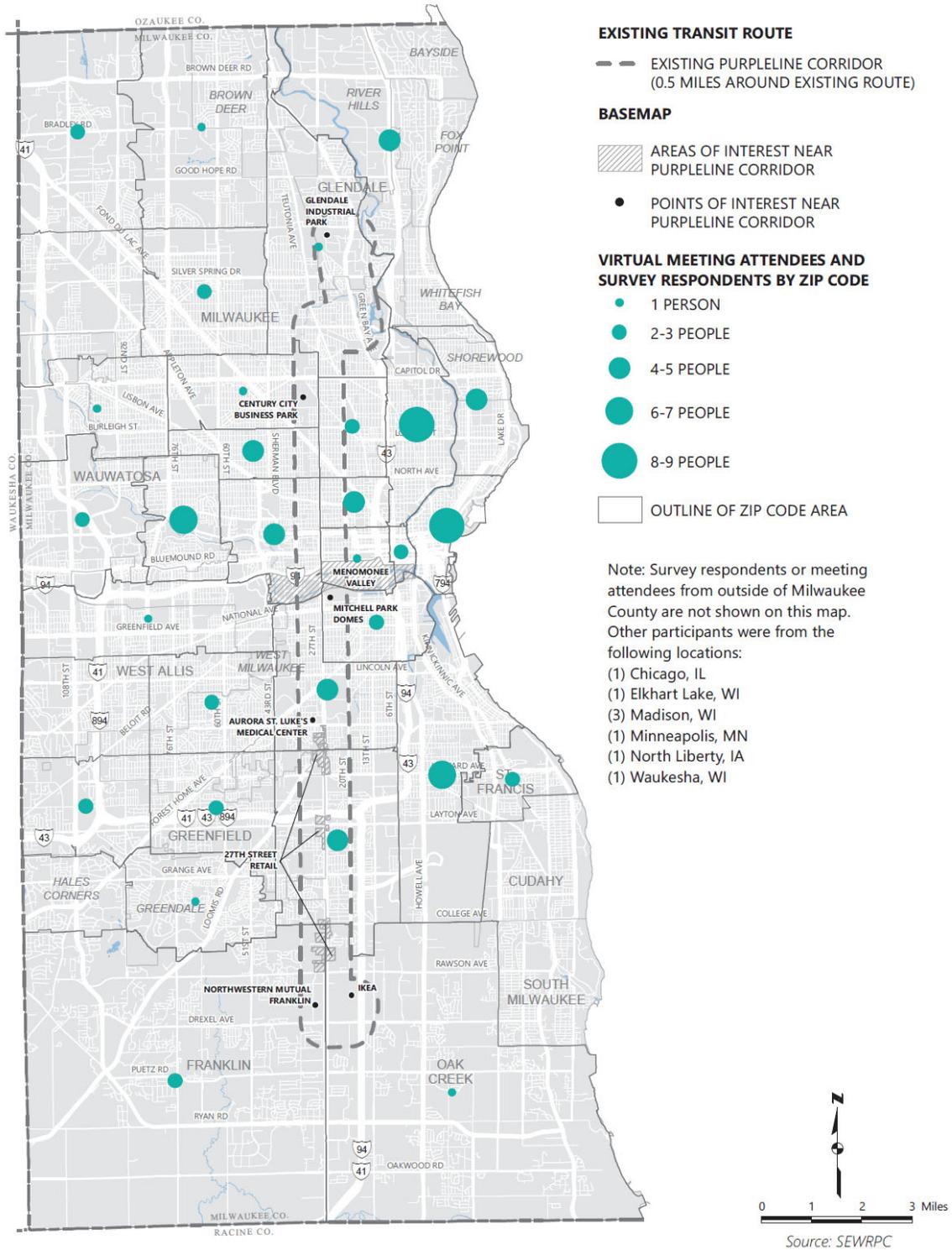


Figure 6.2: Screen Capture of Virtual Whiteboard



# Map 6.1 Round 1 Public Involvement Meeting Participants and Survey Respondents by Zip Code



## **Themes from Public Comments**

Both on the virtual meetings and the online survey, participants were asked to respond to questions about the existing service, improvements they would like to see in transit along the corridor and to provide comments on the draft purpose and need statement. Options to provide general comments and ask questions were also provided. Themes from responses to questions and comments are provided below. A detailed record of comments included in Appendix B. The number in brackets represents the number of comments within the theme.

### ***Themes from Responses to General Questions about Existing and Future Transit in the Corridor***

Q1: In your opinion, what is working well with transit in the corridor?

- Connects people who need transit with places they need to go (jobs, healthcare, shopping) (17)
- Frequency (13)
- Simple routing, easy to use (9)
- Connects well to other routes (2)
- Conversion of Route 27 to PurpleLine (reducing stops) (2)
- Not much is working well (service is not reliable) (2)

Q2: What is missing to better support riders in the corridor?

- Better stops with shelters (15)
- Faster travel times (14)
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity improvements near stops (14)
- Dedicated lanes (10)
- Better frequency (9)
- Safety and security provisions on vehicles and/or at stops (5)
- Light rail service (5)
- Improved wayfinding and signage at stops and on the vehicle (showing bus arrival and transfer information) (4)
- Better reliability (4)
- Improved efficiency at stops (make it easier to get on/off the bus) (3)
- Bus rapid transit (BRT) service (3)

- Signal priority (2)

Q3: What would be the most important improvement to transit in the corridor?

- Better frequency (13)
- Dedicated lanes (12)
- Light rail service (12)
- Safety and security provisions on vehicles and/or at stops (10)
- Faster travel times (8)
- Better stops with shelters (5)
- Transit supportive land use and development in the corridor (5)
- Signal priority (4)
- Better reliability (3)
- Improved wayfinding and signage at stops and on the vehicle (showing bus arrival and transfer information) (2)

**Themes from Comments on Draft Purpose and Need Statements**

Draft purpose statement:

*“The purpose of the Milwaukee North-South Transit Enhancement Study is to build upon Milwaukee’s existing transit infrastructure and investment to support mobility throughout Milwaukee County, focusing on underserved residents in the corridor, supporting the local commitment to racial equity and social justice investments. This study is one step in helping Milwaukee County government to identify and address policies, practices and power structures that, whether intentionally or unintentionally, favor white people and create barriers for black, brown, and indigenous people. Racial equity is a top priority of Milwaukee County government.”*

Themes from comments:

- Support for equity focus of draft purpose statement (23)
- Concern the equity focus of draft purpose statement is not necessary or over-emphasized (3)
- Support for adding access to jobs and other destinations to the purpose statement (3)

- Support for adding environmental sustainability to the purpose statement (3)
- Support for adding specific actions that would promote racial equity to the purpose statement (3)
- Concern the project would not address equity to the extent described in the purpose (e.g., would not connect to appropriate destinations or is not significant enough, etc.) (2)
- Concern the purpose statement promotes the stereotype that transit is only for low-income people (2)
- Support for adding text related to attracting new riders to transit service (2)
- Support for including people with disabilities in the purpose statement (2)

Draft need statements and themes from comments:

*Draft need 1: "To provide an enhanced transit service that will increase frequency and reduce travel times for transit riders in the corridor."*

- Support for draft need as-is (20)
- Support for adding increased connections to other modes of transportation (2)

*Draft need 2: "To help remedy existing racial inequities and the longstanding systemic racism within the broader transportation network by significantly improving access to jobs, healthcare, education, and other essential needs for people of color."*

- Support for draft need as-is (17)
- Concern that focus on racial inequities or systematic racism is over-emphasized (5)

*Draft need 3: "To not harm Milwaukee County's financial ability to continue transit operations on other routes within the County."*

- Concern that need could eventually (either intentionally or unintentionally) undermine the project (e.g., tradeoffs or prioritizing will be necessary, road projects are not treated this way, would result in a "zero sum game" for funding transit) (15)
- Support for need as-is (11)
- Support for adding the need to identify dedicated funding source (2)

*Draft need 4: "To provide those living in poverty and those without an automobile improved access to jobs, healthcare, education, and other essential needs."*

- Support for need as-is (22)
- Concern that statement implies that transit is only for low-income people, not for all (6)
- Support for including individual financial benefits of reducing car ownership (2)
- Support for adding recreational opportunities to examples of destinations (2)

*Draft need 5: "To encourage new, denser, mixed-use development and redevelopment—which results in more efficient public infrastructure and services and lower energy use per household."*

- Support for need as-is (19)
- Support adding need to reduce parking/parking minimums (2)

*Draft need 6: "To accommodate increased travel demand to and from existing and planned developments, services, jobs, and destinations through multi-modal transportation investments."*

- Support for need as-is (19)
- Support for addressing bicycles, pedestrians, and bike and scooter share (4)
- Concern need is redundant or jargon-y (3)

*Draft need 7: "To invest in sustainable options that are consistent with local and regional plans, and future technology."*

- Support for need as-is (17)
- Support for including reference to future automated transit vehicles (3)
- Support for including reference to emissions-free vehicles (4)
- Support for further describing sustainability (e.g., environmentally (2), and economically (1)) (2)

### **Themes from Other Comments**

- Strong support for the study and advancing enhanced transit along or near 27th Street as soon as possible (11)

- Support for rail transit options (9)
- Concern about pedestrian and bicycle safety in the corridor (4)
- Concern that the study is focusing too heavily on racial equity (2)
- Suggest surveying transit users on the bus or at bus stops (2)
- Support for equitable development along transit enhancement (2)

### ***Themes from Comments on Preliminary Route Options***

Maps of preliminary route options using the Remix transit mapping tool were shared during the meeting, via a link in a follow-up email to those that registered for the virtual public meetings, and on the project website, social media, and email blasts after the virtual public meetings. A map for on-street options and a map for rail corridor options showed preliminary route lines and the public was able to add comments on each map about the route alternatives and other comments about important places in the corridor. Themes from comments about preliminary route options are shown below with a detailed record of comments in Appendix B. The number in brackets represents the number of comments within the theme.

- Support for a route that has or would accommodate transit- and pedestrian-friendly development (4)
- Strong support for dedicated transit lanes (bus or rail) (4)
- Preference for a light rail service (3)
- Support for rail service that extends to Brown Deer (3)
- Support for a service that is well integrated with the East-West Bus Rapid Transit line (3)
- Support for a rail service that would facilitate future connections south to Racine and Kenosha (following the proposed Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee rail route) (3)
- Preference for a streetcar service (2)
- Support for service that extends to Franklin (2)
- Support for a transit station at or near American Family Field (2)
- Support for future connection to airport (2)

### **Addressing Public and Stakeholder Feedback**

The project team incorporated public and stakeholder feedback received during Round 1 of public involvement in several ways. First, the draft purpose and need statement was updated substantially. A summary of those changes are listed below:

- Adding a need statement that specifically addressed bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns in the corridor
- Enhancing the focus on attracting new riders, in addition to improving service for existing transit users
- Simplifying the need statements and providing more details about each need within the Purpose and Need Report
- Highlighting feedback throughout the Purpose and Need Report, where applicable, specifically focusing on the need to improve travel times, improve transit shelters, and pedestrian connections to transit stations
- Updating the language related to a transit enhancement not financially “harming other routes” to focus on reasonably expected revenue available from local, state, and federal funding sources
- Explicitly including people with disabilities when referring to traditionally underserved populations
- Referencing personal cost savings and affordability of transit ridership as opposed to car ownership
- Expanding on the need for equitable development and redevelopment along the corridor that would support and be supported by enhanced transit
- Explicitly referencing *environmental* sustainability

In addition to updates to the purpose and need statements, the project team also expanded public outreach in response to feedback with the goal to reach residents and businesses within the corridor by partnering with community- and neighborhood-based organizations who have a longstanding presence in underserved neighborhoods in the corridor, described further in Chapter 3.

## Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 7

# ROUND 2 OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Round 2 of public involvement took place from June 22 through July 31, 2021, focused on sharing information about the updated purpose and need statements, transit types, route options, and preliminary station locations that were being considered for the study and gathering feedback on that information. This round of public involvement consisted of three virtual public meetings (held in lieu of in-person meetings in keeping with COVID-19 precautions), a series of short surveys available on the project website, and an interactive web map where comments could be submitted.

### **VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Virtual public meetings took place on Tuesday, June 22 from 1:00 – 2:00 P.M.; Wednesday, June 23 (Spanish-only) from 6:30-7:30 P.M.; and Thursday, June 24 from 6:00 – 7:30 P.M. and were hosted on the Zoom meeting platform. Attendees were required to register for the meeting in advance through the project website. Live Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters were present on the June 22 and June 24 meetings to provide interpretation services to anyone who needed it. The meeting on June 23 was provided entirely in Spanish.

### **Meeting Notification**

The project team notified the public about the virtual meetings in several ways, including:

- Sharing a press release with several local media outlets, including minority-focused newspapers, which was picked up by the *Milwaukee Neighborhood News Service*

- Sending an e-blast to the study contact list and Commission contacts in Milwaukee County, which included 493 people
- Posting information to the project website and the SEWPRC website
- Sending an email through the City of Milwaukee’s E-Notify listserv
- Sharing information on social media through MCTS, SEWRPC, and advisory committee member’s accounts
- Creating social media packets for CAC and TAC members to share on their social media accounts

### **Meeting Format**

The meeting was entirely virtual, hosted on the Zoom meeting platform with participants having the ability to interact with the project team by unmuting themselves and speaking, or by typing questions or comments in the chat. The meeting format is described in more detail below:

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Project staff welcomed participants and introduced project staff, interpreters, and Community Partners.

#### **2. Study Overview Presentation**

Project staff then provided an update on the study which included an update on public engagement efforts, including themes from the first round of public involvement and the updated study purpose and need statements, including a review of data that supported various project needs.

#### **3. Breakout Sessions: Transit Types, Route Options, and Station Locations**

After the overview presentation, staff broke the discussion-portion of the meeting into three topics:

- Transit Types: an overview of transit types in consideration (bus rapid transit, rapid streetcar, and light rail), and a preliminary evaluation of how each type would fit within the corridor

- Route Options: an overview of a map of route alternatives
- Station Locations: a brief description of how preliminary station locations were selected and an overview of the preliminary station location map

During these breakout sessions, staff provided the information described above, and participants were invited to provide feedback and have an open discussion about different options for each topic being considered for the study.

#### **4. Question and Answer Period**

Participants then had an opportunity to ask additional questions about the study or provide comments.

#### **5. Next Steps**

For the final portion of the meeting, staff provided next steps for the study, including additional options for participants to provide feedback.

After the conclusion of the meeting, the project website was updated with short surveys to answer questions and provide open-ended feedback about each of the break-out session topics. These surveys were open through July 31. The public also had the option to provide written comment via email, mail, or fax.

#### **Meeting Registrants and Survey Respondents**

In total, 67 people registered to attend the virtual public meetings. Meeting registration totals for each of the three virtual meetings is included below.

- Tuesday, June 22, 1:00–2:30 P.M.: 34 registrants
- Wednesday, June 23, 6:30–7:30 P.M. (Spanish only): 6 registrants
- Thursday, June 24, 6:00–7:30 P.M.: 27 registrants

Again, as part of the registration for virtual public meetings and in a question in the follow-up surveys, individuals had the option to provide their zip code to help the study team understand whether participants

lived within or near the study area. Map 7.1 shows the number of meeting participants and survey respondents by zip code in Milwaukee County.

Three short surveys—each geared toward collecting feedback about a specific study topic (transit types, route options, and station locations)—were posted to the website following the public meetings. A total of 132 responses were collected for the three surveys.

### **Themes from Public Comments**

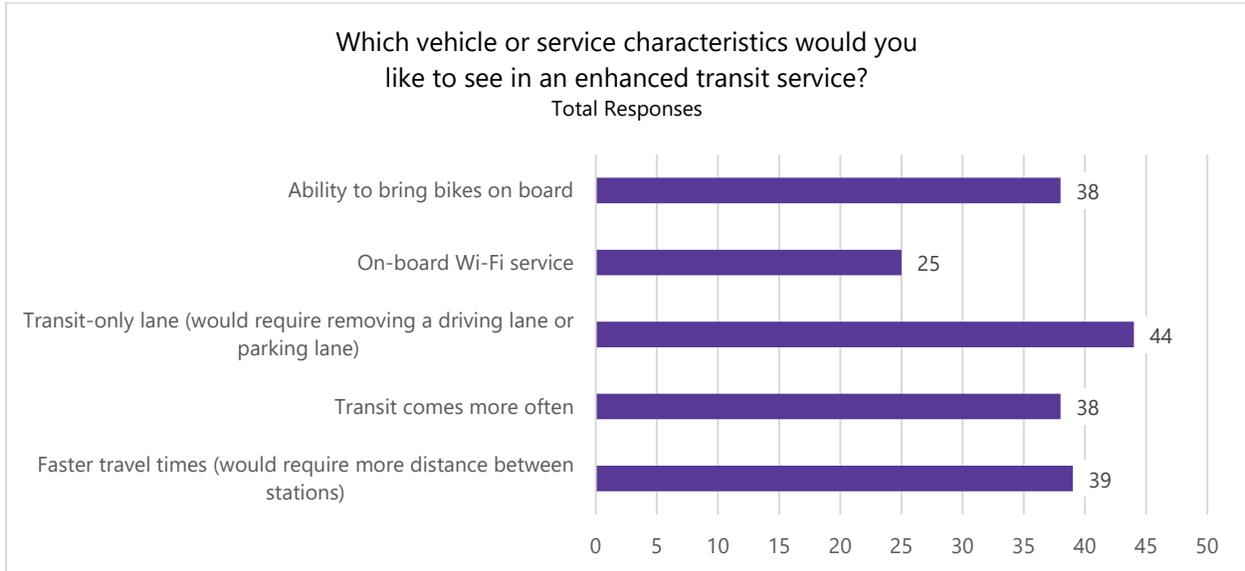
During the virtual public meetings and the surveys, feedback was solicited regarding three topics: transit types, route options, and station locations. Themes from responses under those topics for both the meetings and the surveys are combined and listed below along with results of specific questions asked in the website survey (Figures 7.1–7.6).

#### ***Transit Types***

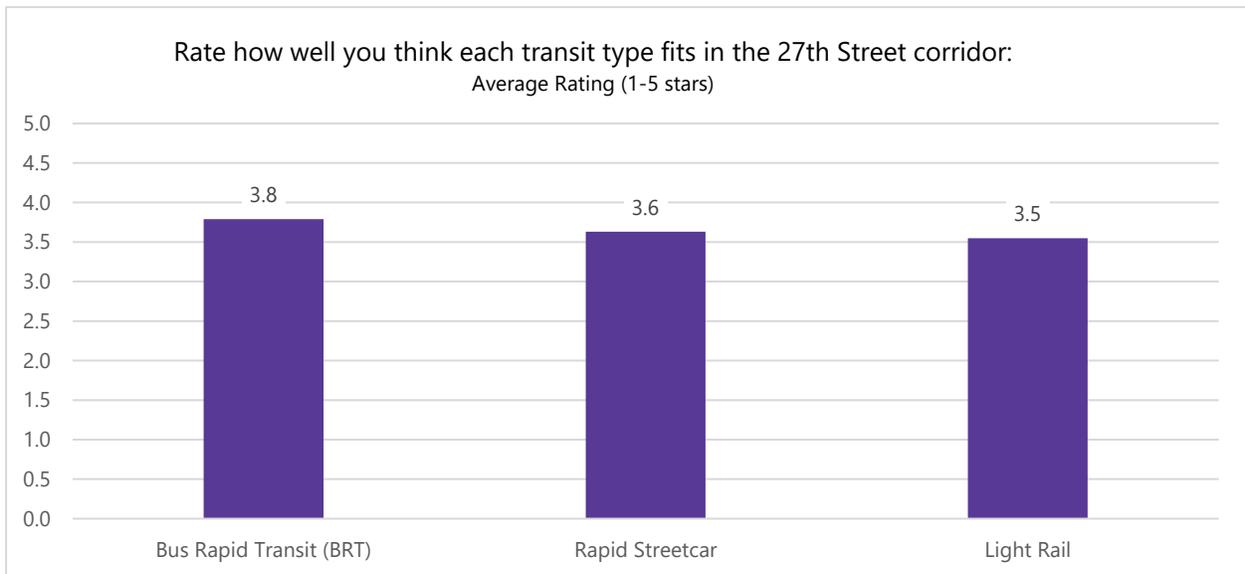
Themes from open-ended comments:

- Support for light rail or rapid streetcar (specified rail) (14)
- Support for dedicated transit lanes (regardless of transit type) (7)
- Support for bus rapid transit (BRT) (7)
- Comments stating transit vehicles should be given priority over automobiles (2)
- Support for a rail/bus hybrid option with rail serving the main corridor and BRT serving 'spurs' on north and south (2)

**Figure 7.1**  
**Results of Transit Types Question 1 from Online Survey**



**Figure 7.2**  
**Results of Transit Types Question 2 from Online Survey**

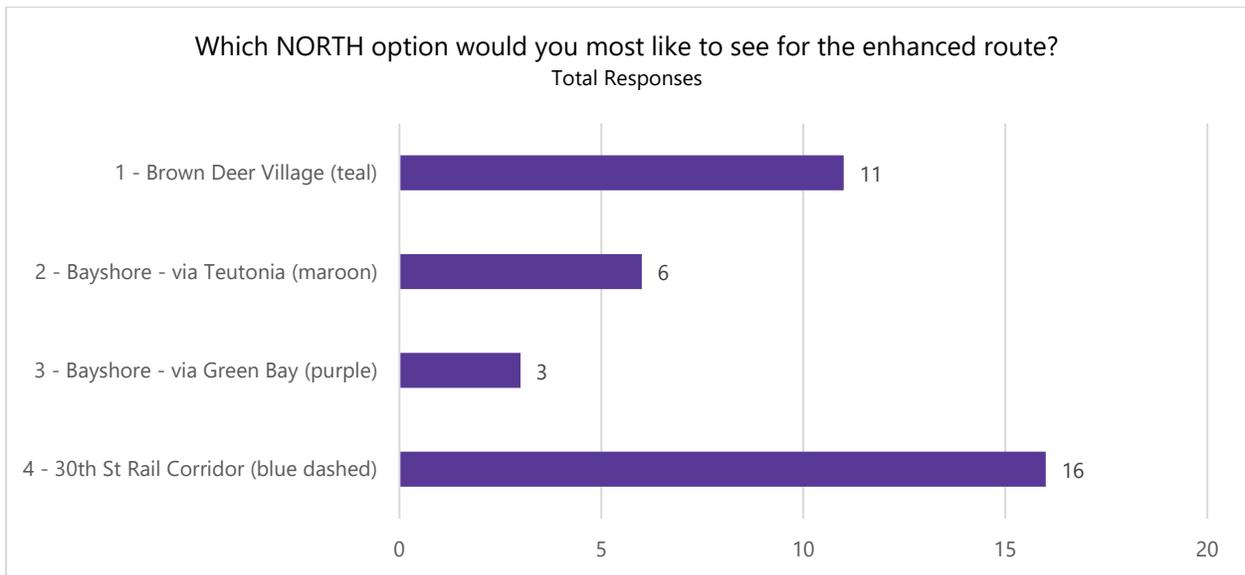


### Route Options

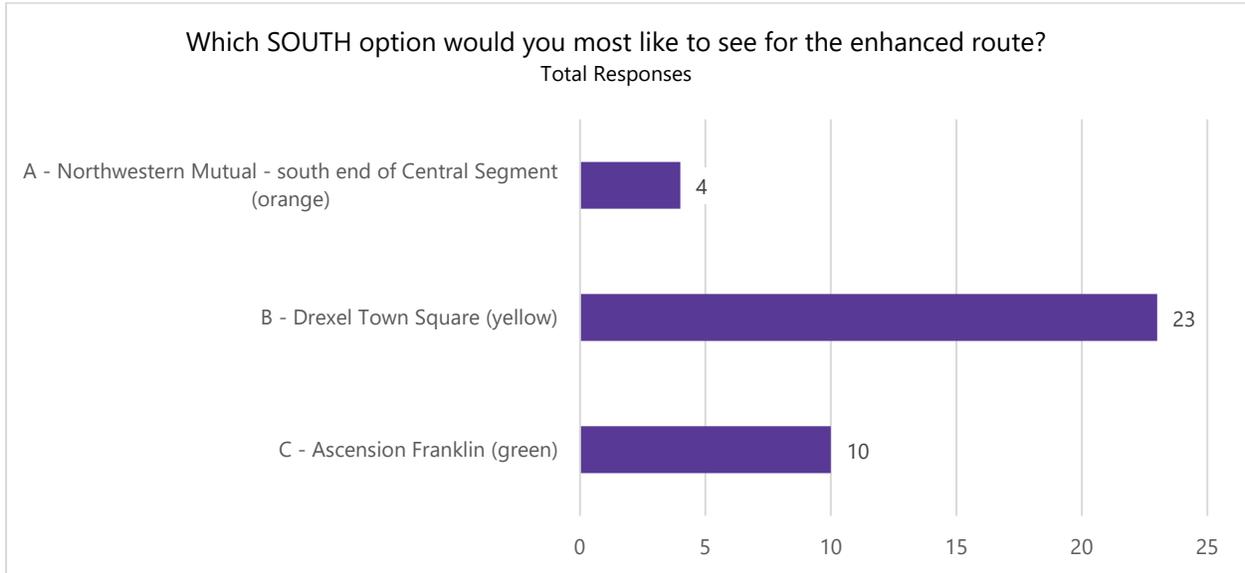
Themes from open-ended comments:

- Support for route that utilizes the 30th Street Rail Corridor (7)
- Support for south option that would serve Drexel Town Square (3)
- Concern about opposition to transit from residents and businesses near southern termini options (2)
- Support for route termini in Brown Deer (2)
- Support for north option that would serve Bayshore (2)

**Figure 7.3**  
**Results of Route Options Question 1 from Online Survey**



**Figure 7.4**  
**Results of Route Options Question 2 from Online Survey**

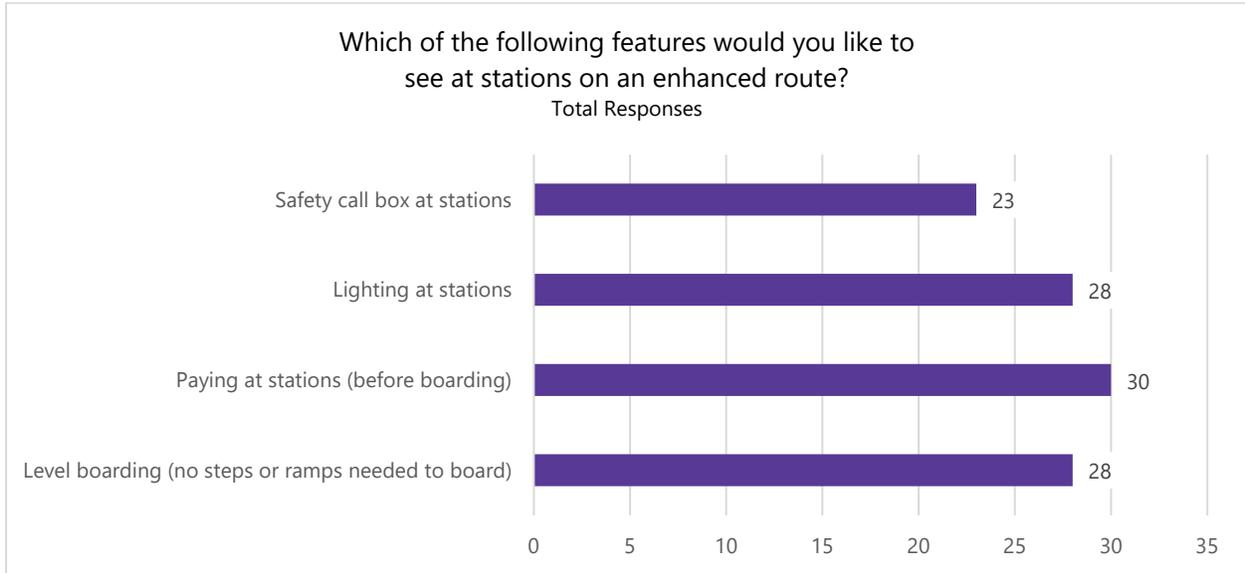


**Station Locations**

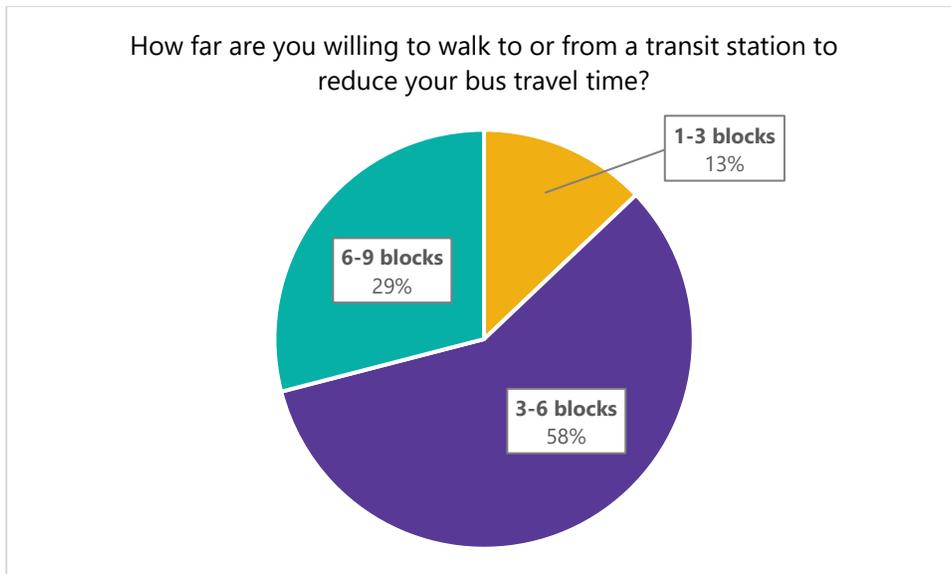
Themes from open-ended comments:

- Support for suggested station spacing at 1/4 to 1/2 miles (6)
- Concern about access for people with disabilities if stations are spaced too far apart (3)
- Suggestion that stations should be connected to sidewalks and on pedestrian-friendly routes and close to building entrances, when possible (3)
- Support for a station that serves the Menomonee Valley (2)

**Figure 7.5**  
**Results of Station Locations Question 1 from Online Survey**



**Figure 7.6**  
**Results of Station Locations Question 2 from Online Survey**



### **Themes from Comments on Preliminary Route Options**

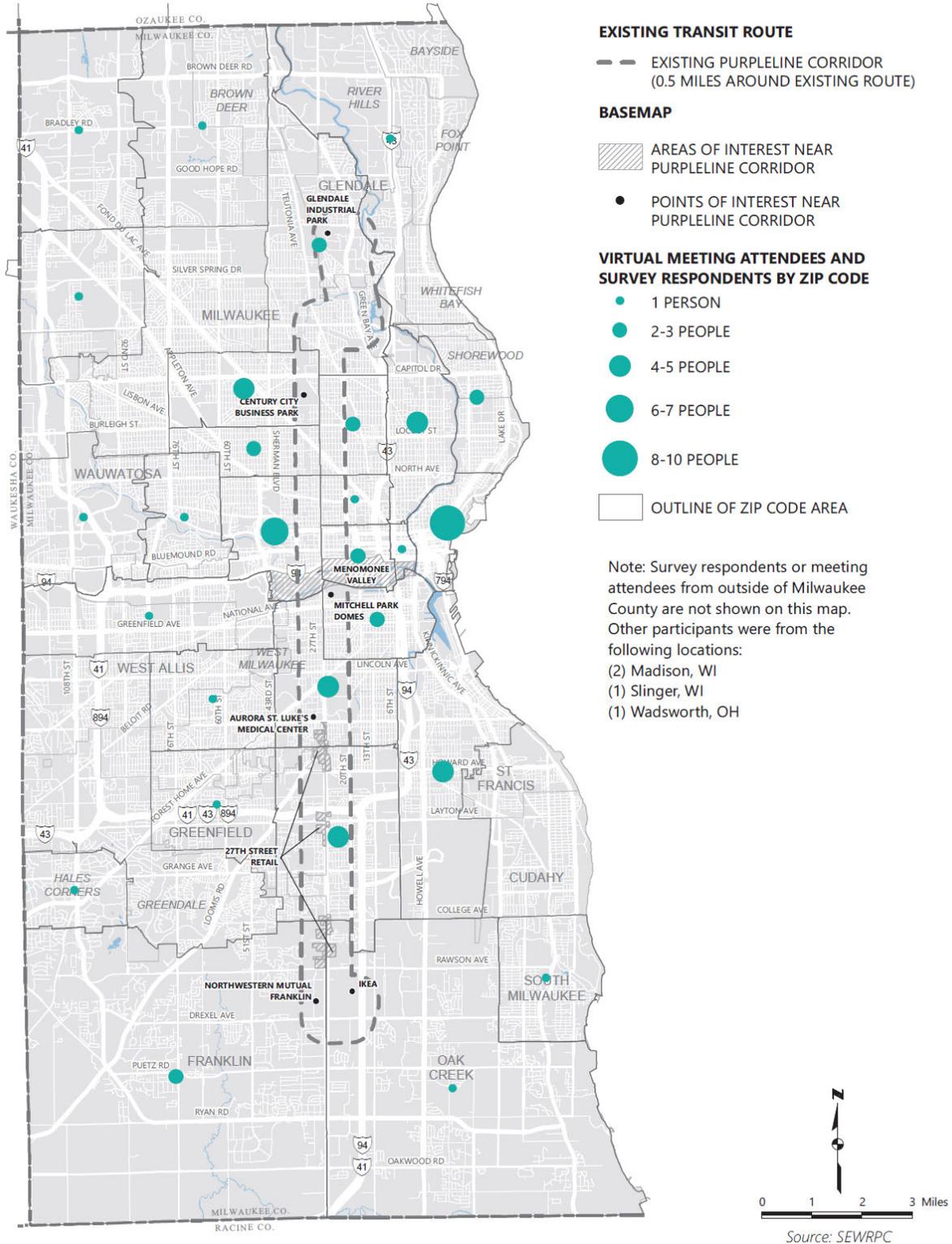
A map of preliminary route options using the Remix transit mapping tool were shared during the meeting, via a link in a follow-up email to those that registered for the virtual public meetings, and on the project website, social media, and email blasts after the virtual public meetings. Like the first round of public involvement, the public was able to add comments to the map about the route alternatives and, in this instance, preliminary station locations in the corridor. Themes from comments are shown below with a detailed record of comments in Appendix C. The number in brackets represents the number of comments within the theme.

- Support for South Option B, which would extend the route to Drexel Town Square (4)
- Support for integrating transit stations with bike trails and bikeshare docking stations (4)
- Support for minimizing stations and increasing speeds in less-developed segments of the corridor, such as the area between Layton Avenue and the Northwestern Mutual Franklin Campus (3)
- Support for traffic calming at intersections with transit stations (3)
- Support for headways of 15 minutes or less, 7 days per week (2)
- Support for separating transit lanes and bike lanes and adding protected bike lanes (2)
- Support for a transit “hub” at Bayshore and better connecting the park and ride to Bayshore (2)

### **Addressing Public and Stakeholder Feedback**

Feedback from both the first and second round of public involvement serve as input to the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Evaluations, which provided a high-level review of route and technology options to define alternatives for further analysis. Details on how public feedback is incorporated into those evaluations is included in those reports.

**Map 7.1**  
**Round 2 Public Involvement Meeting Participants and Survey Respondents by Zip Code**



## Milwaukee County North-South Transit Enhancement Study

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

## Chapter 8

# ROUND 3 OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Round 3 of public involvement took place from October 25 through December 10, 2021, and focused on sharing a synopsis of the results of the draft Tier 1 Evaluation and preliminary results from the Tier 2 Evaluation. Feedback about the draft Tier 1 Evaluation, route options and configurations, station features and locations, and bus-only lanes was solicited during the virtual meetings and through a series of short public input forms that were posted on the project website. This round of public involvement again consisted of three virtual public meetings (held in lieu of in-person meetings in keeping with COVID-19 precautions), which included a Spanish-only meeting, email and social media blasts, and corridor mail drops.

### **VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETINGS**

Virtual public meetings took place on Monday, October 25 from 6:00 – 7:30 P.M.; Wednesday, October 27 (Spanish-only) from 6:00 – 7:30 P.M.; and Thursday, October 28 from 10:00 – 11:30 A.M. and were hosted on the Zoom meeting platform. Attendees were required to register for the meeting in advance through the project website. American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters were present on the October 25 and October 28 meetings to provide interpretation services to anyone who needed it. The meeting on October 27 was provided entirely in Spanish. All meetings were recorded and posted on the project website in English and Spanish.

### **Meeting Notification**

The project team notified the public about the virtual meetings in several ways, including:

- Sharing a press release with several local media outlets, including minority-focused newspapers, which was picked up by *Urban Milwaukee*

- Sending an e-blast to the study contact list and Commission contacts in Milwaukee County, which included 544 people
- Posting information to the project website and the SEWPRC website
- Sending an email through the City of Milwaukee's E-Notify listserv
- Sharing information on social media through MCTS, SEWRPC, and advisory committee member's accounts
- Creating social media packets for Community Partners and CAC and TAC members to share on their social media accounts

### **Meeting Format**

The meeting was entirely virtual, hosted on the Zoom meeting platform with participants having the ability to interact with the project team by unmuting themselves and speaking, or by typing questions or comments in the chat. The meeting format is described in more detail below:

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Project staff welcomed participants and introduced project staff, interpreters, and Community Partners.

#### **2. Review Public Involvement Feedback**

Project staff provided a summary of feedback received during the second round of public involvement.

#### **3. Review Draft Tier 1 Evaluation Results**

Project staff reviewed the draft results of the Tier 1 evaluation, including the transit technology and route options that were recommended. Questions and comments about the draft Tier 1 Evaluation were solicited and received at this time.

#### **4. Discuss Preliminary Tier 2 Evaluation Results**

Project staff shared preliminary analyses for the Tier 2 evaluation, which included sharing information about:

- Preliminary locations and impacts for bus-only lanes
- Configuration options in the form of cross sections in select locations along the corridor
- Possible solutions for allowing safe coordination with bike lanes
- Options for physical barriers to help enforce bus-only lanes in areas where reckless driving is a concern
- Station features and locations
- Preliminary capital cost estimates

Comments on these topics were solicited and received at this time.

#### **5. Next Steps**

For the final portion of the meeting, staff provided next steps for the study, including additional options for participants to provide feedback.

After the conclusion of the meeting, the project website was updated with short surveys to answer questions and provide open-ended feedback about the draft Tier 1 Evaluation, route options, station features and locations, and bus-only lanes. These surveys were open through December 10. The public also had the option to provide written comment via email, mail, or fax.

#### **Meeting Registrants and Survey Respondents**

In total, 64 people attended the virtual public meetings. Attendance totals for each of the three virtual meetings is included below.

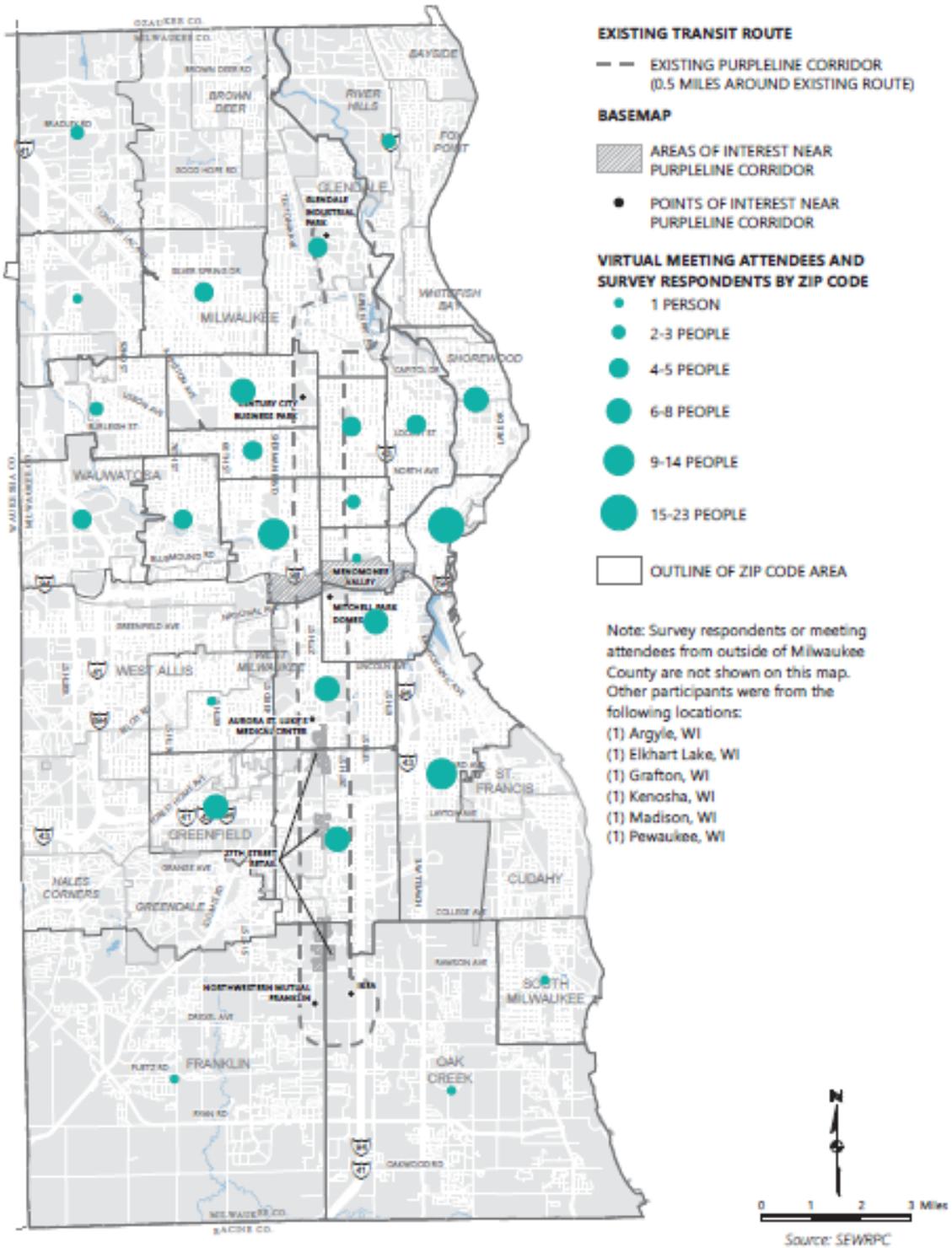
- Monday, October 25, 6:00 – 7:30 P.M.: 35 attendees
- Wednesday, October 27, 6:00 – 7:30 P.M. (Spanish-only): 0 attendees
- Thursday, October 28, 10:00 – 11:30 A.M.: 29 attendees

Although no one attended the virtual Spanish-only meeting the recording was shared and posted to the project website and was viewed 5 times.

Again, as part of the registration for virtual public meetings and in a question in the follow-up surveys, individuals had the option to provide their zip code to help the study team understand whether participants lived within or near the study area. Map 8.1 shows the number of meeting participants and survey respondents by zip code in Milwaukee County.

Four short surveys—each geared toward collecting feedback about a specific study topic (draft Tier 1 Evaluation, route options, stations, and bus-only lanes)—were posted to the website following the public meetings. A total of 130 responses were collected for the three surveys.

**Map 8.1**  
**Round 3 Public Involvement Meeting Participants and Survey Respondents by Zip Code**



## **Themes from Public Comments**

Themes from comments are listed below, categorized under four key topics: (1) the draft of the Tier 1 Evaluation, (2) route options, (3) bus-only lanes and other service configurations, and (4) station features and locations. Themes from comments under those topics for both the meetings and the surveys are combined and listed below along with results of a specific questions asked in the website survey (Figure 8.1) under the bus-only lanes topic. Detailed comments from the third round of public involvement are included in Appendix D.

### ***Comments on preliminary draft of Tier 1 Evaluation***

Themes from open-ended comments:

- Support for BRT (14)
- Preference for a rail option (5)
- Concern about "consistency with corridor character" evaluation (2)

### ***Comments on Route Options***

Themes from open-ended comments:

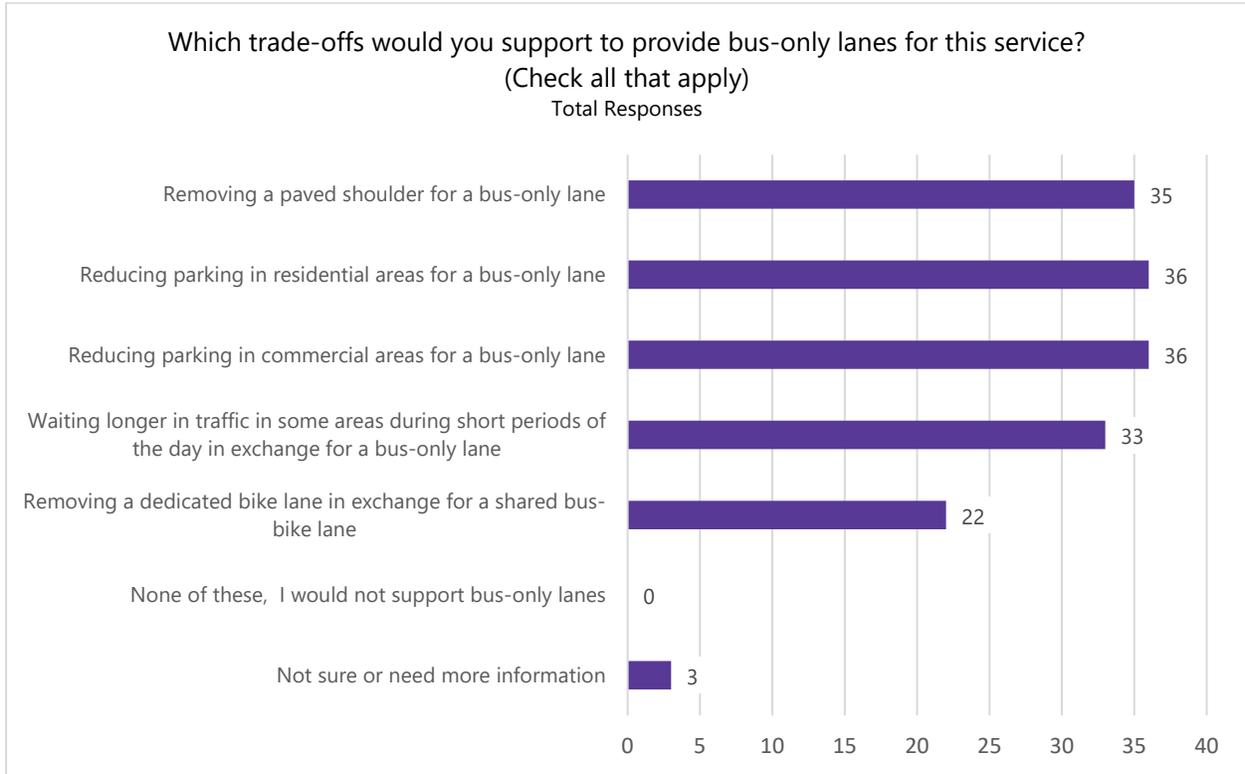
- Support for North Option 2 to Bayshore (6)
- Support for South Option C to Ascension Franklin (3)
- Support for South Option B to Drexel Town Square (3)
- Support for North Option 1 to Brown Deer (2)
- Support for open BRT options on the north and south ends of the route (3)

### ***Comments on Bus-only Lanes and Other Service Configurations***

Themes from open-ended comments:

- Support for dedicated lanes wherever possible in the corridor (22)
- Opposed to removing bike lanes in favor of bus-only lanes (7)
- Support for transit signal priority wherever possible (5)
- Support for including physical barriers to separate bus-only lanes from travel lanes in some locations along the corridor (4)
- Suggestion that flexible or on-demand transit be used to serve destinations beyond BRT route termini (4)
- Support for a center-running bus-only lane where possible in the corridor (4)
- Support for shared bus-bike lanes (3)

**Figure 8.1**  
**Results of Bus-only Lanes Question 1 from Online Survey**



**Comments on Station Features and Locations**

Themes from open-ended comments:

- Support for heating stations in the winter (4)
- Concern about pedestrian safety at existing Bayshore bus stop; suggestion that BRT station location be re-evaluated at Bayshore (2)
- Suggestion that bike share stations be located near BRT stations wherever possible (2)
- Suggestion that cameras and safety call buttons be included at stations (2)
- Suggestion that regular cleaning and maintenance of stations be conducted (2)
- Support for station locations as presented in public involvement materials (2)
- Concern that stations are located too far apart and will not be easily accessible for seniors and people with disabilities (2)

### **Other Comments**

Themes from open-ended comments:

- Opposed to project for various reasons (e.g., disapproves of funding public transit generally in Milwaukee County, questions demand for enhanced transit, unhappy about East-West Bus Rapid Transit project) (8)
- Suggestion to enhance bike lanes wherever possible in the corridor with buffers or barriers (4)
- Concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety on the corridor as it exists today (2)

### **Addressing Public and Stakeholder Feedback**

Feedback from all three rounds of public involvement serve as input to the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Evaluations.

Details on how public feedback is incorporated into those evaluations is included in those reports.