



# Case Study 3 — New Rail Starts: Seattle Monorail & LRT

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# Outline

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- Intro
- Rail
  - Types of rail
  - New Starts Introduction
- Seattle case
  - Overview
  - Who is involved
  - Problems
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- MN Rails: LRT, Northstar Commuter Rail

# Types of Rail



- Commuter Rail – Chicago's Metra
- LRT – Hiawatha Line, Minneapolis
- Monorail – Disneyland, CA
- Subway – BART, San Francisco





# Common Criticisms

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- Rail is outdated
- Transit is not Cost Effective
- Rail Carries Too Few Passengers to Solve Problem
- Efficient Rail Transit Requires High Densities
- People Will Not Give Up Their Cars
- Rail Transit is Too Slow or Unattractive
- Rail Systems are Over Budget and Fail to Attract Predicted Ridership



# What's "New Starts"?

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- "The Federal government's primary financial resource for supporting locally-planned, implemented, and operated transit "guideway" capital investments."
- Is covered under SAFETEA-LU
  - - Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Passed August 2005)
- Includes various modes of transit: heavy rail, LRT, monorail, BRT



# New Starts Criteria

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- 1. Alternatives Analysis and Preliminary Engineering
- 2. Project Justification
  - -Mobility Improvements
  - -Environmental Benefits
  - -Operating Efficiencies
  - -Cost Effectiveness and
  - -Other Factors
- 3. Local Financial Commitment



# Seattle Monorail

## Who is involved?

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- City of Seattle - publicly owned transit system
- ETC ('00) - Elevated Transportation Company
  - ETC plan proposed Aug. 2002
- SMP (Nov. '02) - Seattle Popular Monorail Authority
  - developed citywide monorail system
- Cascadia Monorail Company (DBOM) - responsible for entire design Monorail project



# History of Seattle Initiatives

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- 1962 Worlds Fair
- Voters have continually supported transit initiatives
- In 1997, voters launched Initiative 41
  - X shaped, 40 mile monorail system
  - passed with a 53% approval
- In 2000, voters passed Initiative 53
  - provided 2 years and \$6 million



# Overview of Seattle

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- ETC plan ('02) -5 lines totaling 58 miles to crisscross the city
- Green Line - 14 miles to connect West Seattle to Ballard and stadiums in SODO
- Largely counting on increased tax base to fund continued construction
- Quote describing monorail



# Positive Aspects

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- Fast and Efficient
- Green and Clean
- Economic Development and New Jobs
- Higher Property Values and Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhoods
- Tourism
- World-Class Design



# Recent Happenings

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- Problems... Governance or Financing
- This is the “most disappointing day for me since I became Mayor.” Greg Nickels on unmet deadlines and postponing the project
- Voters to decide on Nov. 8
- Raise Taxes or reduce size
- Newly proposed Green Line is  $\frac{1}{4}$  shorter and without essential canal crossing
- PONDER THIS!! Continue support, or end negotiations and start over?



Grand Opening

Saturday, June 26, 2004

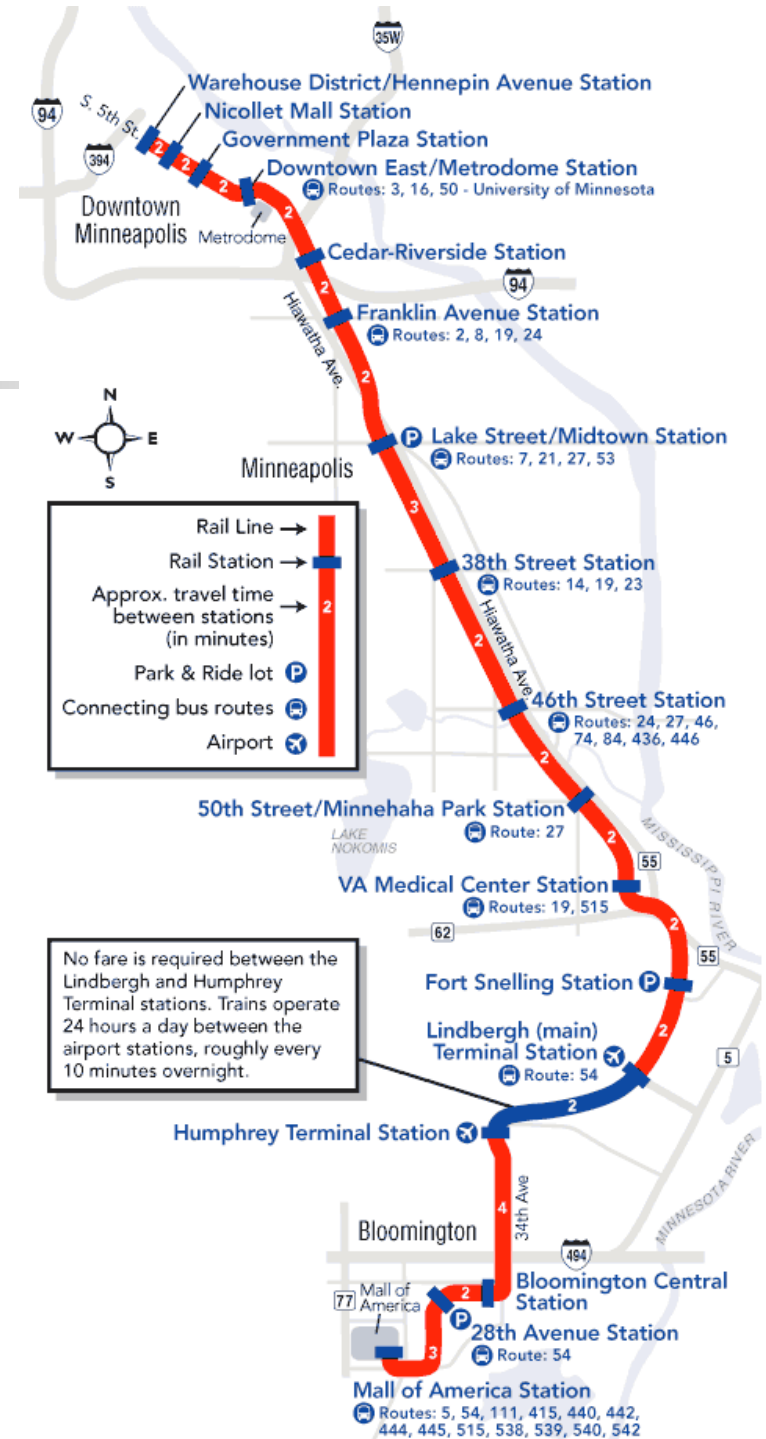
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Warehouse District to Fort Snelling



# Introduction

- Length: 12 miles, connecting downtown Minneapolis, Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America in Bloomington
- Stations: 17 locations





# Light Rail Vehicles

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- 24 cars, each 94 feet long and manufactured by Bombardier
- Electrically powered by wires 16 feet overhead
- Top speed is 55 mph with a general service speed of 40 mph and slower speed in downtown



# Bus Feeder and Fare

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- **Feeder bus service:** 46 Metro Transit routes will connect to 13 rail stations with timed transfers. Twenty percent of rail riders will arrive at their station by bus.
- **Fare price:** Light-rail fares will be the same as bus fares. Transfers will be valid between bus and rail if used within 150 minutes



# Hours of Operation & Frequency

<b>Approximate Route Frequency</b>	<b>Minutes between trips on this route</b>
<b>Rush Hours</b> (weekdays 6-9 am and 3-6:30 pm)	<b>7-8</b>
<b>Midday</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Evening</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Owl</b> (1am-5am)	<b>—</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10-15</b>
<b>Sunday/Holiday</b>	<b>10-15</b>



# Construction funding

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in millions \$

- Federal Transit Administration - \$334.3
- State of Minnesota - \$100
- Metropolitan Airports Commission - \$87
- Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority - \$84.2
- Federal Grant for Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality - \$49.8
- Transit capital grant - \$39.9
- Minnesota Department of Transportation - \$20.1
- **TOTAL** \$715.3



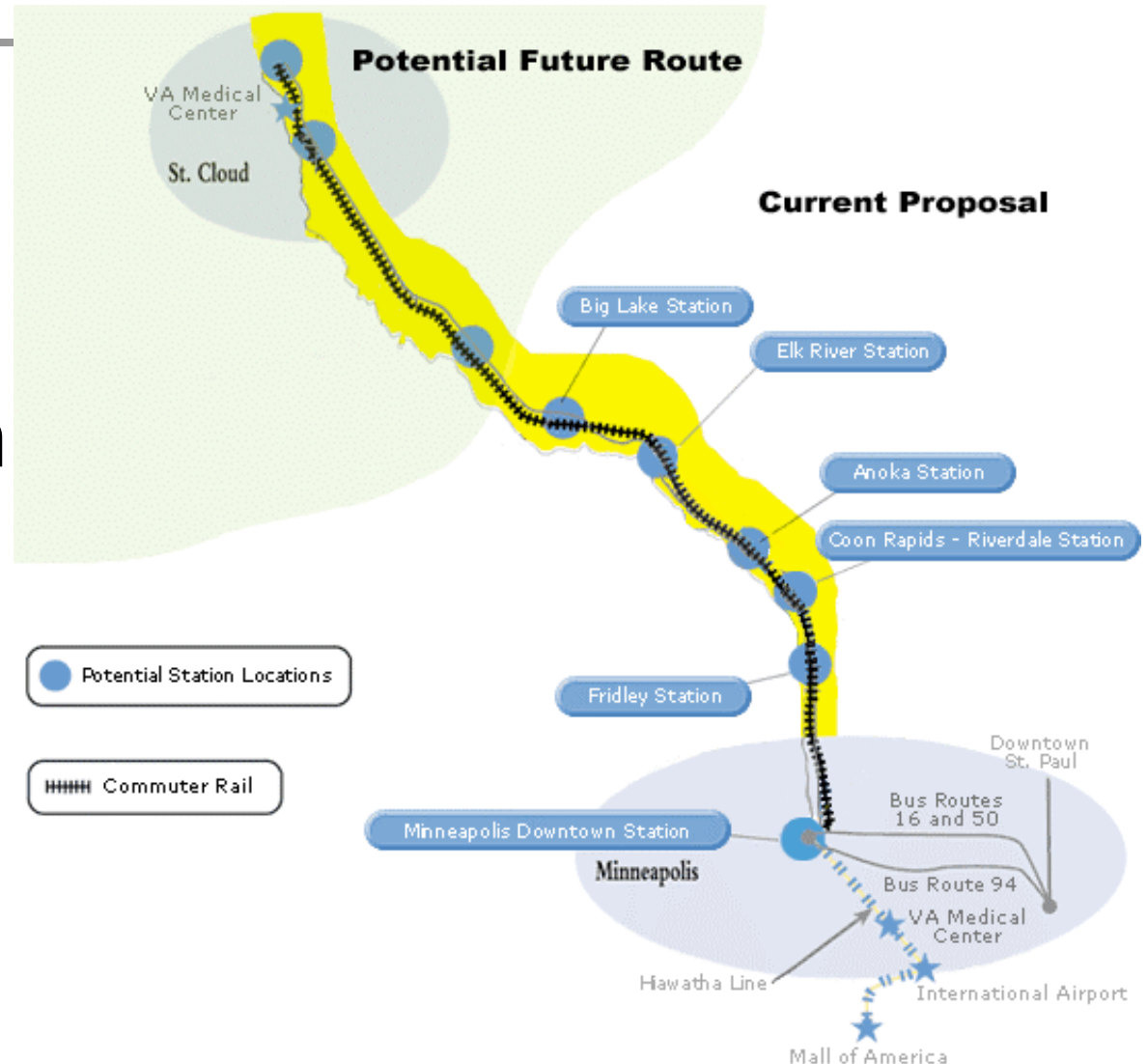
# Milestones achieved

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- Broke ground January 17, 2001
- Delivered 13 rail cars
- Completed 12 stations
- Mined airport rail tunnels
- Installed all track in Minneapolis
- Relocated utilities in downtown

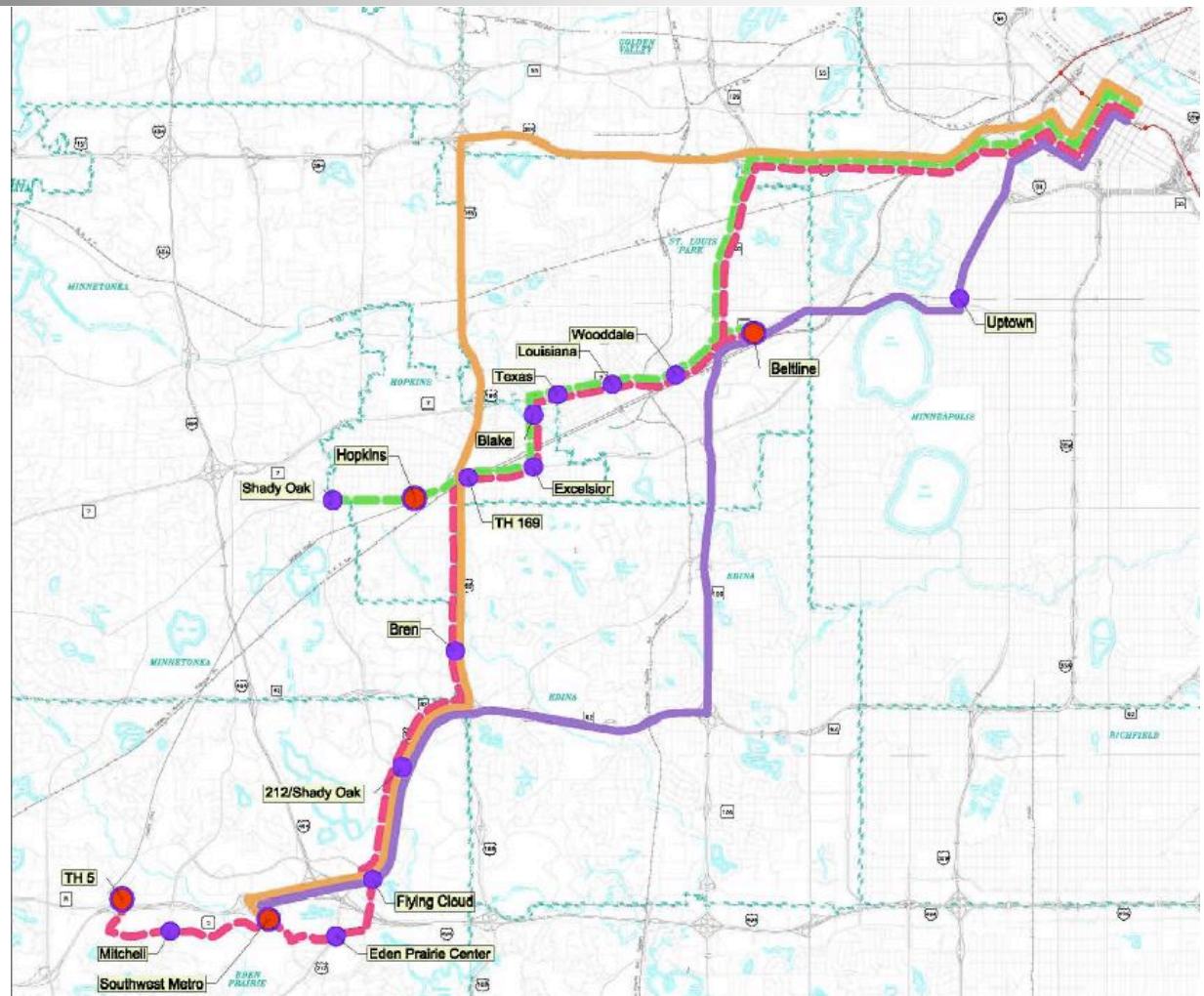
# Northstar Commuter Rail

- the corridor between St. Cloud/Rice and the Twin Cities



# Southwest Corridor Rail Transit

- A joint effort of the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) and the cities of Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, and Minneapolis.





# Southwest Corridor Rail Transit

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- Improve mobility.
- Provide a reliable/competitive travel choice.
- Serve population and employment concentrations.
- Provide for a seamless, integrated transit system.
- Reasonable cost.
- Enhance the environment.
- Enhance the Study area and region's quality of life.
- Promote economic development and redevelopment



# Questions

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- Do the extensive costs of major rail systems outweigh the benefits?
- Are monorail and LRT corridors necessary to ensure continued development of downtown areas like Minneapolis and Seattle?
- Is it realistic to count on expected tax base increases to help pay for the Seattle monorail project?
- Should local transit projects be federally funded?