

METROPOLITAN INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

“Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8



Statement from Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA)

MICAHA was founded in 1988 and works for a Twin Cities area where everyone, without exception, has safe, decent, accessible and affordable housing. We recognize that affordable housing and high quality, high frequency public transit go hand in hand, which is why we support the current Purple Line plan going to Maplewood Mall, and urge the most expansive route possible past the mall.

We know that the Twin Cities is a single community, made up of many parts, and that community works best when there is equity in housing and transportation throughout all cities in the area. Maplewood is connected to St. Paul, St Paul is connected to Minneapolis, and high quality high frequency public transit builds stronger more resilient connections, and stronger and more resilient communities.

We know that construction of transit lines causes disruptions to the neighborhoods, whether that's a trail or a business corridor. We support a robust response from the project proposal dealing with identified issues. In this case, well funded activities aimed at minimizing the impact on the use of the Bruce Vento Trail and robust landscaping and reconstruction.

Maplewood has many jobs along Beam Avenue, from the healthcare and hospital jobs in and around St. John's, and the retail and other jobs in and around Maplewood Mall. This beating heart of employment activity needs to be connected to a strong circulation system that the Purple Line would provide.

As a faith-based organization, we heed the call for public works to assist those who have deeper needs. We know the Purple Line is important to all people - black, white, and brown, working and retired, well off and struggling. When your affordable house is in one city, and your well-paying job is in another, it helps to have reliable, regular transit between those two cities.

We also wish to raise a concern about the composition of the groups opposing the Purple Line. While many of those opposing the proposal claim that they support public transit, the intellectual masterminds of that campaign appear to be the Koch brother-funded Center For The American Experiment. This extremely conservative private think tank is not a supporter of public transit at all. Using the data that they have selected to look at issues of safety is akin to asking a fox if there should be fences in hen houses.

Regular, fast transit is critical to a modern city. It boosts quality of life and economic activity, as well as the value of land adjacent to it, better than any other local investment. This project will help us mitigate our contribution to the climate crisis while making our lives and economies better. We urge you to support the Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit system.

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John Slade
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Dear Mayor Abrams and Maplewood City Council: As a St. Paul resident, a metro-wide transit user and the managing editor of Streets.mn, a decade-old community blog that advocates for multimodal transportation, equitable use of natural lands and practices that reduce the catastrophic effects of climate change, I ask you to take a forward-looking position and **support the Purple Line** at your meeting tomorrow night (March 22).

I live near a Bus Rapid Transit line in St. Paul, the A Line. BRT lines are helping to convince people that mass transit *can* be an effective way to get around a metropolitan area that is decades behind in building out its multi-modal infrastructure.

As a cyclist, I believe that the Purple Line can co-exist with the Bruce Vento Trail. Both projects achieve the same end: getting people outdoors, changing their habits, reducing our dependence on automobiles and moving *forward* to a healthier population and planet.

Please do the right thing -- if not for my Boomer generation than for the young people who are going to have to live with our mistakes and our prioritizing of individual convenience. Thank you for your consideration. -- Amy Gage

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Amy Gage, *she/her*
Managing editor, Streets.mn
612-381-4110 (mobile)

Dear Mayor Abrams and members of the City Council,

Please support the Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit project! The Purple Line will serve as an important connector between Saint Paul, Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, and Gem Lake. And through its connection at Union Depot, the Purple Line will connect the region to healthcare destinations, recreation and more, and will connect served communities to the region. It fits particularly nicely with the city's 2040 plan that incorporates mixed housing and retail. Without this transit line you will be adding miles of gridlocked roads that pollute the air and frustrate residents.

The city has been doing a great job adding affordable housing and dense development and now that needs to be coupled with fast and frequent transit to get people quickly to their destinations. Reducing traffic and wear on the roads. Buses are one of the most fiscally efficient form of transportation.

Those with limited income or mobility cannot always afford or operate their own personal vehicle which limits their job, healthcare, and consumer options.

We also need to consider our greenhouse gas emissions and the effect all those cars we're adding to the roads have on our ability to secure a livable planet for our children and grandchildren. Any combustion cars purchased today because of your policy decisions locks in carbon emissions for the rest of that car's 20-30 years of operation.

We need great, affordable transit to reduce inequities in income and access to opportunity and to address our climate crisis. Please support the Purple Line!

Austin Bell
1700 Jessie St,
Maplewood, MN, 55117

Dear Mayor Abrams and members of the City Council,

Please support the Purple Line BRT project. This project will closely follow the Gold line to bring better, more equitable transit to the east metro region, which lacks reliable service. As a resident in Saint Paul, I understand the need for a more connected

network in the east metro region. I believe both these lines will incorporate electric buses which will help reduce tailpipe emissions in the area.

The Purple Line will serve as an important connector between Saint Paul, Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, and Gem Lake. And through its connection at Union Depot, the Purple Line will connect the region to healthcare destinations, recreation and more, and will connect served communities to the region like my neighborhood in St. Paul.

Thanks!

Claire