

Better Bus Route 7

Engagement Summary
March 2025

Background

Route 7 is a local bus route providing service from 66th Street in Richfield through downtown Minneapolis to Theodore Wirth Park primarily along Minnehaha Avenue, Riverside Avenue, Washington Avenue, and Plymouth Avenue North.

Metro Transit's Better Bus Route program improves the customer experience through better accessibility at the bus stop, adding shelters where warranted, and simplifying the route alignment and schedule. Proposed changes include:

- Consolidating bus stops for up to quarter-mile spacing ([see map](#) for specific bus stop locations)
- Relocating select stops past a signalized intersection to reduce delays
- Expanding the no-parking zone around select stops to ensure buses can fully pull to the curb at the bus stop
- Adjusting the route schedule
- Installing concrete pads to improve accessibility for customers
- Installing new shelters at qualifying bus stops

Purpose and Goal

The purpose of this public engagement effort is to seek feedback on proposed changes to Route 7. Among the items for consideration:

- Education around the Better Bus Route program
- Understanding how proposed bus stop and route alignment changes would affect customers
- Identifying infrastructure, community spaces, organizations, or other factors that would change decisions around stop locations

Methods of Engagement

The target audience is customers, especially those that use the stops that are proposed for removal or consolidation. Outreach methods included:

- Direct mail postcards to all properties in a ¼ mile radius of proposed route alignment changes
- Rider Alerts with a QR code to the survey were posted at bus stops proposed for removal
- Emails to current Go-To Card and mobile app users
- In-person outreach on the route at various times throughout the engagement period to talk to customers and operators about the proposed changes and survey

Communications

Date	Activity
11/4	11,327 postcards sent to properties in a ¼ mile radius of route alignment changes
11/6	Rider Alert message goes out to 4,765 subscribers
11/7	Email blast to 720 registered Go-To card holders
11/7	Website posted with information about Better Bus Route project and link to survey
11/15	Bus stops signage posted with survey information in English, Spanish and Somali
12/4	Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association newsletter & social media

The image shows three pieces of outreach material:

- Poster (Left):** A blue poster with the text "Metro Transit is improving the customer experience on Route 7." and a background image of a bus stop.
- Spanish Flyer (Top Middle):** A yellow flyer with the text "Learn more about it at metrotransit.org/route-7 or call 612-333-3733". It includes a section for Spanish speakers: "ESPAÑOL: Próximamente, cambios en la Ruta 7. Conozca todos los detalles en metrotransit.org/routes-7 o llamando al 612-333-3733".
- Postcard (Bottom Right):** A direct mail postcard with a yellow header and blue footer. The header says "Metro Transit is improving the customer experience on Route 7." with the Metro Transit logo. The main text reads: "We are looking for your feedback on these potential changes:" followed by a bulleted list of changes:
 - Consolidating of bus stops for up to quarter mile spacing to increase trip efficiency
 - Shifting the route to Washington Avenue from 4th and 3rd streets in downtown Minneapolis
 - Shifting the route from 27th to 26th Ave. in the Seward neighborhood
 - These changes are planned for June 2025
 The postcard also includes a QR code, a survey link "SurveyMonkey.com/r/2025BBR7", and a postage meter stamp: "PSR01 STD U.S. Postage PAID Twin Cities, MN Permit No. 177".

Stakeholder Engagement

Date	Activity
11/7	Met with Move Minneapolis on downtown outreach strategy
12/9	Presented to Northside Residents Redevelopment Council Residential Commercial Task Force (RCTF) Meeting
1/9	Met with North Loop Property Managers (North Loop Green, Steelman Exchange, Western Container Building, Union Plaza, T3 North Loop)

Survey Respondents

Over the course of four weeks, we received 372 survey responses and 5 emailed comments. Nearly 350 survey respondents provided additional written comments about Route 7 and other topics. The demographics of customers surveyed were self-identified as follows:

Race/Ethnicity	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.42%
Asian or Asian American	4.3 %
Black, African, African American	6.18%
Hispanic, Latinx, Latino	4.57%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.5%
White	67.74%
Other race, ethnicity, or origin	1.34%
Did not answer	18.28%

Age	Percent
18-24	4.3%
25-34	24.73%
35-44	24.46%
45-54	10.22%
55-64	10.48%
65-74	8.33%
75-84	2.96%
85+	0.3%
Did not answer	14.25%

Out of 372 surveys collected, 295 responded to the question about disability status. Approximately 50% of those who responded indicated having a disability or impairment.

Seventy-five percent of survey respondents ride Metro Transit at least a few times a week, including 40% who are daily riders. Approximately 90% of respondents are Route 7 riders, and 10% ride another route impacted by the proposed stop changes.

The top three zip codes represented were 55406 (43.28%), 55401 (16.39%), 55417 (7.54%), and 55411 (6.23%). These represent the Longfellow, North Loop, Nokomis, and Near North neighborhoods respectively.

Summary and Analysis

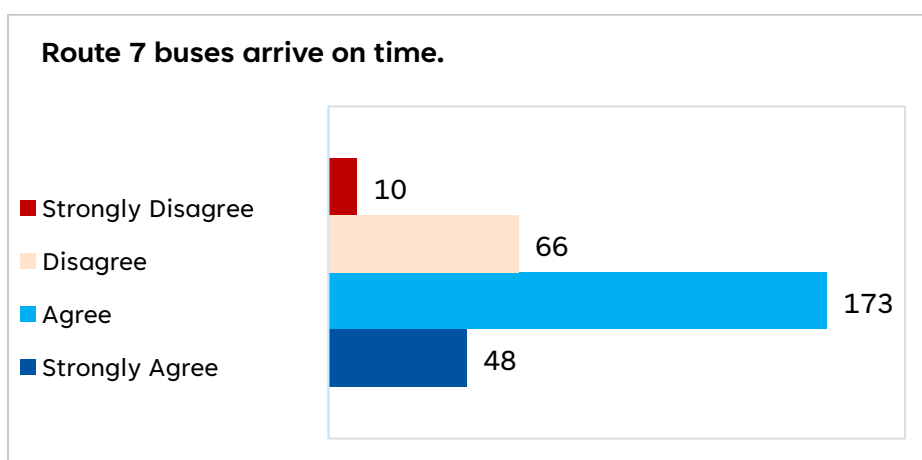
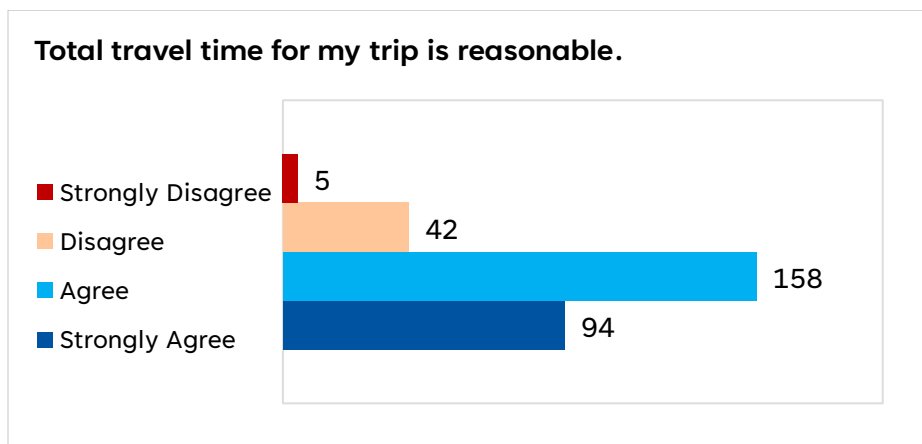
Overall, riders were generally happy with the performance of Route 7 – over 75% thought it was reliable and fast enough to meet their needs. However, over half of riders viewed the frequency of the route as deficient. Most riders were willing to walk further for more reliable service.

Specific to the changes being proposed through the Better Bus Route project, we received 12 written comments about 8 different bus stops. Most bus stops received a single comment.

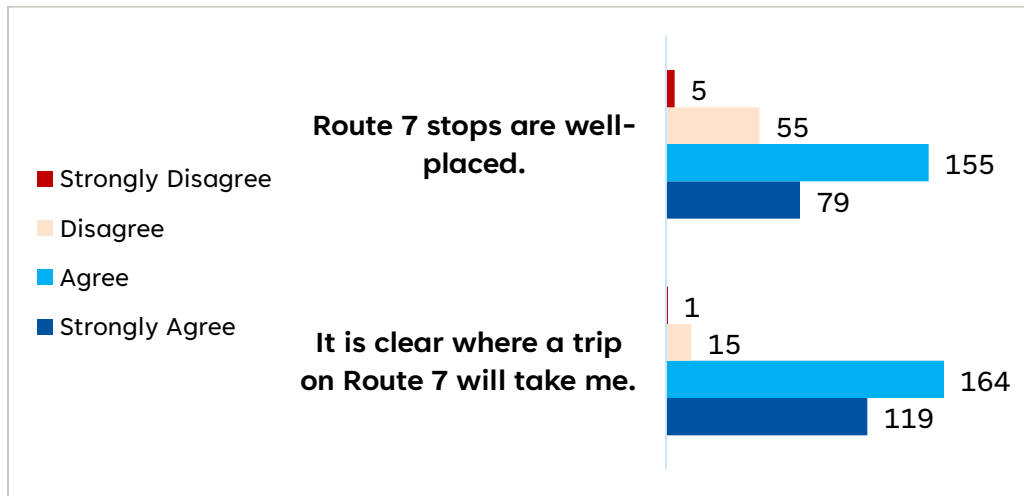
Finally, we also received many comments about other aspects of Route 7 including requests for greater frequency and improved connections to other routes. While these may not be specifically addressed through the Better Bus Route project, they can help inform future decision-making on Route 7 and other local bus service.

Survey Data

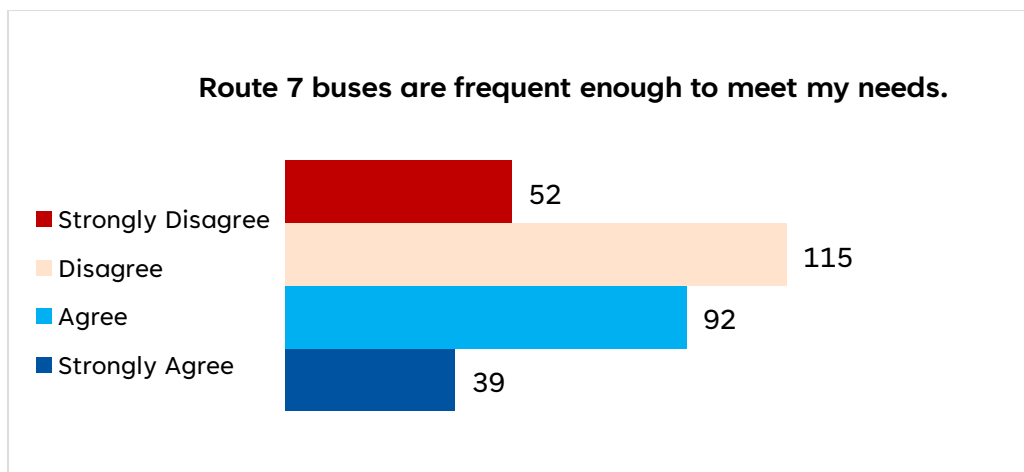
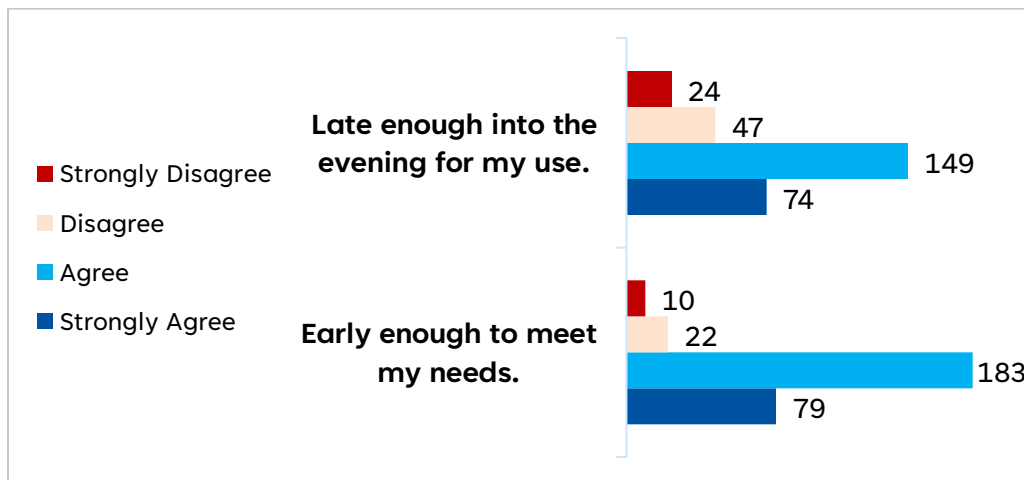
Respondents had a favorable view of Route 7 service, with 84% agreeing that the total travel time was reasonable, and 74% answering that Route 7 buses arrive on time.



Respondents also reported positive responses on clarity of route (95% agree or strongly agree) and placement of stops (80% agree or strongly agree).



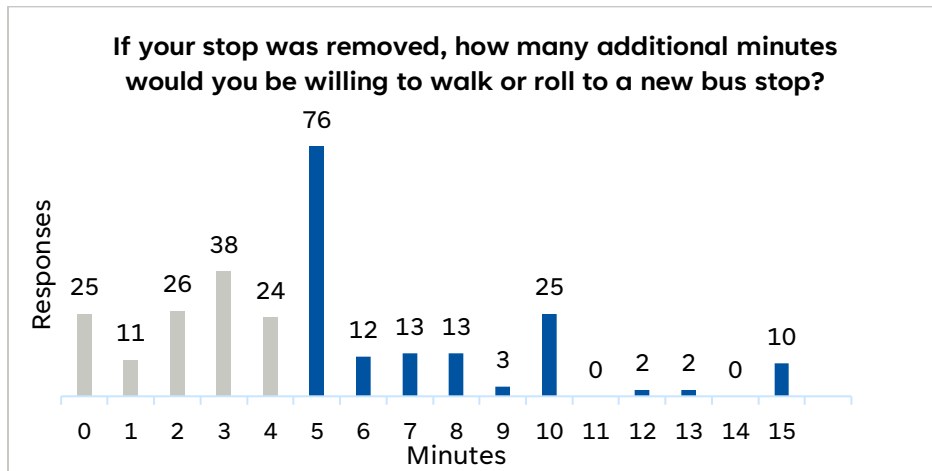
While most respondents indicated that Route 7 ran early enough to meet their needs, 25% said it did not operate late enough for them. Overall, 56% percent said Route 7 does not operate with enough frequency.



Customer Priorities

Sixty percent of respondents told us they preferred a service that is more likely to be on time over a shorter walk or roll to the bus stop. There was a slight preference for a shorter walk or roll to their bus stop (55%) over a faster overall trip (45%).

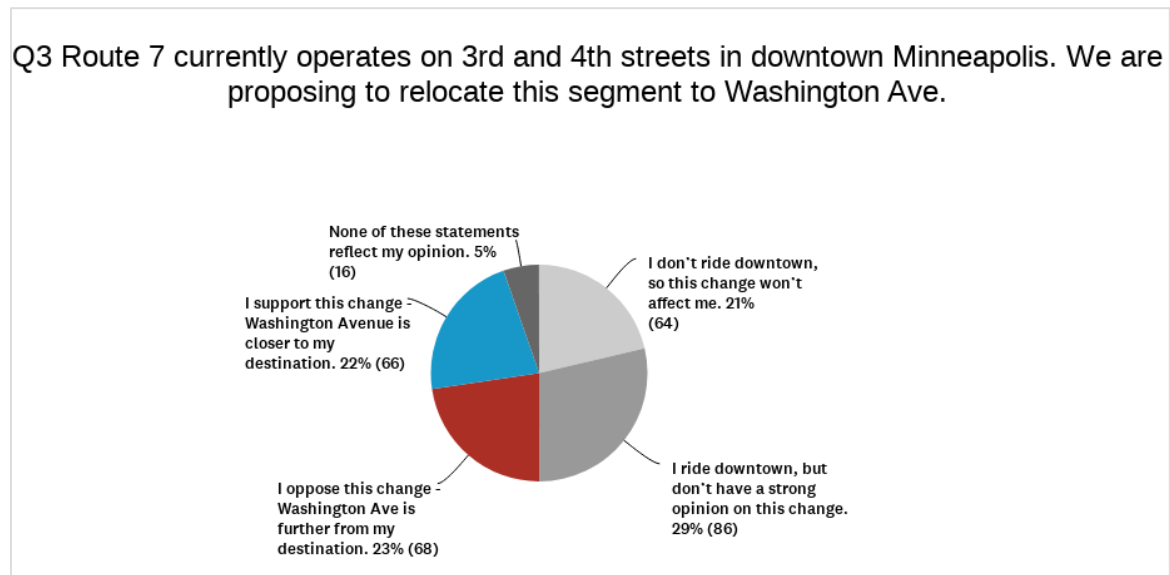
Just over half of respondents (56%) would be willing to walk or roll at least 5 additional minutes to a new bus stop if their current stop were removed. For reference, walking one long block (1/8 mile) takes about 2.5 minutes at a casual pace.



Proposed Alignment Changes

Downtown

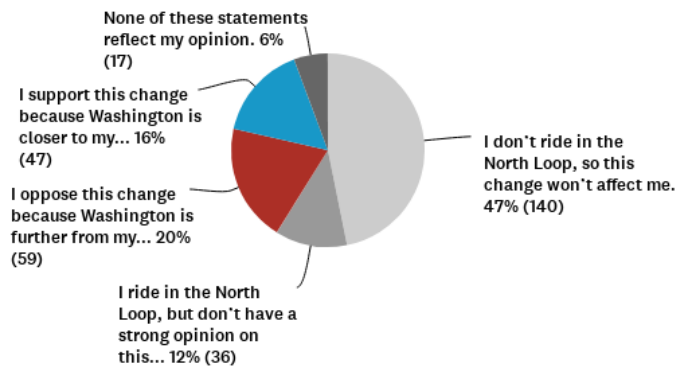
Of respondents who ride Route 7 in Downtown Minneapolis, over 50% either had no opinion or were in support of the proposed change from 3rd & 4th Streets to Washington Avenue.



North Loop

Over half of survey respondents do not ride Route 7 in the North Loop. Of the 142 that do, 58% either had no opinion or were in support of the proposed change from 1st Street North to Washington Avenue.

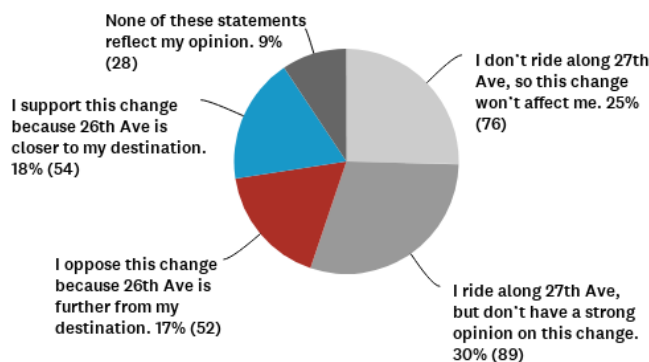
Q4 Route 7 currently operates along 1st St. N in the North Loop. We are proposing to relocate this segment to Washington Ave.



Seward

Of the 195 respondents who ride Route 7 in the Seward Neighborhood, 73% either had no opinion or were in support of the proposed change from 27th Ave S to 26th Ave S.

Q5 Route 7 currently operates along 27th Ave. S. in the Seward neighborhood. We are proposing to relocate this segment to 26th Ave.



How We are Using What We Heard

Transit planners are using this feedback to examine the proposed stop locations prior to finalizing their recommendations. Once finalized, the Route 7 changes will go into effect in mid-June.

Based on public engagement feedback we will be retaining the following stops that had previously been proposed for elimination:

- Minnehaha Ave & 34th St
- Minnehaha Ave & 43rd St
- 34th Ave and 58th/56th St

Appendix A: Sample quotes from Survey Responses

Stop spacing changes

- Changes that eliminate stops hurt people with mobility disabilities and hurt everybody who has to walk/roll through snow and ice. Make the route street and direction changes but don't eliminate stops.
- I really approve of the idea of removing buses from 1st Street North to Washington Avenue even though this will add a minute to my walk for the bus.
- I personally live on 25th Avenue. It was always confusing to have a northbound stop on 26th and a southbound stop on 27th. To get closer to my house I would usually have to get off and walk around 5 minutes to get home. Having the 7 be on 26th Avenue would be so much better and be more straightforward. I also ride the 7 going southbound from 4th and Nicollet so changing to Washington Avenue would be a bit of a change but it would be worth it to have the 7 actually hit North Loop and have more access to that neighborhood.

Frequency requests

- Please increase the frequency on the weekend, especially on Sundays. I rely on this route, and once an hour or less is not workable. Buses need to come frequently to be useful. Thank you
- I am a frequent 7 rider and fully support the proposed changes in route. Improved frequency, especially at night, is my only concern that prevents me from riding the route even more.
- I would like it if there was a frequency increase on this bus line during peak hours and on the weekend. The once per hour on the weekend is terribly too inconvenient. I would take the bus to the gym and other errand if the frequency increased

Other sample comments

- Please eliminate layovers at Plymouth/Theo Wirth Pkwy. I ride to the Trailhead from downtown, and the layovers on the return trip are very annoying. Layover at the Trailhead stop instead please. The stop at Plymouth/Theo Wirth Pkwy is inaccessible — no sidewalk, snow piled up, etc.
- I like the more direct (less zigzag) path of the new proposed route because it should make travel time shorter. Preserving as many connecting routes as possible (or staying within a block or two of them) would be great, if possible.
- Washington Ave does not have any transit advantages and gets more congested than other streets through DT. I'm concerned that any time improvements will be lost to buses sitting in traffic and the 7 will be a farther walk from destinations and transfers. Get Hennepin County to add bus-only lanes on Washington and this makes more sense.