

From: Kara Coustry
Sent: Wednesday, February 23, 2022 10:11 AM
To: ward2
Subject: RE: rushline

Thank you Heidi,
This is a very helpful timesaver!

Kara Coustry
[REDACTED]

From: ward2 <ward2@[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, February 22, 2022 8:53 PM
To: Kara Coustry <kcoustry@[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: rushline

Even after writing it down, it was still hard not to make random comments to myself. 🤔

Typically as a councilmember I'm asked to wait to make any final opinion on a matter coming before the council until we've fully heard about the issue and subsequently talked about it as a group which must happen in public.

We had an open meeting on this issue last week and discussed it. Therefore this is one of the few times I come with my mind made up and thoughts written down so I don't tangent and run off all over the place, therefore making no sense.

This is an issue I campaigned on, and this vote is an issue of my integrity. I have two points to make. The strings that come attached to the federal grant for this bus line are like chains attached to a millstone. Secondly, government is run by the people for the people. Not by the government.

I'm not against transit. I'm against this plan. To me the efficiency gained by running 35e as the trunk line, and moving more quickly to local routes, far outweigh the federal dollars being chased after under this plan.

I think the purple line is a strings attached substandard route. The reason this bus line looks like this is a matching grant program from the feds- 50% of the projected spending. When spending balloons, the percentage falls bc the feds won't be paying

more. And in order to get that money you must have dedicated lanes. We don't have the space for that in the downtown part of WBL but everywhere else we MUST have dedicated bus lanes. The bus also controls the lights. When the bus comes through, the lights will change to move it through the intersection, frustrating your drive to the grocery store, which you will still have to make by car because this bus won't take you there, for \$500 million. Despite the lanes and light, its almost an hour to downtown St. Paul. This is not fast. Those who can't afford cars or simply want public transportation pay with their time. How elitist. There must be 89 buses per day. This cannot be compromised. And finally it must be on 61, which is what I think is the biggest mistake. I think this plan should be scrapped and the busses – all 89 of them, should move to 35E. Rather than making bus stops along 61, we should upgrade the park and ride at Vadnais, include a stop before the bus goes past 36, add a park and ride near hugo. Then not only can people go to Union depot in st paul, they can also go to Minneapolis, to Medtronic or 3M, the rosedale mall, or many other useful locations in the metro area, not simply a random walk along buerkle road, the hospital and union depot.

No one talks about step two of this plan, which is the development of local busses through the neighborhoods to bring people to the second-rate purple line. This is not part of the fed grant. How about we build those NOW and move people to 35E and the many more resources and locations for riders to go? Why wait? 35E is our trunkline. By using 35E, we would lose \$250 million dollars. But maybe we can simply skip SPENDING \$250 million on wrecking 61 for no one to ride to nowhere, and actually move people out of our neighborhoods on to the buses already flying down 35E and increase that number of riders in an organic way? Build it and they will come only works in a fairytale. This behemoth looks like this because of what will be a paltry federal grant, when the entire thing is built. Let's skip the grant and build what makes sense instead.

This purple line is a wonderful example of government telling its uneducated citizens what is good for them despite their protests. One retired government worker told me last week that people didn't know what was good for them and the educated thinkers behind this plan for the last 20 years know best. Well, maybe, but the city doesn't belong to them. The citizens vote for the council and that matters. That matters or democracy doesn't matter. Voting matters and who we elect and why has consequences. And I'm the physical consequence. I'm sitting here because citizens said NO. They've been saying NO for years and no one has listened. Cheap listening sessions and surveys which don't allow people to simply say NO, don't count. False opportunities dressed up like civic engagement, don't count. It's demeaning. It's rude. And I'm the physical NO.

So here I am. Not only will I support the resolution, I will work as a councilmember to thwart this line every chance I get and let the federal government know that the people living here don't want its money – our taxpayer money -- spent on the inadequate route that is being proposed.