

# METRO

## METRONext Update

Transportation, Technology,  
and Infrastructure Committee

December 2, 2021



# METRONEXT MOVING FORWARD PLAN

## **A PLAN FOR TRAFFIC. A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE.**

The METRONext Moving Forward Plan is designed to help improve the quality of life throughout the Greater Houston region with 500 miles of travel investments and enhancements.

# Key goals of the Moving Forward Plan

- ✓ **MORE WAYS TO GET AROUND**
- ✓ **EASE TRAFFIC**
- ✓ **SUPPORT VIBRANT COMMUNITIES**
- ✓ **RETURN ON INVESTMENT**
- ✓ **FUTURE-PROOF SYSTEM**
- ✓ **BUILD UPON EXISTING INVESTMENTS**



# METRONEXT FINANCIALS AND GENERAL MOBILITY

## Key financial assumptions

**TOTAL PLAN COST: \$7.5B**

**FUNDING SOURCES:**

**\$3.5B** in bonding authority  
**\$3.5B** in federal grants  
**\$500M** in local grants

**GENERAL MOBILITY PROGRAM EXTENDED THROUGH 2040**

Debt issued as necessary based on financial realities at time of issuance and under restrictions in covenants

Repaid by existing sales tax revenues, based on Dr. Bill Gilmer's projections (Institute for Regional Forecasting)

**NO TAX INCREASE**



# METRONEXT MOVING FORWARD PLAN



## METRO Rapid (BRT)

- Interstate Highway 45 North to George Bush Intercontinental Airport and Greenspoint
- Inner Katy Corridor to Northwest Transit Center / Proposed High Speed Rail / Uptown
- University Corridor between Westchase and Tidwell
- Uptown Corridor extension to Gulfton
- West Houston Corridor between West Little York Park & Ride and Missouri City

## Regional Express

- US 90A Two-Way HOV
- United States Highway 90A Two-Way HOV
- Interstate Highway 10 West Two-Way HOV
- Interstate Highway 45 North Two-Way HOV
- United States Highway 59/Interstate Highway 69 South Two-Way HOV Downtown to Edloe
- State Highway 249 Two-Way Diamond Lanes/HOV
- 4 Off-Peak Direction Diamond Lane Corridors

## METRO Rail (LRT)

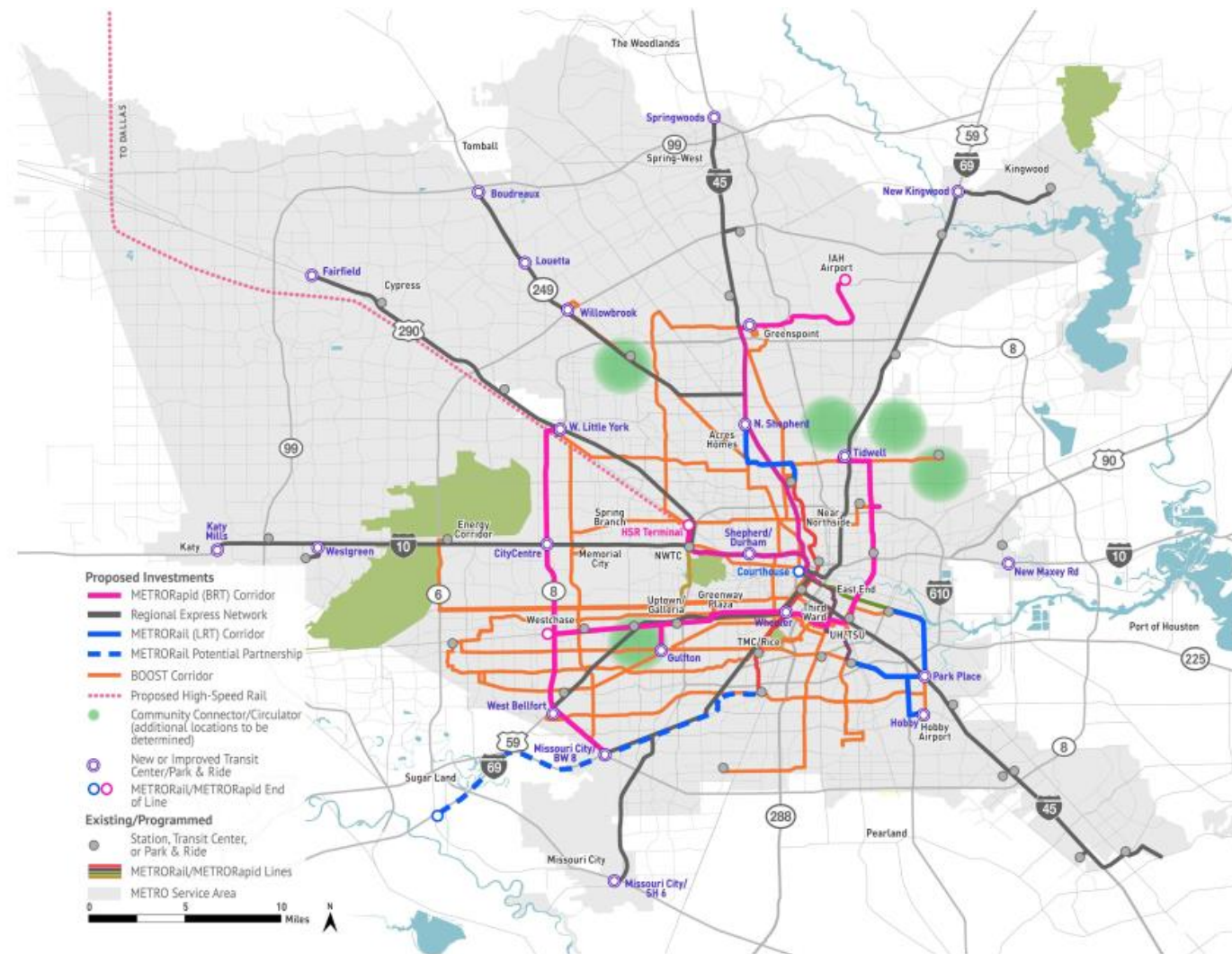
- Connecting the Green Line and Purple Line and extending the combined lines to William P. Hobby Airport
- Extensions of Green and Purple Lines to the City of Houston Municipal Courthouse
- Extension of Red Line to North Shepherd

## BOOST & Signature Service

- 17 Corridors
- Westheimer Signature Bus Service

## System Enhancements

- Approximately 21 new or improved Park & Rides, and Transit Centers
- Approximately 10 new Community Connectors / Circulators
- Systemwide route improvements
- Bus stop enhancements, such as new shelters, accessibility upgrades, and enhanced passenger information
- Bus Operating Facility
- Downtown, Midtown, and Texas Medical Center transit improvements
- Park & Ride Service Enhancements
- Accessibility and usability improvements and other investments designed to reduce barriers for seniors, the disabled and other users of METRO's transit system, including METROLift services
- Improvements to facilitate portions of a rider's trip before and after use of METRO's transit system (First Mile/Last Mile)
- Safety and Security Enhancements





# METRO Rapid Inner Katy Corridor Project



# METRORapid Inner Katy Corridor Project Overview

- Project is a 7.6-mile METRORapid transit line along the I-10 Inner Katy corridor featuring:
  - Two-way, transit-only guideway for METRORapid and Regional Express buses
  - One-stop ride between Uptown and Downtown
- Project is included in the Houston- Galveston Area Council's (H-GAC) Transportation Improvement Plan.
- Project is recognized as a regionally significant project by H-GAC's Transportation Policy Council.



# Filling METRO's Regional Express Infrastructure Gap



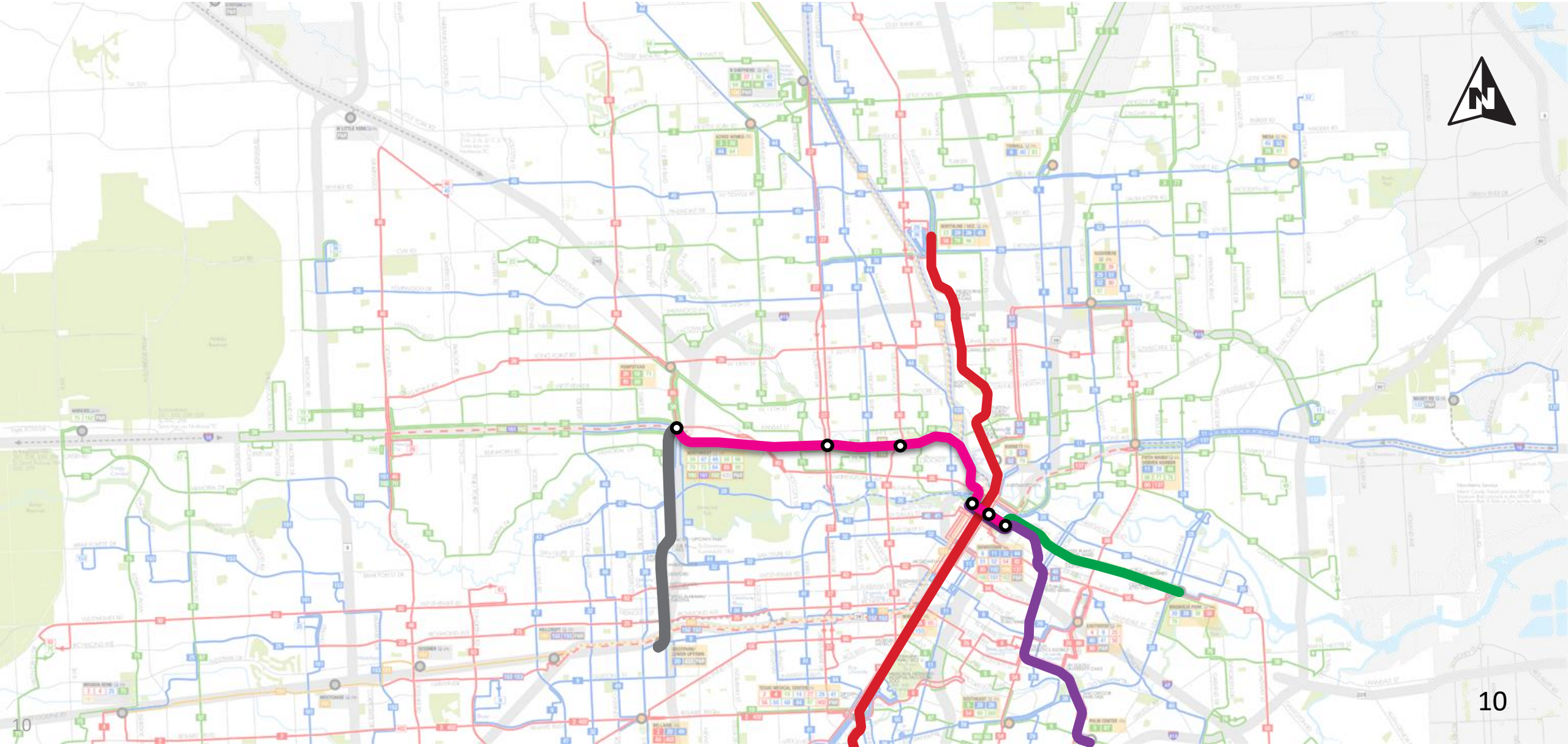


# Project Benefits

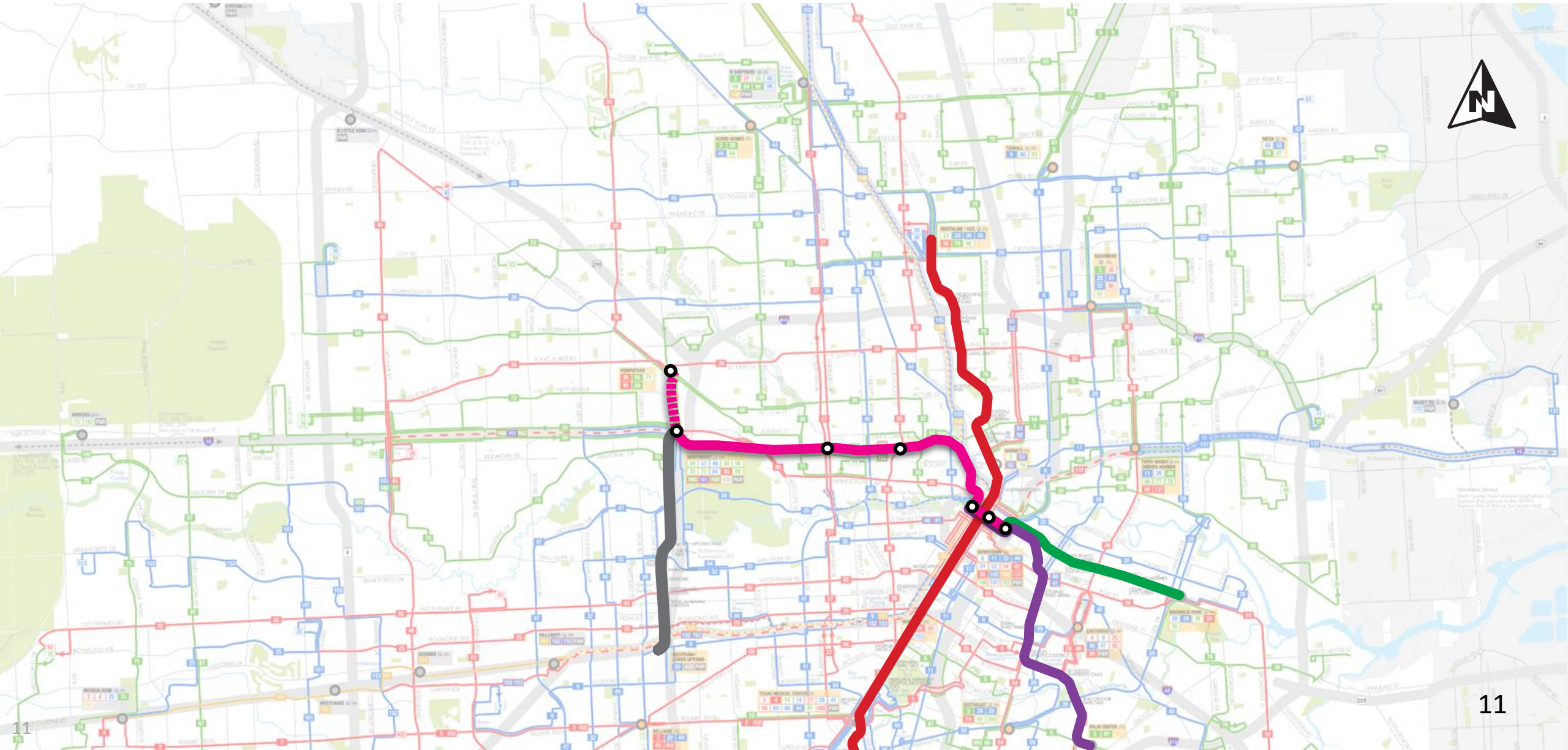
- Extends Silver Line to Downtown
- Provides rapid transit between Downtown and Uptown
- Accommodates Regional Express buses and provides them an exclusive guideway for faster and more reliable trips
- Serves neighborhoods along the route
- Accommodates future connection to planned High Speed Rail terminal



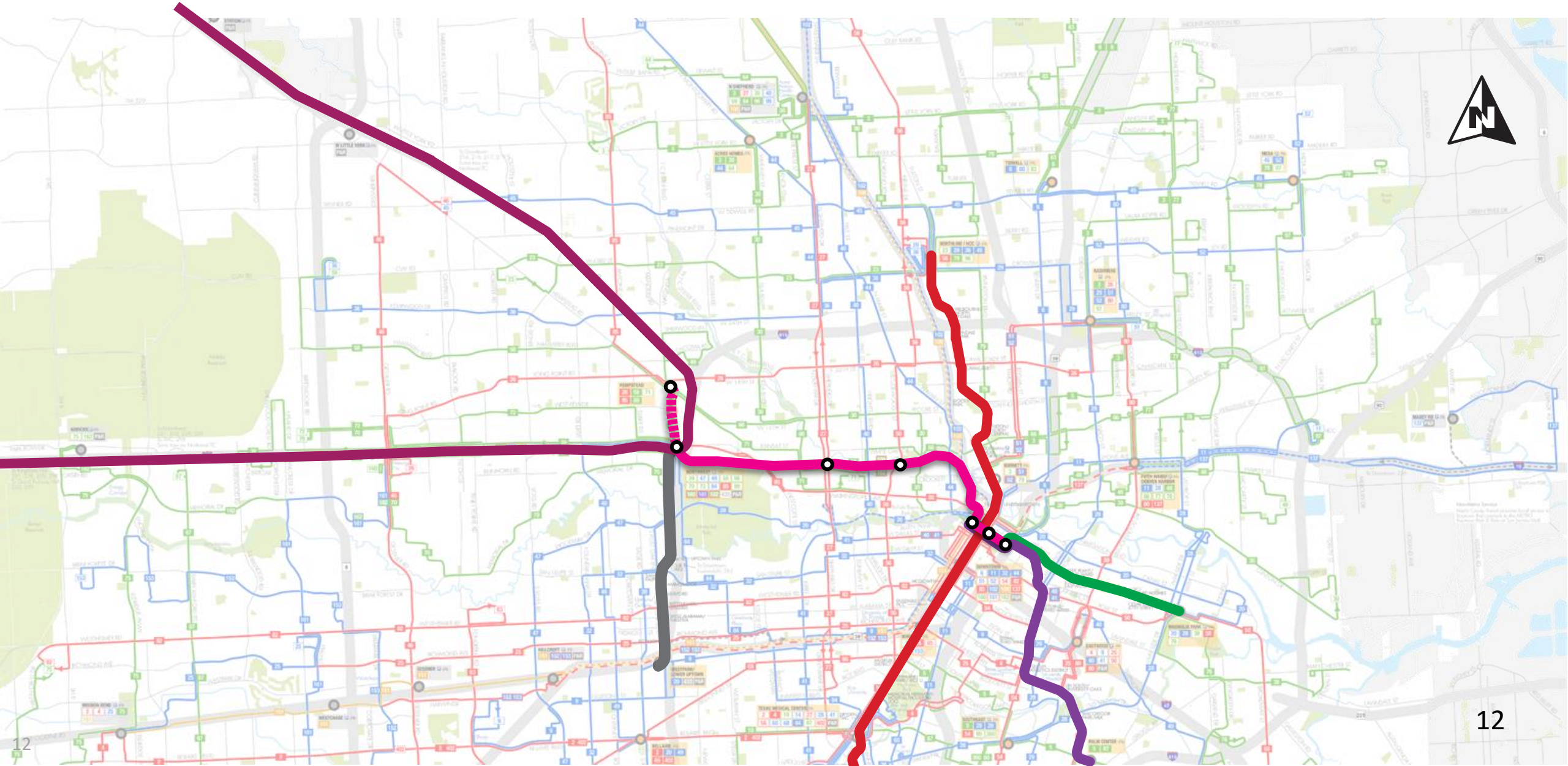
# Rapid Transit Line: Downtown to NWTC



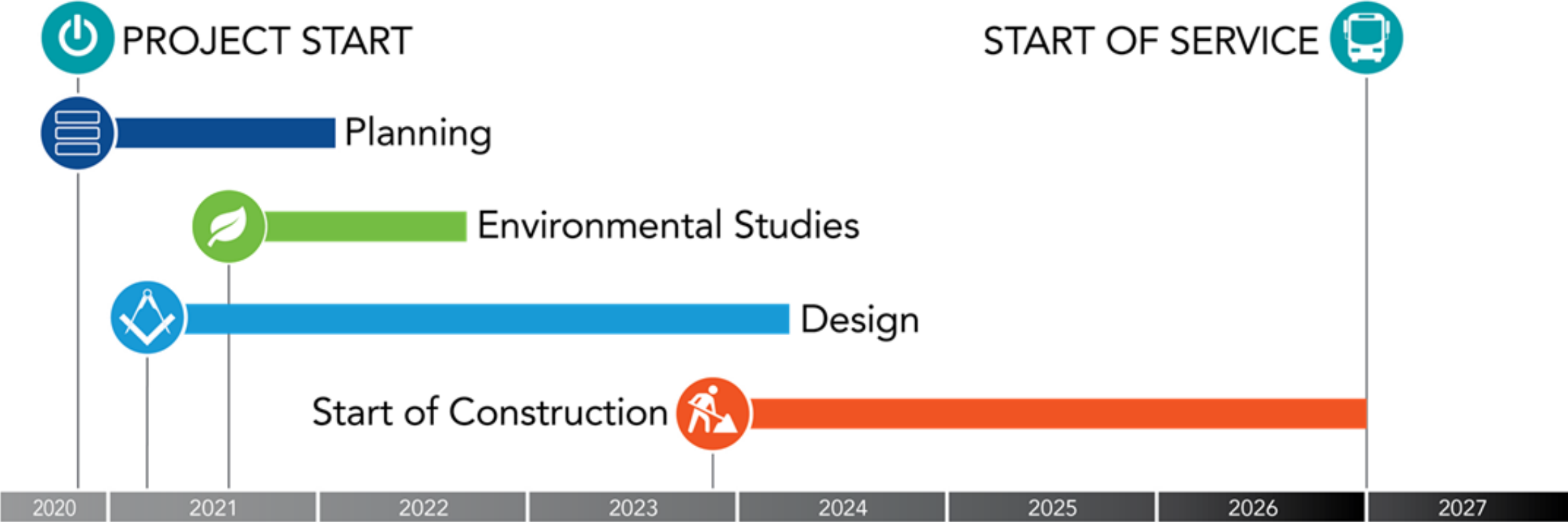
# Potential Expansion to High-Speed Rail Terminal



# Regional Express Bus Network



# Schedule



# Next Steps for the METRO Rapid Inner Katy Corridor Project

- Coordination Efforts:
  - TxDOT
  - City of Houston
- Project update to Transportation Policy Council (TPC): December 2021
- Board decision on Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA): January 2022
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) work completed: August 2022
- Engineering commences: September 2022
- Opening: 2027





# METRO Rapid University Corridor Project



# Project Background

## University Corridor

- Bus Rapid Transit Project
- Key component of the METRONext Plan
- New transit service will combine elements of light rail and bus and run in a 25.3 mile corridor





# Project Features

- Starts in west Harris County at the Westchase Park & Ride
- Travels east through Greenway Plaza and Midtown, then turns north to terminate at the Tidwell Transit Center
- Modern design offering 100% accessibility, with wide doorways and level boarding
- Stations resemble light rail stations
- Dedicated, transit-only lane to move through traffic rapidly
- Transit-friendly traffic signals





# University Corridor Alignment:

- 5 Segments



# University Corridor Connects Key Destinations



## METRO facilities

- Westchase Park and Ride
- Gessner Park and Ride
- Hillcroft Park and Ride
- Westpark/Lower Uptown Transit Center
- Wheeler Station
- Eastwood Transit Center
- Fifth Ward/Denver Harbor Transit Center
- Tidwell Transit Center

## The Corridor serves the following areas and more:

- Westchase
- Gulfton
- Uptown
- Greenway/Upper Kirby
- Montrose
- Midtown
- Greater Third Ward
- Greater Eastwood
- Second Ward
- Greater Fifth Ward
- Kashmere Gardens
- Eastex/Jensen

# Next Steps: Entry into Project Development

The Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program requires activities be completed within two (2) years of entering the Project Development Phase before a New Starts project may enter the Engineering phase:

- Select a locally preferred alternative;
- Have the locally preferred alternative adopted into the fiscally constrained Long Range Transportation Plan;
- Complete the environmental review process and receive a finding from Federal Transit Administration (FTA); and,
- Develop sufficient information for FTA to evaluate and rate the project against the statutory project justification and local financial commitment and receive a Medium or better rating.

# Public Engagement

- Virtual Open House – December 1, 2021
  - Self-directed webinar format
  - Focus on project benefits, preferred alignment, BRT technology, system connectivity, and opportunities for public input.
- Public Engagement and Input (Early 2022)
  - Engagement and outreach plan will include virtual and in-person activities.
  - Tailored to each segment of the project corridor.
  - Sensitivity to equity, access and connectivity to jobs as well as major destinations.
  - Public feedback incorporated into project development.



# METRO's BOOST Network



# METRONext BOOST

## 82 Westheimer Route

- Improvements will consist of bus stop enhancements, new bus shelters, improved passenger information, and easier boarding platforms and safe all-door access.
- An east-west crosstown bus route offering frequent service to major employment centers:
  - Downtown Houston
  - Greenway Plaza
  - Uptown
  - Westchase
- Connects to 64 bus lines in METRO's local and regional network, and the METRORapid Silverline (BRT).
- Certain elements such as new shelters and sidewalk improvements in some segments have already been constructed.

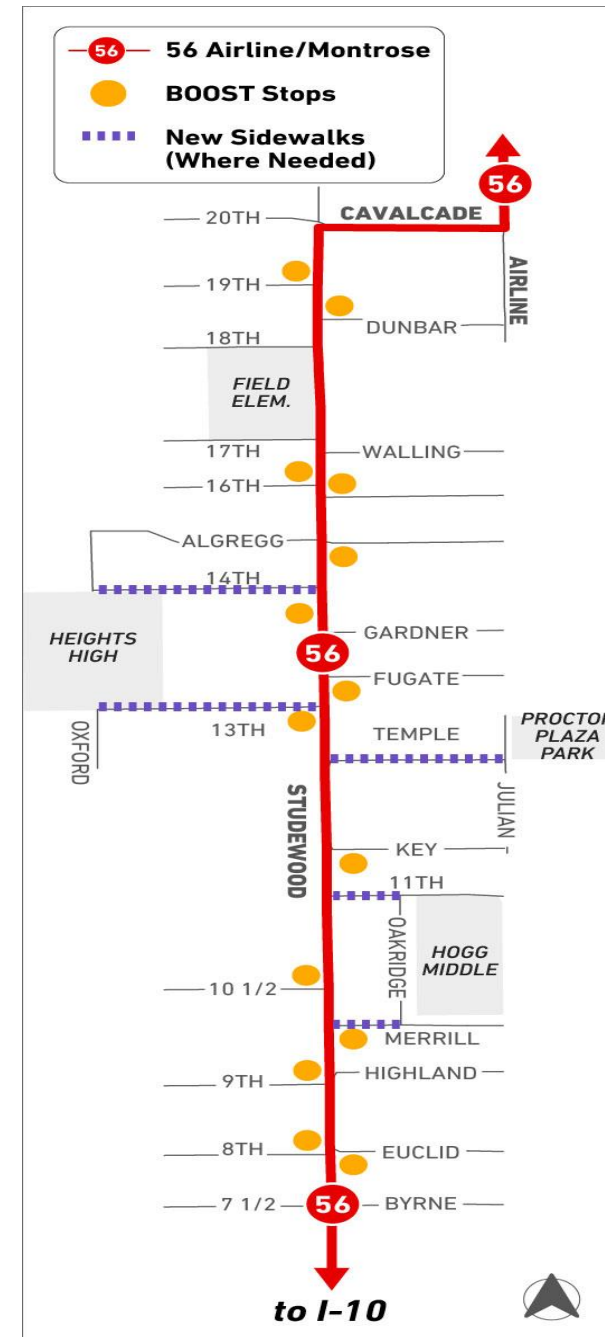


# METRONext BOOST



## 56 Airline/Montrose Route

- 1.5-mile stretch of Studewood St. between White Oak Drive and Cavalcade St. (Construction in Progress).
- METRO has completed the planning phase and is currently in the design phase of the entire 23-mile Airline/Montrose route corridor
- New bus shelters
- Sidewalk improvements and ramps on:
  - Studewood St.
  - Merrill St.
  - 11th St.
  - Temple St.
  - 13th St.
  - 14th St.
- New sidewalks connecting bus stops to:
  - Hogg Middle School
  - Proctor Plaza Park & Community Center
  - Heights High School
- Pedestrian crossing improvements

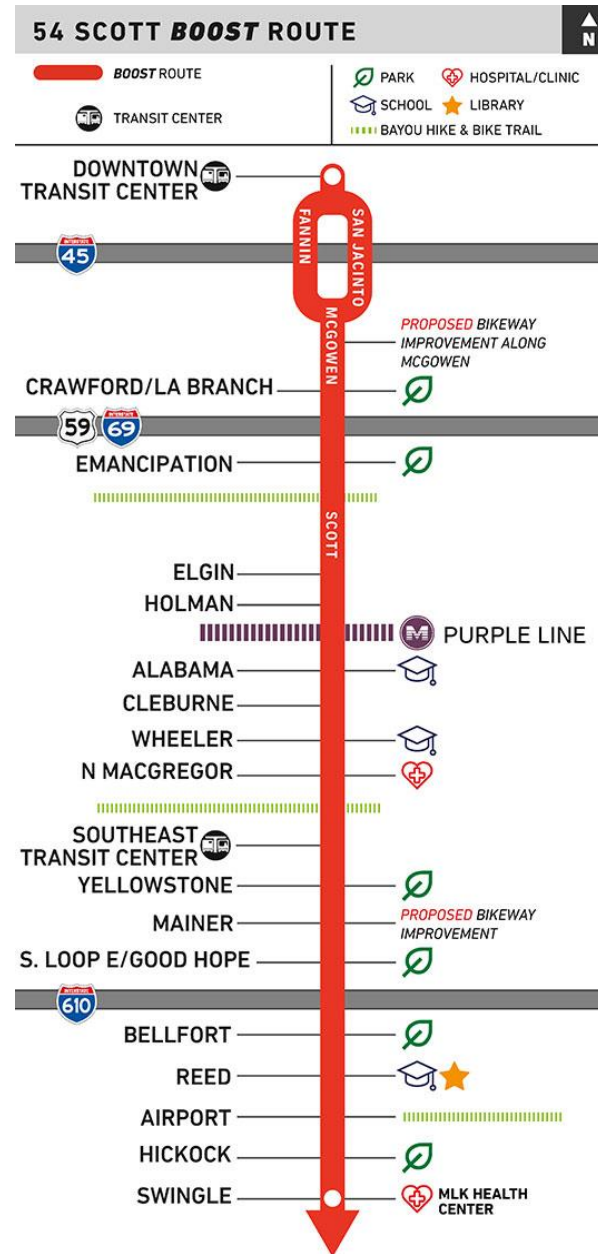




# METRONext BOOST

## 54 Scott Route

- 11-mile stretch of service between the Downtown Transit Center and the MLK Health Center - north of Alameda-Genoa (Planning in Progress).
- New bus shelters
- Sidewalk improvements and ramps along Scott St.
- Pedestrian crossing improvements
- Bikeways along McGowen and along Mainer St.





# METRO's Universal Accessibility



# Universal Accessibility Status

## Bus Stop Prioritization Evaluates Need First, and Ridership Second

### In Design

- METRO has six design consultants under contract
- As of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1200 bus stops have completed design work

### Construction

- Completed 734 site improvements through September 30, 2021
- Total stops since program inception ~ 1667
- Coordinating community outreach efforts with Public Affairs team





- Designed Stops (1,200)
- Constructed Stops (734)

### Universal Accessibility Program FY21 Completed Sites





# METRO's Sustainability Program



# Sustainability Vision Statement

1. METRO will shift to procuring only zero-emission buses by FY2030
2. METRO will manage its operations to avoid or minimize environmental impacts on the health and safety of our employees
3. METRO will apply green principles to the design and management of its facilities. METRO will foster sustainable use of natural resources by promoting energy management, recycling, re-use, and re-purposing of materials, and waste reduction management opportunities
4. METRO will collaborate with other organizations to achieve shared environmental goals
5. METRO will develop an agency wide Climate Action Plan to achieve the objectives of this Sustainability Vision Statement

# METRO's Zero Emissions Goals



- METRO's existing business practice operates buses for their useful life of approximately 12-15 years (depending on vehicle type).
- As of FY2021, the average fleet vehicle is 6 years old with the majority being below.
- If the current vehicles are utilized for their useful life of 15 years that brings the oldest of the fleet to FY2030
- This is a logical year to target transition of fleet purchases to zero emissions vehicles. It also aligns to the region's initial fleet transition goal of non-emergency vehicles by 2030.

# Climate Action Plan

- METRO will purchase 20 battery electric buses and 10 cutaway vans for operation on two bus corridors in FY2021
  - The lessons learned from the 2 corridors will inform update of METRO's Fleet Plan
- METRO will pilot/demonstrate Hydrogen Fuel Cell bus(es)
- METRO will continue to pursue funding to support the purchase of zero emissions vehicles and infrastructure







## Government Affairs Contact Information

**Eduardo Miranda**, Vice President

Office: 713.739.7351

Mobile: 832.977.7351

Email: [Eduardo.Miranda@RideMETRO.org](mailto:Eduardo.Miranda@RideMETRO.org)

**Jose Pulido**, Government Affairs Manager

Office: 713.739.4888

Mobile: 281.224.0884

Email: [Jose.Pulido@RideMETRO.org](mailto:Jose.Pulido@RideMETRO.org)

