



Cultural Placekeeping Meeting 3 Summary

METRO Blue Line LRT Extension (BLE)

Meeting Overview

DATE: JUNE 25, 2025

LOCATION: ELIM LUTHERAN CHURCH, ROBBINSDALE

This second meeting of the Cultural Placekeeping Design Group convened community members, artists, and city representatives for a shared meal, artist introductions, reminder of the day's goals, and in-depth small group discussions. Staff clarified that the meeting's purpose was to gather community feedback on high-level corridor themes to guide artistic visualization and future design opportunities.

Agenda Summary

SHARED MEAL + INTRODUCTIONS (30 MIN)

- The meeting began with a shared meal provided by *Chopped and Served (Shawarma Bar)*, as attendees signed in and received key materials:
 - Agenda and timeline updates
 - CPK binders (for those who missed the June meeting)
 - Aerial renderings and roll plots
 - Public engagement summaries from Brooklyn Park and Jewel of the North
- Artists Philli Irvin, Costanza Carballo, and Adrian Lowe introduced themselves and showcased samples of their work.
- Engagement boards with feedback from *Robbinsdale Whiz Bang Days* and *Brooklyn Park Summer Splash* were displayed to inspire reflection and dialogue.

SMALL GROUP BREAKOUTS (90 MIN)

- Attendees were then split into two breakout groups by geography for deeper discussion: Minneapolis and Robbinsdale attendees remained in the main gymnasium space, Brooklyn Park and Crystal attendees moved into an adjacent classroom.
- Each group engaged in open discussion with suggested prompts to gather input on high-level themes across the corridor.

Brooklyn Park / Crystal Breakout Group

CRYSTAL HIGHLIGHTS:

- Crystal is a smaller-scale, post-WWII city (1950s–60s), with architecture reflecting that era.
- The city hosts many immigrant-owned and multicultural businesses that foster strong personal relationships and a small-town atmosphere.
- Mom-and-pop commercial spaces serve as hubs of community connection and identity.
- City actively supports small businesses with grants, COVID relief, and zoning that favors smaller-scale development.



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- Bass Lake Road near the future LRT station functions as a “Mini Main Street,” with on-street parking vital to sustaining businesses.
- Future vision for Crystal:
 - Preserve small-scale character and prioritize residential redevelopment (vs. mixed-use).
 - Increase population density to improve safety and maintain economic vibrancy.

BROOKLYN PARK DISCUSSION:

- Brooklyn Park is the most suburban of the Blue Line Extension cities, offering spaciousness, quiet streets, and a peaceful atmosphere.
- Residents actively shape their surroundings through gardening, home projects, and neighborhood events, creating a personalized sense of home.
- The city is rich in green spaces, encouraging outdoor activity and fostering a connection to nature.
- Home to many immigrant families, Brooklyn Park celebrates a rich mix of cultures, languages, food, and festivals, with a strong emphasis on respect and inclusivity.
- Public art includes elements like smiley face artwork, and the community has a strong DIY presence in its art.
- All colors can represent Brooklyn Park. Blues and greens reflect their natural environment.

Minneapolis / Robbinsdale Breakout Group

GROUP DIALOGUE THEMES:

- Participants asked how artists would translate abstract themes into tangible artwork without site-specific instructions. Artists responded by emphasizing open interpretation and symbolic storytelling.
- Concerns were raised about preserving thematic focus without diluting community identity.
- Participants advocated for deeper community involvement and creative ownership, including:
 - Assigning artists to specific LRT stations (“adopt-a-station”)
 - Ongoing compensation and recognition for community contributions
 - Long-term support for public artworks post-installation
- Suggestions to go beyond visual arts included use of sound, color, projections, and interactive elements like oral histories or livestreamed “portals.”

KEY THEMES IDENTIFIED:

- Safety, accessibility, walkability
- Inclusivity and reflection of communities between stops
- Micro-economy support (e.g., local currencies, discounts for small businesses)
- Art that is by/for the people – storytelling, memory, everyday life, movement
- Nature themes including native plants, native habitats, and references to timeline (past-present-future)
- Integration of Ojibwe Seven Grandfather Teachings, Kwanzaa principles, and colors of the rainbow – all aligned with the 7 LRT stops within Minneapolis and Robbinsdale
- Additional ideas:
 - Oral history audio on trains
 - Reflective train surfaces to mirror neighborhoods
 - “Platform mayor” concept – public gathering spaces at stations



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- Robbinsdale-specific identity elements: *Birdtown*, *Terrace Theatre*, *Fawcett Publishing*, and *Andrew Robbins' streetcar history*
- Inclusion of Minneapolis Sound in musical theming

Next Steps

- Meeting notes will be compiled and distributed to all attendees.
- Artists will begin developing concepts based on the themes and information shared.
- The August meeting agenda will begin with sharing ideas across the small groups.