





# Appendix B | Comment Report from Open House, Intercept and Online Survey

## 1 How We Processed Engagement Comments

The project team compiled notes from conversations the Open House, including comments from the Share Your Vision activity, intercept surveys and the open-ended survey question (Q16: Is there anything else you would like to share about a pedestrian/bike-only Nicollet Mall and/or moving buses off Nicollet Mall?).

For each of the 873 online survey comments, we read the comment, assessed the sentiment about moving transit to another corridor downtown and tagged for up to three common themes. Themes were developed on an ongoing basis throughout the comment processing, with new themes added as needed to capture emerging trends among the comments. For the 400+ open house comments and staff notes and comments recorded from the intercept survey, the same thematic tagging strategy was used with some unique themes added as needed for those data sets.

Having the ability to tag multiple themes for each comment allowed the project team to capture more nuanced feedback without the risk of lowering counts of higher-level themes. If more than three themes were present, the reader made a judgement as to which three themes best would represent the commenter’s intent. The “score” for each theme is a direct count of the number of comments that were tagged with that theme, within the parameters of this three-theme tagging system.

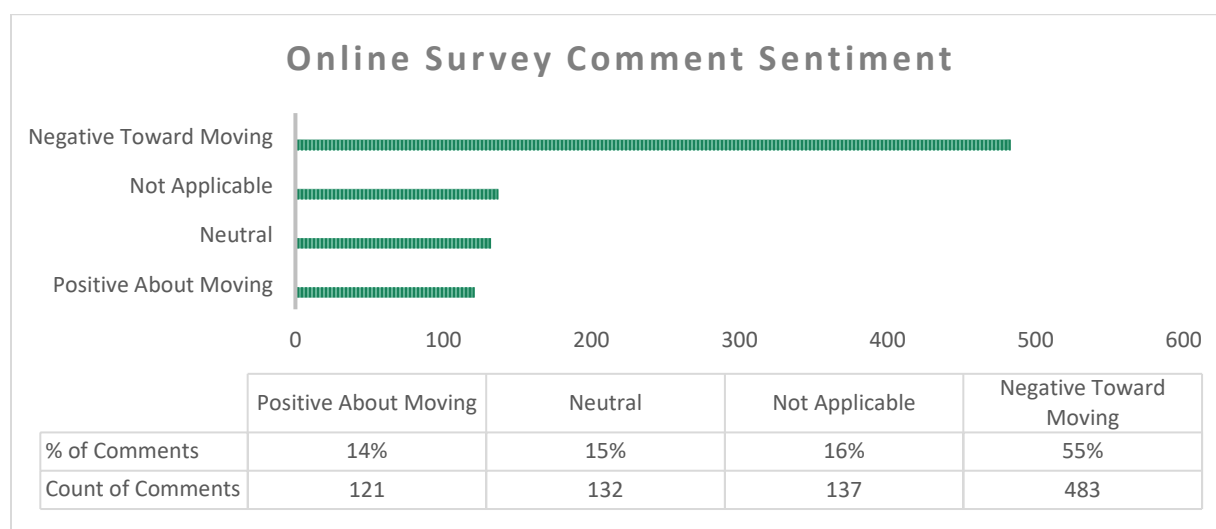
-  Including Pop-Up notes, Open House notes, Open House activities, and Survey open ended questions
-  Reading the comments
-  Tagging
  - Sentiments (positive/negative)
  - Preference for Options
  - Theme tags (up to 3)
-  Adding themes as they emerge based on common wording and themes

## 2 Results – Online Survey Open Response Question

### 2.1 Sentiments Tagging

For online survey open response question comments, each comment was tagged for positive sentiments about moving transit off Nicollet Mall and negative sentiments toward the move to better understand public opinion at this point in the project, after sharing more detailed discussion of the tradeoffs between different solutions.

Neutral comments either did not express an opinion on moving transit and Not Applicable comments were comments about the experience today on Nicollet Mall or future of Nicollet Mall that didn't make a clear distinction about whether transit is present or not.



This represents an increase in negative sentiments expressed in the open comments compared to Phase 1, where 23% of comments were positive about moving transit and 34% of comments were negative about moving transit.

### 2.2 Preference for Options

In Phase 1, comments were tagged with based on preferences for Option 1, Option 2, or Option 3. This was initially part of the comment analysis approach, but too few of the comments in the online survey open response question dataset referenced specific Option preferences to make the information relevant to analysis.

## 2.3 Thematic Tagging

Based on the combined online survey, open house and intercept survey comment dataset, this list of themes is ranked in order of most common, with the highest number of comments tagged, down to less common, with fewer comments tagged. A total of 918 online survey comments, 100 intercept survey comments and over 400 open house notes were tagged by theme, and the score directly relates to how many comments included each theme. Due to themes being added throughout the comment processing and the cap of 3 themes per comment, these can't be understood as exact counts of how many times each theme comes up in comments, but they demonstrate a relative frequency compared to the other themes in the data set. Here are the top 20 most common themes from the engagement comments:

Rank	Top Comment Themes	Score
1	I like the way it is; don't move buses off Nicollet Mall.	176
2	Concern that the distance to the new corridor in bad weather conditions, at night, and with bags may create challenges for accessibility, especially for people with disabilities and older people.	148
3	Concern about safety with fewer people on the new bus corridor; these corridors would need a lot of pedestrian improvements to activate them to the level of Nicollet Mall.	124
4	Concern that pedestrianization efforts on Nicollet will be ineffective given the decline in activity from moving buses, concern for business impact of moving buses, and/or that there isn't enough planned for what happens on Nicollet Mall after busses move.	107
5	Concern that this will not speed up transit or skepticism about the benefits to transit riders.	88
6	Support for moving buses.	82
7	Overall frustration with buses moving off Nicollet Mall.	73
8	Concern about conflicts between bicycles and pedestrians on Nicollet Mall; desire for protection between bicycles and pedestrians.	61
9	Interest in pedestrianization so that Nicollet Mall is a real gathering destination - including stalls for vendors, bollards at cross streets, lots of public seating.	57
10	Perception that this project seems to prioritize commuters/business interests over residents and transit riders; perceived desire to move low-income people and people of color off Nicollet Mall.	56
11	Interest in more businesses and restaurant options to revitalize Nicollet Mall.	53
12	Interest in more things to do on Nicollet Mall.	49
13	Interest in transit speed improvements - transit signal priority, off-board fare payment and removal of bus speed restrictions.	38
14	Interest in increasing downtown vibrancy by keeping transit on Nicollet Mall and implementing other improvements.	38
15	Interest in more public restrooms downtown.	29
16	Concern about existing 'unsavory' behavior around bus stops.	28
17	Concern about transfers to C line, D line, Hennepin and light rail being less convenient.	28
18	Interest in making more of downtown car-free; pedestrianize another street downtown.	28
19	Concern about moving busses to Hennepin Ave.	25
20	Interest in more housing downtown.	24

### 2.3.1 Discussion of Top 10 Themes

For each of the top 10 themes, this section shares some analysis and quotes to illustrate the theme in more depth.

**Theme #1:** I like the way it is; don't move buses off Nicollet Mall.

- **Analysis:** This general theme was most common comment theme, likely because there was not another place in the survey to express this desire. Similar to this theme in Phase 1, there were thoughtful reflections on the potential impact of this move on the commenter's individual experience and the experiences of people who would be most impacted.
  - "Please do not move buses off of Nicollet Mall. This decision will make Nicollet Mall much less accessible to residents."
  - "Don't move the buses off Nicollet mall. Nicollet mall has better lighting and safety features than any of the other options. You need to consider the safety of ALL people when making this decision, which includes women traveling alone or with children, disabled, and elderly who need well-lit sidewalks with good curb access. That's Nicollet mall."
  - "Please don't move the busses off Nicollet Mall - the only time my bus routes slow down is when they have to interact with cars. It seems like this plan would drastically increase the number of times that happens. I for one, have not felt unsafe along that stretch, even while waiting for a long transfer."

**Theme #2:** Concern that the distance to the new corridor in bad weather conditions, at night, and with bags may create challenges for accessibility, especially for people with disabilities and older people.

- **Analysis:** The additional distance to walk to destinations and between transfers was raised as a primary concern with the new transit corridors. The concern primarily came from existing transit riders with a particular concern for winter trips and late-night trips. The theme highlighted that key destinations are consolidated on Nicollet Mall and access to these places would be diminished by moving transit off Nicollet Mall. To address this concern the City will look to consider ways to minimize additional walking distance to destinations and transfers, and other ways to increase the comfort of connections to Nicollet Mall.
  - "As a transit rider with a disability, I do not like the idea of moving transit \*away\* from the places I wish to visit. Any additional walking to and from bus stops creates an accessibility barrier for many transit customers. Nicollet Mall can become a vibrant gathering spot for residents without permanently relocating the buses. Accessibility issues like public restrooms and seating areas can and should already exist, but can be added to the area as it already is. Outdoor dining already happens, though I can admit that dining without vehicle traffic noise would be a more pleasant experience."
  - "Please, please leave the 17 or 18 on Nicollet. If you think these are short walks, you need to do them yourself in subzero, icy, rainy, and high humidity heat, with each of these modifications: in a manual wheelchair by yourself; on crutches; with a mobility issue induced artificially; with a stroller, two ambulatory children, and 3 bags of groceries; with a simulated condition like asthma or heart disease; perfectly mobile and unaccompanied with four bags of groceries; and in a hurry without running. Not everyone is a healthy young professional."
  - "My elderly parents live downtown and use the free shuttles up/down the Nicollet Mall. If you remove these shuttles, you will remove their business from the Mall...Given people's physical limitations, as well as the reality of Minnesota winters that makes walking an extra block or two of walking is problematic, a shuttle is needed. Removing buses from the mall will not solve the problem of people avoiding the Mall due to harassment and perceived threats."

**Theme #3:** Concern about safety with fewer people on the new bus corridor; these corridors would need a lot of pedestrian improvements to activate them to the level of Nicollet Mall.

- **Analysis:** Marquette Ave, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave and 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave have different levels of pedestrian activity and public realm improvement compared to Nicollet Mall today. Comments highlighted a concern that perceived and real safety of transit riders would be impacted by moving transit to these streets and that investments would need to be made in the new transit corridor to achieve a similar level of activation on streets with less natural activity, especially at night. The City will continue to develop designs for the corridor(s) that is selected for transit service to work to achieve a safe and comfortable transit experience there.
  - “My female friends and I feel a lot safer walking Nicollet Mall late at night than Marquette. While a full Marquette is our preferred option of the three here, the large-storefront and business-hours-only nature of that corridor can make it feel really empty and scary/unsafe. If there is truly no more flexibility in the Nicollet traffic models to improve bus speeds along there, then please please work with building owners along Marquette to see how that street can be transformed to accommodate more of a late-night presence.”
  - This is going to make the transit experience worse, with more walking between transfers, stops further from amenities, and a dissolution of the density of eyes from the street that keep people safe. I hate waiting alone on empty streets away from everyone, I hate seeking out transfers, I would rather a slower bus than any of those things.
  - “Please do not reroute busses off of Nicollet Mall. The Nicollet Mall bus shelters feel very safe at night compared to other streets due to being more populated and better lit, many major businesses are located on Nicollet Mall which makes it very easy to get to when the bus stops right there (especially for disabled and elderly passengers). I don't care that the bus moves slowly on Nicollet, I care that it gets me where I need to go which it does. Rerouting it would be inconvenient for many passengers.”

**Theme #4:** Concern that pedestrianization efforts on Nicollet will be ineffective given the decline in activity from moving buses, concern for business impact of moving buses, and/or that there isn't enough planned for what happens on Nicollet Mall after busses move.

- **Analysis:** This comment type highlighted concern that downtown vibrancy goals would not be supported by the move of transit activity to another street. People predicted that without transit riders and without an influx of new businesses or regular programming on Nicollet Mall, that empty space could become a magnet for further disorderly activity. Further planning for Nicollet Mall pedestrianization will take place once a transit corridor is selected.
  - “I think it is a step in the wrong direction to remove transit from Nicollet mall. The mall owes its vibrancy to the fact that it is a transit hub. I feel it will become desolate without it and businesses will suffer.”
  - “Taking the buses off Nicollet Mall will definitely attract people to loiter more on Nicollet Mall which will create more crimes like purse snatching and robbery because buses deter a lot of these crimes from happening. Unless of course, part of the plan is to have quite a lot of police officers on Nicollet Mall. I guess just have to wait and see what happens. But, taking buses off Nicollet Mall and moving them 2 blocks or more away, not good for me. On paper this sounds like a great idea (wishful thinking) but in reality I doubt it will work out for the good.”
  - “If you take the buses off Nicollet Mall, you're going to be losing the main reason there are people on the mall in the first place right now. No amount of once a week programming is going to compensate for that, especially in the winter. What can be done to the commercial spaces on Nicollet that are mostly way too big for small business to ever be able to afford? Big box stores are not going to save us anymore.”
  - “Taking busses off Nicollet makes no sense unless there is a detailed plan of how a pedestrian mall would actually be utilized. There's no retail presence, so this just feels like the city is removing busses because corporate businesses do not like the current vibes on the street.”

**Theme #5:** Concern that this will not speed up transit or skepticism about the benefits to transit riders.

- **Analysis:** A notable number of comments addressed the concern that the additional walk time to their destination would mean that time savings of a faster, more reliable bus would not be realized in their overall trip time. Additionally, commenters highlighted concern that operation of transit alongside general traffic could lead to delay that would diminish the time savings. Other people felt the potential time savings did not offset the inconvenience or challenges presented by the new transit corridors.
  - “I have worked downtown off and on for 25 years. I am very skeptical about the plan. It gets rid of a critical, convenient, and very well used blue line/ bus transfer point, which may reduce transit system effectiveness and wayfinding more than increasing bus speeds would improve it. Nicollet Mall serves as a natural spot to go to if you need to get somewhere. You know that if you need to get somewhere, you can probably find a bus going to the right spot if you head to Nicollet Mall. Moving bus traffic off the mall to two or three different streets makes the transit system much more complicated/less intuitive/harder to navigate... The whole plan seems ill-conceived, bad for Nicollet Mall, bad for transit, bad for the city and downtown, but I would be very pleased to be proven wrong.”
  - “My main concern in terms of transit is the current situation provides me w fast transit between multiple destinations. I fear the new changes will slow my transit, increase my walking distance and result in less safe environments, esp in the evening, for waiting for buses.”
  - “As a decades long bus rider who depends on MT for travel, shorter bus rides and more consistent bus rides are not necessarily the priority. (The latter would be nice but I'll believe it when I see it). The most important priorities, for me, are keeping transfers near major roads to connect easier and having opportunities between transfers (stores, cafes, bathrooms, etc.), and having options. I rely on Hennepin Ave for most of my transfers and for the things I specifically come to downtown to do, so moving my "options" (e.g. me taking the 17 rather than waiting for the next 6 or 4) further apart makes it more difficult to use the buses together. Half the year is winter, we should be prioritizing buses. Pushing buses from the heart of downtown (Hennepin and Nicollet) makes them more difficult to use.”

**Theme #6:** Support for moving buses.

- **Analysis:** This general comment theme captured general positive comments about planning for moving transit to a new corridor in order to produce a pedestrian-only downtown space on Nicollet Mall. A portion of these comments also expressed interest in moving forward quickly and a perception that this process has been long in the making.
  - “Removing buses from Nicollet Mall would be fantastic. We very much need a quality pedestrian space downtown.”
  - “Great idea! Implement ASAP!”
  - “I completed a similar survey about a year ago. Let’s get moving and make a decision instead of endless surveys. This should already be in process. I am so tired of slow-moving buses on Nicollet. What person had the brilliant idea to have buses move one mile per hour? And have to stop at every block for a red light. That person has never rode a bus in their life. I can walk faster than these buses.”

**Theme #7:** Overall frustration with buses moving off Nicollet Mall.

- **Analysis:** This general comment theme represented comments with an elevated level of concern about the move of buses off Nicollet Mall. Theme #1, “I like it the way it is; don’t move buses off Nicollet Mall,” is the broader theme to capture people who voiced that their preference and desired outcome was buses stay on the Mall. Theme #7 emerged to capture comments that expressed deeper concern about the impacts the project would have or frustration with the process/perceived inability to affect the outcome of moving buses of the Mall. There are many comments where both tags were used, but not a complete overlap in the two themes.

- “This is a transparent attempt to remove bus riders - over 95% of whom are pedestrians - from the core of downtown. The "vibrancy" the city cares about does not include the real people for whom transit service is how they get around. The "vibrancy" the city leadership seems to want is from occasional visitors rather than everyday residents. It is a false and ugly way to build a theme park of a city, and sweep problematic issues like drugs and homelessness out of view and out of mind rather than solving them... This is such a deep violation of the spirit of the modal hierarchy of the TAP that Minneapolis once proudly produced. But at least some Target executives will get to play bags in front of their office building before driving back to Minnetonka.”
- “It’s a bad idea and you shouldn’t do it. It’s hard enough to get around as is this is just going to make it worse. I know you guys don’t like feedback on an idea you’re already sold on but this is a supremely terrible idea that you should not go through with.”
- “This is a terrible idea that disregards the swath of the public that live downtown on Nicollet Mall and do not own a car, such as myself. As long as cars continue to use 6th-10th street as personal speedways and continue to cut into dedicated bus lanes throughout the downtown area, transit will continue to be burdened and pedestrians continue to be at risk. I do not see how removing buses from Nicollet makes the area any safer when cars continue to absolutely disregard signage, markers, and other safety features meant to make downtown a more livable and "commutable" space. This survey also was not presented in good faith to people that rely on transit services for their daily needs outside of a work commute or entertainment i.e. running errands, doing groceries, etc.”

**Theme #8:** Concern about conflicts between bicycles and pedestrians on Nicollet Mall; desire for protection between bicycles and pedestrians.

- **Analysis:** This theme expressed a desire for conscious planning for how bicycles and pedestrians would interact on a pedestrianized Nicollet Mall. Some commenters felt that conflicts between the two modes could be improved by discouraging high speed, through route bicycling in the design of Nicollet Mall improvements, or by creating a designated protected bicycle area within the Mall to minimize combined walking and biking space.
  - “I’m an avid bike rider and love all the biking infrastructure the city has added. However, I believe the redesigned mall should look more European in that it caters to pedestrians and wheelchair users first. There should be enough features and meandering paths that riders feel more comfortable dismounting and walking their bikes or scooters. I would worry that a bike lane would encourage folks to speed through it too quickly.”
  - “I think Nicollet Mall has more value as a curbside street to prioritize pedestrian traffic than adding bike lanes. The improvements to downtown biking have provided other routes through downtown, meanwhile the cedar lake trail and Hiawatha trails provide quick options for passing through downtown. I say this as someone who regularly bikes for fitness and commuting, that any Nicollet Mall redesign should encourage a critical mass of pedestrian speed traffic to create an environment where people want to stay, shop, and linger rather than simply pass through.”
  - “Bike and pedestrian safety is paramount. A sheltered bike lane to maintain safety for all (minimize meandering down the middle of the road) would be helpful to have safe infrastructure. Also, ensuring that folks with mobility aids have easy curb transitions and navigation through/around landscaping and other livability designs is key.”

**Theme #9:** Interest in pedestrianization so that Nicollet Mall is a real gathering destination - including stalls for vendors, bollards at cross streets, lots of public seating.

- **Analysis:** People shared specific suggestions for creating a dynamic gathering space on a pedestrianized Nicollet Mall, with notable interest in features that foster small street retail opportunities, bollards to limit private vehicle access to pedestrian spaces and public seating for social enjoyment.
  - “I’m very excited to see Nicollet Mall made into a pedestrian and bike only corridor! Nicollet Mall in its current state is very sterile and uninviting. The buses unfortunately add to that

unwelcoming feeling. Marq2 is a much better place for bus traffic, especially if there are clearly marked bus lanes on each street. I think it's very important to prioritize the pedestrian experience, with added greenery and ample public seating. Public restrooms are also a necessity. Safety, and the perception of it, are crucial to ensuring that people come to Nicollet Mall for leisure. The dedicated security team that patrols Nicollet is a good start, but it needs to be built upon. Overall, I firmly believe a full pedestrianization of Nicollet Mall will be the best decision the city could make for this street and the neighborhood. Please go forward with this proposal."

- "This is the most important thing Minneapolis can do to revitalize downtown. Nicollet is the only street that connects multiple prominent state landmarks and centers of business. No other street is acceptable for such a use. Do not let loud populist bullies continue to defend urban decline. Pedestrian malls in progressive cities like Copenhagen are game changers for urban life and downtown needs this. Have tons of outdoor dining. Require street facing retail. Bring back the Holidazzle parade."
- "It's a great plan. Look into some of the larger pedestrianized streets in Germany that have permanent stalls for vendors in the middle. Also, very important to create lots of seating on the mall."

**Theme #10:** Perception that this project seems to prioritize commuters/business interests over residents and transit riders; perceived desire to move low-income people and people of color off Nicollet Mall.

- **Analysis:** This general theme was concerned with the project goals not reflecting the commenters' perception that the project seeks to remove people who use transit on Nicollet Mall, based on the interests of downtown businesses and/or commuters. However, the City remains committed to furthering transportation equity and increasing the quality of transit downtown as part of this project.
  - "I think this is a really bad idea. It feels like the city cares more about corporations and the downtown council than they do about people who depend on Target for necessities. I think Nicollet will be ridiculously quiet and thus less safe after getting rid of the buses. This feels like bias against bus people when in reality, the troublemakers are not those actually waiting for the bus. Quit trying to make this a tourist town and focus on serving the people who live here and take the bus. The city clearly doesn't care about me."
  - "I don't think the removal of buses will necessarily have any positive effect on Nicollet Mall and it seems specifically detrimental to people using transit to move around the area and access things like Target, Walgreens, the library, etc. This feels much more like designing transit around the needs of commuters or people looking to move through downtown quickly which, of course, has been the strategy since the 60s as far as I can tell. This will need some much more innovative thinking to "revitalize" the corridor in the way we would all like to see."
  - "As well, and really the crux of the matter, is that the basic issue, that white people don't want to be around poor people, people of color, disabled people, or panhandling, will not be solved by moving buses to other streets. These people will both remain on Nicollet for their existing social and practical needs, and also be present at the new stops for their own transit needs. The solutions to that are solving issues of income inequality, racism, substance abuse, all kinds of discrimination, and removing the economic impetus for fare evasion and petty theft thereby."



## 2.4 Full Theme List

Rank	Top Comment Themes	Total
1	I like the way it is; don't move buses off Nicollet Mall.	176
2	Concern that the distance to the new corridor in bad weather conditions, at night, and with bags may create challenges for accessibility, especially for people with disabilities and older people.	148
3	Concern about safety with fewer people on the new bus corridor; these corridors would need a lot of pedestrian improvements to activate them to the level of Nicollet Mall.	124
4	Concern that pedestrianization efforts on Nicollet will be ineffective given the decline in activity from moving buses, concern for business impact of moving buses, and/or that there isn't enough planned for what happens on Nicollet Mall after busses move.	107
5	Concern that this will not speed up transit or skepticism about the benefits to transit riders.	88
6	Support for moving buses.	82
7	Overall frustration with buses moving off Nicollet Mall.	73
8	Concern about conflicts between bicycles and pedestrians on Nicollet Mall; desire for protection between bicycles and pedestrians.	61
9	Interest in pedestrianization so that Nicollet Mall is a real gathering destination - including stalls for vendors, bollards at cross streets, lots of public seating.	57
10	Perception that this project seems to prioritize commuters/business interests over residents and transit riders; perceived desire to move low-income people and people of color off Nicollet Mall.	56
11	Interest in more businesses and restaurant options to revitalize Nicollet Mall.	53
12	Interest in more things to do on Nicollet Mall.	49
13	Interest in transit speed improvements - transit signal priority, off-board fare payment and removal of bus speed restrictions.	38
14	Interest in increasing downtown vibrancy by keeping transit on Nicollet Mall and implementing other improvements.	38
15	Interest in more public restrooms downtown.	29
16	Concern about existing 'unsavory' behavior around bus stops.	28
17	Concern about transfers to C line, D line, Hennepin and light rail being less convenient.	28
18	Interest in making more of downtown car-free; pedestrianize another street downtown.	28
19	Concern about moving busses to Hennepin Ave.	25
20	Desire for more housing downtown	25
21	Interest in more trees and greening on Nicollet Mall.	24
22	If it's harder to use transit, I just won't go downtown anymore/won't use transit anymore.	23
23	Concern about high-speed cross streets impeding pedestrian safety and/or transit effectiveness; desire for pedestrian protection.	20
24	Concern about traffic impacts of the plan; parking concerns.	19
25	Interest in 24/7 bus lanes on Hennepin.	19
26	Concern about new improvements being taken away due to use by homeless people using them; need to address core issue of housing insecurity.	17
27	Interest in alternative transportation on Nicollet - carriages, street cars, tram.	11
28	Interest in more bike racks and cycling amenities on Nicollet.	11
29	Concern about cost of project and disruption of construction given the recent reconstruction.	11
30	Interest in consolidating all the buses to Hennepin.	10
31	Interest in enforcement of bus lanes and impact of general traffic slowing bus speed.	10
32	Concern about impact to express bus riders, their transit time.	7
33	Concern about 3rd Ave as a transit corridor but support for separated bicycle infrastructure on 3rd and on Nicollet.	5
34	Interest in better air quality on Nicollet, including more trees and ability to eat outdoors.	5
35	Concern about inconvenience/confusion for visitors.	5

36	Concern about moving 11 to Hennepin; interest in keeping on Marquette/3 <sup>rd</sup> .	5
37	Consider a subway for transit corridor.	5
38	Survey feedback	4
39	Interest in clean and well-staffed bus stations for more welcoming transit experience.	4
40	Keep the separation between local and express bus routes.	3

### 3 Results – Hennepin Ave Improvement Comment Themes

#### 3.1 Thematic Tagging


This list of themes is ranked in order of most common, with the highest number of comments tagged, down to less common, with fewer comments tagged. A total of 896 online survey comments and several dozen open house notes were tagged by theme and the score directly relates to how many comments included each theme. Due to themes being added throughout the comment processing and the cap of 2 themes per comment, these can't be understood as exact counts of how many times each theme comes up in comments, but they demonstrate a relative frequency compared to the other themes in the data set. Here are the top 10 most common themes from the engagement comments:

Rank	Themes on Hennepin Improvements	Score
1	I like the way it is; don't move busses off Nicollet Mall.	203
2	Interest in 24/7 bus lanes on Hennepin; bus lane protection.	191
3	Interest in more police officers on foot, more ambassadors, safety generally.	97
4	Interest in places to sit.	75
5	Interest in enhanced bus shelters; maintaining bus shelters.	75
6	Invest in the level of infrastructure that Nicollet Mall had, like lighting, heaters, digital signage, public art, greenery.	50
7	Reduce conflict with bike lanes (bus/bike, ped/bike issues).	42
8	Interest in bus signal queue jumps or transit signal priority.	37
9	Improve pedestrian safety especially at crossings, slower traffic, fewer lanes to cross	35
10	Interest in signal timing changes; traffic improvement.	32

##### 3.1.1 Discussion of Top 10 Themes

For each of the top 10 themes, this section shares some analysis and quotes to illustrate the theme in more depth.

**Theme #1:** I like the way it is; don't move busses off Nicollet Mall.

- **Analysis:** This general theme aligns with Theme #1 in the general open response question, see discussion above. It generally raises concern that moving more buses to Hennepin may diminish service quality.
  - “Hennepin Ave is already very busy with busses. Please leave busses 11 and 25 on Nicollet Ave! The people taking the buses don't want them moved. Downtown is already kind of dead, if you take buses off of Nicollet the businesses there will fail not flourish.
  - “It will make traffic worse on Hennepin and make it way more inconvenient for me to get to my office.”
  - “Hennepin (and the other streets proposed in this survey) is already congested enough and confusing to suburbanites who find driving and parking downtown intimidating. Having more buses  in addition to the existing bike, car, and pedestrian traffic doesn't improve anything about transit or travel.”

**Theme #2:** Interest in 24/7 bus lanes on Hennepin; bus lane protection.

- **Analysis:** There was significant interest in new bus priority treatments, specifically bus-only lanes on Hennepin Ave. Many comments expressed desire for these bus lanes to be full-time and/or to have enforcement resources associated with them to ensure effectiveness.
  - “Bus Only Lanes on Hennepin Ave for the E Line and Routes 11 and 25. I fear there will be slow downs for transit users.”
  - “24/7 bus lanes that are enforced”
  - “Bus lanes!! Buses get caught in traffic every day and it sucks to stand at your stop watching your bus inch along block by block, getting caught at every light while waiting behind a bunch of cars with only one person in them each. If transit has to move off Nicollet Mall, there should be improvements on other roads to actually make it faster & more reliable so that there is some benefit to the change.”

**Theme #3:** Interest in more police officers on foot, more ambassadors, safety generally.

- **Analysis:** This theme captures a broad range of ideas to address the perceived and real safety on Hennepin Ave. Foot patrol and ambassador presence were common ideas for how to accomplish improved safety, as well as other physical improvements like lighting.
  - “Better lighting and more safety precautions in place.”
  - “Larger public safety measures taken. Hennepin has the reputation of being very sketchy especially on the weekend evenings. Moving more transit to this street is fine but I would expect that there would be more DID officers or public safety presence (preferably not MPD) to account for the influx of people.”
  - “Wherever buses on rerouted, provide more police officers on foot. I walk Nicollet mall several times a week and constantly see scooters and bikes on the sidewalks instead of the street or to the nearby bike paths on Hennepin or 3rd Ave So. I have talk to the Ambassadors and they explain they don't have the authority to redirect them.”

**Theme #4:** Interest in places to sit.

- **Analysis:** A common theme was desire for more public seating for people using transit and for pedestrian comfort downtown.
  - “Benches and seating all along Hennepin to improve walkability, especially for elderly and disabled who need frequent seating options.
  - “More public seating and restrooms”
  - “24-hour bus lanes, more places for people to sit on Hennepin”

**Theme #5:** Interest in enhanced bus shelters; maintaining bus shelters.

- **Analysis:** This theme expressed desire for improved bus shelters with lighting and heat where not already present. It also highlighted a potential need for larger shelters with the addition of more routes. Maintenance of existing station infrastructure was also a common element of this theme.
  - “Improved bus shelters with better heat in the winter. Better coordination with timing for light rail.
  - “As a rider of the 25, I love the idea of it moving to Hennepin Avenue. I'd like to see well maintained shelters for waiting for buses and fully functional NextTrip displays downtown. Thank you!”
  - “Hennepin has already been improved last design to at least an acceptable functionality. Dedicated bus lanes will be required to make bus service move smoothly. larger heated bus shelters will be needed at all stops if more services are contemplated e.g. at Henn/Laurel, Henn/16th, Henn/1st.”

**Theme #6:** Invest in the level of infrastructure that Nicollet Mall had, like lighting, heaters, digital signage, public art, greenery.

- **Analysis:** These comments highlighted a desire for Hennepin Ave to receive some of the positive features associated with riding transit on Nicollet Mall, including public realm enhancements.
  - “Any route changes need to come with the same level or more investment in the infrastructure (shelters with heaters and digital signage, safety measures, public art, greenery) as what is currently there on Nicollet Mall.”
  - “I don't mind offloading more transit onto Hennepin, and I think with the proper infrastructure adjustments that could be a great public transit corridor”
  - “Increased infrastructure on Hennepin to provide a more transit friendly experience. Much more seating and more vibrancy like flowers and plants.”
  - “Move the DID agents over to Hennepin, move all public art at bus stops on Nicollet Mall over to Hennepin, build better bus shelters on Hennepin, along with better lighting.”

**Theme #7:** Reduce conflict with bike lanes (bus/bike, ped/bike issues).

- **Analysis:** This theme covers concerns about increased conflict with people riding bicycles on sidewalk level dedicated bike facilities. This includes concern for people riding bicycles being forced to use traffic lanes or future bus lanes to avoid pedestrians in the bike lane, leading to conflict with buses.
  - “More clearly defined visual separation between the pedestrian and cyclist zones; more room for pedestrians; lead lights for cyclists and pedestrians; signal priority for transit.
  - “Ongoing improvement of separation between bikes and peds/transit users. (Please keep the separated/off-street bike facility though!)”
  - “Better separation between the bikeway and the sidewalk. If more people are using the bus, there will be more conflicts between people walking and people biking. More greening. Better signal timing for people walking along Hennepin.

**Theme #8:** Interest in bus signal queue jumps or transit signal priority.

- **Analysis:** These comments covered a range of potential transit priority treatments including queue jumps and transit signal priority. This would support ongoing reliability of routes on Hennepin.
  - “Bus signal/queue jumps, improved light timing to get buses through the corridor faster.
  - “Make sure that buses aren't stuck behind right-turning vehicles waiting for pedestrians to cross.”
  - “More signal priority or stripping changes to help busses get through quicker. Possibly 4 to 3 conversion”

**Theme #9:** Improve pedestrian safety especially at crossings, slower traffic, fewer lanes to cross.

- **Analysis:** Comments addressed a desire for greater pedestrian comfort on Hennepin Ave, given the transit only experience on Nicollet Mall that riders are used to. Design solutions such as raised crossings and reduction of crossing distance are discussed to control for pedestrian-vehicle conflict, especially during high-risk turn maneuvers.
  - “Continuing improvements that increase pedestrian visibility and safety such as curb bump-outs and bus stop islands.
  - “Traffic calming, easier to cross intersections.”
  - “I would like to see more bump outs and maybe even raised crosswalks so that more cars are discouraged from speeding and right-on-red turns”

**Theme #10:** Interest in signal timing changes; traffic improvements.

- **Analysis:** This theme captures an interest in additional signal coordination for bus movement and general traffic flow downtown.
  - “Less car traffic. Longer green traffic lights on Hennepin, longer red lights on the east/west streets.
  - “Shorten the left-turn periods of the traffic signals' sequence. They are too long, making both non-turning traffic and pedestrians wait to merely move forward.”
  - “Limit bus stops and sync up green lights for traffic.”

## 3.2 Full theme list

Rank	Themes on Hennepin Improvements	Counts
1	Don't move the bus off Nicollet	203
2	24/7 bus lanes on Hennepin; bus lane protection	191
3	More police officers on foot, more ambassadors, safety generally	97
4	Places to sit	75
5	Enhanced bus shelters; maintaining bus shelters	75
6	Invest in the level of infrastructure that Nicollet Mall had, like lighting, heaters, digital signage, public art, greenery	50
7	Reduce conflict with bike lanes (bus/bike, ped/bike issues)	42
8	Bus signal queue jumps or transit signal priority	37
9	Improve pedestrian safety especially at crossings, slower traffic, fewer lanes	35
10	Signal timing changes; traffic improvements	32
11	Less car traffic	27
12	Connection to Nicollet Mall destinations and new bus corridor for people who can't make the distance.	26
13	More frequency for the 25; frequency generally; transit network density	25
14	Don't move buses to Hennepin, keep them all together	24
15	Remove people who make me feel unsafe (loitering)	20
16	More street level businesses, especially more open at night to feel safer	17
17	More parking/more driving lanes	12
18	Better light rail connections; transfers	9
19	Pick up drop off area to solve for bar close; rideshare; scooter parking	9
20	No more construction on Hennepin	8
21	I'll stop using these busses if they move to Hennepin	8
22	Move all buses to Hennepin	8
23	Skyways stay open later; access	8
24	Restrooms	6
25	Build a subway system or light rail	6
26	More turn lanes	5
27	More bus stops	4
28	Move the 17 to Hennepin	3
29	Pedestrian only Nicollet Mall (no bikes, no buses)	2
30	Redevelop the parking lots	2
31	Make the 11 fare free	1