

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: November 23, 2015

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of December 9, 2015

Subject: METRO Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Light Rail Transit) Revised Scope and Cost Estimate; Municipal Consent Plans and Public Hearing

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes: 473.3994

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Division/Department: Metro Transit/Blue Line Extension Project Office

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

- Approve the revised project scope and cost estimate of \$1.496 billion as recommended by the Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee at their November 12, 2015 meeting;
- Direct staff to prepare Blue Line Extension Municipal Consent Plans consistent with the project revised scope, and submit to Hennepin County and the cities of Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Robbinsdale, Golden Valley and Minneapolis; and
- Authorize scheduling and conducting a joint public hearing with the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Council on the revised plans on January 19, 2016 at Hennepin County's Minneapolis Central Library.

Background

In March 2014, the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) published the Bottineau Light Rail Transit (Blue Line Extension) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and held three public hearings.

In August 2014, the FTA granted approval for the Blue Line Extension to start Project Development.

In October 2014, the Metropolitan Council hired the Engineering Services Consultant and Environmental Consultant to support Project Development activities and to complete the environmental process.

In November 2014, the Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee held its first meeting.

In January 2015, the Metropolitan Council opened the Blue Line Extension Project Office (BPO) and identified 16 technical issues.

Throughout 2015, the BPO staff sought input on the technical issues via Issue Resolution Team meetings, Technical Project Advisory Committee, 13 Corridor Management Committee and Community and Business Advisory Committees. Public input on

the project was sought by holding 14 public open houses, which were attended by over 1,600 people, receiving over 530 comments.

In September and October 2015, the BPO presented potential changes to the project scope to seek feedback.

On November 12, 2015, the Corridor Management Committee recommended revised project scope and cost estimate as reflected in Attachment A.

Rationale

Approval of the Project scope is necessary to advance the project and to obtain municipal consent.

Funding

The cost of the recommended project scope is estimated at \$1.496 billion in year of expenditure dollars.

Known Support / Opposition

The Blue Line Extension Community Advisory Committee and Business Advisory Committee support the revised project scope.

The Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee, which includes representatives from funding partners, Hennepin County and the five host cities along the line, recommended the revised scope.

METRO Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Light Rail Transit) Project Scope

The revised METRO Blue Line Extension project scope includes:

- 13.5 miles of ballasted double track from Target Field Station in downtown Minneapolis to northwestern Brooklyn Park
- 11 new center platform stations
- 28 new Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs)
- Rail signal and communication system
- Traction Power Substations
- 10 at-grade freight/LRT crossings of roadways
- Reconstruction of eight miles of ballasted single freight track and freight corridor protection treatments

Target Field Connection

Construction of a bridge connection on the south side of 6th Avenue North from the existing Target Field Station to the center of Olson Memorial Highway (OMH) and 7th Street intersection. Planned roadway improvements include reconstruction of the signalized intersection of 7th Street and OMH.

Olson Memorial Highway (Trunk Highway 55)

Modification of the existing I-94 Interchange Bridge to accommodate light rail tracks between the westbound and eastbound vehicle traffic lanes.

Reconstruction of Olson Memorial Highway as a 6-lane principal arterial highway from I-94 to the BNSF freight rail corridor with light rail tracks between the westbound and eastbound lanes.

Reconstruction of Olson Memorial Highway would also include 10' boulevards, 6' sidewalks, 7 signalized intersections and 3 mid-block crossings. The design also leaves space for a future cycle track on the north side of TH 55.

Center platform stations at Van White Boulevard and Penn Avenue.

Olson Memorial Highway Crossing

Reconstruction of the westbound TH 55 Bridge to accommodate light rail tracks running at-grade between the westbound and eastbound bridges. Tracks turn northwest and go under the reconstructed westbound bridge and connect to the BNSF freight rail corridor.

Plymouth Avenue Station

Center platform stations at Plymouth Avenue, including vertical circulation (elevator and stair tower).

Golden Valley Road Station

Center platform station at Golden Valley Road, including vertical circulation (elevator and stair tower), park-and-ride, Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway intersection reconstruction and trail connections.

Golden Valley Alignment

Construct new LRT bridges over both Grimes and Golden Valley ponds, and maintain freight rail on existing embankment across the ponds.

Reconstruct Theodore Wirth Parkway, Plymouth Avenue and Golden Valley Road roadway bridges over rail corridor to accommodate both freight and light rail tracks.

Robbinsdale Station

Center platform station south of 42nd Avenue and a 550 stall Park & Ride structure in downtown Robbinsdale. The Park & Ride structure would include a bus transit center and accommodate future transit oriented development (TOD).

Reconstruct 36th Avenue bridge over rail corridor to accommodate both freight and light rail tracks and construct new LRT bridge over Trunk Highway 100.

Bass Lake Road Station

West Broadway rail crossing would be constructed to be quiet-zone ready and include a roundabout on the east side and full access to 48th Avenue / Welcome Avenue.

Center platform station south of Bass Lake Road with an adjacent 170 space surface Park & Ride.

63rd Avenue Station/Park & Ride

Center platform station north of 63rd Avenue. Pedestrian bridge over freight rail to station platform with vertical circulation from the existing 565 space Park & Ride structure.

Brooklyn Boulevard Station

New LRT bridge over County Road 81 north of 73rd Avenue N.

Center platform station south of Brooklyn Boulevard with pedestrian access points at both north and south ends of the platform.

Reconstruction of West Broadway from 73rd Avenue to Candlewood Drive to accommodate LRT.

West Broadway Reconstruction

Continue coordination with Hennepin County West Broadway (CSAH 103) reconstruction project, which includes roadway reconstruction from Candlewood Drive to 93rd Avenue.

Construction of light rail tracks between northbound and southbound lanes.

Center platform station south of 85th Avenue with pedestrian access points at both north and south ends of the platform.

93rd Avenue/Oak Grove Parkway Stations

Center platform station south of 93rd Avenue with pedestrian access points at both north and south ends of the platform.

Center platform station on west side of West Broadway at Oak Grove Parkway, with an adjacent 850 space Park & Ride structure.

Construction of roadway network north of TH 610 to accommodate light rail, access to the park and ride and the operations and maintenance facility.

Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) Location

Construction of an Operations and Maintenance facility, storage bays, loop track, employee parking lot and stormwater retention pond on a 10.8 acre site at 101st Avenue N and Xylon Avenue.

Transmission Lines

Shift Xcel transmission lines to the west side of the BNSF corridor.