



## **OMETRO Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee (CMC) Meeting Minutes**

<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	February 13, 2025      1:30 – 3:00 PM
<b>Location</b>	F.T. Heywood Chambers, 560 N 6th Ave, Minneapolis
<b>Members</b>	Charlie Zelle, Irene Fernando, Richnetta Parker, Dan Doerrer, Mike Opatz, Leslie Kandaras, Charles Rucker, Julie Deshler, Therese Kiser, Jonathan Hansen, Suzanne Sobotka, Yassin Osman, Aaron Wagner, Reva Chamblis, Amanda Xiong, Candi Bakion
<b>Project Staff</b>	Shahin Khazrajafari, Nick Landwer, Kelcie Young, Ryan Kronzer, Jer Yang

### **1. Call to Order and Welcome**

Charlie Zelle, Chair of the Metropolitan Council (MetC) called the METRO Blue Line Extension (BLE) Corridor Management Committee (CMC) meeting to order at 1:34 pm. Chair Zelle extended a warm welcome to the CMC members and members of the public.

Chair Zelle announced the appointed new CMC members and introduced them to the group. Council Member Aaron Wagner will serve as the appointed CMC representative for Robbinsdale, with Mayor Brad Sutton as the alternate. In Crystal, Mayor Julie Deshler will represent the CMC, with Council Member Therese Kizer as the alternate. Brooklyn Park Mayor Hollies Winston will continue as the CMC representative, with Council Member Amanda Xiong serving as the alternate. For the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), Commissioner Charles Rucker has been appointed as the new CMC representative, with Commissioner Becka Thompson as the alternate. Additionally, Jonathan Hansen will serve as the Community Advisory Committee Co-Chair.

Chair Zelle also noted that today's CMC meeting materials are available on the Blue Line Extension website at [www.bluelineext.org](http://www.bluelineext.org). Members of the public may submit comments regarding the meeting to Nkongo Cigolo at Met Council by Friday, February 21, 2025.

Chair Zelle shared that the BLE Project continues to advance as a project for those who have concerns with the news circulating on what is happening on the federal level at the moment. Irene Fernando, Hennepin County Commissioner, added her commitment to the BLE project.

Chair Zelle announced that the BLE Project has selected a Project Director who will be joining the team in the coming months.



## **2. Approval of December 19, 2024 BLE CMC Meeting Minutes**

Chair Zelle called for a motion to approve of the December 19, 2024 CMC Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Fernando moved to approve the minutes and was seconded by Yassin Osman, Metropolitan Council Member. The minutes were officially approved.

## **3. Community and Business Advisory Committee Reports**

Dan Doerrer, Co-Chair of the Business Advisory Committee (BAC), provided a report on the February 4, 2025, BAC meeting, noting that members expressed curiosity about the design and interest in fostering dialogue between communities, businesses, and policymakers.

Jonathan Hansen, Co-Chair of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), shared an update from the February 5, 2025, CAC meeting, reporting that members received updates from the City of Minneapolis on station area planning.

## **4. Anti-Displacement Community Prosperity Board Update**

Ricardo Perez, representing the Anti-Displacement Community Prosperity Board, reported progress on anti-displacement implementation since the December CMC meeting. He highlighted that funding priorities have been established, with a focus on how resources should be allocated. Land acquisition has emerged as a top priority, as securing land now is expected to generate long-term, multiplying investments in the future.

Mr. Perez emphasized that the Anti-Displacement Board aims to be community-led and extended an invitation for policymakers and municipal representatives to attend one of its meetings. Metropolitan Council Member Reva Chamblis expressed appreciation for the investment in these efforts.

## **5. Environmental Update**

Kelcie Young, Metropolitan Council, provided an environmental update, reporting that the BLE Project is continuing to develop the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS), with publication anticipated next summer. She noted that the project team is working closely with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to navigate changes related to executive orders affecting the SFEIS.

Additionally, Ms. Young stated that progress continues on the Section 4(f) evaluation.

## **6. Design Update**

### **• Design Production - 60% Design**

Nick Landwer, Metropolitan Council, provided an update on the alignment design process. He reported that the project is progressing from 30% municipal consent plans to 60% design plans, which will be packaged by city along with the



Lowry Avenue Station package. These packages will be distributed to corridor cities for review and feedback.

Mr. Landwer outlined the contents of the design plan packets, explaining that they consist of plan sheets, each representing a specific area. He emphasized that these plans will help advance the project toward the 90% design phase.

Mr. Landwer also reviewed the release timeline for the 60% design plan packages, noting that Brooklyn Park's package is expected in May 2025, followed by Crystal in June, Robbinsdale and the Lowry Avenue Station in July, and Minneapolis in late July to August 2025.

Mr. Landwer explained the review process, noting that city partners will have 45 days from the release date to review and submit comments. Throughout this process, the BLE project team will continue to collaborate with each city's Design Resolution Team.

Council Member Chamblis acknowledged that Brooklyn Park had reached the 90% design phase several years ago and requested that the BLE project provide a summary of the community feedback from that time, along with input from other corridor areas.

Council Member Aaron Wagner, Robbinsdale inquired about who would be responsible for reviewing the design plans among the project's review partners. In response, Mr. Landwer explained that each city's engineering, public works, and planning teams are expected to conduct the review upon receiving the plans. Commissioner Fernando further clarified that this review process is in addition to the ongoing collaboration with the Design Resolutions Team, which meets regularly with the BLE project team.

Candi Baikon, Blue Line Coalition asked whether community members would have an opportunity to provide input on the design after its release to municipalities. Mr. Landwer responded that the BLE Outreach team has been, and will continue to be, actively engaging with the community, sharing design plans and gathering feedback.

Charles Rucker, MPRB Commissioner asked how many park-and-ride facilities are included in the alignment. Mr. Landwer responded that two new park-and-ride facilities will be built, in addition to the existing one at 63rd Avenue.

- **Lowry Station**

Ms. Young reported that the BLE project team continues to work closely with municipalities on the design process for the Lowry Avenue Station. She noted that during the municipal consent process and the Supplemental Draft



Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) phase, the BLE project received concerns about the design concept outlined in the Municipal Consent plan. In response to these comments and concerns, the BLE Engineering team established a workgroup that includes MPRB, Robbinsdale, North Memorial, and Minneapolis to review the station. This collaboration led to the development of nine different design options for the Lowry Avenue Station.

Ms. Young shared that the BLE project held two open house events, one in December 2024 and a second in January 2025 to present the nine design options to the community, along with an online survey to gather feedback. Following these engagement activities, there was notable interest in Option A (the original Municipal Consent Option) and Option H. However, opinions on Option H were mixed, with concerns raised regarding the lack of direct connection to Victory Memorial Parkway, as well as issues related to vibration and noise, parkland preservation, safety and security around the station, and potential traffic impacts on County Road 81.

Ryan Kronzer, Metropolitan Council, explained that the workgroup revisited the goals for establishing the Lowry Avenue Station design. These goals include providing efficient transit service to patrons, improving access to the hospital, increasing transit options for adjacent neighborhoods, and creating a station that integrates into the surrounding park environment. In addition, Mr. Kronzer reviewed the Evaluation Matrix, which was developed from the SDEIS, covering factors such as station accessibility, park and trail integration, and other key considerations.

Mr. Kronzer further outlined the design options, comparing the Municipal Consent Option and Option H, highlighting their respective benefits and impacts. Mr. Kronzer noted that Option H would result in an additional year of construction and an increase in cost by about \$50 million based on early designs.

Commissioner Fernando sought clarification on the lack of access to the parkway. Mr. Kronzer explained that it refers to no vehicle access to the parkway. Commissioner Fernando suggested adding a footnote indicating the nearest route for accessing the parkway.

Council Member Wagner asked for a brief explanation as to why Option H would add an extra year of construction. Mr. Kronzer explained that the additional year is needed to modify the bridge. Specifically, Option H would require the construction of two new bridges.

Mike Opatz, Maple Grove mentioned that at some point, Maple Grove Transit plans to connect with the local fixed route of Micro Transit in Brooklyn Park and asked if this would affect the connection. Mr. Kronzer responded that there are



plans to rebuild Brooklyn Boulevard and assured him that the project team would look into the details of this issue.

Commissioner Rucker shared that the MPRB held a board meeting on February 5, 2025, and noted that Option H is the MPRB's preferred option. Suzanne Sobotka, Policy Aid of Mayor Fry added that the City of Minneapolis does not object to Option H. Ms. Sobotka stated that it would be useful for project staff to provide more in-depth report on timeline of ongoing public engagement and decision-making process for 60% design concepts and the SFEIS, as Minneapolis has concerns over vehicular traffic at Lowry Avenue and additional transit user connections.

Ms. Young shared that the BLE project plans to present this at the Project Decision Board meeting on February 19, 2025, to seek design direction on which station option should move forward, including additional public engagement. Additionally, the BLE project team continues discussions with MPRB regarding mitigation for the selected option.

Council Member Chamblis requested further clarification on the context of the Section 4(f) and Section 106 consultations. Ms. Young explained that the next steps for Section 4(f) will depend on which option advances.

## **7. Schedule Update**

Shahin Khazrajafari, Hennepin County provided an update on the BLE project schedule, highlighting that 2025 will be a busy year. Mr. Khazrajafari noted that the project team has restructured the 2025 CMC meetings to better align with the project's major milestones.

## **8. Next Meeting: April 10, 2025**

## **9. Adjourn**

Chair Zelle stated that the next CMC Meeting is scheduled for April 10, 2025, then concluded the meeting and adjourned it at 2:37 pm.

### Meeting Materials Provided:

Meeting Agenda, February 13, 2025

CMC Presentation

December 19, 2024 CMC Minutes

Respectfully submitted, Jer Yang, Blue Line Ext. Administrative Lead

# ACPP Grantmaking for Land Acquisition

Update for CMC

Thursday, Feb. 13, 2025



# ACPP Grantmaking for Land Acquisition

- Planning RFP for 3-30 grants of \$100k - \$1M
- Priority for existing residents and businesses to own property and to invest in + benefit from development

## How CMC partners can support the work:

- **Allocate land** the partners control and acquire in the BLE corridor to Anti-Displacement work
- Help develop **shared strategy** for public / private land inventory, tracking, and acquisition
- **Invest in community capacity and enforceable policy** (e.g. community benefits ordinance) to ensure equitable development across the corridor

## Public Land Ownership

