



## **METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**

METRO Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee  
Brooklyn Park Community Activity Center  
5600 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue North  
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443  
July 16, 2015

### **Committee Members Present:**

Adam Duininck, Lona Schreiber, Jim Adams, Peter Wagenius, Marika Pfefferkorn, Scott McBride, Mike Opat, Linda Higgins, Jeffrey Lunde, Adam Arvidson, George Selman, Shep Harris, Andy Snopes, Meg Forney

#### **1. Call to Order:**

Chair Adam Duininck called the July 16, 2015 meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

#### **2. Approval of June 11, 2015 Minutes**

Commissioner Linda Higgins made the motion to approve the June 11<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Andy Snopes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Peter Wagenius wanted to state regrets of Mayor Hodges being unable to attend today. She is meeting with the Minneapolis Police to discuss recent events.

#### **3. Outreach Update**

Sam O'Connell provided Open House updates. June 11<sup>th</sup> there was an open house in Robbinsdale; (40 attendees) June 17<sup>th</sup> there was an open house in Brooklyn Park; (60 attendees). On July 27<sup>th</sup> there will be an open house in Crystal as well as a number of upcoming open houses throughout August listed on the Public Open House flyer distributed today.

#### **4. Technical Issues #1 & #2: Target Field Station Connection to I-94**

Nick Landwer reviewed the slides of SWLRT to connect to BLRT at Target Field. Key issues: The tail track for existing rail extension was reviewed in slide #12. The unique geometry of the intersection is challenging for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Review of slide #13-SW line will connect LRT to BRT lines. The track drops down off Target Field to at-intersection grade level. Two rail lines cannot be at the same grade level at the same location.

Mr. Landwer responded to questions of Mr. Snopes regarding height of

tracks and clarification of at-grade levels requested by Commissioner Higgins.

Commissioner Higgins asked how often train stops traffic at this intersection, voicing concern over her constituents and their ability to get to the downtown area in a timely manner. Mr. Landwer stated that the train will stop every 10 minutes and that heavy traffic and proposed improvements are compatible with train timing. Commissioner Higgins requested the possibility of a track (overhead) on 7<sup>th</sup> street.

Marika Pfefferkorn asked how long the train would allow a pedestrian to cross the street East /West. Mr. Landwer responded that 25 seconds would be allowable time to cross East/West and 40 seconds would be allowed for pedestrians crossing North/South (slide #17).

Commissioner Higgins voiced concerns over three lanes being reduced to two at this intersection and Nick clarified what was needed at this intersection.

Peter Wagenius asked about the status of the right turn lane at night (truck traffic to HERC building) Nick stated buses also use this lane. Mr. Wagenius agreed with Commissioner Higgins regarding an overhead track but agreed it is not feasible within the constraints as opposed to the earlier version. The recommendation is to bring this revised plan forward.

## **Technical Issue #2: I-94 Interchange**

Mr. Landwer stated that new intersection signal systems would be installed. Slides #20/21 were reviewed and clarified. Center running LRT on an existing bridge would need reinforcement; removal of a portion of bridge deck and existing beams would be replaced.

Scott McBride asked the age of the bridge, voicing concern over what the decision will be after MnDOT reviews existing bridge, and what it needs. Recommendation discussed (slide #24).

## **5. 85<sup>th</sup> Station Configuration**

Alicia Vap discussed the 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue Station Platform configuration. The DEIS plan has changed from a split platform to a center platform, as reviewed on slide #26. Platform configurations were discussed with the City of Brooklyn Park. Alicia stated that all existing bus stops on 85th will remain. Passenger drop-off options are being discussed.

Mayor Jeff Lunde stated that North Hennepin Community College plans to

add a skywalk across 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. Mayor Lunde also asked about pedestrians crossing from school NB on West Broadway. Alicia stated they are continuing to work through safety issues. A concern was brought forth by the Mayor regarding losing a right turn lane (slide #29) and the request was made for further consideration on the matter.

Marika Pfefferkorn asked if these routes/bus stops are being discussed at the CAC/BAC meetings, and Alicia Vap responded yes, along with the Bus Operations division reviewing plans and providing feedback. Sam O'Connell covered this information prior to Ms.Vap's presentation.

Ms. Pfefferkorn voiced her perception of not seeing pedestrians as a priority and requested documented feedback/input from community sessions. Ms.Vap reiterated that as detailed plans roll out, information will be shared with community, and the concerns received from the community are being shared with design team.

## **6. 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Station Configuration**

Alicia Vap reviewed issues –layout of track and station, pedestrian access, traffic concerns, and stated they are continuing to work on design plans. There have been requests for a Park and Ride at this location. Track will remain center running, with center platform. Currently exploring options about passenger drop-off with neighborhood businesses (church lot). This information is being shared at all open houses.

Chair Duininck added that the Oak Grove station currently has a Park and Ride planned for that site.

## **7. DEIS Scope and Cost Estimate Update**

Dan wanted to lay foundation as to where we are in the process. This is an expensive, large project. Cost uncertainty becomes more clear as the project proceeds from the DEIS stage to the Construction stage. Dan gave soil boring as an example; 200-300 are being done along the proposed route, and finding the unknowns. We are very early-on in the process.

Chair Duininck asked Dan Soler, on behalf of Peter McLaughlin, regarding the Design/Build process. Dan Soler stated that the decision was made to follow the Design/Bid/Build process.

Cost is based on the scope of the DEIS, and we need to go through the Municipal Consent process. The cost estimate is updated as design and risks are further identified and defined. The cost estimate will fluctuate until revised scope is approved. We are currently at the advanced project development stage. The New Starts process will take place one year from now. The FTA wants a 6 month notice to enter into the application of

Engineering phase (anticipated June, 2016). Cost estimate will be updated based on revised scope.

Mr. Soler further explained cost uncertainty and reviewed graph stages (slide 36) and the variables that can affect costs. Cost Estimates vs. Budget were clarified. Site work and special conditions not included in the DEIS Cost estimate include 3 Park and Ride stations, roadway construction on West Broadway (part of Hennepin County CIP) and the full reconstruction of Olson Highway; grade separated pedestrian crossings.

Requirements and Design are the highest risk areas. Market risks were explained. Mayor Lunde asked when does risk become cost, and when does it become a need to cut. Mayor Lunde expressed concerns over Brooklyn Park being asked to make cuts like Eden Prairie did on the SWLRT. Chair Duininck responded stating we are at 1% in the process; it's tempting to compare BLRT to SWLRT but they are different projects all together. The scope for SWLRT didn't include an add-in that had to be removed. Commissioner Higgins expressed how cuts were determined and made to the SWLRT project.

Going forward: Chair Duininck clarified that the refined scope of project will be brought to the CMC committee for their recommendation, then the refined scope will be presented to the Metropolitan Council. Commissioner Schreiber stated we need to engage institutional members along the route and receive their input, especially the new president of NHCC.

Commissioner Schreiber said she recently was invited to tour the Green Line and found it to be a very smooth, quiet ride. Commissioner Schreiber expressed she is not in favor of the at-grade crossings for the Target Field station and wants a double-wide overhead track to be considered. She does endorse a design/build process. Commissioner Wagenius seconded her approval of the Green Line tour and stated there is a higher capacity ridership now for U of M students.

Commissioner Opat asked about applied time for the New Starts process. Mr. Soler clarified that the application for 'Intent to Enter Engineering' cannot be done until the Municipal Consent process is completed. We need to complete requirements first. The original estimate was done in 2012 with a mid-point construction date of 2017. The schedule has been revised and now mid-point construction is 2019.

MarySue Abel presented information on costs, explaining that the scope is based on the DEIS, what it includes, doesn't include, and what we might need to add in. (Slide #43)

**Guideway and Track included in DEIS cost estimate** includes ballasted track, guideway structures in Brooklyn Park, Robbinsdale and over the

existing CP Rail line in Crystal, I-94 bridge modifications, and the HERC LRT bridge in Minneapolis. Currently the soil mitigation costs are at the exploration level.

**Guideway and Track *not* included** in DEIS cost estimate are embedded track, grade separation at 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenue intersections, and corridor protection between freight rail and light rail.

**Stations included in the DEIS cost estimate** include 10 stations, and 1 elevator at the Golden Valley Road station. ***Not*** included in the DEIS cost estimate is the Plymouth Avenue Station that requires vertical circulation and bridge replacement-constraints with bridge. Also the pedestrian overpass at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Station is not included in the DEIS cost estimate.

**Support Facilities included in DEIS cost estimate** are the Operations and Maintenance Facility for most of routine maintenance, as well as storage for 26 vehicles.

***Not* included in the DEIS cost estimate:** OMF site roadway realignment, which may need to be realigned. Space and equipment for major repairs not included in DEIS.

**Sitework and Special Conditions included in DEIS Cost Estimate** are Roadway bridge reconstruction at Hwy. 55 at-grade, Roadway bridge minor modifications at 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, Golden Valley Road, Theodore Wirth Parkway and Plymouth Avenue. Also included is the partial reconstruction of Olson Memorial Highway and reconstruction of all at-grade crossings, 3 Park and Ride sites and Xcel Energy transmission relocation of 14 towers.

**Sitework and Special Conditions *not* included in DEIS cost estimate** are Golden Valley Road Station Park and Ride, Bass Lake Road Station Park and Ride, grade separated pedestrian crossings, and full reconstruction of Olson Memorial Highway.

**Systems included in DEIS cost estimate** are 13 traction power substations, Grade crossing protection gates for LRT and/or freight (10 at-grade crossings and 12 signalized intersections).

**Systems *not* included in DEIS cost estimate-**Gated crossings along West Broadway (center running not gated).

**Right of Way included in DEIS Cost estimate:** 17 full acquisitions, 56 partial acquisitions, acquisition of 50 feet of BNSF right of way.

**Right of Way *not* included in the DEIS cost estimate:** Acquisition for additional Park and Ride sites in Golden Valley and Crystal.

**Vehicles included in DEIS cost estimate** include 26 vehicles (2 latched together) with a 15% spare ratio and ten minute headway. The actual number of vehicles is based on run time analysis, the need for gap train, spare ratio (20%). The original run time estimate at 2 cars is at 7.5 minutes now at 10 minutes with 3-car trains.

Meg Forney asked if the Plymouth Station bridge would be replaced. Commissioner Higgins stated the bridge is less than 15 years old and would not need replacement.

Marika Pfefferkorn requested details on the 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Station and whether the DEIS estimate included ridership data. Ms. Abel stated additionally the pedestrian crossing is at-grade now; looking to expand surface lots.

Dan Soler added that we are identifying original DEIS items and looking at what new items need to be added. This will set the stage for the final scope and cost. Process steps are:

- Recommendations
- Refine Project Scope
- CMC will approve final cost estimates
- Metropolitan Council approval

## **8. Adjourn**

### **Next meeting:**

**Thursday, August 13, 2015  
1:00-2:30 pm  
Brooklyn Center Community Center  
6301 Shingle Creek Parkway  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430**