



# METRO Blue Line Extension

## Meeting of the Business Advisory Committee

Tuesday, July 13, 2021

8:00 AM –9:30 AM

Microsoft Teams Meeting

**BAC Members:** Ryan Borne, Candice Oathout, Jennifer Cutter, Kenya McKnight-Ahad, Jimmy Loyd, Alex Burns, Felicia Perry, Ian Alexander, J. Kevin Croston, Mike Steinhauser, Tim Baylor

**Agency Staff and Guests:** Sophia Ginis, Jesse Struve, Jim Voll, Joan Vanhala, Kristine Stehly, Kyle Mianulli, Nick Landwer, Sam O'Connell, Rebecca Hughes, Andrew G Gillett, Daniel Soler, Kerri Pearce Ruch, Liz Morice, Jason Tintes, Cathy Gold, Sarah Abe, Sam King, Kristine Stehly, Nick Thompson, David Davies

### Meeting Summary

#### 1. Call to Order, Welcome, and Introductions

Sophia Ginis, Metropolitan Council, called the meeting to order at 8:03. She shared an overview of the agenda and what to expect with the meeting.

#### 2. Adopt May 4, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Kevin Croston moved to approve, and Mike Steinhauser seconded. The minutes were approved.

#### 3. Potential Station Locations

Dan Soler, Hennepin County, shared the purpose and timeline for potential station locations. Dan shared how the potential station study areas were determined. This included previously planned stations and public input. He highlighted connections with the METRO C and D line. They considered station spacing and the number of stations. They do not have a set number of stations yet.

Brooklyn Park has previously planned stations from the old alignment which includes many destinations. The potential station study areas in Crystal and Robbinsdale are very similar to the locations on the previous alignment. These stations would be on County Road 81 at 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Bass Lake Rd, 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue (downtown Robbinsdale) and near North Memorial. They expect high ridership from North Memorial. They are studying a direct route into the hospital for employees and visitors, but also want to serve the residential area nearby. Dan reviewed proposed station areas on the Lowry Route and West Broadway Route. Both of these routes have study areas at Penn and at Emerson/Fremont Avenues. These would serve the METRO C and D lines. Other stations considered land use and destinations.

Dan Soler shared some elements of the evaluation including the project goals and principles as well as other data and engineering considerations. He shared how there would be ongoing discussion for these potential station areas. For example, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board shared that they will be investing in

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North Commons Park near the West Broadway route. Mike Steinhauser asked about the locations for stations in Brooklyn Park. Are these pretty set? Dan Confirmed that these were selected long ago and said these were set. Ryan Borne said that there is not much displaced here. There is a lot of space. There is a large walk between 694 and the Brooklyn Blvd station.

#### 4. LRT Visualizations

Nick Landwer, Metropolitan Council, introduced the visualizations. There are many of these, but he would be reviewing some typical examples. He started by describing the Brooklyn Park designs, which were at 90% for four out of the five stations. He showed a plan of 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue and renderings.

Nick reviewed the design considerations for Crystal. He showed two visualizations for this area in a commercial area near South Bass Lake Road.

Candice Oathout asked how this would impact movements with Bass Lake Road. This has been an ongoing issue with the BNSF alignment. Nick said that there is some work to do on this. Overall Candance said this is a major improvement from BNSF.

Nick shared design considerations for Robbinsdale. These is included maintaining intersections and safe pedestrian crossings. Nick showed two renderings of Robbinsdale starting with County Road 81 at 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Mike asked what the width was of the guideway in this area. Nick said that there is some flexibility with the width of the layout of the road and shared that the guideway is about 28 feet. He showed a second rendering near North Memorial Hospital and how the frontage road would be maintained. Tim Baylor asked for the rendering north of 41<sup>st</sup> near the McDonalds. Nick shared that he did not have that today. Alex Burns asked what would be done to mitigate the impacts of the frontage road for pedestrians. Alex said he was thinking of the frontage road adding another barrier to people trying to access the station. Nick said that they will have to evaluate how these connections are made safe. They will work with the communities on how to handle that.

In Minneapolis, there are two route options and the links to those main route options that need to be determined. They are coming up with a toolbox of mitigations for parking, traffic and property specific access concerns. He showed rendering on Lowry which includes a residential area with a narrow right of way. The proposed rendering shows sharrows. He showed the Washington Avenue center-running light rail. He showed West Broadway.

Sophia Ginis, Metropolitan Council, replied to Felicia Perry's question in the chat. Felicia asked how the community would be engaged and if they would be invited to workshops before decisions were made. She said that there will be some technical work before they have engagement with the community. There will be lots of discussions and they need some of the leaders from the BAC to provide input in a workshop setting. Tim Baylor said that there is a Minneapolis contingent that has met about the impacts of these options. Tim Baylor said that the loss of traffic and parking would be devastating. They will continue to be working in that small group and will be including Felicia in that. It would be helpful to get more renderings rather than just a few intersections. Nick confirmed that they can bring more materials, both renderings and alignments. Alex Burns said that it's important to have the context that West Broadway is one of the most dangerous roads in Hennepin County because it over-prioritizes vehicle access. Prioritizing other modes of transportation would



be beneficial for that. Nick addressed that turn lanes would still exist on West Broadway, but they are evaluating where these would exist.

Nick showed other options that have been evaluated included side-running and elevated options. He showed the impacts of elevated. Due to the space needed for the columns and the turn lanes, not much room would be saved. Nick showed side running light rail visualization. He showed how access points would be impacted with side running. There would be many alley, driveway and roadway closures with side-running for both Lowry and West Broadway. Ian Alexander shared that he is working on a development at Girard and Broadway. He confirmed that the project team is still working out the turn lanes at this section. His question is how the turn will work and if there would be property taking. Nick said they would want to keep traffic off the guideway. They are still reviewing how this would work with traffic and connections. Dan Soler said there might be areas where property is acquired but would not be total taking. A workshop that would be in more detail. Ian Alexander said that at the intersections of West Broadway, Emerson and Fremont there are a lot of important entities without a lot of leeway. It seems like the options you have on those intersections are very limited because those institutions are critical, and the intersections need turn lanes. It seems like those conversations will end in impasse. Dan Soler confirmed that is the challenge. Dan said this is why they need to dig deeper and continue to determine these issues. Sophia said that it's getting to the point where they can have these more specific solutions because there is enough information.

#### 5. Updates: RFP & Engagement Report

Sophia reminded the group that the RFP is out and asked for them to share it with their networks. She shared some of the community events and open houses. There are virtual and in-person options in July. She said that the next meeting is Tuesday August 3 or September 7 at 8:00 AM.

#### 6. Adjourn

The meeting ended at 9:17AM.

#### Chat

from Candace Oathout to everyone: 8:32 AM

How will center running affect Bass Lake Road intersection?

from Felicia Perry WBC to everyone: 8:44 AM

Will the workshops with the city and county include the business community and residents?  
(mpls route)

from Felicia Perry WBC to everyone: 8:46 AM

What is the timeline for all of that, Nick? If city and county are meeting first and then you're depending on BAC to be the "community". We need to be able to do engagement with residents and businesses BEFOREHAND. How much time do we have before you all start meeting without us?

from Alex Burns to everyone: 8:51 AM

So, street trees and green infrastructure could be included in those visualizations?

from Felicia Perry WBC to everyone: 8:52 AM

I wish I had a team. lol. It will just be me.

from Felicia Perry WBC to everyone: 8:54 AM



Agreed Tim.

from Felicia Perry WBC to everyone: 8:55 AM

Losing parking on W. Broadway would be devastating. Also losing all the turns on W.

Broadway completely change how community navigates the neighborhood and not in a good way.

from kenya to everyone: 8:56 AM

Good morning, the visuals for the North Minneapolis ideal routes look scary without seeing station areas etc. to better understand potential impact and opportunity. The current visuals send a message of North Minneapolis being a pass through, same for Robbinsdale & Crystal which are very connected areas sharing an economy... I agree with Tim, parking is critical.

from Alex Burns to everyone: 8:58 AM

I'd suggest that the project team does a parking study along the corridor. My guess is that the existing street parking is not currently being used but it would be good to have that data

from kenya to everyone: 8:59 AM

Sure Sophia, happy to connect around the routes.

from kenya to everyone: 9:02 AM

Extremely scary 'side routes'

from Alex Burns to everyone: 9:03 AM

Agreed^ I don't support the side running scenario

from Candace Oathout to everyone: 9:06 AM

Agreed side running does not make sense.

from kenya to everyone: 9:12 AM

US Bank parking lot area and the Chicken place on Fremont- there are options