



METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
METRO Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee
October 29, 2015
Brooklyn Park Community Activity Center
5600 85th Avenue North
Brooklyn Park, MN 55443

Committee Members Present:

Adam Duininck, Lona Schreiber, Scott Schulte, Mike Opat, Linda Higgins, Meg Forney, Jim Adams, Andy Snope, George Selman, Chris Berne, Denny Walsh, Rich Gates, Peter Wagenius, Olga Parsons

1. Call to Order

Chair Adam Duininck called the October 29, 2015 meeting to order at 1:05 pm.

2. Approval of October 15, 2015 Minutes

CAC Committee representative Chris Berne stated the minutes had the wrong date. Subject line will be amended to reflect October 15, 2015. Council Member Snope moved to approve minutes; seconded by Commissioner Opat. Amended October 15, 2015 meeting minutes were approved.

Chair Duininck asked that all at the table introduce themselves prior to start of presentation. He thanked everyone for their hard work getting to this point in the project.

The next steps are CMC Recommendation on November 12 and then to the Metropolitan Council for approval in December.

3. Revised Project Scope and Cost Estimate-Dan Soler

Mr. Soler stated this is a culmination of the last fourteen months of work, comments on the DEIS, Issue Resolution Teams involvement, detailed engineering, soil testing, configurations of stations and many other factors that lead up to the proposed revised scope.

The revised scope takes into account over 1,000 comments from the Issues Resolution Teams, Community Advisory Committee, and Business Advisory Committee.

The original cost estimate was developed in 2012. LRT projects are different because costs increase annually over the life of project. The current proposed scope has a cost estimate of \$1.488 billion.

Mr. Soler reviewed the proposed plans starting at Target Field, with the recommendation for at-grade tracks. Continuing down Olson Memorial Highway the recommendation is for a 6-lane principal arterial center running LRT, 10' boulevards, 6' sidewalk on both sides of highway, 3 mid-block pedestrian crossings, and a recommendation to preserve space in the future for 12' cycle track on the north side of Olson Memorial highway.

The Olson Memorial Highway crossing recommendations include maintaining the eastbound bridge over the freight corridor, reconstruct the westbound bridge over the freight corridor,

and continue with center running LRT with the LRT transitioning to freight rail corridor under new westbound Olson Memorial Highway bridge.

Plymouth Avenue/Golden Valley Road Station Recommendations include advancing the design of Plymouth Avenue and Golden Valley Road stations, both of which are included in revised cost estimate. A park and ride at Golden Valley Road station is not included in cost estimate. BPO will continue coordination with Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on property impacts and design of potential Golden Valley Road station park and ride.

Councilmember Snope requested a cost estimate of adding a park and ride at Golden Valley Road station, reconstruction of the Theodore Wirth Parkway and Golden Valley Road intersection and trail connections.

Commissioner Forney also asked for the cost estimates of adding trail connections.

Mr. Soler stated that he would ask staff to look into these cost estimates but that the ability to provide cost estimates was limited by the level of design that had been completed. Some design work has been done for a park and ride but no design work has been done on intersection reconstruction or trail connections.

The Golden Valley Alignment recommendation is to minimize floodplain impacts by retaining freight rail on existing embankment and constructing LRT bridges. There is a significant change in cost but it results in benefits and eliminates flood mitigation.

Councilmember Snope said it is important to enhance Sochacki Park, and asked if it would be restored after it is used as a staging area.

Mr. Soler said the park would be restored. Enhancement is part of the proposed design, as well as restoration of any area used for staging during the project.

The Robbinsdale Station recommendation includes a center station platform south of 42nd Avenue North, a park and ride facility with 550 spaces adjacent to station that will incorporate the existing transit center function, and provides opportunity for development. The recommendation also provides traffic improvements to West Broadway and 42nd Avenue North, at-grade pedestrian crossing at 41st Avenue North, and at-grade roadway and LRT crossing at 42nd Avenue North with gates.

West Broadway Crossing recommendations include a roundabout on the east side of LRT alignment; quiet zone ready design, and maintain full access to 48th Avenue/Welcoming Avenue North.

Bass Lake Road recommendations include a center station platform south of Bass Lake Road, a surface park and ride lot with 170 spaces, and at-grade roadway with LRT crossing at Bass Lake Road.

Mayor Adams stated he has concerns about the station area planning and feels there is not a lot of time to approve scope regarding parking and station planning.

Mr. Soler stated that BPO station design team will continue to work with the City of Crystal and Hennepin County on the station area planning.

Mr. Soler continued by presenting the slides with recommendations for the 63rd Avenue North station, LRT Crossing of County Road 81 at 73rd Avenue North, reconstruction of West Broadway and stations at Brooklyn Boulevard and 93rd Avenue.

Council member Gates asked about 85th Avenue not reflected in handout.

Mr. Soler clarified that there will be station at 85th Avenue, we just didn't have a showing of the layout, and it is reflected in the cost estimate.

Mr. Soler continued by presenting recommendation for the Oak Grove Parkway Station, park and ride, road network north of TH 610 and the operations and maintenance facility.

Mr. Soler reviewed some of the corridor-wide recommendations including reconstructing 4 roadway bridges over BNSF corridor at Plymouth Avenue, Theodore Wirth Parkway, Golden Valley Road and 36th Avenue North as well as Xcel transmission line location, and the locations of the traction power substation.

Councilmember Selman asked if Hwy 55 costs are being partially covered by MnDOT and who would be paying to relocate the Xcel towers. Mr. Soler stated the current cost estimate covers the proposed scope but the source of funding has not been discussed. Regarding the Xcel costs, they are currently in discussions with the railroad and Xcel.

Mr. Soler presented a summary of the revised project scope and asked if there were further questions.

Councilmember Schreiber asked about the need to publish a 1% cost estimate at the time of the DEIS. Mr. Soler stated there has to be an estimate at the submittal of the DEIS for the Federal Government. Council Member Schreiber added that she has no problems with numbers presented and is ready to defend the process. If there is criticism so far, it's totally unfounded and this has been a very open process. She commended the unbelievable staff involvement so far.

Councilmember Selman asked for clarification regarding the stations in Golden Valley. Does the revised cost estimate reflect for one or both?

Mr. Soler clarified that the cost estimate includes both. The estimated cost is the entire cost of the project, engineering, staffing, project office costs, including finance costs. Reviewed pie chart of cost breakdowns. (slide 52)

Mayor Adams asked how much of advanced engineering did not get predicted; feels the cost increase for advanced Engineering is a lot. He also requested more detail on the cost estimates of adjustments, especially any specific changes in Crystal.

Mr. Soler stated he will do what he can to get some of that information to Mayor Adams so that the information can be relayed to his constituents.

Mr. Chris Berne asked where contingency costs fall into the pie chart. Mr. Soler said that the contingency is not called out in the pie chart because contingency is incorporated into these numbers, as both allocated and unallocated contingency.

Commissioner Schulte noted that CTIB funding would need to increase by almost \$150 million (31%). He suggested CMC have a frank discussion about \$1.488 billion as the top number.

Mr. Wagenius added that nothing in the costs is a surprise today. On behalf of Mayor Hodges, he is asking for comparisons to other nationwide projects, in context to this project.

BAC Representative Denny Walsh commended staff for all the outreach that has been done and the work in getting the information out there and getting feedback. He supported previous comments to provide “best practices” to the outside world with a solid number and stick to it going forward.

Commissioner Schulte wanted to follow up on the Portland comparison. The costs are the same but they have a smaller system—who gets it wrong, us or them?

Mr. Wagenius noted that the Orange Line and Gold Line have lower costs but also lower ridership. He noted that decisions need to be made within the regional context. On Mayor Hodges behalf, Mr. Wagenius stated she supports the funding necessary to build the system. Commissioner Opat suggested that those comments were beyond the scope of this committee.

Commissioner Forney stated she is so pleased that the Park Board is at the table, and has had the opportunity to participate in the process.

Chair Duininck asked Mr. Soler if there would be briefings of today’s meetings to those not attending the meeting today. Mr. Soler said the project office will contact those that were not able to attend today, and provide updates prior to the November 12 CMC meeting.

Mayor Adams asked if impacts could be resolved prior to the November 12 meeting. Mr. Soler responded that the Final Environmental Impact Statement will be published after the Nov. 12 meeting. It is a dual process; the scope informs what gets studied in the environment process.

Councilmember Selman thanked CTIB for providing scholarships to Railvolution. The experience in Texas was very helpful and educational. He rode transit and spoke to many riders and learned a lot from everyday riders. Commissioner Schulte also thanked participants for utilizing the scholarship funds.

Chair Duininck reminded everyone that the next meeting is November 12 at the Brooklyn Center Community Center.

If you have any questions prior to that very important meeting, please contact the Project office or the Chair.

4. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm

Next Meeting:

November 12, 2015
2:30-4:30 pm (Note Time change)
Brooklyn Center Community Center
Constitution Hall
6301 Shingle Creek Parkway
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430