



# METRO Blue Line Extension

## Meeting of the Community Advisory Committee Meeting

December 15, 2021

6:00PM

WebEx

**CAC Members:** Kathy Fraser, Jason Greenberg, Catherine Fleming, Ellis Beck

### Meeting Summary

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

Sophia Ginis, Metropolitan Council welcomed the group. Jason Greenberg began the meeting at 6:07 PM.

**2. Adopt November 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

Jason Greenberg asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Catherine Fleming moved to approve the minutes. Kathy Fraser seconded. The minutes were approved.

**3. Anti-Displacement Workgroup Update**

C Terrence shared an update on the workgroup. He started with general principles. He would like the group to develop recommendations that can be practically implemented. We want to work through existing tensions between groups. This could be not using the same language or various ideas about how something would be implemented. These conflicts should happen within the project so that the best outcomes can be had. He reviewed two more principles.

He clarified general activities including advising on research agenda, making meaning of research findings, making recommendations to address displacement, and participating in anti-displacement engagement to different interests on the project. There will be other engagement in addition to what the workgroup does. The group will be more or less composed of 21 members including six government representatives, six community members, six non-affiliated members and 3 philanthropic members. These government representatives will not be elected officials. Members from each corridor city, the Met Council and Hennepin County. There will be a good representation of businesses and non-profits. The point is they would like to find people who are experiencing or are vulnerable to displacement. There will also be six people who are non-affiliated community representatives. The role of philanthropic organizational members will be to help assure recommendations can be implemented but they will not be overly influential in the recommendation.

Catherine stated that the Philanthropic community should not have a vote on the Anti-displacement Workgroup because their role should be to support what the Community decides. In addition, Catherine pointed out that Hennepin County, Met Council and the City of Minneapolis seems to believe that there is a need for them to employ an "interpreter" as a go-

between because they think local residents won't understand "technical" or "detailed" information about the project. Catherine said this is wrong, incorrect and insulting to the community.

Jason Greenberg said overall he liked what was presented. He is concerned that the group will be some of the same old faces. He is concerned that it will be only the people already involved. C Terrence said he feels pretty aware of who are in the Cohort and are leaders of other involved organizations, BAC and CAC. CURA has a very deep network within the corridor. They know the people involved and others who could be brought in. Catherine pointed out that there are some people who are passionate but don't have the time and they are represented by leaders and other connected people like herself who can help share their perspectives since they have more time to participate. Catherine asked if there is a timeline for the recommendations for this group. There are not a lot of decision makers in this group.

They are planning to have nine required meetings. Four which are full day Saturday meetings. Catherine asked if some of the time on these Saturdays will be pitch meetings for developers who want to invest in some areas. C Terrence said that he isn't going to preclude that, if it's a focus the group wants. Will the group have input into the activities of development activities? For example, if there was a development that they didn't want in the area. C Terrence said that is possible.

Jason asked if there will be information about the meetings for the community to attend. C Terrence said the meeting is public, but they have not determined if it will be parts of the meetings or how it will be public. Catherine Fleming asked if the group will be discussing time-sensitive opportunities, for example if there was funding available for a limited time. We know that they already have grant programs that are relevant in this corridor. C Terrence said that the group may take on some of those questions. Dan Soler said that Hennepin County and the Met Council will be working closely with this group to work on those opportunities. C Terrence said that there will be representatives to help with housing and that is part of the idea. Sophia conveyed that not every detail is worked out here, but there is more time. Catherine Fleming pointed out that some of these questions are about key parts of the decision-making process and the purpose for the group. Catherine asked about the timing of these. C Terrence said that the norms will be decided in the first meetings of the group. Catherine clarified she meant the final recommendations. C Terrence said it will be consensus decision making. Catherine Fleming said this question goes back to will these recommendations be implemented. C Terrence said that that will also relate to who the recommendation will be implemented by so that the group knows who is going to carry that recommendation. There is no legal requirement to follow the recommendations. Catherine said but the politicians that don't follow this will be protested and voted out, so it's not without consequence.

C Terrence said the application will go live on December 20 and go through January 14. The panel will be CURA staff and BAC and CAC representation. The first meeting is anticipated in February.

#### **4. Draft Route Modification Report Overview**

Sophia walked through the report details then shared some evaluation of goals. She shared some of the things reflected in the report including an overview of the last year's work. She reviewed the ratings of Excellent, Good or Poor.

Sophia reviewed some of the areas that inform Goal 1. She reviewed why Area 2 got an excellent rating for Goal 1. She highlighted some of the similarities to the spacing of the stations on the former alignment. She reviewed some statistics for Lowry and how Lowry serves the goal but does have some limitations especially with the geographic location between 94 and the

Mississippi. She reviewed how West Broadway is a commercial heart of North Minneapolis and some statistics about jobs and people potentially served.

Dan Soler reviewed what informs Goal 6. This includes maximizing cohesion and preservation of communities and assets. This also includes minimizing impacts to access. For goal 1, Area 2 receives a rating of Good because it does minimize impacts by going through an existing county facility. There is potential on Lowry for development and community wealth building. There will be particular attention to parking in this area to minimize this impact. Catherine asked about the parking. Dan Soler said that what we've learned is that many of the trucks parking on Washington are driven by people who live in North Minneapolis and do not have other options. Catherine said she was under the impression that the city was dealing with that. Dan Soler said yes, getting rid of it may not solve the problem so it is an impact that must be considered. Jason wanted to confirm what parking is the issue. Dan confirmed that there is parking on Washington and it's used by cars and mostly trucks. There aren't as many parking spots as possible, but the ones that are, are highly used. Jason clarified that they are not looking at one type of parking or another, just that parking is highly utilized. Dan said that most of the traffic lanes will be in place, but they will need to take parking. Catherine said the city backed off a little bit on their policy because many of the drivers were minorities and the trucks were their source of income. Sophia said this is a good example of the need to collaborate with partners. Dan Soler said the goal is to build transit, but the unintended consequence may be an impact on the community.

West Broadway received an Excellent rating. Dan Soler said that the West Broadway business is the heart of North Minneapolis. He pointed out the impacts of redlining in this corridor. Jason said that he sees red in both corridors. He said that there have been major significant investments on West Broadway, including the Minneapolis Public Schools. Dan pointed that the Lowry Hennepin County Library is a significant investment. Lowry has nodes of businesses. Jason Greenberg said that the investment on West Broadway has been greater.

Sophia opportunities for in-person and virtual meetings. She shared the next steps include a comment period through January 25. Then there will be draft in Spring 2022. Then in the Summer of 2022 they will begin the environmental process.

Jason Greenberg asked that they have something they can share on social media that includes the dates for the comment period. Catherine said that Tim Baylor has asked for direct contact with the city and asked where they stood on that. Jim Voll said that he contacted Tim and the West Broadway Business Coalition. Tim said that he is going to get together some voices, and the meeting will likely happen after the holiday. Catherine Fleming said that the folks on the BAC wanted direct connection to the city.

Jason Greenberg asked what has been heard so far. Sophia said that she's heard a lot of initial thoughts and a lot of requests regarding what the final report should include. Catherine asked if the comments are different than what is on the maps. She said that there is still commenting that will be reviewed on the map. There are also the comment forms as well. Catherine asked if the map comments are different. Sophia said that no matter the method they will be collecting the comments and incorporating them into the Final Report.

## **5. Engagement Overview**

Sophia shared some metrics of how many people they have heard from. She shared overall themes, including decisions made with the lens of fairness. They did door-knocking and heard about the impacts of construction. They heard about property impacts and some fear and opposition of those impacts and some who saw them as opportunities. They did stakeholder check-ins where they heard a lot of support for West Broadway. They heard a lot of about

incorporating the lessons the Green Line and original Blue Line. Sophia shared they are in a place where they would like to hear officially from folks. This is the time to have an impact on the final recommendation.

Jason Greenberg said that there hasn't been one large communication that this light rail is coming or there has not been enough. There are so many people that will be impacted don't know it is happening. Sophia confirmed that every in Robbinsdale will receive a postcard. They are timed to arrive during the holidays when people might be home and checking their mail. They are spending money on publicizing with various media organizations. The communications team is focused on broad messaging and outreach. Some of this will be coupled with the Anti-Displacement outreach to make sure there is a broader audience. Catherine asked who will receive post cards. Robbinsdale will be receiving it as well as the people around and within the West Broadway and Lowry corridors, as well as along the corridor in Crystal and Brooklyn Park. Catherine said that some of these will be sent to property owners who live out of state. Sophia said that in the past the tenant and owner were both receiving the communication.

6. **Next Meeting:** February 2021

The next one is scheduled for January 5, 2022 is recommended to be canceled.

7. **Adjourn**

Jason adjourned the meeting at 7:57 pm.