



**METRO Blue Line Extension
Business Advisory Committee Meeting
June 6, 2017
Blue Line Project Office
5514 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 200
Crystal, MN 55428
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

BAC Members: Staci Horwitz, Alison Pence, Mark Steinhauser, Matt Rentsch, Aiysha Mustapha, and Candace Oathout

Agency Staff and Guests: Juan Rangel, Dan Pfeiffer, Nick Landwer, Nick Ollrich, Sophia Ginis, Jennifer Swenson, and David Davies

1. Call to Order/Introductions

No new members were introduced.

2. Approval of Minutes

March 2017 minutes were not sent out in time so they were not approved.

3. Project Overview – Dan Pfeiffer

A project overview was presented that included current LRT and BRT lines and project budget, schedule, funding sources, decision-making process, staffing, and BAC/CAC roles and responsibilities. If anyone from the BAC wants to co-chair with Denny please let someone from the project outreach staff know.

State funding sources are changing since the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) is going through the dissolution process. When the dissolution process occurs Hennepin County will pick up the CTIB and State portion of funding for the project.

Horwitz: Will Hennepin County be able to cover both of these portions?

Pfeiffer: Yes, under the current law CTIB can only collect a quarter cent of tax—when it dissolves Hennepin County can increase this to a half a cent. A good portion of CTIB was already Hennepin dedicated money.

Oathout: What arrangements are being done to coordinate bus and LRT connections?

Pfeiffer: LRT staff work with Metro Transit bus operations to coordinate connections. Prior to the BLRT Extension opening a corridor sector study is done to look at where people currently go, where they want to go, and looks at existing lines and where we need new lines.

Oathout: We still have a problem with suburb to suburb transit.

Landwer: The BLRT extension project is a backbone system that you can build from. This project may not directly address suburb to suburb transit but it is a part of a holistic system that can help address future transit needs.

The project was previously in an issues resolution process that went into municipal consent. Now the project is in the design resolution process.

4. Traffic Signal Coordination – Ollrich

Two types of train signals were shared with the BAC—automatic block signaling (ABS) that separates the corridor into sections and are controlled with a series of automatic rail signals and bar signals that are a part of the traffic signal system. A transit signal priority and preemption spectrum overview was presented and explained to the BAC. The following examples were given in addition to the ones included in the PowerPoint:

- Coordinated timings are used in Downtown Minneapolis
- University Avenue LRT uses a combination
- Automatic gates are used on Hiawatha

Project staff are working to identify the needs and priorities at each intersection. The traffic signals are connected by a fiber network that communicates with each other that helps identify how to move traffic efficiently. There also are detection input points spaced out along the corridor that share information between rail and traffic.

Horwitz: Along Olson Memorial the city is responsible for traffic signals, will that become someone else's responsibility?

Ollrich: No, the city will maintain ownership of them.

Horwitz: Will they be updated?

Ollrich: They will all be new.

Horwitz: Do you have a traffic/transit center?

Landwer: Yes, there is a rail control center (RCC) that monitors traffic and knows what is going on at all times and has protocol for issues that come up.

Ollrich: The City of Minneapolis has their own center that can monitor timing issues that arise.

Pence: Will there be post revenue data collecting?

Landwer: Yes, revenue data is part of the on-going testing that is used to make sure the LRT line is functioning correctly.

Pence: How do you make adjustments? What data do you use to make these?

Pfeiffer: Typically, when issues/concerns arise they come into the Metro Transit information center who passes it along to the operations center. The city and county have a similar process. The best point of contact is the Metro Transit information center.

Oathout: How often do the trains hit stations?

Pfeiffer: During peak hours trains operate every 10 minutes.

Landwer: We have done modeling that accounts for sequencing and reflects how the signals work and impacts station stops. Currently we are not seeing any big issues with this and all of our intersections are operating at a high level of service.

5. 60% Plans Update - Landwer

The project started by going through a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) phase that was completed and adopted by communities. Then the project went through municipal consent that helped dictate where the alignment was going to be. Currently we are into the project engineering phase. The project has two civil packages, systems package, and an operations and maintenance facility (OMF) package. All packages are at 60% design and have been shared with project partners. Some of the issues we are still working through with our partners include:

- Oak Grove park and ride
- West Broadway streetscape
- Olson Memorial Highway streetscape

Pence: With the Southwest LRT and BLRT project going into construction in 2021 will that affect finding contractors for both projects?

Landwer: Since these are large scale projects contractors will be coming in from all over, not just locally.

Pfeiffer: Some of the other local large scale projects will be winding down around this time as well.

Ginis: Our project team is working with the Office of Equal Opportunity to help bring in new talent to work on the line by educating and promoting construction trade degrees and jobs.

Horwitz: Are we doing anything to build capacity in the workforce beyond construction?

Pfeiffer: Yes, we started technical training program for diesel mechanics and an LRT technician program that includes classes and on-the-job training.

Basset Creek Tunnel (BCT) is going out for bid this summer and construction will begin this fall. We cut the heavy construction for BCT from six phases to three phases and are working with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to move this storm sewer off of the structurally deficient list.

Oathout: What is the capacity of the pipe?

Landwer: It is currently sufficient for the capacity it needs so we are maintaining capacity.

Oathout: How deep will you be going?

Landwer: The box culvert depth will remain the same.

In October OMH will be closing for 12 days for the contractor to get the area excavated, pipes in place, backfill, and good pavement patch over pipe. The old pipe can get removed at a later time or during future construction. By closing OMH for 12 days it will save us months of closures in the long run. We are exploring detour options on I-94, I-394, and 100.

Pence: Will the creek itself be stopped during this process?

Landwer: No, but there may be a brief time it needs to get pumped but it won't be backed up.

Horwitz: Will construction happen with Southwest LRT and BLRT simultaneously?

Landwer: We anticipate construction will happen at the same time and we will work closely with Southwest to coordinate.

6. Adjourn

Next meeting will be in August.