



METRO Blue Line Extension
Meeting of the Corridor Management Committee
September 8, 2022
1:30 PM
Metro Transit Heywood Council Chambers

CMC Member Attendees: Jim Adams, Mike Barnes, Bill Blonigan, Reva Chamblis, Jeremiah Ellison, Irene Fernando, Jason Greenberg, Robert Lilligren, John Pacheco, Gillian Rosenquist

Meeting Summary

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Commissioner Irene Fernando, Hennepin County, called the meeting to order at 1:32 PM.

2. Approval of July 14, 2022, BLRT CMC Meeting Summary

Commissioner Fernando, Hennepin County, asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mayor Jim Adams, City of Crystal, made a motion and Council member Robert Lilligren, Metropolitan Council, seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

3. Environmental & Design Next Steps

Chris Beckwith, Metropolitan Council, reviewed the environmental phase project schedule. She shared that the project team will continue to do engineering work and work on station area planning with the communities. A Final Environmental Impact Statement was published in July 2016 for the previous route. The project team is currently working on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) to evaluate the new route options. In the SDEIS, information will be carried over that still apply and will carry them into the documentation. Chris then explained the SDEIS process, stating that the process will take several months. The team is also currently evaluating new route options in Minneapolis. Over the next month, the goal is to narrow down the number of options to include in the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS). An Amended Record of Decision document will formalize the environmental commitments made for the project and complete the environmental review process. Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) has a parallel process, which requires public notice to identify the scope. There will be a 20-day comment period around mid to late-October. Chris introduced the project team's new environmental compliance lead, Neha Damle, and the new financial analyst, Sumit Kapali.

Nick Landwer, Metropolitan Council, shared that the project team is in early stages of engineering. Nick shared some schematic drawings of route options on 21st Avenue and



West Broadway Avenue in Minneapolis. He mentioned that these are some of the materials that would be used in the September and October public meetings. The project team will look to get input from the community and use the input to narrow the options that carry into the SDEIS. Council member Reva Chamblis, Metropolitan Council, asked a question regarding option D in Minneapolis. She asked if the connection to the alleyways is from 21st Avenue to West Broadway. Nick responded that alleyways would be truncated on West Broadway unless they had a specific traffic signal. Some roadways would be truncated in order to avoid crossing the LRT corridor without a signalized intersection. Nick noted that these are just initial concepts to see how to keep traffic circulated.

Nick covered the Target Field Station to West Broadway route options identified in the Route Modification Report. The study area was expanded to include additional route options east and west of I-94. Nick mentioned that these options are being brought to the public to get feedback on the merits and drawbacks of the options. Commissioner Fernando acknowledged the advocacy of the community members on this stage.

Nick provided a brief design update for each city. He also shared that during September and October, the materials brought to the public meetings will provide a design update and the project team will solicit feedback from the community to help inform the designs.

Mayor Bill Blonigan, City of Robbinsdale, asked if Nick had an opinion at this point as to the difference in travel time between the alternates and if we know which option would take the most and least amount of time. Nick responded that the team hasn't completed an analysis of travel time through the whole corridor. Pushing the train in one direction could impact travel time, there could also be opportunity to increase light rail train vehicle speeds. Nick added that there is likely 30 seconds to a minute difference between each option. The Mayor said that doesn't seem significant but at some point, you'll have a better estimate as to the differences. Nick responded yes.

Council Member Jeremiah Ellison commented on the routes between Target Field Station and West Broadway. He shared that he appreciates the engagement being done around there. He said it is meaningful and feels the conversation is being taken seriously. The work is not done but it is good to see the seriousness and the Northside residents being engaged in the process.

4. Fall Community Meetings

Sophia Ginis, Metropolitan Council, reviewed the upcoming fall engagement meetings and what project staff are trying to accomplish. She explained that there is a long process ahead and many decisions to be made and the project team wants the community to come along during the process. Sophia shared that in September, the focus will be on route options along 21st Avenue and West Broadway and from Target Field Station to West Broadway



with both in-person and virtual meeting options. For the month of October, the project team will host corridor wide meetings to provide a project update with a focus on specific topics for each city and an overview of the environmental process. Commissioner Robert Lilligren asked about the interactive activities during virtual meetings. Sophia responded it would be polling. Commissioner Fernando asked how the CMC members would see the learnings from this engagement phase. Sophia responded that the project team is not making overall decisions between the route options, but they are trying to refine the scope for what will go into the environmental document. The project team will summarize feedback and provide another update to the CMC.

5. Community and Business Advisory Committees Member Appointments Update

Sophia Ginis, Metropolitan Council, noted members from the previous phase will be grandfathered into the new BAC and CAC. About half are continuing and the project team are reviewing applications and coordinating with municipal partners. The kickoff meetings are anticipated to be held for October 11th and 12th.

6. Anti-Displacement Update

Catherine Gold, Hennepin County, shared that the next Anti-Displacement Working Group workshop would be held at the Brooklyn Park Library on September 24th, from 10AM-4PM. She shared the first session was held in June and this gave the opportunity for people to meet one another. It was the first time the work group meet face-to-face. The focus for the September workshop is about housing. The workshop will revisit policies and investments and build upon that with policies CURA collected nationwide that are in action now. They will look at gaps and major concerns, refine the way this process takes place between communities and governments, and discuss what is and what is not possible. The group will use the research to capitalize on input from memberships and government representatives. Catherine shared that the Hennepin County workgroup has met and will provide an update on the programs and investments Hennepin County is providing. Other governments will share what their institution's offerings are.

Catherine also shared that there will be a workgroup member at each of the BAC and CAC meetings to provide community member perspectives to the groups. After the Saturday event, there will be follow-up public events. Council Member Jeremiah Ellison shared that he appreciated the event at UROC. It was easy for people to walk in and get information. He expressed that how we handle the anti-displacement work is going to be the ultimate grade of the project, whether it will be a complete benefit or not. He shared he has a lot of faith and optimism in the process. Council Member Reva Chamblis asked how the technical designs are being integrated into the anti-displacement discussions and if that has come up. She shared that she thinks it is important for the anti-displacement work to stay close to what is happening in the planning, design and environmental phases. Catherine responded they have standing meetings with CURA and CURA's work is based on research and the



feedback they are hearing from the community. Council Member Chamblis asked if it could be specified where the anti-displacement information is being applied. Catherine responded that the environmental document would record the actual steps to stay accountable to this work. Mayor Bill Blonigan said he has failed to engage with renters and asked if he could go and view materials on how renters will be engaged or get information on how the group will engage renters. Catherine responded saying that she is able to share what the strategies will be. Commissioner Fernando asked for the website address where the anti-displacement page can be found, Catherine responded the website is mybluelineext.org. Commissioner Fernando expressed thankfulness for the transparency and accessibility aspects of this work.

7. Next Meeting: October 13, 2022

8. Adjourn

Commissioner Fernando adjourned the meeting at 2:27 PM.