

Metropolitan Council

Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee
December 1, 2021

Members/Alternates Present	Chair Charlie Zelle Asas Aliweyd Mike Barnes Molly Cummings Dan Duffy Chris Ferguson	Irene Fernando Debbie Goettel Jim Hovland Chris LaTondresse Will Roach Jake Spano	Brian Hunke (Alt) Kathy Nelson (Alt) Rebecca Schack (Alt) Abdi Sahla (Alt)
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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Charlie Zelle called the December 1, 2021, meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed attendees.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Zelle presented the September 1, 2021, SWLRT Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. Council Member Cummings made a motion to approve the minutes. Will Roach seconded the motion. After a roll call, the minutes were approved.

3. CHAIR'S UPDATE

Chair Zelle provided some project highlights and noted that this work is helping all of Minnesota, with 65 out of the 87 Minnesota counties having employees working on this project. The Project has been ramping up social media with the highlights, and Chair Zelle shared the recent video created for the project. Chair Zelle introduced Jim Alexander for the Project update.

4. PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Jim Alexander, SWLRT Project Director, provided project highlights. Photos were shown of the construction progress. At this time, civil construction is at about 60% complete. There are 11 of the 16 LRT stations underway; 25 of the 29 bridges completed or underway; all 8 tunnels underway; and 114 of 131 retaining walls are under construction. Jim went through some of the other construction highlights and shared photos of the work.

The Kenilworth LRT Tunnel and Secant Wall continue to be the key challenges of the project and are on the critical path and impacting the overall project schedule and budget. These challenges impact both the civil and systems contracts. We are negotiating revised schedules and associated costs with the contractors, which will inform overall project costs and schedule.

Mayor Hovland asked what kind of structure was used to make the Corridor Protection wall effective? Jim responded it is a very robust structure with drilled shafts to provide support. They are closely spaced to withstand a freight impact. This plan went through rigorous review with both BNSF and MnDOT. We are constructing this with active freight traffic right next to it, which is also a challenge.

Mayor Spano asked about any updates on the trail sections reopening. Jim responded that we are close with the segment from Beltline Boulevard and Wooddale Avenue and the segment from Hopkins Depot to 11th Avenue. The goal is to open early 2022. We are close and the remaining work with finalizing fencing work. We are also working on agreements that will need to be in place before the trail segments can open to the public. We will know more about these openings in early 2022.

Mayor Spano said the tunnel and secant wall seem to be the largest hold up for budget and timeline. He asked how much time the contractor will need to provide the information needed for the new timeline and budget for the project. Jim responded that is under negotiation and the project team is working to complete negotiations as soon as possible. Jim also said we are using outside experts help with the negotiations. Mayor Spano asked for an easier way to explain this information and tell this story, perhaps

a visual format, so he can better explain it when he is asked.

Mayor Hovland asked how Return on Investment (ROI) should be discussed? We need to show the value and return on investment of this project to the public. This goes beyond cost per rider/cost per trip. Chair Zelle said we need to work together to shape these messages. There are a lot of benefits to the communities along the line. Commissioner Fernando said it is also about energy. The possibilities that occur because of this line, such as climate impacts, connections to jobs and housing. Commissioner Fernando suggested Sam O'Connell can help shape these messages and narrative direction to use. Chair Zelle also mentioned this corridor has a growing employment base all along the corridor.

Jim went through the photos of the Systems and Franklin Facility work. Jim also provided an update on the light rail vehicles. To date we have 25 vehicles here with two remaining to be shipped.

Commissioner Goettel asked if we expect to have the Systems deliveries on time with all the changes. Jim responded we are negotiating a revised schedule with the Systems contractor.

Commissioner LaTondresse commented that the dollars spent for redevelopment has already been \$1.6B. This figure allows us to tell the story on how this project is already helping in investments to the community before the trains even begin to run.

5. DBE AND WORKFORCE UPDATE

Mr. Jon Tao, DBE Specialist for the project provided an update on the DBE and Workforce activity. Jon went over the DBE achievements as of September 30, 2021. Our three construction contracts continue to exceed their DBE goals. Civil DBE participation continues to build, and is currently at 21.8%, with the contract about 60% complete. The Systems DBE participation is at 15.6%. Franklin is almost complete and will be at 19%, which will exceed the goal of 15%.

Jon went over the disaggregated information on the DBE commitments to the contracts. The supplemental disaggregated data will be sent out to members in a separate email.

For the workforce participation, MN Dept. of Human Rights works closely with us to achieve these outcomes. The prime contractor for the I-35W project has transferred many of these workers to our project. Women participation plateaued at 8%, but the contractors are trying to engage and attract more women to the project. They are working with unions and organizations to help get us closer to the goal. POC participation climbed over the summer to 28.1%, which is closer to the 32% goal.

Systems is only at 2% so the workforce participation is small. We expect more work in spring of 2022. We will do a chart for this contract once more work has begun.

Franklin contract is nearing the end. Jon went over the final percentages for this contract for women and POCI. We have been trying to find new ways to increase women participation, and in the last few months it has increased. The POCI hours were at 22.9% and women hours was at 9.3%.

The Dept. of Human Rights continues to meet monthly with the Prime contractor and discuss ways to increase these numbers. For the Franklin O&M Facility, the DBE numbers aren't as high as we would like, and currently the Dept. of Human Rights is reviewing the good faith efforts of the contractors. We will continue to work with MDHR and contractors in areas to increase participation.

Mayor Hovland mentioned the standard of how we get DBEs involved depends in part on how they can purchase products they need to do the work. Larger firms may be able to purchase supplies at a much lower cost. Need to figure out how to adjust for this and take into account pricing that the small contractors deal with. Should be more than a good faith effort, but strong requirements around it.

6. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Sophia Ginis, Manager of Outreach, provided an update on outreach activities. Sophia highlighted the work of our three outreach coordinators and staff. We have been offering quite a few tours this past summer and fall. Tours are very helpful for people see the work up close and just how detailed it is. We will start up tours again in the spring.

For 2021 highlights, there have been virtual townhalls, community meetings, many tours, and property owner meetings. Also, a highly robust social media plan is being used, with GovDelivery, Twitter and the Project Website.

7. ADJOURN

Chair Zelle thanked all for participating today. The next quarterly CMC meeting will be February 2, 2022. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Hoffner, Recording Secretary