



**METRO Blue Line Extension
Business Advisory Committee Meeting
May 5, 2015
Blue Line Project Office
5514 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 200
Crystal, MN 55428
8:00 AM – 9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

BAC Members: Brad Clift, Jim White, Randy Boushek, Mark Steinhauser, Denny Walsh, Alison Pence, Jeff Washburne, John Slama

Agency Staff and Guests: Dan Pfeiffer, David Davies, Sophia Ginis, Jessica Laabs, John Welbes, Juan Rangel, Nick Landwer, Dan Soler, Jim Toulouse, Kathryn O'Brien, Paul Danielson, MarySue Abel, Erik Hansen

1. Welcome and Introductions

Nick Landwer welcomed the group. Each person introduced themselves.

2. Introduction of Outreach Coordinators

Dan Soler talked about the BAC/CAC kickoff meeting held in April. Following that meeting, a survey was sent out to determine preferred meeting times and topics. Future meetings will be held on the first Tuesday of each month from 8:00-9:30 AM at the Blue Line Project Office. The top three topics as indicated by committee members were 1) station location and station area plans; 2) transit oriented development; and 3) station and platform design, multi-modal connections.

At the June meeting, co-chairs will be nominated. Co-chairs help run the meetings and set agendas. Dan Soler called for comments on draft BAC charter; no comments were noted. Draft will be finalized.

Outreach coordinators are as follows:

- Juan Rangel - Brooklyn Park
- David Davies - Crystal, Robbinsdale, and Golden Valley
- Sophia Ginis - Minneapolis
- Dan Pfeiffer – Assistant Public Involvement Manager

Community outreach coordinators are the primary point of contact for respective cities. Coordinators can field questions and will go to all of the technical meetings. In the near future they

will be introducing themselves to city council members. The last page of the meeting packet has a map with contact info for coordinators.

3. Community Works Update

This item will be moved to next month.

4. Design Update/Discussion

West Broadway Roadway/LRT Design:

Dan Soler presented this technical issue segment of West Broadway (CSAH 103): Candlewood to 93rd Avenue. This segment of West Broadway was concurrently chosen as the route for LRT and programmed as a reconstruction project by Hennepin County. Hennepin County brought a project to the Brooklyn Park City Council last summer, assuming county would reconstruct roadway and leave space for the future LRT line. The City Council requested that the county adjust the project to reduce ROW impact; analyze and design in coordination with LRT; and accommodate projected needs for mobility and population growth.

Since then, Hennepin County, City of Brooklyn Park, and BPO all came together and formed three groups to address the city council's concerns: design and engineering, community outreach, and environmental. Three outreach meetings were held in Brooklyn Park with high attendance, and good feedback was received on public preferences.

As a result of public input and additional design and engineering, ROW footprint was reduced from 176 feet to 141 feet. BPO presented to City Council that project partners will move forward with LRT center running on West Broadway from 75th to 94th, transitioning to west side running at 94th. Stations are proposed at Brooklyn Boulevard, 85th, and 93rd. The roadway would be four lanes with left turn lanes, curb and gutter, 8' boulevard and 10' trail on each side. Access and signal locations are being evaluated.

Next steps: work through committees, advance design and environmental assessment of LRT and county roadway projects.

Jim White – Does the City Council like it?

Dan Soler– The City Council happy with engagement, generally in agreement that this is the type of roadway wanted. There are still some different views on LRT in general, and LRT on West Broadway. Final approval will come early next year via the municipal consent process.

Randy Boushek – Station at 85th, is the college concerned about their parking lot being used for LRT?
Kathryn O'Brien – Met with Dan Hall, VP of Facilities at the college. They recognize they need to look at parking opportunities, and are open to losing some parking. There will always be people who will park in the lot, but there is a balance of losing some parking and providing transit options for students. Dan Soler added that he has not heard many parking concerns from existing lots.

Randy Boushek – Where will the line cross 81?

Dan Soler – At traffic signal at 73rd, LRT will diagonally cross 81. BPO will put a map together of this area.

Olson Memorial Highway:

Nick Landwer described the Issues Resolution Team (IRT) process which covers 15 technical issues, 12 of which relate to specific cities. Olson Memorial Highway (TH 55) from Target Field Station to the freight rail corridor near Theodore Wirth Parkway is one of these issues. The Blue Line project will replace existing signals and create a new signal at Thomas. Nick Landwer walked through different segments of this area:

Target Field Station to I-94:

Reviewed Olson Memorial Highway/7th Street intersection. BRT would be on the south leg of 7th Street (pilot project), and also on northwest. SWLRT is responsible for building bike lanes along 7th, but BLRT is responsible for getting them safely through the intersection.

Randy Boushek – Are lights programmed around the disruption of traffic in both directions when train is moving through?

Dan Soler – Yes.

Erik Hansen – Will there be new added signal cycles for the train?

Nick Landwer – Yes.

Jeff Washburne – How does this intersection compare to other intersections in terms of usage? Can we continue to encourage use of other arteries for bicycle use?

Paul Danielson – This is ultimately part of a City of Minneapolis plan for protected bikeways. SWLRT has an agreement with the City of Minneapolis to put a bikeway through this area. It is intended to serve the north Minneapolis area through downtown. There is currently limited use on the existing bike facility on 7th.

Alison Pence – Is this the location of the proposed soccer stadium?

Dan Soler – Yes, in the southwest corner of this intersection.

I-94 interchange: BPO is working with MnDOT on this.

I-94 to freight rail section:

BPO is working with MnDOT, Hennepin County, city of Minneapolis on what Olson Memorial Highway will look like when LRT is implemented. Challenge to balance issues related to heavy traffic volumes, development potential (Penn area) and desires for traffic calming and bike/pedestrian safety. Working group and committees will come up with a recommendation.

Van White and Penn Avenue are stations along Olson Memorial Highway. Issues to resolve include number of lanes, turn lanes, I-94 interchange, station configuration, pedestrian access, coordination with C Line and local routes, ped/bike crossings and safety, and bike facilities.

Jeff Washburne - How much land on the south side is developable, especially toward Penn?

Nick Landwer – There is a substantial amount of developable land, currently owned by MnDOT as right-of-way.

Jeff Washburne - From road, how closely could something be developed?

Nick Landwer – About 100-170' of depth; still working through setback from Olson Memorial Highway, probably about 20 feet.

Paul Danielson – There is large piece of property at Van White owned by Minneapolis Public Housing.

Randy Boushek – How challenging is it to cross I-94?

Nick Landwer – Doable on existing bridge, but there would definitely be work to do to retrofit the bridge and accommodate traffic.

Paul Danielson – Very similar to Highway 280 bridge on Green Line; almost exactly same dimensions.

Next steps: Work through IRT on road design, evaluate current and future traffic conditions and potential impacts (Olson Memorial Highway is a reliever for 394), input from committees, and a community meeting in June.

Center running on Olson Memorial Highway to freight rail corridor:

Olson Memorial Highway crosses rail tracks near Theodore Wirth Parkway. There is coordination necessary between BLRT, BNSF Rail, CP Rail, and the Basset Creek Trail to resolve this bridge/crossing design.

Floodplain Impacts:

Jim Toulouse introduced this issue in Golden Valley. BLRT would go through Basset Creek floodplain just north of Olson Memorial Highway when heading to freight rail corridor (north and south of Golden Valley Road) and requires mitigation for filling these areas. BPO is working with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board on mitigation locations.

In the Grimes, North Rice, and South Rice pond area, BPO has not fully determined the impact due to difficult soils and is still exploring how LRT tracks will be constructed (fill or bridge section). BPO is working with city staff on potential mitigation locations.

Next steps: Further refine impacts, coordinate on mitigation requirements and sites, and community meeting in June.

Jim White – How long is stretch over the Grimes/North Rice/South Rice pond area?

Paul Danielson – About 600 to 800 feet.

Jim White – How long are platforms, accounting for future expansion/longer trains?

Nick Landwer – Platforms will be built for 3-car consists, approx. 300 feet long.

Environmental Update:

Kathryn O'Brien noted interest from businesses particularly related to noise and vibration. BPO's noise subconsultant will be in town to do noise/vibration 101 session on May 12 and May 13 for CAC and BAC members. Please RSVP to David Davies (david.davies@metrotransit.org).

5. Member and Committee Reports/Public Forum

No comments.

6. Adjourn

Next meeting June 2nd with a primary goal to select co-chairs.