



METRO Blue Line Extension
Meeting of the Corridor Management Committee
February 10, 2022
1:30 PM
WebEx

CMC Member Attendees: Irene Fernando, Anna Schmiel, Reva Chamblis, Jim Adams, Bill Blonigan, George Selman, Robert Lilligren, Gillian Rosenquist, Becca Thompson, Bethany Turnwall, Denise Butler, Jason Greenberg, Tim Baylor, Bridget Rief, Felicia Perry, Nick Thompson, Jeremiah Ellison

Meeting Summary

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Charlie Zelle, Met Council, called the meeting to order at 1:31 PM.

2. Approval of December 17, 2021 BLRT CMC Meeting Summary

Chair Charlie Zelle, Met Council, asked if anyone had any edits or corrections. Mayor Bill Blonigan, City of Robbinsdale, motioned for approval. Mayor Jim Adams, City of Crystal, seconded the motion.

Chair Zelle mentioned Governor Walz and had included \$200 million in their budget proposal to support the Blue Line Extension.

3. Committee Reports

Jason Greenberg, CAC, provided a summary from the Community Advisory Committee on the Draft Report comments. Jason said that big feedback revolved around how the comments are grouped together and how to use the groupings to get answers back to the community. There was some concern around common themes and making sure they're accurate to the meetings and feedback. There was discussion about businesses between stations and discussing "winners" and "losers." They discussed ADWG and discussed who CURA is talking to, what are their knowledge and opinions of the project. There was discussion around actions happening in advance of the work CURA is doing now. They also brought up the pace of the ADWG and asked how that will impact the overall timeline of the project.

Felicia Perry, BAC, provided a summary update for the Business Advisory Committee. She shared they reviewed the comments from the Draft Report and update from the ADWG. The



committee wants to ensure there is engagement around anti-displacement. People had questions of who will be surveyed.

4. Draft Report Comment Overview

Sophia Ginis, Met Council, walked through comments received from the Draft Report. Sophia shared that they had received close to 500 comments and emphasized this work is built on the engagement work the project staff and partners have been involved in. The next Report will integrate themes heard from the comment period. There were comments that came through the comment form, email, letters from the municipalities along the corridor. The interactive map gathered active feedback from communities. They received comments from public meetings as well.

Sophia shared themes that have come up. One of the themes was how LRT has benefited from connections to ped and bike facilities and overall safety. Also, there's an equity lens. There's a need to consider people in zero-car household and how to increase mobility and access to major destinations. People also asked about new information about specific things. Sophia reviewed the common themes of each of the goals.

Dan Soler, Hennepin County, gave a thanks to Sophia Ginis and Joan Vanhala and teams that worked with and in partnership with communities. Project staff had a check in with FTA and shared how they went about outreach. Dan shared that he thought that FTA felt that the project team went above and beyond with the variety and different ways to get community feedback. Dan highlighted what the project staff has heard from municipal partners. Brooklyn Park supports the route change and also identified the need to keep in mind how to deal with pedestrian crossings at 63rd Ave and are interested in continuing to maintain development opportunities in the 73rd Ave flyover area. Crystal wants considered the impacts of the lane configurations on County Road 81, going from 6 to 4 lanes. They shared concern around the end configuration of Bass Lake Road. Robbinsdale sent a resolution with a number of topics, one is to consider the city as 2A and 2B, not grouped into just Area 2. The City asked to see a no-build option to be evaluated, this would be addressed in the environmental review. Robbinsdale also talked about bringing in outside help to look at the feasibility of light rail on County Road 81. Project staff are working with the City on how to form a contract to go about this. Minneapolis is looking for more information to help guide the decision making between the routes. Maple Grove requested to include design options to accommodate a future BLRT spur to the city.

In the chat, Bridget Rief, MAC, asked about the MAC and the interchange option at Bass Lake Road. Dan said he believed those discussions have begun. They have been working with the MAC team for the area around the Crystal Airport.



Felicia Perry, BAC, asked if the City of Minneapolis mentioned anything around reparative justice, the anti-displacement work or the previous work around Harrison neighborhood and the impacts that had. Dan responded that project staff discuss those topics. The pieces summarized were responses to the Draft Report. Project staff continually update the cities on the work with anti-displacement and equity work. Sophia Ginis added that the cities have heard the community and reflect back and ask project staff for the analysis they do. Felicia shared that the impacts are community wide. The Harrison neighborhood has suffered negative impacts, which is why the work around anti-displacement is an important aspect for this community. She is interested in how the City is supporting that. Dan responded that the ADWG will analyze and look at the Harrison neighborhood area and the current areas along the alignment. Hennepin County and Met Council will be part of cooperation with MnDOT to look at transportation improvements to Hwy 55 in the Harrison area, the areas the light rail couldn't be advanced in.

Commissioner Irene Fernando, Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority, shared that the comment Felicia shared is consistent feedback received and consistent with the comment in the chat from Councilmember Gillian Rosenquist. The communities along the alignment were promised improvements, for safety and pedestrians. Commissioner Fernando suggested it's perhaps a time for a conversation with Met Council to ensure the residents who live along the corridor and had partnered with the project, receive the amenities they were promised. Council member Jeremiah Ellison shared that he encourages more coordination on these discussions.

Mayor Bill Blonigan, City of Robbinsdale, thanked the team for considering Robbinsdale request to get an engineering consulting firm. Mayor Blonigan shared his thoughts on a few items. He shared that the Robbinsdale connection could be over or under 81. Regarding the build or no-build option, too much money will have already been spent to be past the no-build option. He shared that the crash wall may or may not be necessary. It maybe would've been better to buy the whole BNSF rail corridor. Lastly, he commented on whether the BLRT Extension has a position on the possible legislation of MnDOT to supervise the building of the BLRT instead of the Met Council.

5. Anti-Displacement Working Group Update

C Terrence Anderson, CURA, shared that CURA had been conducting interviews and should have the group set by mid- next week. He gave a shoutout to Felicia Perry for helping with the interviews. C Terrence shared that the team will be working closely with the engagement for the overall project. He shared that it's tough for the community to separate the conversations between the alignment [design] and anti-displacement. There will be planned engagement and outreach on the project around the full Saturday meeting timeline.



C Terrence shared that they're interviewing about 50 candidates for the ADWG. There was representation across the whole corridor. The group is still looking to identify philanthropic representatives. C Terrence shared items on their research plan that the group has already started on: Review of the best practices in anti-displacement policy, locally and nationally; A case study of the existing Green and Blue Lines and their effects on displacement of residents and businesses. What are the lessons from the existing Green and Blue Lines; a thorough baseline study of the Blue Line Extension Corridor and Needs assessment for investment in the corridor.

Felicia Perry, BAC, thanked C Terrence for allowing her to be part of the process. She shared there were great insights that came out of the interviews. She brought up a concern she heard in the interviews around timing of the ADWG and the release of the Final Report. The ADWG will just be getting started when the Final Report will be released with a route recommendation. It doesn't feel like these two things are happening at the same pace. Felicia also shared they had a great group of candidates; the diversity was impressive and the interest in this project was inspiring. CURA has been great to work with on this process. C Terrence responded that they'll find a way to stay connected to who they interviewed.

6. Next Meeting:

The next meeting regularly scheduled meeting is March 10th. The project would like to postpone until closer to April 18, 2022.

7. Adjournment

Council member George Selman shared he had received an email from a retired police chief in Robbinsdale. He read the email and shared that it consolidated a lot of the comments that have been heard from many other residents in Robbinsdale.

Chair Charlie Zelle, Met Council, adjourned the meeting at 2:52 PM.