



## Blue Line Extension Corridor Management Committee Minutes of the April 8, 2021 Meeting

**Present:** Charlie Zelle, Reva Chamblis, Robert Lilligren, Irene Fernando, Jeff Lunde, Elie Farhat, Tonja West-Hafner, Jim Adams, Bill Blonigan, Shep Harris, Gillian Rosenquist, George Selman, Philippe Cunningham, Felicia Perry, Mike Elliott, Mike Opatz, Chris Meyer, Jason Greenberg, Mike Steinhauser, Bridget Rief, Mike Barnes, Kathi Hemken, Abdi Salah, Alicia Vickerman, Nichole Buehler, Bridget Rief, Denise Butler, Tim Baylor, Jeremiah Ellison

### 1. Call to Order

Chair Charlie Zelle, Met Council, welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 1:32 pm.

### 2. Approval of March 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Chair Charlie Zelle asked the committee to review the meeting minutes from the February 11, 2021 meeting. Mayor Jim Adams, City of Crystal, made the motion to approve the minutes; Mayor Mike Elliott, City of Brooklyn Center, seconded the motion. Meeting minutes were approved.

### 3. Committee Reports

Chair Zelle, asked the committee chairs for a report of their meeting. Jason Greenberg provided an update of the last Community Advisory Committee meeting. He shared how the group talked about initial feedback on the routes, supporting communities in place, and follow-up items. Felicia Perry shared a report on the last Business Advisory Committee meeting. They discussed the community cohort and the anti-displacement work group. Mayor Elliott underscored the need to start as early as possible to support the communities in terms of building wealth in place.

### 4. Corridor Management Committee Membership

Chair Zelle, shared some background on the process for committee membership and the history of the Charter. Mayor Hemken said that the line comes very close to the City of New Hope. It seems unfair given that they have the same demographics and distance as Brooklyn Center. Mayor Adams shared that he thought that it would be good to go back to what the legislation says after the route is decided; at this point in the game, he does not feel comfortable restricting membership. Mayor Shep Harris, City of Golden Valley, shared that Golden Valley would be supportive of adding New Hope. This is a regional project and there is a long-term project that will impact the corridor broadly. Mayor Bill Blonigan, City of Robbinsdale, shared that they would be in support of including New Hope, and he feels that the more input the better. Commissioner Jeff Lunde, Hennepin County, said they are stronger when more people are included, and they support including New Hope. Council Member Alicia Vickerman, City of Osseo, shared that in Osseo they are interested in minimizing the barrier to Osseo and are interested in being included. Mayor Mike Elliott, City of Brooklyn Center, shared that they have the region's transit hub; Brooklyn Center plays a significant role in transit for the region. Brooklyn Center does not have the same demographics as New Hope, although there are communities that are similar in both places. Denise Butler, Blue Line Coalition, shared some background on their membership. She said that they won membership because in the past there was not enough representation from people of color, and she wants the group to be mindful of that dynamic. Mike Opatz, Maple Grove shared that they would be supportive of voting membership in



the committee. Commissioner Lunde made a motion to make a shift in membership to expand the voting members by three additional communities: Maple Grove, New Hope, and Osseo as we work to adopt an alignment. Mayor Adams seconded this. Mayor Elliott shared that he would support the review of leadership at the table to become more diverse. Council Member Reva Chamblis, Metropolitan Council, asked for more clarification on adding non-voting members (to become voting members) and the rationale for the change as we are setting a precedent for future voting changes. Felicia Perry, BAC, wanted to highlight the term inclusion, and its use in this context. Her part of the city has two routes to decide. There needs to be more clarity before a vote is taken on such an important decision. Tim Baylor, BAC also highlighted that Minneapolis is very large and only has one member like others and should have more. The motion was removed by Commissioner Lunde and Mayor Adams to be brought back to the next meeting.

## **5. Route Feedback**

Sophia Ginis shared some updates on the feedback they are receiving. There are some emerging themes in this feedback including general support for LRT, coupled with requests for more information. There are specific questions about roadway, home, and business impacts (with the desire to preserve businesses). Other themes including a push for green infrastructure, LRT structures (tunnels or elevated) and other design issues. She shared some very preliminary survey results. The surveys showed that 60% of respondents supported most the goals about regional connections, access, and regional equity.

## **6. Community Engagement Update**

Joan Vanhala, Hennepin County shared an update on the Community Engagement Cohort Contractors. They have organizations in each area, with the most organizations focusing on Area 3, Minneapolis. The group had two orientation sessions and will be meeting monthly.

Councilmember Phillipe Cunningham, City of Minneapolis asked why native or indigenous communities were not represented. Joan shared that the process was an RFP and there were groups that responded to that. Joan Vanhala also shared that if there are more groups that should be included in this process, she would love input from Councilmember Cunningham's office. Sophia shared that the next step in this process is to evaluate current gaps, and they already recognize that for example, the disability community should be more included. Jason Greenberg, CAC, shared that safety is a common theme that they've been hearing and that a focus on Area 2 seemed to be underrepresented in the cohort. Commissioner Lunde shared that he and Commissioner Fernando are receiving a lot of input about people wanting to host events. Mayor Harris shared that Courage Kenny might be a good resource.

## **7. Supporting Communities in Place**

Dan Soler shared today's focus on community benefits and previous project commitments. Sophia Ginis shared some background on this topic and the feedback from community including addressing displacement and concerns around community benefits. The project is committed to recognizing the role of private groups and community partners, in addressing short and long-term needs, identify resources to address these issues, and to take actions that are tangible and measurable.

Commissioner Fernando shared that the table for identifying issues might be different than the table addressing these issues. She pointed out that people who have experienced this harm and capturing



experiences. There is not a shared definition of gentrification and displacement, and how that impacts communities in the corridor.

Dan shared that the group would need to bring in a shared understanding and asked for some input on these questions, including how to come to a consensus on the definitions of displacement, gentrification, community benefits, and if there are other questions. Sophia said the group would like to work on building the table that would address these issues. Part of the elements of this would be finding a trusted facilitator and who would be invited to the group. She asked the group who would be a trusted facilitator. What public and private agencies and organizations come to mind?

Councilmember Jeremiah Ellison, City of Minneapolis, shared that it is a much-needed conversation. The University of Minnesota has done good work on definitions and that might be a good place to start. He wanted to urge people to consider equity, and that there are studies that people can react to.

Mayor Harris asked where the Met Council, Hennepin County and Governor Walz are thinking about the new fast-track offered by the Biden Administration, and could this be a candidate? This could be discussed at a future meeting. Chair Zelle said we could circle back on that item.

#### **8. Closing**

Chair Zelle asked if there were any further questions or comments from the committee. There were none. The meeting adjourned at 3:05PM.

**Next CMC Meeting: May 13, 2021, 1:30 PM  
WebEx**