

Metropolitan Council  
St. Louis Park City Hall, 5005 Minnetonka Boulevard, St. Louis Park, MN 55416

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Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee  
**February 4, 2015**

Members Present	Chair Adam Duininck Jan Callison Dan Duffy Jason Gadd James Hovland Linda Higgins	Bill James Brian Lamb Matt Look Peter McLaughlin Will Roach Terry Schneider	Nancy Tyra-Lukens Marion Greene (Alt) Jake Spano (Alt) Peter Wagenius (Alt)
Members Absent	Keith Bogut Jim Brimeyer	Betsy Hodges Jeff Jacobs	Scott McBride

## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Adam Duininck called the February 4, 2015 meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee to order at 10:10 a.m. at the St. Louis Park City Hall. Chair Duininck welcomed the members and committee member introductions were made, as this was Chair Duininck's first meeting as CMC Chair.

## **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Duininck presented the December 3, 2014 SWLRT Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Callison made a motion to accept the minutes, Councilmember Spano seconded it, and the motion was then unanimously approved.

Mr. Craig Lamothe reported that with the release of the President's budget also came the FTA's annual report on the New Starts Program. As part of this, there was approval for Full Funding Grant Agreements (FFGAs) in 2016 for \$150 million dollars. Mr. Lamothe showed the map of the seven projects that are proposed to receive an FFGA in the 2016 timeframe, which includes SWLRT. SWLRT also received a rating increase. The rating received when the project entered into PE in 2011 was a medium. We have now moved up to a medium high rating overall. Mr. Lamothe said for the project to achieve the medium high rating is significant and is due to the major efforts by our local funding partners CTIB and HCRA. We have 85% of the local funds committed to move this project forward.

Commissioner Callison asked what the next step is in the federal process. Mr. Lamothe stated that we will make another submittal for entry into engineering, which will be made shortly after FTA issues the Record of Decision.

## **3. 2015 LOOK AHEAD**

Mr. Lamothe reported that the Southwest LRT Project Office (SPO) will be advancing project designs from 30% to 60% by the fourth quarter of 2015. Some of the areas we will be working were reviewed and include:

### Station Design

Mr. Lamothe reported that we started developing station design concepts last year. This year we will focus on architectural consistency with the Green Line, with focus on controlling anticipated construction and maintenance costs based on lessons learned from past projects. We will apply one of

four suggested station prototypes based on public input and site observations. The four station types are: landscape, neighborhood, town square and landmark stations.

Mr. Lamothe reported the SPO will also holding open houses on the suggested station prototypes later this spring.

#### Integrated Public Art

Mr. Lamothe reported SPO is currently in the process of procuring artists to develop integrated public art at the 17 stations and OMF. We received 10 proposals and are currently going through the evaluation process. The public art will enhance the unique identity of the stations and aid in passenger wayfinding.

Councilmember Spano asked if there will be one artist to coordinate all the stations or different artists for each station. Mr. Lamothe stated that we anticipate having a team of artists selected and envision an artist may handle up to three stations. It is anticipated that between six to eight artists will be selected.

Commissioner Look asked what the anticipated cost is for the artists. Mr. Lamothe responded there is an estimated unit cost of \$250,000 for each site.

Mayor Tyra-Lukens asked about the station art committee membership. Mr. Lamothe responded that we are going through a selection process, working with the project partners to get representation from each of the communities. There will be one station art committee for each city with a second committee in Minneapolis.

#### Kenilworth Corridor Landscaping

Mr. Lamothe reported we are in the process of awarding a Kenilworth Corridor landscape consultant, who will work closely with the advanced design consultant. We expect an award for this later in Q1 2015. This consultant will focus on the Kenilworth Corridor from West Lake Street Station area to the Penn Ave Station area, with a focus on design vegetation and landscape with the trails, freight rail and light rail.

#### Kenilworth Channel Bridge Design Concept

Mr. Lamothe reported SPO has been meeting with the Section 106 consulting parties, and discussions include the channel crossing as well as other Section 106 properties. We have been refining the bridge design concepts proposed over the channel to make sure they meet functional requirements. We will continue the process of working with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the consulting parties.

#### National Environmental Policy Act and Minnesota Environmental Policy Act

Mr. Lamothe reported that the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) is an update to the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) focusing on areas where the alignment has been adjusted. The three main areas that have been adjusted are the Eden Prairie alignment; proposed location of the operations and maintenance facility; and the Kenilworth corridor/freight rail alignment. SPO is conferring with the FTA on the timing to release the SDEIS for public comment. Once the SDEIS is released there will be a Notice of Availability published followed by a 45 day public comment period. The comments from the DEIS and SDEIS will be responded to in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS).

Commissioner Higgins asked when the mitigation begins. Mr. Lamothe stated that the FEIS will identify mitigation requirements. This analysis includes reviewing the impacts and looking to avoid,

minimize or mitigate these impacts as part of the design process. Mitigation commitments are then documented in the ROD.

Mr. Wagenius asked if there is a date for the SDEIS to be published. Mr. Lamothe stated we are in ongoing discussions with FTA and currently anticipate that FTA will release the SDEIS for public comment in 2015 but this will need to be confirmed by FTA.

Commissioner Callison asked what effect would there be if it was Q4 of 2015. Mr. Lamothe stated that we don't anticipate it will be Q4 of 2015, and noted that the schedule will be assessed once the SDEIS is released.

#### Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act

Mr. Lamothe stated that Section 4(f) involves the review of publicly owned parks, recreation and wildlife refuges and publicly or privately owned historic sites along the alignment. We have 4(f) properties that need to be analyzed through this process. This includes coordination with officials with jurisdiction and those that have property rights to the properties impacted. An update to the draft 4(f) analysis will be included in the SDEIS. The next steps are to coordinate with the officials with jurisdiction; publish the draft 4(f) evaluation; and then publish the final 4(f) evaluation in the FEIS.

Councilmember Spano asked if there are any other cities besides Minneapolis that have 4(f) properties. Mr. Lamothe stated that Purgatory Creek Park in Eden Prairie is a 4(f) property. The other 4(f) properties are in Minneapolis.

Mayor Tyra-Lukens asked if the Watershed Districts are also met with. Ms. Nani Jacobson stated that only the property owners are engaged under 4(f).

Mayor Hovland asked that since the Kenilworth Channel is historic, what the standards are for this. Ms. Jacobson said the Kenilworth Lagoon Channel is a historic resource under Section 106. 4(f) is different than Section 106, but they are related. Under Section 106 you look at the historic characteristics of the resource. For the Channel you look at the banks, vegetation and the user experience. If the project would have an impact on any of these areas, you would then look at 4(f). If not impacted, 4(f) does not apply. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) works with the consulting parties under Section 106 and FTA ultimately has the decision whether a property is evaluated under 4(f). We have been consulting with SHPO and the consulting parties since 2010. We had our last consulting party meeting in November and another is scheduled for February 6. There are different historic features that are included as part of the historic channel and the project could have some level of impact to these historic features. We identify them now, and then work to either avoid, minimize or mitigate the impacts.

Mr. Wagenius asked how the SDEIS and FEIS release date relate to the legal proceedings based on the LPA lawsuit. Will the ruling be before or after the publication of the SDEIS or FEIS? Mr. Lamothe said there are two hearings set. One for a motion to dismiss set for 2/25/15 and one for a motion for a summary judgment scheduled for 3/9/15. At this time, we do not know when the findings will be made.

#### Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

Mr. Lamothe stated this requires federal agencies to consider the effects of the project on historic properties. The list was shown to the Section 106 consulting parties. The next steps for the Section 106 is to meet again with the consulting parties and then make a determination of adverse effects on the historic properties impacted by the project and develop the Section 106 Agreement.

Mr. Lamothe reported that Joint Development integrates transit elements with private development, which FTA looks favorably on. These activities would be 50% federally funded and 50% locally funded by the nontraditional partners. Neither CTIB, HCRRA nor the state would be the source of the local funds. There are two potential JD sites identified, one in Hopkins at Blake Station and one in St. Louis Park at Beltline Station. The next steps are to define and commence due diligence activities; seek input from the real estate community; secure city, local funding partners and Met Council approval; and release a request for interest for real estate developers.

#### Public Involvement

Mr. Lamothe reviewed the chart of the public involvement activities for 2015.

#### **4. BAC/CAC UPDATE**

Ms. Sam O'Connell reported that the Business Advisory Committee (BAC) and Community Advisory Committee (CAC) are shared committees with the SWLRT Project Office, Hennepin County Community Works and Steering Committees. Ms. O'Connell thanked the cities and chambers of commerce and Corridors of Opportunity members who nominated members to the BAC and CAC. The rosters for the newly appointed members was distributed. For BAC, the co chairs appointed are Will Roach and Dan Duffy; and for the CAC, the co chairs appointed are Jennifer Munt and Russ Adams. The next step is to hold a joint meeting of the BAC/CAC on February 12. At this meeting they will set their regular meeting schedules. We anticipate regular meetings to start the end of February.

#### **5. EXECUTIVE CHANGE CONTROL BOARD**

Ms. Melanie Steinborn provided an update on the Executive Change Control Board (ECCB). This committee consists of five voting members, along with non voting members representing the five cities, Hennepin County and MnDOT. The ECCB's charge is to approve change orders greater than \$250,000; approve scope deferrals and Locally Requested Capital Investments greater than \$75,000; and review at regular intervals all change orders.

#### Locally Requested Capital Investments (LRCI)

Ms. Steinborn reported that the LRCIs are items that the cities or county has identified that are beyond the scope of the project. The ECCB has now identified 14 of those LRCIs as being eligible for funding if FTA allows use of project contingency. These were all deemed eligible based on having one or more of the four criteria, which include: improve benefits to the regional system; improve connectivity to the community by increasing ridership; increase safety and security for patrons; and/or reduce operating costs. The 14 LRCIs were shown on a chart as to their types. They were also shown on a map as to their location. Since the 14 LRCIs were approved by ECCB, the city of St. Louis Park has removed a LRCI item that involved grade separating Beltline Boulevard.

Councilmember Spano stated that the cities were recently informed that if the LRCI is found not to be viable after the engineering and environmental process has already begun, the cities would now be asked to pay for the full [engineering and environmental] cost. Originally the cities weren't asked to cover this cost if work on the LRCI did not proceed. Mr. Lamothe stated we have been working with FTA on getting the LRCIs into the delivery of the overall project. FTA has stipulated that the LRCIs need to be environmentally cleared if we are using our design and construction forces to complete these projects, even if they are 100% locally funded. FTA has directed that the LRCIs be part of the build condition in the environmental documentation, and as such if a LRCI does not proceed during the preparation of the FEIS, we would have to stop and rewrite those sections affected in the FEIS. That would end up delaying the preparation of the FEIS, causing delay to the project. Because of this, we now ask those parties that want to go forward with their LRCIs to commit to complete the design and the environmental clearance processes. Mr. Lamothe reported that at this time, none of the SFAs have been taken forward for approval by the cities prior to this change in action.

Mr. Will Roach asked the cost of the average 14 LRCIs. Mr. Alexander stated that the costs were not readily available at this time.

## **6. DRAFT NOISE AND VIBRATION OVERVIEW**

Ms. Nani Jacobson reviewed the background for noise and vibration. Noise and vibration analysis was conducted for the SDEIS. The analysis is based on FTA's noise and vibration impact assessment methodology and criteria. The information in the 2012 DEIS still applies for areas without new impacts or adjustments. Ms. Jacobson reviewed how noise impacts are assessed. There are three categories for noise sensitive receptors. Category 1 is the most sensitive and includes recording studios and concert halls; Category 2 is where people normally sleep, like residents, hospitals and hotels; and Category 3 are institutional land used with primarily daytime and evening use, such as schools and churches.

For the Eden Prairie noise analysis, there were 2 moderate noise impacts and one severe noise impact identified without mitigation. These are the Baymont and Residence Inns on Flying Cloud Drive. These impacts are due to a proposed nearby at-grade crossing on Flying Cloud.

For Minneapolis/St. Louis Park from Louisiana Station to Van White Station, there were 66 moderate noise impacts and 3 severe noise impacts identified without mitigation. These are mostly due to the proximity of proposed LRT.

Commissioner Higgins asked about the Royalston Station. Ms. Jacobson stated this area is not covered under the SDEIS as no significant adjustments are being proposed, so this area was not re evaluated for the SDEIS.

Councilmember Gadd asked if the OMF was looked at. Ms. Jacobson stated that the area of the proposed OMF site was evaluated and given the light industrial land use it was not affected. Councilmember Gadd mentioned there are a couple studios in that area. Ms. Jacobson said SPO looked at the sensitive receptors that they were aware of and asked for Councilmember Gadd to provide SPO with this additional information if applicable.

Mr. Wagenius asked how recent the additional noise analysis work was performed. Ms. Jacobson stated SPO conducted the monitoring in the summer of 2013 for the areas covered under the SDEIS. For the DEIS, the work was conducted by the County in 2008 – 2010. The work continues as we advance the design and get more detail. Mr. Wagenius stated the Minneapolis fire chief was recently contacted about information Met Council needed for the SDEIS related to emergency access. He asked if the FTA is the delay for the SDEIS, or is the Met Council still getting data to inform the SDEIS. Ms. Jacobson stated we requested information from the fire chief for the FEIS. The SDEIS is fairly well along, we have done the analysis based on Council adopted scope and budget from July of 2014. Mr. Wagenius asked if there is a cutoff for the FTA to have all the information they need or do they come back asking for more detail. Ms. Jacobson stated that we do want to get the SDEIS out so it can be commented on and SPO continues to work with the FTA to get the SDEIS released. Mr. Wagenius asked if FTA is still seeking locally produced information for the SDEIS? Ms. Jacobson stated that from a 4(f) perspective the FTA is looking for more information.

Mr. Duffy asked if the three items listed as severe, are there opportunities to create berms or other ways to mitigate them? Ms. Jacobson stated there are options for mitigation. Berms are one option, along with other options like noise walls.

### Vibration

Ms. Jacobson reviewed how vibration is assessed. This assessment is put into three categories: Category 1 being highly sensitive to vibration, such as manufacturing facilities and hospitals; Category 2 which are residences and other places where people sleep; and Category 3 which includes schools and churches.

In Eden Prairie there are no identified vibration impacts. The auditorium at the Optum facility on Technology Drive was identified as a sensitive receptor and will be tested. In Minneapolis/St. Louis Park, there were also no identified vibration impacts. There were 54 ground-borne noise impacts identified in the area along the tunnel without mitigation.

Commissioner Greene asked what speed was used for the testing, and was the speed specific to the area? Ms. Jacobson stated that the speeds by each of the receptors is what we plan to use as actual speeds in those areas.

Ms. Jacobson said the next steps are to publish the SDEIS which identifies the impacts in the areas studied and complete the noise and vibration analysis on the entire line. We will then identify measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate through advanced design. The detailed analysis and committed mitigation measures will then be included in the FEIS.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Duininck reported the next CMC meeting will be on March 4 back here at St. Louis Park City Hall. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Dawn Hoffner, Recording Secretary**