



**Southwest Light Rail Transitway (SWLRT)  
Community and Business Advisory Committees Meeting  
October 27, 2015  
Minnetonka Community Center  
14600 Minnetonka Boulevard  
Minnetonka, MN 55345  
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**

**Meeting Summary**

*BAC/CAC Members/Alternatives in Attendance:* Co-Chair's Jennifer Munt, and Dan Duffy, (BAC) Dave Pelner, Gary Orcutt, Rick Weiblen, Tony Barranco, Joan Suko; (CAC) Amanda Kappes, Bill James, Brian Kirk, Craig Westgate, Hildy Shank, Jeff Strate, Jody Strakosch, Lee Munnich, Mathews Hollinshead, Shirajoy Abry, Christopher Bates; (Guests) Alysén Nesse, Ann Bench; (SPO) Sam O'Connell, Dan Pfeifer, Craig Lamothe, Sophia Ginis, Andrew Larson, James Mockovciak;

**1. Welcome and Meeting Purpose**

Co-Chairs Councilwoman Munt and Dan Duffy provided a welcome and overview of the evening.

**2. Project Update**

- A. Mr. Lamothe presented a high level Project Update that included the Major Project Milestones and the Station Design Advancement.
- B. Ms. O'Connell introduced the updated alignment video representing the revised engineering plans the cities and counties ratified this summer. Among other things, it shows clearly how the LRT and Freight Rail coexist.
- C. Mr. Lamothe continued with an overview of the upcoming Construction Activities. This included a statistical overview of the projects structural features, The OMF, Types of Work available in the upcoming Civil and Systems Contracts, and the OMF construction like Utility and Roadwork, Structures, Track Work, and Stations. He illustrated the financial impact for local counties across Minnesota by highlighting the financial benefits of the Central Corridor Project. Mr. Lamothe mentioned the recent, successful Construction Mixer and the range of participants and exhibitors.

*There were several questions:*

1. Q. *Will the Legislature give the remaining funds?*  
A. We believe so.
2. Q. *Can cities initiate utility work before the ROD to get a head start if they have the advanced engineering drawings?*

- A. Yes and no. They cannot move them, but can coordinate and design any changes and give input into where they will be relocated. We're working closely with staff from the 5 cities involved in this process. In short, anything paid for by the project will have to wait until the ROD.
3. Q. *Who is in charge of flipping LRT and Freight lines?*  
A. We'll do the grading, or build the bridges, and the railroad companies lay the rail they'll own and operate.
4. Q. *What is the level of contamination?*  
A. We've been assessing that and the results will be documented in the FEIS.
5. Q. *Will the new Substations be placed on the ground?*  
A. They will lay on concrete foundations
6. Q. *How many jobs will be created?*  
A. Upward of 7500 new construction jobs.
7. Q. *Can the OMF building be multilevel and be zoned as multipurpose, say for retail or office space?*  
A. No. Security precludes that option.
8. Q. *How do the Prime teams work together on such a large project?*  
A. Commonly as Joint ventures between large firms with different specialties.
9. Q. *How do we protect wetlands during construction?*  
A. Our current focus on construction mitigation, staging and delivery plans address that as required by FTA. We will be submitting these plans next year for review. As a result, contractors will be aware of what is required when they propose their bid.
10. Q. *Are you the ultimate overseers of the project?*  
A. There is a mix of consultants and agency staff, infield and compliance staff as well as builder overseers.
11. Q. *Will the construction be coordinated with MnDOT's planning?*  
A. Yes. We have several MnDOT staff working full time in our office to assist in the development of our planning.
- D. Mr. Larson continued the presentation with an overview of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Workforce program. Topics included a definition of the program, a description of its potential by referring to the Central Corridor LRT experience; how DBE monitoring works, and what the Workforce Requirements are to qualify.

*There were the following Questions:*

1. Q. *Is there a mandate from the Feds that a certain percentage of the workforce must be used for minority business?*  
A. These expectations are not quotas. They are aspirations, subcontracting goals, and good faith efforts. The contractor can try to meet the goal to qualify, or document why they couldn't use DBEs.
2. Q. *If there are few minority businesses to choose from, do you go looking for them in the bid process?*

- A. When we set the goal and don't see certified DBE's we adjust our goals. Throughout the life of the project contractors can add firms to their team and receive credit. However, once procuring a contract they cannot cut DBE firms without just cause.
- 3. Q. *Are there plans to get SBE goals?*
  - A. No, just DBE's. Mr. Lamothe added that DBE goals are not only applied to the Construction phase but also the Project Development phase. We have a number of DBE's involved in many of our major engineering and architectural processes. Mr. Larson concluded by stating that the SPO is achieving a hiring rate of around 16.9 percent rate of DBE companies.

### **3. Construction Outreach and Communications Workshop**

- A. Mr. Pfeiffer continued with an overview of Construction Outreach and Communications. He highlighted the communication strategies that worked well in the Green Line construction, identifying the various outlets to send information, the use of weekly construction updates, and, consistent communication with community committees.
- B. Ms. O'Connell facilitated the beginning of small group discussion. Committee members discussed three questions at their tables.
  - 1. Identify outreach and communication challenges/opportunities for SWLRT construction
  - 2. Identify outreach and communications techniques to address challenges/opportunities
  - 3. Identify key corridor events/dates
- C. Small group feedback: (Note: The rough list of answers notes is included at the end of this summary).

### **4. Next Steps**

- a. Co-Chair Munt provided her summary of the meeting. There will be three years of heavy construction. It will be difficult for everyone. To survive that, the Council must recognize that technology has changed and people will expect us to use it. Some people use it less and must also be informed with more traditional methods. Regardless, people want to be prepared. They want constant information, and as few, if any, surprises as possible. This will be a challenge since SPO will be working throughout the corridor rather than one location at a time. We need to create tours to show and demonstrate progress throughout the construction phase in order to communicate the light at the end of the tunnel.

Co-Chair Duffy added that he had been in the construction sector for most of his career. He knows from experience that unexpected things will happen. The important thing is how you deal with it, and how you solve problems that arise. The keys are consistent, clear communication and disciplined organization. It's important we keep the public on our side and preempt any reason to complain to the press.

Another committee member highlighted the importance of good signage for bikes and cars during construction, and to maintain good detours for all commuters.

There were other suggestions on ways to keep kids away from attractive, but dangerous job sites. Create tours to divert their curiosity by giving them opportunities to see the trucks and equipment.

#### **5. 2015 Meeting Schedule**

Co-Chair Duffy floated the idea of inviting the Lt. Governor to a committee meeting in December to hear from members about their views on the SWLRT. Co-Chair Munt stated that Governor Dayton had made the Lt. Governor the point person on transportation for the upcoming Legislative session in March. Based on the show of hands, the committee members present agreed with this initiative.

#### **6. The Meeting was Adjourned**



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October 27, 2015**

**Dear BAC/CAC Members,**

The primary purpose of the October 27, 2015 joint meeting was to solicit the thoughts and ideas of committee members about the upcoming construction phase of the SWLRT project. Approximately 20 members between the two committees heard a project update, an overview of upcoming construction activities; an overview of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program, and viewed the updated alignment video. These presentations were followed with a construction outreach and communications workshop. After listening to a high level summary of best practices and lessons learned on the Green Line (Central Corridor), members discussed the following questions with others around their tables:

1. Identify outreach and communication challenges/opportunities for SWLRT construction
2. Identify outreach and communications techniques to address challenges/opportunities
3. Identify key corridor events/dates

If you were unable to attend, we would appreciate your input on these questions. If you did attend, and have additional thoughts, please feel free to contribute them. On the following page is a reference list of the feedback received during the workshop, taken from the notes collected in 'bullet' form. They are listed under common themes/categories.

## Construction Mitigation Feedback

### I. General Thoughts

- Develop a “SWLRT Construction Survival Kit”
- Provide a general, accessible “big picture” overview of the construction phase (i.e. phasing, scope, process, etc.). This should include: what to expect, available public resources, etc.
- Advance notice/daily postings of construction projects/issues: cut lines, broken hydrants, etc.,) instead of trying to hide them
- Show/promote progress, phasing
- Involve locals
- Resources in multiple languages

### II. Detours and Reroutes

- Monitors at bus stops to have route updates
- Coordinate with MnDOT for road closures
- Coordinate with Metro Transit and SouthWest Transit for road/transit route changes
- Specify bus, bike, and automobile, detours/reroutes: daily updates
- Coordinate with bus schedules
- Clear signage
- On-site tours/bus tours/focus tour areas

### III. Communication

- The communication should be pushed to a variety of local community groups of different sizes; Organized into various categories. In multiple languages
- Use technology: high and low tech methods to serve multiple audiences
- Use email, text alerts
- Create a new app
- Use existing apps: WAYZ, Beat the Traffic, Nextdoor, Neighborhood pages
- Facebook: AAA traffic site, (DON'T use the MnDOT site)
- Use community newspapers and radio stations/KBEM
- Regularly attend/arrange neighborhood meetings, and/or with associations
- Work with property managers of large buildings (post info, bus changes, etc.,)
- Keep city/county staff and elected officials informed: They will also get calls from the public looking for information
- Partner/link with other websites like AAA website

### IV. Develop Good Will

- Onsite tours, bus tours in focus areas; wash windows of businesses, residents
- Develop a pre-construction survey
- Create opportunities for kids to learn about the construction, see equipment
- Yik-yak on college campuses (?)
- Stay ahead of potentially controversial matters like what we're doing to protect the environment