



METRO Blue Line Extension Project Decision Board Meeting Minutes

Date & Time	April 17, 2024 9:00 – 10:00 am
Location	Blue Line Extension Project Office, North Conference Room, 6465 Wayzata Blvd, Suite 600, St Louis Park, MN 55426
Attendees	Charles Zelle, Anjuli Cameron, Lisa Cerney, Reva Chamblis, Marion Greene, Peter Hanf, Joleen Ketterling, Shahin Khazrajafari, Nick Landwer, Jeff Lunde, Ben Schweigert, Dan Soler, Nick Thompson, Kjerstin Yager, Kelcie Young

1. Call To Order

Chair Charlie Zelle, Metropolitan Council, called the METRO Blue Line Extension Project Decision Board (PDB) Meeting to order at 9:10 am.

2. Minutes from February 8 Meeting

Chair Zelle indicated one edit was made to the February 8 meeting minutes correcting Commissioner Marion Greene to be representing Hennepin County and not the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Chair Zelle requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 8 with the edit noted. Commissioner Jeff Lunde, Hennepin County, motioned to approve the February 8 meeting minutes and Council Members Anjuli Cameron and Reva Chamblis seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved.

Nick Thompson, Metropolitan Council, stated that no actions will be needed at today’s meeting, but important information will be shared on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), Municipal Consent and the Contract Bidding Strategy.

3. SDEIS and NEPA Update

Kelcie Young, Metropolitan Council, summarized the progress being made on the SDEIS. She reviewed the 2024 schedule that has been presented at the Corridor Management Committee (CMC) and discussed the sequence of events forthcoming, adding that the FTA has been a cooperative partner throughout this process. Kelcie added when the SDEIS is published, notices will be communicated in the Federal Register, Minnesota Environmental Quality Board Monitor (EQB) and through other typical channels.



Kelcie added that presentations to the CMC and Council will be provided including a summary of impact topics and next steps as well as preliminary findings related to strategies to avoid, minimize, and mitigate negative impacts. Kelcie emphasized that not everything will be fully resolved at the SDEIS stage. The Environmental Team will seek meaningful input and comments for mitigation strategies in collaboration with the community which will inform the SDEIS.

After the SDEIS publication and comment period, the Environmental Team will begin preparation of the Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement (SFEIS). Comments on the SDEIS will inform work on the SFEIS. Dan stated these efforts will lead to an anticipated record of decision date on the SFEIS in May 2025.

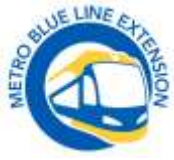
4. Municipal Consent Update

Shahin Khazrajafari, Hennepin County, shared details regarding the municipal consent schedule and added this is a key milestone. Shahin reviewed the milestones that need to be achieved before municipal consent including environmental, design, and committee meetings. The plan is to submit the municipal consent plans by July 26 and conduct a public hearing on August 26 with the final municipal consent slated for October 10.

Shahin shared that in addition to what Kelcie covered on the environmental work, there is also design work being done such as updating the cost and ridership estimates based on 30% design. Shahin indicated up until now a cost range has been provided and the next estimate will be a single number. Ridership will be updated based on the 2023 onboard data available.

Shahin stated there is a list of municipal consent items being worked through in coordination with City and local municipality staff to enable finalization of a set of plans to be submitted for municipal consent. To accomplish this there are key meetings and actions that need to occur. Cost and ridership data will be shared at the June 13 CMC. Meetings with the Transportation Committee, Metropolitan Council, and Hennepin County Board will be scheduled to authorize the public hearing. The plan is to have these meetings complete in mid to late July to allow a clear path for the public hearing. Back-up dates are in place if needed.

Dan shared the public hearing for the SDEIS occurs before an authorization for the public hearing for municipal consent.



Council Member Chamblis asked for a clarification of the July dates for Council and asked if the Transportation Committee is authorizing the public hearing. Nick Thompson indicated yes, the business item of authorization of the public hearing will be brought forward including identifying the date of the public hearing and purpose. Nick added this is essentially starting the public hearing process and Hennepin County will take a similar step to authorize the date and purpose.

Dan stated a public works hearing will be conducted the week before. Commissioner Greene asked if this could be added to the schedule.

Ben Schweigert reviewed the statute and clarified that the Metropolitan Council and Regional Railroad Authority need to authorize the public hearing, and not Hennepin County. Hennepin County needs to provide municipal consent during the 45 days and take action.

Commissioner Greene asked if approving the public hearing date was an immediate approval. Nick replied that the 30-day and 45-day periods are statutes. Chair Zelle asked if the statute read at least 45 days. Nick replied no and clarified it is 45 days up to deadline for municipal consent. Nick added the cities do not have to act but action is preferred. Lisa Cerney, Hennepin County, added the County Committee would be in July.

Commissioner Greene stated Shahin had mentioned new information from the 2023 study will be used to update ridership numbers and this information will be different than what was previously shared. Shahin replied that the estimate will be updated based on actual ridership data and the team is working on updating the model based on this. Nick Thompson added the number is expected to be positive. Commissioner Greene asked if it is common practice to update. Nick stated that when the estimated ridership number was shared, the committees were informed that ridership estimates would be updated three times this year and this will be the second update. Nick stated it is important to keep updating as more information is gathered. Commissioner Greene replied that the recent announcement felt like a big deal and wondered as a member of the public if it will receive the same fanfare. Nick shared this will be an incremental change so not sure it would trigger the same fanfare. Nick added that the estimated cost will go from a range to a single number which might be a story. The number will be important when going to municipal consent as it will be the starting point.



Shahin reviewed the municipal consent process for each city. Dan added that each City will hold a public hearing of their own and have an action. Each City determines how to conduct the public hearing as long as it is within the statutory timeframe.

Nick Thompson shared that each City will be taking action on the project within the City's boundaries or jurisdiction and the action is either "yes" or "no action". If the City does not approve, the reasons why are listed and if these items are incorporated into the project, would then approve.

Dan added that Nick Landwer's team has been regularly meeting with each City and when the design plans are submitted on June 26th for each City, it will have been after months and months of discussion.

Commissioner Lunde shared the August timeframe may need to be discussed by the City of Brooklyn Park as the City Council usually cancels the night before a Primary. Commissioner Lunde asked whether it is fair to assume from a County Board perspective the focus is on what the County gets out of it; not the Cities with regard to municipal consent. Dan replied from a County Board approval of the municipal consent plan this is correct.

Chair Zelle requested that this PowerPoint presentation be shared. Dan indicated revisions will be made regarding the public hearing authorizations and then it will be shared. Shahin added the presentation will be published online as well.

5. Contract Bidding Strategy

Shahin shared that over the past year, the Blue Line Extension Project has been looking at an array of contract delivery methods. Shahin reviewed the main elements of the following delivery methods: Low-Price Design-Bid-Build (LP DBB), Design-Build (DB), Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) and Best Value Design-Bid-Build (BV DBB).

Chair Zelle asked if the CMAR is similar to the CMGC delivery method. Nick and Shahin answered that the CMAR delivery method is very similar. Chair Zelle shared that when the project goes out to bid, often the contractor will come in with a low bid but make up the margins through change orders. Chair Zelle indicated it is important to be thinking about this now. Nick shared that the BV DBB has been discussed with MnDOT and would bring in some of these elements.

Shahin shared that a workshop was held to discuss the BV DBB delivery method. Advantages were identified with this method. The selected contractor may not have the



lowest initial price, but high quality and management of change orders will result in better overall project cost.

Commissioner Greene asked if not having the lowest initial price was the single downside to this approach. Shahin replied that there are tradeoffs. Individuals participating in this workshop were from Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, Procurement, MnDOT, Construction and OEO. This group identified clear criteria to compare the LP DBB and BV DBB delivery methods. A scoring sheet was completed based on various risk areas. The findings were that LP DBB scored higher in some areas than BV DBB. For example, the LP DBB delivery method is a familiar process and is quicker. BV DBB delivery method scored higher on other elements such as DBE participation, quality, sequencing of work, and contractor input.

Shahin added that a decision on the delivery method has not been finalized and more discussions about this approach will be conducted. Nick added there is a weighted value to each element such as price and quality and these are big decisions to work through. Chair Zelle replied this is complex and there is certainly more work involved to ensure delivery of a high-quality project. Chair Zelle added it is important that the project is set up correctly up front and difficult conversations are had. Dan indicated each light rail project between Hiawatha and now has been a little different and stated that BV DBB may help to understand how each potential contractor would attack the most difficult part of the project such as daily interactions with the businesses and residential properties and the relocation of utilities.

Council Member Cameron asked if a standard methodology exists to perform the procurement process or if something is being developed. Nick replied there are standards that exist and MnDOT has experience with it but there are specific project issues yet to be understood. Nick added if this method is chosen, policymaker input will be important.

Commissioner Lunde asked if the contract delivery method provided a more realistic assessment if this would change the value of the project when presented to the FTA. Nick replied that the FTA will approve any of these delivery methods and prefer the method that effectively manages risk. The FTA's price will be locked in based on their share of the budget. The FTA has approved similar light rail projects using the BV DBB method.

Council Member Chamblis shared it is the categories being emphasized and the impacts being focused on that are important.



Shahin shared that more assessment is being done and there is another round of workshops scheduled to discuss contract packaging strategies including how the contracts will be split up and identifying the appropriate delivery method to use. With the BV DBB delivery method being new, the right contract language needs to be determined and the appropriate bidder qualifications and criteria will be established to measure and assess potential proposals.

Commissioner Greene asked if there will be a thorough vetting of why a particular delivery method is chosen. Nick replied yes, there will be a report that goes into detail of why the decision was made. This report is a requirement of the FTA.

6. Next Meeting: May 15, 2024

7. Adjourn

Chair Zelle adjourned the meeting at (insert time) 9:57 am.

Meeting Materials Provided:

Meeting Agenda, April 17, 2024

Meeting Summary February 8, 2024

PDB PowerPoint Presentation

Respectfully Submitted,

Joleen Ketterling, Blue Line Ext. Administrative Lead