



METRO Blue Line Extension
Meeting of the Corridor Management Committee
September 24, 2021
9:00 AM
Location: WebEx

CMC Members: Charlie Zelle, Robert Lilligren, Reva Chamblis, Irene Fernando, Jeff Lunde, Gillian Rosenquist, Bill Blonigan, Jim Adams, Tonja West-Hafner, Chris Meyer, Abdi Salah, Nicole Buehler, Denise Butler, Felicia Perry, Mike Steinhauser, Jason Greenberg, Bridget Rief, Mike Opatz, Kathi Hemken, Alicia Vickerman, Mike Barns, Jon Solbert, Elie Farhat, George Selman

Not in attendance: Angela Conley, Jacob Frey, Shep Harris, Mike Elliott, Mark Steffenson, Olga Parsons, Susan Pha, Ricardo Perez, Qannani Omar, Tim Baylor, Felipe Sosa, Wes Kooistra, Nick Thompson

Meeting Summary

1. Call to Order

Chair Charlie Zelle called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 12, 2016

Mayor Blonigan moved to approve the minutes. Mike Steinhauser seconded. The minutes were approved.

3. Committee Reports

Jason Greenberg, Committee Co-Chair shared an update for the Community Advisory Committee. He shared they learned a lot of new information. The group had questions about a number of topics including jobs training and other details that will be forthcoming.

Felicia Perry, Committee Co-Chair shared an update from the last Business Advisory Committee. She said they reviewed the engagement that has been happening. They reviewed updates on County Road 81, including updates on North Memorial and Bass Lake Road. They also discussed the upcoming workshops and how the community will engage in that information. They reviewed the project schedule and reoriented around that. She reported that the committee was excited to learn about the selection of CURA and their project team for the Anti-Displacement.

4. Public Engagement: What We Heard Summer 2021



Sophia Ginis shared an update on public engagement activities. In July and August there were 45 events with over 2,000 direct points of contact and 222 comments on the interactive map. The team has been out and about, and they are really working to get feedback. The map includes some back-and-forth dialogue and gives a picture of what people are talking about.

Sophia shared feedback on the Station Study Areas. Generally, they heard confirmation of the station areas with some feedback about making those locations closer together. She shared feedback on the visualizations by city.

Nichole Buehler had a comment. She said that when there are conversations about the route selection, it is difficult to make a decision without knowing the impacts. Will there be an opportunity to understand the displacement and impacts before that decision is made? Sophia agreed that needs to be a part of the conversation, and that information will be available and shared before there is a decision. Mike Steinhauser shared that he's talked to each business in Robbinsdale in the past. He said that it could be disastrous for a business to have construction. Businesses are very concerned about traffic implications for them. Chair Zelle said that needs to be considered. Councilmember Reva Chamblis said she was glad to see the summary of feedback including engagement in Brooklyn Park. She said that in order to make sure the northern part of the corridor is engaged we want them to be able to look to the future in terms of benefits and what might have been missed in the planning of the old alignment. In terms of anti-displacement, we should be looking at historic assets and what should be maintained and redeveloped, and at current assets and what should be maintained and developed. For the future, we should look at what sort of pre-development planning can occur so that those communities, particularly in the corridors that are at risk and underserved, have their needs met early enough to be impacted in a positive way.

Nichole Buehler asked about the data for the community outreach. She asked if Sophia could share if there were gaps in the engagement, particularly for BIPOC groups. Sophia said that now that they have been in person, they have been able to close the gap that was there with the first round of engagement. Sophia said this is because they have been able to go out to people, door knock and have events in the communities they need to reach.

5. County Road 81 Update

Nick Landwer, Metropolitan Council, shared visualizations for three options for routes near North Memorial. Following visualizations, Nick shared videos which will be posted online. The first option showed the light rail on an elevated structure that is center running at North Memorial. Option 2 showed an option which would curve over and above the Victory Memorial Parkway with a connection to the park and a slightly easier connection to the hospital. The third option was for connection to the Lowry Route which would have a similar connection to the Hospital as Option 1, but it would not serve the park as well in Option 2.



Commissioner Fernando said these visuals are very helpful. She said she would recommend when these get posted to the public to include the objectives of the designs so that people understand why decisions were made and then the public can share more informed feedback.

Mayor Blonigan thanked Met Council members for coming to Robbinsdale. Robbinsdale would like to have a meeting with the senators about this project and would like help with this. In the downtown area, businesses and community members are concerned about pedestrian safety and traffic. He said that they would like to have more consultant support for understanding this. They have concerns about width of the corridor and impacts. He asked if there would need to be property purchases in areas due to added traffic and the need for more lanes. They would like more support to understand these issues and impacts. Chair Zelle acknowledged these concerns and committed to working with them on these issues. Jason Greenberg asked about the connection to the hospital, which is at the parking garage. Nick said that they are looking into the pedestrian connection there. Dan Soler, Hennepin County, added that where the connection is being now is to the area where employees were parking, and they access the hospital through a tunnel underneath Oakdale. Mike Steinhauser said that that is an unheated parking ramp and narrow tunnel. Long-term a skyway would be a possibility. Dan Soler added that that is how helicopter patients access the hospital too.

Nick Landwer shared some designs for the Bass Lake Road Intersection. Mayor Adams shared that the number one issue would be safety for the station. The second issue would be the properties that would need to be acquired. He said that the future for traffic needs should be considered in the process. The traffic from all the northwest suburbs all comes through this corridor and is the main highway to access Minneapolis, so this is not just important for Crystal but for all the other cities.

6. Minneapolis Update

Dan Soler shared some updates in the progress of determining a route. He reviewed work completed to date including identifying the main options: West Broadway and Washington/Lowry. Following this the project determined station study areas based on analysis and community feedback. They are currently working on the evaluation criteria to determine between these routes. They are currently advancing design details including station configurations and locations as well as intersections. These are both important for property impacts.

They are considering many different sets of information for this evaluation including land use, equity considerations, community demographics, traffic and parking information and Right-of-Way impacts. Dan Soler emphasized that identifying potential property impacts are



important part of this process. There will be minor impacts and then there are properties that need to be acquired. That is the evaluation side.

Dan shared that there will be upcoming community design workshops. Design is advancing to be able to work on and understand fully the impacts and the options. There will be detailed design drawings and they will be brought forward at those.

7. Project Schedule: Upcoming Milestones

Sam O'Connell, Metropolitan Council shared the upcoming milestones for the project including the Fall Community Workshops, draft report and final report schedule. The draft report will be a culmination of community engagement and technical work and a 45-day comment period. By March 2022 the report will be finalized. The Route Modification Report will include details on the project history, process thus far and evaluation of the main route options. Sam reviewed the project goals which will guide the evaluation process.

Mayor Blonigan asked if the December draft report will have a preliminary recommendation about the Minneapolis routes. Sam O'Connell said that the draft report will include the overview of all the work that has been done. The March report will have the recommendation.

8. Anti-Displacement Update

Cathy Gold, Hennepin County, announced the selection of CURA and the leadership of C Terrence Anderson as the Anti-Displacement consultant. In addition to CURA's team they will be including Bellwether Consulting and the Housing Justice Center. She reviewed the next steps to getting the work started. CURA will lead the creation and facilitation of a new Blue Line Extension Anti-Displacement Work Group. Chair Zelle said that this is a wonderful team and the process itself has tremendous opportunity.

9. Next Meeting: October 14, 1:30 PM

10. Adjourn

Chair Zelle adjourned the meeting at 10:25 AM.

