

Metropolitan Council

Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee
Wednesday, June 7, 10:00 a.m., St. Louis Park City Hall

Members/Alternates Present	Chair Charlie Zelle Dr. Tyrone Carter Dan Duffy Debbie Goettel Marion Greene James Hovland	Chris LaTondresse John Pacheco Will Roach Nick Thompson Brad Wiersum	Tim Brausen (Alt) Anjuli Cameron (Alt) Suzanne Sobotka (Alt)
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1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Zelle called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. Introductions were made for the new members.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Zelle presented the April 5, 2023, SWLRT Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner LaTondresse made a motion to approve the minutes, Council Member Brausen seconded the motion. Following a vote, the minutes were approved.

Chair Zelle thanked the City of Eden Prairie for the recent ribbon cutting event held for the SouthWest Station. The bus turnaround area is now open for service and is very nice. This will be a great area for multi-modal connections once the Green Line Extension is up and running.

Chair Zelle provided a brief update on the recent Legislative session. There was a ¼ cent sales tax portion for Metro Transit that was approved, which will free up opportunities for the transit system. Also approved was \$72M bonding for ABRT.

3. METRO TRANSIT SECURITY

Chair Zelle introduced Metro Transit Police Chief Morales.

Chief Morales addressed some of the concerns on LRT and BLRT. He also shared his visions for how to come up with long term solutions. Staff resources continue to be a concern all over, particularly in the state of Minnesota. Chief Morales reassured the CMC that Metro Transit is recruiting and moving forward. Currently, Metro Transit has 23 new candidate officers going through background checks. The onboarding for new officers was changed from 8 weeks in-class training to 5 weeks in-class training and 3 weeks training in the field. The reason for this is to have the officers in the field for the last 3 weeks of training.

Chief Morales said his staff has been conducting outreach with the Homeless Action Team (HAT). Staff is also teaming up with community partners who offer social services for help with homelessness to help enforce our code of conduct. Since officers have had extra presence in this area, it has shown a significant decrease in crime.

Chief Morales reported that as of June 1, Metro Transit started a partnership with Allied Security. This will be for the Lake Street and Franklin station areas and will help free up law enforcement officials to move about the system. We are hoping this presence will help in having our riders return.

Commissioner Greene mentioned 23 new officers is a great number to achieve. She asked how Metro Transit has been successful in getting this number. Chief Morales responded that we have an effective recruitment team, and we go out and meet with people where they are, by going into their communities and establishing good relationships for our recruitment. We plan to have double digits on board by August.

Commissioner LaTondresse feels these items Chief Morales reported on will be great for improving

safety on transit. He asked about the vision for system collaboration between Metro Transit and other local jurisdictions. Security on transit is an issue for more than just Metro Transit, as the issue belongs to everyone. Our overall objective is to move people and get them to their destination. Chief Morales said we all do need to work together and collaborate effectively. We need to work smartly and work with one another to keep our system safe. Mayor Wiersum stated that this is a collaboration challenge that needs coordination and cooperation by all. The challenges that happen along this line should belong to all and we all should have a stake to resolve problems. He wants his city to partner and work with Metro Transit.

3. PROJECT UPDATE

Jim Alexander, Green Line Extension Project Director provided an update on the project. We are continuing to progress construction forward. Mr. Alexander stated that we continue discussions with our civil and systems contractors on the revised costs associated with the revised schedules. We are continuing with our project estimate of \$2.7B with anticipated revenue service in 2027. Mr. Alexander reminded the Committee that impacts due to the work stoppages in 2022 and 2023 associated with the secant wall work have not been incorporated in the schedule and impacts to the schedule and budget are under evaluation. The Project staff will talk later this year with FTA on a Risk Assessment and Recovery Plan, which are necessary steps for the project.

We have had over 4,120 individuals working on this project through April 2023. To date, we have had \$210.2M billed by Disadvantaged Business Enterprise companies, which is over 20%. Our project is reinvesting in communities throughout the Twin Cities and the State.

Trail Update. Mr. Alexander reviewed the scheduled opening dates for the various trails. We are working with the contractor to open some trail segments earlier and hope to open portions of the South Cedar Lake Trail later this year. A portion of the trail near the Twins Stadium will need to close for some work starting there this summer. We continue to provide weekly construction updates that include information on trail opening and closings.

The SouthWest Transit opening event was very successful. This will be a multi-modal station where buses and LRT both operate out of this station. Photos of the ribbon cutting event were shared, along with photos of the station area. There is some additional pile driving work in this area, which is scheduled for completion by mid-summer.

Photos were shown of the station work progress, along with photos of the bridges and tunnel work. Mr. Alexander reviewed highlights of construction along the alignment. Work is progressing in the Kenilworth LRT tunnel area, with the secant work now complete in this area. Photos were also shown of the Kenilworth area work.

The Cedar Lake Channel WPA walls are now complete and the contractor is finishing up the ped bridge in this area. The Cedar Lake Channel continues to be closed off for this work. We recently received an extension of an easement from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to extend the closure of Cedar Lake Parkway through September 29. Coordination continues with City and Park Board on this area.

Commissioner Greene asked if the Flat Pack House sellers have been in contact with the Project to coordinate with their work. David Davies, Public Involvement Manager, responded that we do communicate with the current owners for construction coordination.

Mr. Alexander reported that work in the Glenwood Avenue area is moving along well and we hope to open this roadway later this summer. We continue to coordinate our work with Hennepin County, who also has work in this area. We plan to close the roadway at Royalton Avenue and Holden Street for construction work later this year.

Commissioner LaTondresse asked about trail segment between Blake Road and Louisiana, is this still

scheduled to open the Summer of 2023? Mr. Alexander responded he is hopeful this will open this summer. This would be the trail section from Blake Road to just west of Louisiana Avenue.

Commissioner LaTondresse thanked the Project for conducting Excelsior Bridge work at night, which was helpful. Mr. Alexander responded that most of the work remaining in this area will be done mostly at night or weekends.

Chair Zelle asked how far along the project is to date? Mr. Alexander responded that we are now about 75% complete overall. The critical path continues to be the Kenilworth tunnel.

Systems. Photos were shown of the recent work on Systems. Mr. Alexander reported the Overhead Catenary System poles and arms are now installed from SouthWest Station all the way up through Minnetonka. Crews are also currently installing substation and signal houses. Mayor Hovland asked if there is security around the substations? Mr. Alexander responded yes, the systems contractor is responsible for security of these areas.

Public Involvement. David Davies, Public Involvement Manager, provided a community outreach update. Mr. Davies reported our two new outreach coordinators are onboarding and currently going out in the community attending events and meetings. The Outreach team is very busy in the community this summer, with over 90 meetings and events held so far this year, being a mix of in-person and virtual events. Construction coordination during the season is a major part of outreach, and the goal is to get the word out before the construction begins.

Mr. Davies reported there were five walking tours led by Outreach and Construction staff held in May, which were very well attended. Participation is limited to approximately 15 – 20 per tour depending on the venue. More public opportunities will be offered in July with a third round in Aug./Sept. Outreach staff are also always available for group tours as well. If interested, let the Outreach team know. The van tours hold 8 – 10 people. Mayor Wiersum stated he is interested and will get in touch with David.

Mayor Hovland suggested these public tours also be advertised on city or county websites. Mr. Davies said we will share the information.

4. DBE/WORKFORCE UPDATE

Jon Tao from the Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity reviewed and shared the DBE achievement numbers along with the small business and workforce participation. The numbers shared are as of March 31, 2023. Mr. Tao stated that the contractors continue to exceed the goals for the DBE participation on their contracts. The aggregate goal is 15%, and overall cumulative achievement is over 20%. Staff continue to monitor progress and meet with the small businesses out in the field.

The disaggregated data as of March 31, 2023 was shown.

Mr. Tao reported on a couple recent workforce events. One was the “Rockin’ the Rails” event, which was held at Dunwoody College. This was a construction career expo, with hands on experience for students to check out. The contractor reports that it was well attended and will be promoted again next year. Photos were shown of this event.

A few years ago, Met Council participated with construction trade unions, community based organizations, and higher education to create the Building Strong Communities Construction Pre-Apprentice program. This program model has since been adopted and expanded throughout Minnesota. For the 2023 class, numbers were shown, along with the metro area graduates. The data shown included the Veterans who took advantage and were helped by this program.

Commissioner Greene asked for clarification on the workforce slides. It appears we did not hit the workforce goals on one area and then the other two slides we have. Mr. Tao responded that the DBE

achievement slides are measured in dollars paid to DBE small businesses, the disaggregated contract data is referring to prime contractor's commitment to the DBE subs. The workforce disaggregated slides are measured in hours, which is being monitored by the Department of Human Rights on a monthly basis.

Commissioner Greene asked what is the Project's response to try to increase these workforce numbers? Mr. Tao responded that increasing the numbers is a collaborative effort by the contractors and stakeholders from the DBE and Workforce Advisory Committee. Our contractors work with their subs on how to increase diversity in their labor workforce. The contractors do the hiring; and the unions have a lot to do with the training. Community-based organizations that we meet with have relationships with and training for job seekers. They also have the support resources that job seekers need. We also meet with stakeholders on the challenges/barriers and how we can overcome them.

Commissioner Greene would like to hear more on stakeholder meetings and how they are being discussed and implemented. She also would like a follow up on the graduates and what percent of those graduates are now working on the project. Mr. Tao stated that the May 4 event was an opportunity for the graduates to come and talk to the contractors and build a connection with them, which was helpful. Civil contractors have hired a few and are interviewing other graduates. He will try to get confirmation on the number that were hired for the next meeting.

Council Member Cameron asked Mr. Tao to provide at a future meeting the breakdown in data as to what position they hold within the workforce. Mr. Tao will look into getting this data from MDHR or the contractors.

5. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Hoffner, Recording Secretary