

Metropolitan Council

Meeting of the Southwest Corridor Management Committee
Wednesday, February 1, 10:00 a.m., St. Louis Park City Hall

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| Members/Alternates | Chair Charlie Zelle | Marion Greene | Will Roach |
| Present | Mike Barnes | Patrick Hanlon | Jake Spano |
| | Molly Cummings | James Hovland | Nick Thompson |
| | Dan Duffy | Chris LaTondresse | Suzanne Sobotka (Alt) |
| | Debbie Goettel | John Pacheco | |

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Zelle called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

Chair Zelle provided an update on the Governor’s recent budget proposal. The proposal is supportive of transit and proposes money for electrification of buses; a proposed bonding authority for buying buses; and a proposal for a 1/8 of a percent regional transit sales tax for operating and capital costs. This is not enough but a start, and the Governor’s proposal does acknowledge transit.

Chair Zelle also reported Council Member Molly Cummings will be retiring from Met Council, and this is her last CMC meeting as a Council Member. Molly has made many remarkable contributions to this project and other projects over the years. Molly commented that it has been a privilege and honor to work with this project. Mayors Spano, Hanlon and Commissioner Greene made remarks appreciating all the work that Molly has done on this project. The CMC thanked her for her work and wished her well in retirement.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Zelle presented the December 7, 2022, SWLRT Corridor Management Committee meeting minutes for approval. Commissioner Goettel made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner LaTondresse seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

3. MnDOT PEER REVIEW

Chair Zelle welcomed Michael Beer, Assistant Commissioner in Engineering Services Division of MnDOT to provide an update on the recent MnDOT Peer Review report. Michael reported that MnDOT provided their review and expertise for this Peer Review, with a strong team that included Tom Ravn, Paul Johns and Ben Hoefler, along with others. Overall, this team has a lot of years of construction experience between them. Michael said since July 2022, there were about 6 meetings and site visits held. The Project Office staff are very knowledgeable and were very forthcoming in sharing any documents they had to help with the review. A lot of effort went in for this Peer Review, which also benefited MnDOT.

Michael reported there were about eight recommendations made from the review, some of which included: to shorten the length of time from the bid opening to the award of the contract. A longer time creates a challenge on a large project with prices and schedule changes. Another comment was to recommend using unit bid prices rather than a lump sum for a project this size. They also had comments on work that was added after the contract letting.

Nick Thompson appreciated MnDOT performing this review. Internally, for this project we discussed what we can do differently with cost estimates and change orders going forward. There were staff from BLRT participating as well so we can also learn from the Peer Review for this project. We will be sharing this report with all our capital improvement staff, and also posting on our web site. It has been very beneficial to us.

Council Member Cummings thanked Michael for presenting on this peer review today. We continually learn from our projects, and these peer reviews are very important.

Mayor Hovland mentioned he was surprised that the Civil contract started in 2018 with no baseline schedule until March 2022 for this large of a contract. Jim Alexander, Project Director, responded that there was a schedule in place, although it was not an approved schedule as the project office was not in agreement with the contractor on some of the forecasted dates. The schedule was ultimately approved in March 2020. However, with the many changes on the project the Council had to rebaseline the schedule, which was done as part of the Settlement Agreement, which was executed in March 2022.

Mayor Spano asked that the link to the Peer Review report be sent out, and also asked if the report addressed the ownership of the project. Michael Beer stated this report was just for the mechanics of the project, it did not address ownership. Jim said the link to the report will be sent out to CMC members.

4. PROJECT UPDATE

Jim Alexander, Green Line Extension Project Director provided an update on the project. Jim reported progress is continuing to be made with the Systems contractor. Staff will present a proposed change order for Met Council approval that establishes a revised schedule. The schedule will add 28 months to the Systems contract, bringing the completion of the Systems work in May 2026. It also sets a process for dispute resolution, similar to the process established with the Settlement Agreement for Civil construction. Once the change order is finalized, we will then negotiate a price for the extended duration.

It was noted that the delays with the secant work have not been accounted for in the schedule. Commissioner Goettel asked about the estimate of timeline from the secant delay? Jim responded that staff is evaluating this with the contractors, also looking to see if there can be any improvements to the tunnel construction schedule. Later in the spring we should be able to provide a more detailed update.

Safety. Jim reported that we coordinate with the City of Minneapolis on their annual freight rail safety meeting. Our project keeps track of recordable incidents, which are defined as when time is lost at work or restricted duty is required due to an injury or if treatment beyond first aid is required. To date there have been 49 recordables on the Civil construction contract. Mostly these were due to slips, falls, and cuts. Commissioner Goettel asked if the safety numbers that were reported are year to date? Jim said these numbers are since the Civil contract started. These numbers were highest in 2020 but have been coming down since then. Jim noted that staff reports safety numbers to FTA monthly.

The count of construction workers was shared. There have been 3,957 individuals working on the project through December 2022, with 69 of the 87 MN counties bringing home paychecks from this project. Photos were shown on construction progress.

Jim previewed a snapshot of upcoming construction work in 2023, which will include progress of Civil construction of stations, walls and bridges, along with ramping up Systems work. There will be Town Halls scheduled later this Spring to preview the work.

Mayor Hanlon asked where we are at with the surface parking at Shady Oak Station. Jim responded that we are working with the contractor on negotiating a change order for this. Ryan Kronzer, Manager of Design, reported that the parking lot north of the platform is about 200 stalls; the balance of about 500 spaces will be south of the station, which are currently deferred. Mayor Hanlon appreciates what Met Council has done to reduce the amount of surface parking, but this is still a huge hit to a city that is only 4 square miles. A parking ramp at that spot would be better, and he appreciates any help that can be given for this issue.

Jim reported that the secant wall work for the Kenilworth LRT tunnel is about 94% complete. We have recently encountered an impediment prohibiting the completion of the secants. An investigation is underway. Commissioner Goettel asked if it is more difficult in winter to find out what that impediment is? Jim said yes, it is more difficult to conduct work in colder temperatures.

Images of the Kenilworth LRT tunnel work were shown. Recently, there was an approximately 1,500 cubic yard tremie seal poured, along with some floor slab work completed. We recently moved the temporary pedestrian bridge to the north. We put up an information board at this new crossing, which has been well received. Chair Zelle agrees this board is very informative and well placed.

The Civil contractor is working on restoration work for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) walls in the Cedar Lake Channel bridge. This work is a Project requirement identified in the FEIS and ROD. A photo was shown of the work. The Glenwood roadway is planned to be open in 2023. Once Glenwood is open, there will be some closures in the Royalston Avenue area.

Council Member Cummings stated the tours really show the benefits of the line and asked of any coming up. Jim said these tours will be ramped up again in the Spring. We typically invite the public to about three or four throughout the season. We will also offer CMC and individual cities tours.

Will Roach asked if there are any new developments happening. Jim responded there is a lot of existing development, which Michael Kranz from Metro Transit presented to CMC at the December meeting. The link to the presentation will be shared to CMC. Jim mentioned that Blake, Wooddale, Beltline, and Opus are good examples of development.

Photos were shown of the Systems work. Jim reported the OCS poles are going up in the Eden Prairie area. With this cold weather, not a lot of Systems work is going on but work will ramp up again when the temperatures warm up.

Overall completion of this project is over 70%. Our vehicles are all in and we have four currently in revenue service. The Franklin Facility work is complete. The Civil work is over 75% complete and Systems work in the field is about 10% complete and with production of Systems equipment the contract is nearly 50% complete.

Trails. Jim explained the map showing the anticipated reopening dates for trails. Some areas are open in a temporary condition, such as the Kenilworth Trail north of 21st. We are hopeful to open the trail segment from Blake Road to just west of Louisiana Avenue in the spring. The trail segment from Excelsior Boulevard to Blake Road is projected to remain closed until 2024. Mayor Hanlon thanked the project staff for the work in opening the trails.

Public Involvement. Jim reported we have held over 2,100 public meetings to date with over 51,000 people attending. We will continue our open communications on this project. In 2022, hotline calls/emails were at 165. Our newsletter has 18,237 subscribers, with an open rate of 50%. Our year end video has been put together and is available on our website.

Dan Duffy asked if the project has seen any supply chain issues that may cause delay? Jim responded that with Systems, we are dealing with conduit pricing going up and down, but we haven't really been impacted much with supply chain issues particularly since we executed a change order to the System contract to store equipment as it is being manufactured.

Mayor Hovland asked if we have seen anything that would affect the opening date? Jim stated we continue to hold 2027 as our opening date.

5. DBE/WORKFORCE UPDATE

Jon Tao from the Office of Equity and Equal Opportunities reviewed and shared the DBE achievement numbers as of November 30, 2022. Franklin O&M is now shown as closed.

Overall the construction contracts are at 17.92% and towards the end of the contracts will come close to 18%.

Disaggregated numbers were then shared, along with the Workforce numbers. The DBE Workforce Advisory Committee members continue to discuss strategies on increasing these workforce numbers.

Commissioner LaTondresse mentioned he is hearing a lot on public safety and rider experience. He suggests we provide an update on safety in the future. Chair Zelle said the number one priority for Metro Transit is the safety and welcoming atmosphere of public transit. This comes down to training, expanding police force, community service officer presence. Chair Zelle agrees on a future agenda topic for this. Metro Transit has a new police chief starting that will bring fresh energy to recruit and think out of the box. He invites the presentation and conversation at a future meeting. Mayor Spano also suggests when Metro Transit Police Chief Morales attends CMC to talk, we also invite the St. Louis Park new Police Chief for discussions.

6. ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Hoffner, Recording Secretary