

Appendix I- Agency Scoping Meeting



SOUTHWEST
transitway

green means go.

Agency Scoping Meeting

Metro Counties Building

2099 University Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55104

October 15, 2008

1:30-3:30

Agency	Name	Address	Phone Number	Email
MIEQB	JON LARSEN	300 Centennial 658 Cedar ST. ST. PAUL 55155	651-201-2477	jon.larsen@state.mn.us
CCPO	Kathryn O'Brien	540 Fairview Ave St. Paul 55104	651-602-1927	Kathryn.obrien@state.mn.us
MINNEAPOLIS	Steve Hay		612-873-3884	Steve.Hay@state.mn.us
Eden Prairie	Randy Newton	8080 Mitchell Rd Eden Prairie 55344	952-949-8339	rnewton@edenprairie.org
D Pflaum	mpls	on file	612-673-2129	on file
Metro Transit Engineering & Facilities	Charles Carlson	560 Gth Ave N mpls	612-349-7630	Charles.Carlson@metc.state.mn.us
Met Council	Connie Kozlak	390 N Robert St Paul	651-602-1720	Connie.Kozlak@metc.state.mn.us
Metro Transit	Steve Mahavala	on file	612-349-7775	Steve.Mahavala@metc.mn.us
EPA	Norm - via West phone			





October 15, 2008 Agency Scoping Meeting

Agency	Name
Central Corridor Project Office (CCPO)	Kathryn O'Brien
City of Eden Prairie	Randy Newton
City of Minneapolis	Steven Hay
City of Minneapolis	Don Pflaum
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Norman West (via phone)
Hennepin County	Katie Walker
Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (MEQB)	Jon Larsen
Metro Transit	Charles Carlson
Metro Transit	Steve Mahowald
Metropolitan Council	Connie Kozlak

Summary of discussion by agencies at Agency Scoping Meeting:

C Alternative-

- EJ issues on Nicollet Avenue because of minority owned businesses and potential impacts associated with construction.
- Disruption of traffic and change in traffic could reduce business viability of EJ community.
- Possibility to removing on-street parking north of Franklin to Grant on Nicollet Avenue to maintain traffic capacity could cause adverse impacts to businesses and property values.
- It is a stated goal of the city of Minneapolis to open Nicollet Avenue through K-Mart site. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) has money for a bridge; however the major cost is the purchase of the right-of-way. The city has not funded right-of-way and therefore the project is on hold because of financial constraints.
- Because of the tunnel portals, Nicollet Avenue is restricted and through lanes may need rerouting. What does this do to bus operations on Nicollet Avenue?
- Relocation of bus stops and holding areas in downtown Minneapolis is an issue to be evaluated.
- How does LRT work between Grant and Franklin with LRT and regular bus route service? LRT will take 30 feet, plus 12 foot drive lanes.
- Conditions are difficult with snow removal.
- What's out there for utilities, water table and bed rock?
- Potential impacts to property access will be an issue





- LRT travel through the tunnel could result in noise and vibration impacts. Issue of noise and evacuated air at portals needs to be investigated.
- Public and private utilities are going to be a problem throughout the corridor—there is a potential for large diameter regional interceptor sewer lines to potentially be impacted. Need to determine potential impacts.
- Look at the structural integrity of the bridges over I-94.
- Mitigate the trail on the Midtown Corridor. LRT and trails will have to cross somewhere in order for LRT to transition to the north. Trail could go over or under LRT. 2500 to 5000 people a day on the greenway. Even at 20 feet wide it is congested. Construction impacts should be considered and means and methods to keep trail in service during construction should be addressed.
- It is feasible to have gated crossings but better to have a separation? Hiawatha LRT has something similar.
- Some bridges are identified as historic. Project relationship and potential effects on bridges to be addressed.
- Trench is historic—any changes have to be done in context with Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA). Portions of the side banks could be considered historic and protected in the PA.
- SHPO was involved with entire design of the Midtown trail.
- Some existing bridges over Midtown may be used only for pedestrians in the future.
- Pier placement of any new bridges for the LRT will have to be coordinated with the trails system.
- Trail has a 30-foot corridor to the south with a full retaining wall to allow it.
- Grade separated LRT stations on Nicollet Ave (28th Street, and Franklin Avenue) will require ADA vertical circulation (elevators/escalators) This could be a ROW, private property access and potential redevelopment issue.
- LRT crossing at Humboldt, Irving, James will need gate arms.
- LRT speeds over 35 mph requires flashing lights and gates at road crossings.
- Sight distance along corridor could be an issue.
- Need to replace bridge over the canal. It is very old.
- HCRRA has investigated the potential of the bike/pedestrian trail being protected under 4(f). The conclusion is that the HCRRA has taken the necessary actions to insure that the trails are not a 4(f) resource. Therefore the trails and HCRRA right-of-way are not 4(f) properties. There are potential 4(f) properties adjacent and potentially within the corridor. Determination of 4(f) status will be an issue.
- Federal money was used to develop the trails. If the trails are removed prior to the useful life time period there may have to be a prorated payback to the federal agency. HCRRA stated that the project will replace in kind any trail displaced by



the project. Therefore, the public will be made whole relative to the trial system and no payback will be required.

- Citizens are familiar with 4(f) regulation and some will try to expand and extend the criteria to the full width and length of the trail system. They want to see it opened up for better recreation.
- Brownie Lake Channel is considered parkland-crossing could be an issue. The right-of-way crosses a waterway that may be part of a Minneapolis park- crossing might trigger problem.
- Rail corridor is more than 100 years old and is older than the park system. Rail crossing of water ways existed before park designation. Rail corridor could be eligible for historic designation and SHPO may consider existing rail structures eligible for designation.
- Don't know if waterway is part of the parkland. Need to talk to Minneapolis Park Board (post meeting discussion with Park Board staff determine location of park property in corridor).
- Project may be impact to Grand Round which is eligible for HP designation and a National Scenic Byway. Need to address potential impacts and mitigations.
- Cedar Lake Parkway is also historic as part of Grand Rounds. Hiawatha LRT was grade separated over Grand Rounds. Could have been as mitigation for impacts the HP. Need to investigate.
- End of the line options—Nicolette Mall is and issue. Cross the mall or stop short? Where to locate stations for ease of transfer.
- Lots of busses on the Nicollet Mall. If LRT displaces buses on Nicollet Mall the entire service plan in Downtown Minneapolis will have to be evaluated.
- With relocation of buses to 2nd and Marquette Avenue, can buses operate with LRT on the Nicollet Mall?
- Could need to run buses with the LRT on the Nicollet Mall. If buses are displaced from the Nicollet Mall, reconfiguring bus service plan could be an issue. Finding adequate and appropriate curb stop locations on downtown streets due to the density of bus services could be an issue.
- Route 18 good productivity-don't want to end the LRT at the end of the Nicollet Mall.
- Route 17 is a through route from the south.
- Current plan is that Express buses will be taken off the Nicollet Mall, but several high frequency routes will continue to operate there.
- Current plan is for bike lanes to be reestablished on the Nicollet Mall with the shifting of buses to Marquette Avenue /2nd. What is the compatibility of LRT and bike lanes on the Nicollet Mall?
- If LRT is placed on the Nicollet Mall, the existing curb lines will likely have to be straightened out. This could alter the design and feel of the Nicollet Mall. The



- impact of LRT on the Nicollet Mall should be addressed as part of the entire Mall, not just the travel way- this includes pedestrians, parades, farmers market and access of trucks (26 days per year), Holidazzle Parade.
- Nicolette Avenue is also designated as a potential streetcar corridor.
 - Some of the skyways may not be high enough for catenary; most are probably ok. While clearance may not be an issue there could be other technical issues with DC current associated with the OCS.
 - LRT on the Nicollet Mall could limit or constrain emergency access; fire trucks could block LRT and require alternate operations plans.
 - Location of power stations for LRT Downtown Minneapolis could be a problem due to the density of development. The power demand/supply in downtown could be an issue if LRT power demand requires the expansion of feed supply system.
 - Would number of pedestrians from the trains going to/from a baseball game be an issue? Capacity to absorb the people on streets and on trains? City of Minneapolis stated this is a concern, but not an issue for SWT. Ballpark EIS did a study of this- might want to study it.
 - There could be an LRT capacity issue for special events at the Ballpark. Metro Transit should evaluate at a system level. Alternative 3C does not interline with Hiawatha or Central. At the Ballpark, SWT riders could take east bound capacity away from Hiawatha – Central lines to travel a few blocks to Nicollet Mall to get SWT line. This is an issue particular to game days. Minneapolis staff stated you don't design and build a system for special events travel patterns.
 - Not interlining with Hiawatha – Central is not a fatal flaw, but it does distinguish this option from the other options.
 - There are operational costs and inefficiencies associated with not interlining that are not fully explored in the AA. They need to be discussed more fully.

A Alternative-

- Nice to interline Kenilworth with the west end, but how to get out of the railroad trench and on to Royalston to Glenwood Avenue? Must clear the railroad by 23 feet. Glenwood Bridge.
- Could have Southwest and Bottineau coming in at the same place at 5th and 7th intersection. The AA design concept was that the SWT should be it own system. The DEIS design can not preclude the next line. The SWT design concept needs to accommodate the future at the Ballpark termini.
- How to get across 7th Street to the Royalston station? the Ballpark EIS may address this-an operational issue.
- Pinch points along the bridges. Right-of-way ownership-the trail-adjacent parkland.
- Cedar Lake Trail crossed at Penn Avenue Station?



- Bryn Mawr access to the trail needs to be maintained.
- Vertical circulation at Penn Avenue Station—what about footprint needed to turn buses around, connecting service.
- What to do with freight rail in the Kenilworth corridor?
- Cedar Lake Parkway—a national scenic byway. If LRT is elevated it will be a view-shed problem for the neighborhood. If LRT goes under, the elevation of the water table could be an issue.
- Train Park on 28th ... 4(f) has already been brought up by the folks. It is a real park...claims the city bought it from HCRRA. It is not adjacent to the RR.
- Pinch point of 62 feet is a design issue. Need concepts for pedestrian protection. Keep them at the same grade and separate with a vinyl covered chain link fence or split rail. 32-feet is enough Right-of-way for a trail.
- Belt Line Station has three modes: freight, LRT, and trail. CPR owns 60 feet of right-of-way. LRT needs to be on the south side. Is CPR willing to swap location within right-of-way? That is if freight stays in Kenilworth.
- Trunk Highway 7 interchange will touch down before it gets to the LRT. Grade separation money has been given, but a funding gap remains.
- Woodale/Louisiana-sewer interceptors out in the farther suburbs that go north—deep tunnel flow to downtown St. Paul.

1 Alternative-

- Past Shady Oak, grade and cross slope of old rail bed could be an issue.
- TH 62 to Highway 5—difficult crossing. Under TH 62 is also a city street— an industrial area, Midwest asphalt plant.
- The 1 alignment is in a narrow area, all crossings at grade, sitting up on a berm approximately 22 feet high with major drop offs on either side. Tricky to have LRT will have to cut a lot of trees. May need to lower the berm to gain sufficient width for double tracks and trail. Some properties have placed improvements in HCRRA right-of-way that could be displaced. This is a potential issue.
- Valley View Road bridge is probably a RR bridge.
- Would be good to keep alternative, even with the challenges because land is owned by HCRRA.

3 Alternative-

- Where is there going to be embedded track and where will it be ballasted track? All ballast except at crossings and downtown.
- Good reasons to do three alignments.
- City West Station is a large site owned by United Health Group. Have approved development plan with LRT exceptions built in. On the very east end there is a





- large hill that is wooded- we can not touch for their development. Need to find a good way get LRT through that area. Go around or minimize impacts to the hill.
- Over TH 212 at Golden Triangle, TH 212 interchange has a lot of traffic. Don't impact the interchange area. City doing high level analysis to improve interchange for future capacity. Close spacing and parallel frontage roads. Stacking and queuing is difficult at peak hours.
- Golden Triangle Station: At the SUPERVALU Site, the developer is putting up 120,000 ft² building. Existing building likely to be redeveloped. Secured right-of-way to extend street. Concessions for LRT. Park and ride elements=City West site. Need a park-and-ride, approximately 500 vehicles.
- New housing in Golden Triangle? Increase residential with station planning... upwards to 500 now going in. 2003 Land Use study shows substantial mix around Golden Triangle Station. Good opportunity.
- South end of SUPERVALU site is wooded, wetland, creek crossing, dog park.
- South of creek crossing, two sites are for sale- development proposals.
- Valley View Road and TH 212 interchange... Internal ring road area... interchange has big traffic impacts... over capacity... bad queuing.
- Interaction with Flying Cloud Drive- busy four lane road; how you get on the alignment could be tricky- very busy if going at grade impacts could be substantial.
- Town Center Station-just finished major land use and transportation study. Anticipated redevelopment and housing, character will be changing. Especially the Wal-Mart piece and the industrial building north of the station site.
- Prairie Center Drive and TH 212- grade will work in favor of LRT.
- Southwest Station has horrible soils and is sinking.
- Water Treatment plant at Mitchell and TH 212- storage tanks in the right-of-way. Grade crossing of Mitchell Road could be hard. Mitchell Road is a half diamond. The other half is Wallace road. Locating a station and park-and-ride needs consideration of the interchange and access to and from Mitchell Road.

Other-

- Any consideration given to making a loop in the south, serving two areas? No didn't look at trying to do a loop. Opportunities for economic development and the city's plans with LRT 1 are not high. Ridership isn't very high. Low density, suburban housing, not a good opportunity for development around proposed station locations. LRT 1 gets ridership from park and ride stations.
- Any big projects to be aware of or other natural resource issues we need to be aware of?
- No EPA special concerns? No



SOUTHWEST transitway

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Notes Prepared By:

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