



PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC) MEETING Meeting Minutes

Date: December 14, 2006
Time: 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Location: Room 319, City Hall
Attendees: See attached roster

Agenda

1. Streetcar Phase II Evaluation
2. Update on Downtown Transportation Strategy
3. Update on Citywide Action Plan
4. Housekeeping
 - a. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Summary of Items Discussed

Streetcar Phase II Evaluation

Bonnie Nelson and Paul Lutey from Nelson Nygaard presented the highlights of the Phase II evaluation for the Streetcar study (please refer to PowerPoint presentation posted on Project website). Evaluation criteria were developed and a field review of candidate corridors has been completed. Phase I which included the initial screening of candidate corridors has been completed. The consultant team has recently submitted the Phase II report which includes a detailed evaluation of the remaining corridors. The next steps are Phase III: Detailed evaluation of shortest operable segments and financial plan and funding opportunities.

Bonnie Nelson summarized the defining characteristics of streetcars, how they are different from light rail, and some of the drawbacks of streetcars. A brief description of existing streetcar systems was provided. Fourteen candidate corridors were evaluated during Phase I of the study for technical and physical feasibility. The following ten corridors were selected for further evaluation in Phase II:

W Broadway Ave – Entire corridor
Central Ave NE – South of 29th Ave NE only
Chicago Ave S – North of Lake only
Franklin Ave – Between Nicollet Ave S and Chicago Ave S
Hennepin Ave S – Entire corridor
Lake St/Midtown Greenway – West of Hiawatha Ave only
Nicollet Ave S – Entire corridor (to 66th St)

University Ave SE/4th St Se – Entire corridor
Washington Ave – Entire corridor
Lyndale Ave S/Bryant Ave S – North of Lake only

Downtown corridors carried forward to Phase II evaluation were also listed. Please refer to PowerPoint and report for complete list of downtown corridors. Likely connections between corridors to carry routes through downtown were also discussed.

Paul Lutey provided an overview of the evaluation process for Phase II. Corridors were evaluated based on five broad criteria:

- Transit supportive land use
- Economic development potential
- Transit operations
- Transit demand
- Cost-effectiveness

Comments from the PSC included the following:

- What is the ease of construction with respect to the Nicollet Mall? *In the section coming from the north, where the road is straight construction should be relatively easy. In sections where the curves on Nicollet Mall are one curve per two blocks, reconstruction of the street should not be necessary. The problem for construction arises in the section where there is one curve per block (south of 11th Street).*
- Have you studied the structural integrity of the 3rd Ave bridge with respect to its capability to accommodate streetcar? What is the difference between the weight of streetcar and a bus? *We understand the 3rd Ave bridge has structural issues but we have not studied in detail whether the bridge will be able to accommodate streetcar. A streetcar is heavier than a bus and also the concrete bed for the tracks adds weight. Therefore, there are certainly weight implications for bridges in streetcar corridors.*
- What are the utility implications during streetcar construction? *Portland and Seattle have used the embedded track system which has 12 inches of concrete. This system reduces deep underground digging for laying tracks. Initial research suggests that this construction technique can be used in the Twin Cities but that a slightly thicker concrete slab would be needed due to the freeze thaw cycles in winter. There are 40-48" water mains in certain locations that may require additional work and cost.*
- Have you looked at major sewer lines in addition to water mains? *Yes.*
- Have you looked at private utilities? *No, not yet.*
- Why is there an emphasis on the University Ave/4th St for streetcar corridor? How will it improve the service for students who will have good service to downtown via the Central Corridor LRT? *The University Ave/4th St corridor connects to Uptown through downtown and will serve a ridership that is somewhat different than the ridership for the Central Corridor LRT. Additional work is needed to determine how much competition there might be between these two corridors.*
- What are the criteria for establishing corridor termini/transfer points? *Termini need physical feasibility. Also, discussion with Metro Transit concluded that we have to go far enough to provide enough service to be able to replace bus service where appropriate.*

- What do you mean by adequate space for streetcar to turn-around? *We mean that we need enough width on the street to provide for a dedicated link (tail track) where operators can change directions.*
- What were the restrictions with extending the Central Ave NE corridor north of 29th Ave NE to the Transit Center in Columbia Heights? *Railroad bridges with low clearance, an at-grade crossing and non-compatible land use were major restrictions.*

The long-term streetcar network i.e., corridors carried forward to Phase II were listed. Bonnie Nelson summarized the streetcar service on Midtown Greenway and Lake Street. Impacts of the Southwest Corridor LRT were also discussed. Comments from the PSC on the Midtown Greenway/Lake Street corridor are the following:

- The Midtown Greenway Coalition's stand on the type of car is very neutral – either historical or modern streetcars are acceptable.
- The streetcar on the Greenway will operate as mini-LRT. What is the cost and complexity of vertical access to the Greenway and is it feasible? *The streetcar can operate on a single-track system on most of the Greenway. This would help to off-set the cost of vertical access.*
- What is a single-track system? *The streetcars in both directions will operate on one single track. There will be double tracks near stations and other places where streetcars traveling in opposing direction can pass each other.*
- According to the Midtown Greenway Coalition, two-thirds of the system on the Greenway can operate on double track. In places like near Lake Calhoun, where there might be environmental impacts, the streetcar should operate on single-track. A lot of buildings will have access to the Greenway. There will be approximately 2,400 ft between stops. The Coalition is working with Hennepin County regarding building access to the Greenway.
- Is it possible to run a LRT with less capacity on the Greenway so that it can be converted to LRT in the future? *LRT needs different station and track configuration than streetcar and will require major changes for conversion. This would be possible if the track was initially built for LRT and a single LRT vehicle was used.*

The next topic of discussion focused on shortest operable segments through Downtown. The following segments were identified by the consultant team for discussion with the PSC:

- Washington to Nicollet – From Plymouth to south edge of downtown
- Washington to Park/Portland/Chicago – From Plymouth to south edge of downtown
- Nicollet – From Washington to south edge of downtown
- Hennepin - From Loring Park to East Hennepin area

Financing alternatives for streetcars were also summarized by Bonnie Nelson. Comments from the PSC included:

- Have you considered how to deal with K-Mart on the Nicollet Ave route? *Not yet. It is however, important to have a line on the map to identify the route for future discussions.*
- Have you identified storage/maintenance locations? *We have not identified a site yet. Usually, the storage/maintenance facilities are initially located at temporary facilities taking into view expansion of the system. 'Running service' or minor service can be*

provided at temporary locations. For major service, Metro Transit facilities can be used. Access to a maintenance facility will influence which corridors can be built first.

- As some of the streetcar routes are on the County Road system, it is important to build partnerships between the City and Hennepin County to further discuss the system.
- Has financing been identified for any of these corridors? *Not yet. The consultant team is meeting with the Finance Group on Dec 15 to initiate finance discussions.*
- Who is on the Finance Group? *The group consists of City staff from CPED, Public Works, Finance Department, Assessor's Office and Mayor's Office. There are no developers on the group. We are going to look at best practices, identify funding streams that were used for other cities, and apply them to Minneapolis. In addition, the consultant team will identify potential funding alternatives.*
- Will the finance group be expanded in the future to include the private sector? *It is possible. The City has not discussed this issue.*
- Will private support determine which lines will come first? *Yes, this will be an important factor.*

A formal action was requested from the PSC to approve the long-term streetcar network. The long-term streetcar network was approved by the PSC. Motion by John DeWitt, seconded by Bob Greenberg.

Update on Downtown Transportation Strategy

Charleen Zimmer provided a summary of the Downtown Action Plan work activities. Meetings have been held with a Task Force of the Downtown Council, the 1st Avenue Business Association and with the Downtown Neighborhood Association. A simulation of Marquette Avenue and 8th Street South has been prepared to address access to/from off-street parking facilities in relation to the double width transit lane on Marquette and the transit lanes on 8th Street. An inventory of curbside uses and street widths has been undertaken by City staff to begin a detailed analysis of impacts from the proposed street changes. This information is being used to develop alternative cross sections for the streets. From these studies, potential designs for reconstruction are being developed for the purpose of preparing cost estimates. Block by block management strategies are being developed for curbside uses to determine which uses should stay, which should move and where they should move to. This material will be brought to property owners and managers for review once ready. Questions raised by the PSC were the following:

- What were the criteria for the inventory? *They were based on what the city allows via permit or by ordinance.*
- When will the staff work be distributed? *It needs to go to business and property owners. Work products are still being developed.*
- Transit security has to be addressed for overall changes on 8th Street to be supported by downtown businesses. *A security plan is in preparation by Metro Transit and the city.*
- Concern was expressed that the downtown strategy was already chosen. *The process of involvement continues. The detailed materials are being prepared as the basis for furthering the discussion and decision making. The steps used to develop contra-flow lanes on 4th Street were cited as an analogy for where the downtown process is today.*

- Can retiming of signals be accomplished within the funds budgeted for 2007? *Priorities are still being established at this time. Retiming is still under consideration.*
- Did commuter rail get considered in the planning work? *Yes, along with LRT and BRT.*

Next steps in the process are expected to be the following:

- A detailed update on the downtown strategy at the January meeting, potentially with a request for recommendation
- Discussions on the citywide action plan elements in February
- Public meetings on the action plans in April
- Design Guidelines in the Spring of 2007

Schedule Update

The next PSC meeting will be on January 11, 2007 (rescheduled to January 25, 2007). The meeting adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

**PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE
RECORD OF ATTENDANCE**

Meeting Date/Time: October 12, 2006, 4:00-6:00 pm

Location: Room 319, City Hall

| OFFICIAL MEMBER | NAME | ORGANIZATION | PRESENT |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---|---------|
| X | Akre, John | Northeast Sub-Area | |
| X | Anderson, Richard | Mpls Bicycle Advisory Committee | X |
| X | Brown, Tim | Mpls Parks | |
| X | Davis, Douglas | Mpls Senior Citizens Adv Commission | |
| X | Dewar, Caren | Southwest Sub-Area | X |
| X | DeWitt, John | East Sub-Area | X |
| X | Eikaas, Gary | Minnesota Freight Advisory Comm | |
| X | Gerber, Darrell | Southwest Sub-Area | X |
| X | Greenberg, Bob | Downtown Sub-Area Business Rep | X |
| X | Grube, Jim | Hennepin County Alternate | X |
| X | Harrington, Adam | Metro Transit – Service Development | X |
| X | Indieke Cross, Margot | Mpls Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities | X |
| X | Johnson, William | Transit Rider Representative | X |
| X | Keysser, Janet | Transit Rider Representative | |
| X | Kjonaas, Rick | Mn/DOT – SALT | |
| X | Kotke, Steve | Minneapolis Public Works | X |
| X | Kozlak, Connie | Metropolitan Council | X |
| X | Larson, Mike | Minneapolis CPED | |
| X | McLaughlin, Mike | Downtown Council | X |
| X | Miner, Pam | Minneapolis CPED | |
| X | Moe, Susan | FHWA | |
| X | Morlock, Jan | University of Minnesota | |
| X | O'Keefe, Tom | Mn/DOT – Metro | X |
| X | Pearce Ruch, Kerri | Northwest Sub-Area | X |
| X | Qvale, Pat | Opt-Out Transit Representative | |
| X | Scallen, Maureen | Meet Minneapolis | |
| X | Schuster, Lea | Southeast Sub-Area | |
| X | Scott, Pat | Mpls TMO | X |
| X | Thorstenson, Tom | Metro Transit – Eng and Facilities | |
| X | VanHeel, John | Downtown Sub-Area Resident Rep | X |
| X | Walker, Katie | Hennepin Community Works | |
| X | Walter, Doug | Southeast Sub-Area | X |
| X | Warden, Kent | BOMA Minneapolis | X |
| Mailing | Byers, Jack | Minneapolis CPED | |
| Mailing | Caddock, Andrew | Close Landscape Architects | |

| OFFICIAL MEMBER | NAME | ORGANIZATION | PRESENT |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|---------|
| Mailing | Fey, David | Minneapolis CPED | |
| Mailing | Martens, Michael | | |
| Mailing | Schmidt, Stacy | Mpls Senior Citizens Adv Comm | |
| Mailing | Sheehy, Lee | Minneapolis CPED | |
| Mailing | Sporlein, Barbara | Minneapolis CPED | |
| Mailing | Wagenius, Peter | Mayor's Office | X |
| Mailing | Wernecke, Teresa | Minneapolis TMO | |
| Mailing | Willlette, Pierre | Minneapolis | |
| PMT | Abegg, Michael | Minnesota Valley Transit | |
| PMT | Rae, Rhonda | Minneapolis Public Works | X |
| PMT | Wertjes, Jon | Minneapolis Public Works | X |
| Alternate/PMT | Byers, Bob | Hennepin County Transportation | |
| Alternate/PMT | Gieseke, Mark | Mn/DOT – Metro State Aid | |
| Alternate/PMT | Stine, Paul | Mn/DOT- SALT | |
| Alternate/PMT | Elliott, Beth | Minneapolis CPED | |
| Alternate/PMT | Griffith, John | Hennepin County Transportation | |
| Alternate/PMT | Johnson, Tom | Hennepin County Transportation | |
| Alternate/PMT | Mahowald, Steve | Metro Transit – Service Development | X |
| Alternate | Olson, Glenn | Mpls TMO Alternate | X |
| Alternate | Opatz, Mike | Op-Out Provider Alternate | |
| Project Mgr | Zimmer, Charleen | Mpls Public Works (Zan Associates) | X |
| Staff | Flintoft, Anna | Minneapolis Public Works | X |
| Consultant | Buss, Jaimie | Richardson Richter | |
| Consultant | Dock, Fred | Meyer Mohaddes | X |
| Consultant | Gondringer, Linda | Richardson Richter | |
| Consultant | Kost, Bob | SEH | |
| Consultant | Messner, Gina | Meyer Mohaddes | |
| Consultant | Plum, Roger | SEH | |
| Consultant | Pidaparathi, Praveena | Meyer Mohaddes | X |
| Consultant | Richter, Trudy | Richardson Richter | |
| Consultant | Thompsen, Will | Meyer Mohaddes | |
| Consultant | Lutey, Paul | Nelson Nygaard | X |
| Consultant | Nelson, Bonnie | Nelson Nygaard | X |
| | Burg, Brian | United Properties – Midwest Plaza/BOMA | X |
| Alternate NE Sub Area | Reich, Kevin | Northeast Sub Area | X |