

AGENDA

Policy Advisory Committee Meeting

September 19, 2013 – 2:30 PM to 4 PM

Minneapolis City Hall, 350 South Fifth Street, **Room 132**

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| I. | Welcome & Housekeeping Items | 2:30 |
| | A. Introductions | |
| | B. Action Item: Approve notes from June 6, 2013 meeting (attachment #1) | |
| II. | Update on Funding | 2:40 |
| | A. Value Capture | |
| | B. Other Activities | |
| III. | Update on Evaluation of Alternatives | 2:50 |
| | A. Summary of Technical Findings | |
| | B. Summary of Public Outreach Activities, Public Comments and Survey Results | |
| IV. | Discussion and Action on Locally Preferred Alternatives | 3:20 |
| | A. Proposed Motion | |
| | B. Discussion and Action | |
| Proposed Motion:
That the Policy Advisory Committee approve the Locally Preferred Alternative as modern streetcar running between Lake Street and approximately 5 th Street NE on Nicollet Avenue, Nicollet Mall and Hennepin/1 st Avenues, using the Hennepin Avenue bridge to cross the Mississippi River. | | |
| V. | Next Steps | 3:50 |
| | A. Public Hearing/Transportation & Public Works Committee – Sept 24 | |
| | B. Council Meeting – Oct 4 | |
| | C. Amendment to Transportation Policy Plan | |
| | D. Other Technical Activities | |
| VI. | Adjourn | 4:00 |

MEETING NOTES

Policy Advisory Committee Meeting #04

June 10, 2013 – 2 PM to 4 PM

Minneapolis City Hall, Room 350 South Fifth Street, Room 333

Attendees

See attached attendance sheet.

I. Welcome & Housekeeping Items

Mayor R.T. Rybak kicked off the meeting after welcoming the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and other attendees. PAC approved notes from the February 28, 2013 meeting.

II. Update on Funding

A. Value Capture District

The Legislature has approved the Value Capture District for streetcar in the Nicollet-Central corridor. The value capture tool was focused on specific properties where development was known to be occurring to make it less speculative. The Mayor explained how the legislation was written. The next step in the process is City Council approval of the Value Capture District. This needs to occur by the end of June to set the base value at January 2012. It is anticipated that this revenue source will support about \$60 million in bonding. He emphasized that this is a rare opportunity for the region to leverage these funds for federal funding.

B. Other Funding Options

Peter Wagenius reviewed other federal options. He thanked Hennepin County for their support of the value capture tool and noted that the city did not apply for TIGER V to be a good regional partner. He also stated that the city is investigating a new federal innovation grant under MAP-21 that could be up to \$100 million grant. Criteria have not be set for this program yet but the focus will be on innovation and project delivery.

Peter Wagenius also noted that the city is continuing to explore a two-tiered non-residential parking charge (revenue source and development incentive for underused surface parking lots).

Steve Kotke noted that the city is continuing to work on a cooperative agreement with Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit for construction and operation. Cole Hiniker asked if Metro Council/Metro Transit was being asked to commit to paying for operations and maintenance cost. Mayor Rybak indicated that this is still under review.

Mayor Rybak asked how Hennepin County, CTIB and/or MnDOT might become partners in this to take advantage of the momentum of the value capture tool, citing the UPA project as a great example of partnership with other agencies and creative funding/financing. Gary Cunningham asked what is being asked of Policy Advisory Committee. Steve Kotke emphasized the need to keep the project moving forward so that the project is ready when dollars become available.

III. Evaluation of Alternatives

Charleen Zimmer, Acting Project Manager, provided a summary presentation of the detailed technical evaluation of the alternatives. She noted that there are three decisions that need to be made: (1) the mode (streetcar, enhanced bus or no build), (2) the river crossing (Hennepin Avenue or Central/3rd Avenue, and (3) the short streetcar starter line.

A. Comparison of Mode Alternatives

Elizabeth Glidden stated that she appreciated the explanation of the differences between Enhanced Bus and Arterial BRT, and asked whether these terms would continue to be used in the future. *Response:* While it is not clear at this time what terminology the region will use in the future, it is important to understand that the enhanced bus alternative in this study was designed to be very similar to streetcar and this is a different service plan than is typically used for bus rapid transit.

Gail Dorfman asked if the study analyzed service to transit-dependent populations as well as considering population and employment densities. *Response:* Yes, service to transit-dependent populations, population and employment densities, as well as other demographic considerations such as income, race, auto ownership and proximity to affordable housing were all considered in the evaluation.

John Wheaton asked if the enhanced bus mimics the shorter or longer streetcar line. *Response:* The longer line.

Adam Harrington asked how ridership estimates compare to No-Build. *Response:* The ridership forecasts are still being reviewed with Metro Transit and Metropolitan Council. Adam noted that it is important for the agencies to have an opportunity to review the forecasting results before any decisions are made.

Elizabeth Glidden asked for clarification on how ratings were arrived at, particularly the differences between the 9.2-mile and 3.4-mile streetcar lines. *Response:* Higher densities in the short line as well as the dominance of downtown account for many of the differences in ratings between the long and short streetcar lines. Peter Wagenius also noted that the results are not intended to indicate that future potential extensions are not warranted.

Lisa Goodman asked about crossing the River because it is a big barrier. Mayor Rybak noted that a commitment was made early in the project that crossing the Mississippi River was a must. Charleen Zimmer noted that the proposed starter streetcar line runs from Lake Street on the south to approximately 5th Street on the northeast side of the river. She also noted that there are two options still being considered for how to cross the river: the Hennepin Avenue Bridge and the Central/3rd Avenue Bridge.

Kevin Reich stated that economic development including approved small area plans and active development (for example, the Totino's property) are a good rationale for crossing River.

Gail Dorfman noted that housing development and economic development along the entire streetcar line should be considered, not just at stations as is done in LRT. She indicated that streetcar would be more successful at spurring economic development than enhanced bus. Mayor Rybak and John Wheaton concurred with this statement.

There were a number of questions on how to interpret the qualitative ratings when comparing the longer streetcar and enhanced bus alternatives to the shorter streetcar line. There were also questions regarding what terms such as "better" and "best" mean and whether the criteria should be weighted. It was noted

that many of the ratings, particularly for the shorter streetcar line, reflect more benefits for the financial investment (more “bang for the buck”).

Gail Dorfman asked what transitways and other transit improvements are included in ridership model. *Response:* Midtown Corridor as Arterial BRT; I-35W BRT (orange line), Cedar Avenue BRT (red line), Bottineau LRT, SW LRT, Central LRT, Hiawatha LRT, and Northstar commuter rail.

Lisa Goodman suggested that the cost measures be separated from the public support measures.

B. Comparison of River Crossings

Charleen Zimmer reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of each river crossing option. The results of the technical evaluation favor the Hennepin Avenue Bridge.

Gail Dorfman asked if the Hennepin Avenue Bridge is a Hennepin County bridge. *Response:* Yes, and some initial discussions have been held with Hennepin County bridge staff.

IV. Next Steps and Motion

Charleen Zimmer explained the next steps and the proposed schedule for accomplishing those tasks. Mayor Rybak noted the city’s desire to move forward on funding and implementation and asked why the schedule couldn’t be accelerated. *Response:* Partner agencies need time to review the technical work.

Peter Wagenius noted that the PAC could approve a draft LPA pending results of Metro Council/Metro Transit review, recognizing that a meeting would be needed for final LPA approval. Steve Kotke stated that this could be done to facilitate or expedite public review and comment. Adam Harrington and Gary Cunningham stated that they felt it was important to review the technical results before making a LPA recommendation. Lisa Goodman noted that she is still not comfortable with the cost and funding issues. Gail Dorfman expressed concern that FTA might think this was too early in the process to approve an LPA. Elizabeth Glidden suggested that the PAC motion be revised to move the evaluation information forward for public comment without identifying a draft LPA. John Wheaton noted that it would be hard to approve a LPA without economic analysis. Gary Cunningham noted that the LPA might be enhanced bus if economic development is not considered. Lisa Goodman stated that there is no public appetite for enhanced bus or no-build and that developers are willing to pay more for the certainty of streetcar.

The proposed motion on the agenda was revised as follows, and approved unanimously by the PAC:

“That the Policy Advisory Committee receive and file the evaluation of alternatives, pending final review by partner agencies, for public review and comment and economic development opportunities.”

IV. Next Meeting: Late June/Early July 2013 (Date to be determined)

V. Adjourn – Adjourned at 3:50 PM.

Nicollet-Central Transit Alternatives

Attendees

John Wheaton

Gail Dorfman

Kevin Reich

Lisa Goodman

David Frank

Steve Kotke

Gary Cunningham

Michael Mechtenberg

Cole Hiniker

Scott McBride

Elizabeth Glidden

Peter Wagenius

Mayor R.T. Rybak

Geoff Slater

April Manlapaz

Dan Meyers

Charleen Zimmer

Gavin Poindexter

Adam Harrington