



PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC) MEETING Meeting Minutes

Date: August 10, 2006
Time: 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Location: Room 319, City Hall
Attendees: See attached roster

Agenda

1. Housekeeping
 - a. Approval of minutes from last meeting
 - b. Status of Action Items
2. Downtown Streets Strategy
3. Initial Evaluation of Streetcar Corridors

Summary of Items Discussed

Housekeeping

Meeting minutes from the June 7, 2006 PSC meeting were approved without any comments.

Downtown Streets Strategy

Fred Dock presented a strategy for downtown streets, which is based on modal priority. No street is exclusively dedicated to one mode, but the street design and operating strategy differs depending on the modal priority for the street. A layered analysis of the downtown transit alternative, pedestrian and bicycle systems, connections to freeways, and one-way and two-way streets was summarized. Fred Dock described each of these layers and their components (please refer to the Downtown Streets Strategy handout).

- Transit
 - Marquette and 2nd Avenues would each have double-width contra-flow bus lanes and two lanes of mixed traffic.
 - 8th Street would have single-width with-flow bus lanes and one lane of mixed traffic in each direction
 - Hennepin Ave would have buses operating in mixed traffic (two lanes of mixed traffic in each direction)
 - Nicollet would serve local bus routes, those routes would be operated at regular headways to serve a local circulator function between Grant and Washington.
 - 4th Street would continue to have a single-width contra-flow bus lane, serving primarily University Avenue buses that would be at least partially replaced by Central LRT.

- One-Way Streets
 - 4th Street, Marquette Avenue, and 2nd Avenue would remain one-way streets because of the contra-flow bus lanes on them.
 - 5th Street would remain one-way because of the light rail.
 - 3rd and 4th Streets, 4th and 5th Avenues, 11th and 12th Streets, and 2nd and 3rd Avenues North would continue to function as one-way pairs serving the freeway system.
 - 6th and 7th Streets would be reoriented as a one-way couplet serving I-94 on the east side of downtown. 10th Avenue South between 5th and 6th Street would become one-way to reorient traffic exiting I-94 on 5th Street to 7th Street.
- Two-Way Streets
 - 8th Street, 9th Street, 10th Street, Park Avenue, Portland Avenue, 1st Ave N, Hennepin Avenue, and LaSalle Avenue south of downtown would become new two-way streets. However, any decision on Park and Portland should take into account operation south of downtown.
 - 9th Street would become two-way with one or two travel lane in each direction, a bicycle lane in each direction and/or on-street parking
 - 8th Street would become two-way with one travel lane in each direction for mixed traffic and one travel lane in each direction dedicated to buses.
- Primary Pedestrian Network
 - The pedestrian network is based upon the Downtown East-North Loop Master Plan.
 - 9th Street would become a pedestrian priority street and have wider sidewalks.
 - Hennepin, 5th Street, Washington Avenue, and 3rd Avenue currently have wider walks.
- Bicycle Network
 - One-way bike lane couplets on 3rd and 4th Streets and 2nd and Marquette Avenues would provide bicycle circulation through the downtown core.
 - A system of proposed bike lanes was presented. This system is still somewhat in flux depending on decisions related to transit lanes, sidewalk widths, travel lanes and on-street parking.
 - Two cross-section alternatives were presented for Hennepin and 1st Avenues. One included two-way bike lanes on 1st Avenue and the other included a one-way pair of bike lanes on Hennepin and 1st. Each alternative results in different scenarios for on-street parking and sidewalk width.

Lastly, changes in freeway access were discussed. Changes in freeway access are needed to address the following:

- A more-distributed system of access to/from I-35W on the east side of Downtown.
- Re-orientation of the I-94 off-ramp on the east side of Downtown to connect to 7th Street rather than 5th Street which is now used for LRT and is not continuous.
- Better utilization of the available entry points to I-394 on the Third Avenue Distributor (TAD) by changing the HOV-only status of some ramps and addressing the bottleneck at the lane drop at I-394 west of the Hawthorne/11th Street on-ramp.

Fred Dock also presented typical cross-section figures for First Ave North, 8th Street South, 9th Street South, Hennepin Avenue, Marquette Avenue and 2nd Avenue South (please refer to Cross Sections handout). Comments from the PSC included the following:

- What is the timeframe of implementing the cross-sections? *Still working on them.*
- What is the existing sidewalk width? Are they currently 12' wide as shown in shown cross-sections? *Yes, most streets with 80' or more ROW have 12' wide sidewalks. The range of sidewalk width in Downtown varies from 10' to 14'. The majority of them are 12' wide.*
- 9th Street has two-way bike lanes under both bicycle scenarios. Suggested considering 9th St and 10th St as one-way pairs for bike lanes.

Comments from Downtown Task Force Meeting

A Downtown task force meeting was held on August 8, 2006. Mike McLaughlin conveyed the comments from the meeting:

- The task force appreciated the systems approach of the study.
- Want to understand the implications of proposed changes to parking ramp access/egress, curbside loading and drop-off, and sidewalk cafes.
- Would like to look at the data and assumptions used on the operations analysis.
- Concerned that the study may favor transit and non-auto modes over auto modes.
- Need more clarification on local bus service operating on Nicollet Mall as a shuttle.
- Expressed concern over capacity issues on 8th and 9th Streets.
- Need more detail on access to parking ramps. Ramps are willing to provide daily data if necessary.
- In general, support transit Alternative B
- Would like a free-fare zone in Downtown.
- Want to know if privately funded and operated transit systems are more economical than public transit services
- Concerned about the frequency of transit service to near downtown neighborhoods.

A concern was expressed that the Downtown task force does not include representation from residents and small businesses located in the broader Downtown area, particularly businesses in the Warehouse District. Charleen Zimmer noted that the Minneapolis TMO is assisting in setting up meetings with smaller businesses, downtown residents and developers to address this issue. Other comments from the PSC included:

- Was there discussion at the task force meeting on the ability to shift trips from auto to transit modes? *The group wants to see transit use grow, as long as it operationally works with existing auto traffic. The downtown business community has been a big supporter of transit and understands that we cannot attract large businesses to downtown without growth in transit. They are, however, concerned about the impacts of congestion on downtown and are concerned that the proposed transit alternatives do not have unintended consequences related to traffic flow and parking ramp access and egress.*
- A concern was expressed that Alternative B has local service on Nicollet Mall which may be shifted off the mall during special events. Alternative C has peak hour express service on Nicollet Mall with local service on Marquette. This would have less impact on

transit use during special events. This part of Alternative C should be considered. *We haven't eliminated any alternative. Every alternative has its pros and cons.*

- Does the city have data on who parks at the meters in Downtown and why? *No. Parking at meters in the core area is allowed for a maximum of two hours and up to four hours for people with disabilities.*
- Is the pedestrian link connecting the Nicollet Mall to the convention center above grade or at-grade? *It is at-grade with vertical connection to the skyway system.*
- Have we eliminated the option of removing all vehicles from Marquette Avenue? *We haven't eliminated any alternative yet. The consultant team prefers Alternative B which would retain two lanes of mixed traffic on both Marquette and 2nd Avenues along with the double-width transit lanes.*

Initial Evaluation of Streetcar Corridors

Bonnie Nelson, Nelson Nygaard, provided a summary of the initial screening of candidate streetcar corridors (refer to the Streetcar Feasibility Report). Candidate streetcar corridors were evaluated for technical and physical feasibility. Primary screening includes grade, street geometry, overhead clearance, terminal locations, speed and reliability, and duplication of other major transit investment. Secondary screening factors include the presence of transit supportive planned land use and industrial zoning for maintenance facilities. Fourteen candidate corridors in Minneapolis were evaluated based on the above screening criteria. Of these the following were carried forward to Phase 2 evaluation.

- West Broadway (entire corridor)
- Central Ave NE (south of Lowry Ave)
- Chicago Ave S (north of Lake St)
- Franklin Ave (between Nicollet Ave S and Chicago Ave S)
- Hennepin Ave S (entire corridor)
- Lake St/Midtown Greenway (west of Hiawatha Ave)
- Nicollet Ave S (north of Lake St)
- University Ave SE/4th St SE (entire corridor)
- Washington Ave (entire corridor)
- Lyndale Ave S/Bryant Ave S (north of Lake St)

Several corridors in Downtown including Nicollet Ave, Hennepin Ave etc. were also evaluated in terms of how they tie into PTN routes and regional transit connections. All corridors in Downtown were carried forward to Phase II

- Nicollet Ave
- Hennepin Ave
- 9th and 10th St S (between Chicago Ave and Hennepin Ave)
- Washington Ave
- Chicago Ave (between Washington Ave and 14th St S)
- Grant St (between LaSalle Ave and 2nd Ave S)
- 1st Ave N (between 1st Street North and 9th/10th St N)

- 2nd Ave S (between Grant St and Washington Ave)
- 3rd Ave S (between 12th St S and Washington Ave)
- LaSalle Ave (between Grant St and 9th St S)

Comments on the streetcar evaluation included the following:

- The Kingfield neighborhood (Nicollet south of Lake Street) has a strong desire for transit-oriented development. The study suggests a lack of transit supportive land-use on Nicollet Ave south of Lake St. Will the study consider future land use or development potential? *The analysis was based on the Metropolitan Council regional land-use. The consultant team is working with the City's Planning Department to identify future development potential and this will be a factor in later stages of evaluation.*
- There is a lot of future development planned along the Midtown Greenway, but developers want to "see the tracks" in order to justify higher density development. How do we address this "chicken and egg" issue? *Private funding for the streetcar system may determine which corridors get built. That was the case in Portland, Oregon.*
- With rising gas prices, how does the operating cost of streetcars compare with buses? *Streetcars are costlier to operate than buses because they include maintenance of rail and electrical systems (which bus costs do not) and because there are fewer economies of scale available in maintaining a small fleet of vehicles. An operational analysis with cost will be conducted. However, because streetcars typically attract higher ridership than buses, the cost per rider is often the same or lower than bus.*
- Are you identifying private funding sources? *A detailed technical analysis will be conducted after which private funding sources will be identified as part of the financial analysis.*
- Is there a possibility of a spur off of the West Broadway corridor to serve nodes at Penn Ave and Lowry Ave? *Based on the analysis, the hospital in Robbinsdale or the transit transfer facility in downtown Robbinsdale is a good anchor for that route. The Penn Ave corridor lacks the density to make a spur cost-effective.*
- If streetcar will replace bus service, will the bus-stops be reduced through skip-stops? *It is not the intent to ask people to get off the bus and onto the streetcar. We know the initial implementation of streetcars will not replace all buses in the corridor, and buses and rail may need to operate in the same corridor for a period of time. Over the long run, it would be ideal if streetcar could replace all or most buses in a PTN corridor. It is not expected that streetcars would operate on a limited stop basis. More information will be available after the operating plan is completed.*
- How will frequency play into these options? What is the highest frequency of streetcars in other cities? *Double-track will have more frequency. The San Francisco F line operates at a frequency of five minutes. Frequency of service will, to a great extent, be a function of ridership.*
- We have to focus on how transfers can be improved without overlap.
- Is the thin slab construction used in Portland feasible here? *URS did the design work for the Portland line and the consultant team has discussed this issue with them. The technique can be used here; however, keeping in mind the expansion and contraction during winters in Minnesota, the slab would need additional reinforcement leading to higher construction costs. The Portland numbers for construction cost will not be used.*

- The potential for a streetcar line to become a LRT line should be taken into account during construction.
- How much of an emphasis is there from the City Council for an environmentally friendly transit system? *The City Council supports an environmentally friendly transit system. There are various options available to reduce impacts on the environment.*

Schedule Update

The next PSC meeting will be on Thursday, September 14, 2006.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 P.M.

Action Items

Tim Brown	Provide Tree GIS layer
-----------	------------------------

**PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE
RECORD OF ATTENDANCE**

Meeting Date/Time: June 7, 2006, 4:00-6:00 pm

Location: Room 333, City Hall

OFFICIAL MEMBER	NAME	ORGANIZATION	PRESENT
X	Akre, John	Northeast Sub-Area	X
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	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	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	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
X	Scallen, Maureen	Meet Minneapolis	X
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	
Alternate	Olson, Glenn	Mpls TMO Alternate	
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	X
Consultant	Dock, Fred	Meyer Mohaddes	X
Consultant	Gondringer, Linda	Richardson Richter	
Consultant	Kost, Bob	SEH	
Consultant	Messner, Gina	Meyer Mohaddes	X
Consultant	Nelson, Bonnie	Nelson Nygaard	X
Consultant	Pidaparthy, Praveena	Meyer Mohaddes	X
Consultant	Richter, Trudy	Richardson Richter	
Consultant	Thompsen, Will	Meyer Mohaddes	
Consultant	Tumlin, Jeff	Nelson Nygaard	
Consultant	Walker, Jarrett	Nelson Nygaard	
	Hay, Steven	Minneapolis CPED	X
	Lilligren, Robert	City of Minneapolis Council Member	X