

Metropolitan Council

Metropolitan Council Chambers, 390 No. Robert St., St. Paul, Mn. 55101

**Meeting of the Central Corridor Management Committee
March 14, 2007**

Members Present	Peter Bell, Chair	Mary Hill Smith	Kathleen O'Brien
	Toni Carter	R.T. Rybak	Bob McFarlin
	Raynaldo Aligada	Tom Hanson	Jim Westerhaus
	Rafael Ortega	Chris Coleman	
Members Absent	Peter McLaughlin	Paul Krause	

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peter Bell called the March 14, 2007 regular meeting of the Central Corridor Management Committee to order at 1:10 pm in the Metropolitan Council Chambers, 390 North Robert St., St. Paul.

2. ADOPTION OF 01/10/07 AGENDA AND 12/13/06 MINUTES

Motion was made by M.Hill Smith, seconded by K.O'Brien to adopt the agenda for 03/14/07 meeting. Motion carried.

Motion was made by J.Westerhaus, seconded by C.Coleman to approve the minutes of 02/14/07 meeting. Motion carried.

3. BELL REPORT ON 2/28/07 METROPOLITAN COUNCIL ACTIONS:

Bell reported that the Metropolitan Council took the St. Paul Downtown Loop alignment issue under consideration at their February 28th meeting. The Council decided that the Downtown St. Paul Loop proposal would not be considered unless, and until, the proposal meets the principles that have been adopted regarding significant changes to the project. Bell clarified that a connection to the Union Depot and/or concourse will be studied in Preliminary Engineering. A list of Council actions regarding the Central Corridor is included in the meeting packet.

R.T.Rybak pointed out the need to look at a variety of transit forms to move passengers in compact downtowns, in the vision for transit in the future. The City of Minneapolis is considering shorter, more circulating forms of transit in the future (streetcar, circulator concepts), in addition to the larger forms of transit.

Bell expressed concern that two requests have been made to the Congressional delegation for Central Corridor Preliminary Engineering: Ramsey County (\$15M) and Metropolitan Council (\$22 M). The Metropolitan Council submitted and was granted approval from the FTA to enter Preliminary Engineering. The Metropolitan Council and MnDOT are designated by statute as the agencies that will construct and operate the Central Corridor. The two requests for preliminary engineering could create confusion in Congress as to who is the lead agency on the project. Bell asked representatives of the Congressional delegation to submit the Metropolitan Council's request for federal funding for preliminary engineering. He asked that Ramsey County give consideration to withdrawing their proposal for the \$15 M for PE. Commissioner R.Ortega responded that Ramsey County had several commissioners in Washington D.C. last week meeting on several projects. They met with the Congressional delegates and discovered that the amount of money to be requested by the Metropolitan Council for Central Corridor had risen to \$22 M. Ortega requested that Met Council notify the County of these changes in the future. While in D.C., Ramsey

County modified their request to \$22 M. Congresswoman B.McCollum's office informed Ramsey County that she would like them to keep their request submitted to be certain that the request is in, and informed them that a request from Met Council had not been received. He is aware that, regardless of who submitted the request, the money will go to the Met Council; Ramsey County's request was to keep the project progressing. Ramsey County did not try to supplant the Met Council request. He suggested improved communications between the Met Council and McCollum's office. Bell stated that Met Council did submit their application on time and received an e-mail receipt from McCollum's office for such. It is Bell's understanding that an agreement had been reached between Met Council and Ramsey County that the Met Council would be submitting the request. McCollum and Ellison's offices would then make the request. Bell has stressed the importance that the application come from Met Council, and the go funds directly to Met Council, to McCollum's office which is taking his request under advisement. Fred Gates from McCollum's office was present and stated he would contact McCollum's office to try to help clarify what McCollum's intent is relative to this request.

A motion was made by M.Hill Smith, seconded by B.McFarlin that federal dollars requested for preliminary engineering shall come from the FTA directly to the Met Council. Motion carried unanimously. Bell will communicate this to McCollum's office

Bell welcomed new member Tom Hanson, Commissioner of the State Department of Finance. Hanson replaces Ms. Peggy Ingison on the committee.

4. BUSINESS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Karri Plowman presented an update of the BAC. Plowman presented the membership list chosen and appointed by Bell, the committee charter, and first meeting agenda. After much advertising, more than 55 applications were received. 23 members were chosen. Individuals not chosen will remain in an active file to replace members as they are unable to serve. The BAC is a business-led committee to advise on station design, business and construction mitigation, etc. Following a question from C.Coleman, Plowman will change the charter paragraph concerning scope removing or modifying the reference to developing a project that is "on time and within budget", as this may reach beyond the role of the BAC.

K.O'Brien questioned the absence of Stadium Village representatives on this committee. Plowman responded that the Stadium Village Business Association chose to be represented on the CAC at this time, although they may request a change later.

5. SNELLING/UNIVERSITY CAPACITY STUDY

Allan Lovejoy gave a presentation regarding the Snelling/University Capacity Study which was begun about a year ago to investigate capacity problems. The study looks at a small geographical area, looking for "fixes", development potential and transit-oriented solutions. There is already congestion on Snelling/University, LRT is not the primary reason for the capacity improvement study as congestion exists with or without LRT. After looking at 17 scenarios, three alternatives were presented: 1) One-Way Pair, 2) Ring Road, and 3) Grade Separation. All alternatives can accommodate LRT and bus operations, but there would be a restriction in station locations. Community meetings will take place to reach decisions as to the preferred alternative. Following a design consensus, the City, County and MnDOT would develop a funding request for the 2008 Legislature. There may be contingency plans for interim improvements if funding and design for the full project cannot be reached. Hanson stated that it would be desirable to approach the legislature with a total package and plan, rather than make requests in segments. Discussion followed regarding the alternatives, timing of improvements, funding issues. Ortega stated that \$2 M for Snelling is included as a part of Ramsey County's federal request, and Ramsey County has begun discussions with MnDOT regarding forming a partnership for this project.

As a suggestion, Rybak stated that the City of Minneapolis has been moving away from the One-Way Pairs as they are successful for traffic flow, but not so favorable to retail development and pedestrian traffic.

M.Fuhrmann stated that staff must work carefully to keep Snelling/University alternative costs disengaged from becoming costs associated with LRT.

6. CENTRAL DBE PROGRAM

March 14, 2007 Central Corridor Management Committee Meeting

Wanda Kirkpatrick, Metropolitan Council Director Equal Opportunity in the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity (ODEO), presented this item. This plan is required for federally funded projects. Kirkpatrick requested that the committee members contact staff with any changes or suggestions they may have before the DBE Strategy Plan goes before the Metropolitan Council for final approval. Committee members also discussed outreach plans to ensure that the workforce is available from the community, by engaging unions, technical colleges, training facilities, organizations. Rybak requested that Ms. Kirkpatrick look at projects that have successfully hit targets in recent years (Convention Center in Mpls., Central Library, and Midtown Exchange). Some of these projects were successful in creating smaller contracts in order to create a larger pool for selection. Coleman suggested mapping out major projects occurring in the area over the next few years to be able to recruit by coordinating efforts.

7. WHAT IS PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING?

In the interest of time, Bell suggested that this item be presented at the next CCMC meeting.

8. CAC REPORT

Robin Kaufman reported on the CAC meeting held February 15, 2007. Members were asked to identify stakeholders, identify communication techniques to reach the stakeholders, and identify future meeting topics. The focus of the next CAC meeting will be the DBE Plan, Public Involvement Plan and timing of decisions. Information is available on the Metro Council website. A bus tour of the corridor is planned for April. Most of the public involvement and community outreach work is being performed in-house. Metro Council is in the process of posting three positions for Public Involvement Specialists to work on the Central Corridor.

9. LAND USE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

In the interest of time, Bell suggested that this item be presented at the next CCMC meeting.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

T. Carter requested an update on the status of the Preliminary Engineering RFP. Fuhrmann responded that the RFP has been divided into two, in response to FTA discussions: 1) PMC Contract (preliminary engineering, final design and design support), and 2) Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Work. Pre-proposal conference for the FEIS was today, and tomorrow is a pre-proposal conference for the larger PMC RFP. Fuhrmann responded to Carter that the revised RFP scope for PMC includes an experienced public artist person to be part of the PMC team.

Possible upcoming meeting subjects:

Final Design, Full Funding Grant Agreement, Construction and Revenue Operations, FTS Proposed changes to New Starts, Utilities Overview.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Aligada, seconded by Rybak to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 pm. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,
LuAnne Major, Recording Secretary