

Location: HERC Admin Building
435 5th Street North, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Client: Metro Transit

Date: August 4, 2015

Subject: West Broadway Transit Study
TAC Meeting #6

Attendees: Jim Voll, City of Minneapolis; Steve Hay, City of Minneapolis; Casey Dzieveczynski, City of Minneapolis; Emily Goellner, City of Golden Valley; Charles Carlson, Metro Transit; Michael Mechtenberg, Metro Transit; Jake Knight, Metro Transit; Cameran Bailey, Metro Transit; Kelly Hoffman, Hennepin County; Rick Pearson, City of Robbinsdale; Karen Lyons, Metropolitan Council; Mona Elabbady, SRF Consulting; Steve Wilson, SRF Consulting; Charleen Zimmer, Zan Associates; Justin Woffinden, Kimley Horn and Associates; Kyle Vangel, HR&A Advisors; Erin Lonoff, HR&A Advisors; Martin Leung, HR&A Advisors (HR&A by phone)

1. Introductions

2. Concepts for Streetcar and BRT Alternatives

- Justin began by reviewing the alignment options in the North Loop. The two alignment options are:
 - Two-way on 2nd Avenue between West Broadway and 10th, then transitioning to Washington
 - Two way on 2nd Avenue between West Broadway and 10th, then a one-way couplet on 2nd and Washington Avenues south of 10th
- Some of the notable differences between the North Loop alignment options include:
 - Additional costs for the one-way couplet due to additional staging and utility impacts
 - Need better connectivity between 2nd and Washington Avenues
- A TAC member asked if there would be more economic development impact with a one-way couplet than with a two-way alignment. Justin replied possibly in some corridors; however, much of the development has already happened on 2nd.
- Justin walked through the draft concept plans, including the typical sections. Comments/questions on the concept plans were as follows:
 - A floating stop includes a bicycle bypass at stations. This design requires a minimum of 18 feet of width. This assumes the bicycle lane width is 5 feet, the minimum required by MnDOT.
 - Label on concepts that says, “Pedestrian walk-through zone” should be relabeled to “Paid fare zone”

- Rick has concerns with the Oakdale and France intersection. This is currently an existing intersection and he is concerned with the addition of BRT stations. Mona explained that for the purposes of this study, we want to understand the demand at the station, as well as the costs and potential impacts.
- 26th Avenue Station: Need to extend the proposed cross-walk on the concept plans
- Penn Avenue Station: The eastbound station does not have enough room to accommodate a new shelter. It is assumed that the Blossoms of Hope shelter could be retrofitted and serve both C Line and West Broadway customers.
- Ilion Avenue Station: Need to send Jim Voll dimensions needed for a station so that a future development at the site can allow room for the station.
- Emerson Avenue Station: Show potential parking addition on the east side of the intersection
- A TAC member asked how traffic would work with emergency vehicles and a streetcar. Justin explained that emergency vehicles would get priority over all vehicles. A follow-up question was asked regarding if the intersection could be completely blocked with streetcars traveling in both directions, thus blocking emergency vehicle access. Justin and Charles explained that this scenario could happen, but streetcar vehicles would move to allow access to emergency vehicles.
- The team will finalize the concept plans and develop cost estimates for each alternative. These will be shared at the next TAC meeting.

3. Ridership Forecasting Results

- Steve walked through the ridership forecasting results with the TAC. The following questions/comments were made about the forecasts:
 - What was assumed for the streetcar connection at Nicollet? Steve explained that the streetcar alternative was through-routed to the Convention Center. Need to be sure to include the vehicle costs of this routing in the capital and operating cost estimates.
 - Why is the Route 14 ridership higher for the BRT alternative than for the streetcar alternative? Especially when the Route 14 service provided for BRT is less than the service provided for streetcar. Steve will look into this.
- Mona mentioned that as part of the study, up to eight sensitivity tests will be done. These tests are done to help us answer ridership questions based on changes in the underlying assumptions. Examples of this include faster travel times, less stations, variations in the alignments. Mona explained that the best tests are those that help answer questions that the public and policy makers might have. Mona requested that the TAC members send in ideas for the tests.

4. Economic Development Case Studies Update

- Kyle gave an overview of the first two national economic development case studies

Portland Yellow Line LRT

- This line was chosen because it passes through neighborhoods with similar socio-economic conditions to West Broadway, and also because Portland has a similar economic and policy support context.
- This line has succeeded in attracting new market-rate housing that has been subsidized by TOD gap financing. Public entities have also used their properties to spur development.
- There has been a successful effort to shield businesses from construction impacts and to help them stay in their space. Similar efforts to prevent gentrification and help residents stay in the neighborhood have been less successful; one estimate is that 10,000 people of color have moved out of the corridor.
- The TAC stated that they would like the team to look into the 10,000 people of color figure before using in the document. Because the number represents a loss across the city, not just the corridor, we should try and drill down to the corridor level.
- There are several applicable lessons from Portland:
 - A project has the potential to transform an area into one that attracts market-rate development.
 - The Yellow Line experience may not be completely transferrable; recreating this in Minneapolis will depend on macroeconomic conditions and the gap in real estate prices.
 - Yellow Line offers a good example of ways to retain businesses, but not to retain residents.
 - Portland Metro's TOD incentives are similar to our region's programs.
 - Metro funneled an increase in tax revenue into affordable housing in the corridor.

Boston Washington Street Silver Line BRT

- This line was chosen because it operates in mixed traffic through lower-income diverse communities in Boston, including Roxbury, an African-American center.
- There has been a lot of real estate development in this corridor but most of it has occurred near downtown Boston, which makes it difficult to attribute to the Silver Line, since those areas are also served by subway. There has been some investment in the south end of the corridor, and little investment in Roxbury. Development in Roxbury has been mostly infill and not oriented toward the line; there has been no new TOD.
- There is a price premium for houses and condos near the Silver Line, but the corridor did not appreciate faster than the city as a whole.

- Applicable lessons from the Silver Line:
 - New development in the corridor has been mostly mixed-use retail/residential. There is not much new office or job clustering along the line. A West Broadway transit improvement would likely improve commuting to existing employment centers, but is unlikely to develop as a linear employment cluster.
 - New development is expected where there is already momentum. Properties near the BRT line did not increase values more than the city was appreciating. If the same pattern occurs in Minneapolis, North Minneapolis would not be expected to grow any more than the city as a whole.
- The ridership on the Silver Line is very high because it filled a hole in the network and serves already-dense neighborhoods.

Other Case Studies

- Denver D Line will be studied for the second rail case study because it traverses Five Points and has had some TOD impacts.
- Seattle was discussed for the second bus case study but none of the arterial BRT corridors in Seattle have similar demographics to West Broadway. The Troost Line in Kansas City is a much better fit given the socio-economic conditions in that corridor. There are fewer peer-reviewed articles on Kansas City, however, so HR&A is collecting information by talking with city and transit authority staff.
- The additional case studies and the economic development impact of the streetcar and BRT alternatives will be presented at the next TAC meeting.

5. Community Outreach Update

- Charleen provided an update on ongoing community engagement efforts.
- Kelly asked what the goal of the community engagement is. Charleen explained that there are two engagement phases: first an education and awareness phase, and second sharing technical results and getting input on an LPA.
- Jim requested that the team work with the cities to get the word out about the fall engagement. For the city economic development newsletter, information would need to be provided by the end of September.

6. Next TAC Meeting: Tuesday, September 1, 2015