

CENTRAL CITY LINE STEERING COMMITTEE
MEETING

DRAFT Minutes of February 17, 2021
Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS/ALTERNATES PRESENT

Kevin Brockbank, Spokane Community College
Cara Coon, Greater Spokane Inc.
Lars Gilberts, University District Dev. Assoc.
Collen Gardner, Chief Garry Park Neighborhood
Gordon Hester, Downtown Business Rep.
Lori Kinnear, City of Spokane
John Lemus, People First
E. Susan Meyer, Spokane Transit Authority
Jon Schad, Washington State University
John Sklut, Gonzaga University
Frank Tombari, East/Valley Representative
Amber Waldref, Logan Neighborhood Council

MEMBERS ABSENT

Stephanie Curran, Spokane Public Facilities Dist.
Kathy Fritchie, Browne's Addn. Neighborhood
Mark Richard, Downtown Spokane Partnership
Riverside Neighborhood Council
Harlan Shellabarger, West Representative
Scott Simmons, City of Spokane
Steve Trabun, Avista Corporation
Vacant, Visit Spokane

STAFF PRESENT

Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning & Development
(Secretary)
Dan Wells, Deputy Director of Capital Development
Don Skillingstad, Capital Projects Manager
Jeff Logan, Construction Manager
Nick Hanson, Capital Projects Manager
Heather Orr, Project Control
Mike Tresidder, Associate Transit Planner
Brandon Rapez-Betty, Director of Communications &
Customer Service
Monique Liard, Chief Financial Officer

CONSULTANTS/GUESTS

Chris Batten, Citizen
Toby Hatley, Citizen
Rob Brewster, Citizen
Steve Dewalt, Citizen
Kevin Wallace, SRTC
Louis Meuler, City of Spokane
Katherine Miller, City of Spokane
Colin Quin-Hurst, City of Spokane
Melissa Huggins, Spokane ARTS
John Gillette, Community Colleges of Spokane
Jim Kolva, Citizen

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Lars Gilberts called the meeting to order at 2:04 PM. Roll was called.

2. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS

None.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

Chair Gilberts identified that minor modifications had been made to the minutes for October 24, 2019. (Corrections are reflected in the minutes.) Chair Gilberts requested a motion for both the minutes of October 24, 2019 and October 29, 2020.

Ms. Colleen Gardner moved to approve the October 24, 2019 committee meeting minutes and the October 29, 2020 committee meeting minutes with amendments or changes as stated. Mr. John Lemus seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

4. REVIEW COMMITTEE PURPOSE

Chair Gilberts emphasized the importance of determining the lasting impact of this committee, and its ability to set committee objectives during this year and beyond this committee. The City Line has been long anticipated, and once this service begins, the charter that formed this committee stipulates that this group ends.

5. PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Karl Otterstrom presented a high-level review of the current projects, with deeper dives on construction scheduling and timelines. A packet was emailed to the committee members prior to this meeting which included information about various contracts and procurements. Green checks indicates projects that have been secured, while other projects are ongoing. Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the financial status update, and individual projects:

Battery Electric Buses (BEB) – Text bus was received in December; additional buses to begin arriving in April and fully delivered by June 11, 2021.

Station Work and Roadwork Construction – Mr. Don Skillingstad presented. Staff is gearing up the construction crew. Mr. Skillingstad reviewed the Core Construction Schedule for 2021 which begins in March and follows a west to east construction cycle.

There was a question about the flexibility of the schedule. Mr. Skillingstad responded that there is always room for adjustments in the schedule. Station 20 construction could overlap with Gonzaga's academic schedule. Mr. Skillingstad and Mr. Sklut will get together to discuss at a later time. Ms. Gardner asked if the issues at Cook have been resolved. Mr. Skillingstad responded that staff will work hard to be as open and transparent with those involved.

Crews began work on BEB infrastructure on November 9, 2020. Spokane Community College Transit Center – overhead charger installation is scheduled for February 16, with an anticipated completion date of February 26, 2021. Boone NW Garage is anticipated to complete on April 6, 2021.

Mr. Jeff Logan reviewed construction impacts and coordination activities with other agencies such as City of Spokane, Spokane Valley, Avista and other utilities. Staff is attending the Joint Utility Coordination Meeting tomorrow.

Mr. Frank Tombari asked what percentage of downtown will be disrupted during the many construction and utility projects. Mr. Logan responded that the coordination of the many projects always remains a challenge, but crews work hard to stay ahead of it, when possible, and not too far behind it, at best. Even after coordinating, sometimes utility companies come in after the STA work is completed. Even after coordinating with Verizon, several 5G towers were installed right where an STA platform will be at WSU. Verizon will have to move it. Mr. Skillingstad added that the City of Spokane are putting their final touches on construction projects for the year, and STA staff works closely with them to try to minimize the impacts downtown.

Ms. Gardner asked if Mr. Skillingstad or Mr. Logan had had a chance to speak Shanna Housman regarding potential traffic calming issues on Mission. Ms. Gardner had asked Ms. Housman to call them. Ms. Gardner will follow-up with Ms. Hausmann and neither Mr. Skillingstad nor Mr. Logan have received a call.

Key Communication Messages – Brandon Rapez-Betty presented the City Line Outreach Strategy and emphasized that STA is aware of the concern of construction as some businesses are just starting to reopen due to COVID. STA will do everything possible to get through a message that supports business through downtown Spokane. Mr. Rapez-Betty reviewed the communication objectives for the next few years:

- 2021 Objectives – construction awareness, testing/training awareness, service awareness (May 2022)
- 2022 Objectives – construction awareness, testing/training awareness, service awareness, ridership (how to use the service, station amenities, load through all doors at the same time at the platform), promote transit investments in other major corridors (I-90, Sprague, Division Street).
- 20223 Objectives -- ridership awareness, promote transit investments in other major corridors (how transit can be successful in busy corridors)

Mr. Rapez-Betty reviewed the Construction Outreach Strategy which includes site-specific communication, construction vicinity communication (blocks and businesses around City Line), and region-wide project communication. A postcard will arrive within 7200 mailboxes within ¼ of mile of the City Line route,

Mr. John Lemus asked about sidewalks within construction areas. Are people with mobility challenges going to be asked to take different routes. Mr. Rapez-Betty responded that it depends upon the Traffic Control Plan. If a sidewalk is closed for safety concerns, there may be a need to redirect people to use a different direction. Downtown Spokane Partnership (DSP) asked STA to specifically identify the appropriate pedestrian routes to get people to the businesses where sidewalks are closed.

Other Implementation Activities – Mr. Otterstrom reviewed the shelter fabrication and installation. The shelter fabrication contract was executed November 2020, final design for fabrication is ongoing, reaching a 75% milestone on February 5, 2021. The Prototype phase begins May 2021. Deliveries begin late December 2021. STA has been working in partnership with Spokane Arts on station identification work. Staff are gearing up for the next phase in which artists will be commissioned to develop the artwork in conjunction with the local neighborhoods and organizations to reflect neighborhood character along the corridor. Focus areas for identification elements are shelter wind screens, handrail art panels, trash/recycle bin wraps, and banners.

Transit Signal Priority (TSP) – TSP has been embedded into new signals and works with existing signal infrastructure (i.e., Hamilton/Mission). Testing to occur during the Summer of 2021. TSP is part of a larger more complex system (bus locations, schedule adherence, marker beacons).

Chair Gilbert shared that it is his understanding that along this type of line (high performance line) there would never be a stop without a shelter. Mr. Meyer responded that STA will be fulfilling several requests made: moving the station to the west, and making the platform area 10' area less wide than the other shelters. There will be a shelter on the station. Chair Gilberts is appreciative that STA is listening and accommodating the local businesses.

Ms. Gardner asked about the status of the timing for the light at Napa and Mission. Mr. Otterstrom responded that the impacts should be limited especially since there are three doors that passengers are boarding.

Mr. Tombari asked if there was the ability to adjust the time of the light at that location for a short time frame (i.e., 3:30 – 5:00 pm). Mr. Otterstrom responded that STA is reviewing all of the lights along Mission.

Technology Integration – This project includes multiple technology components that must be installed and tests (TSP, fare collection, CCTV, customer service media, back-end systems, video and audio systems, etc.)

Mr. Lemus is hoping STA will be able to provide near field communication (NFC) for riders to load passes on their phones or something similar to what is used on the light rail in Seattle. Mr. Lemus feels it would be more efficient and could save STA some money.

Other amenity procurements ongoing include a combination of new contracts, State contracts and existing contracts. The installation package is in development. Work includes the installation for all amenities and electrical/date work at platforms. Staff intends to advertise by mid-March.

6. CITY LINE ADJACENT PROJECTS

Mr. Otterstrom presented. There are four projects that are not technically STA City Line projects, but they are adjacent to and integrated with the City Line:

- Fare System Upgrade – STA is in the process of a fare system collection upgrade so that smart cards can be loaded remotely via phone, or use phones as a smart card, etc. STA's retail network will be expanded. The majority of the functionality is estimated to be ready by the City Line launch. Ms. Liard shared that a goal of this modernized platform will be to communicate/connect with other platforms. It's not in the current plan, but will be in the future.
- Riverside Avenue Rebuild (City of Spokane) – The City of Spokane has been developing a plan over the past three years to implement changes along the corridor. STA will design, engineer and construct the stations this year, consistent with what the City dictates details (lane width, etc.) Resurfacing and utility work, etc. will take place next year.
- STA 2022 Service Revisions – Major service revisions to coincide with the City Line. The draft recommendation is based on over 1 ½ years of input.
- Transit Oriented Development (City of Spokane) – The purpose of this project is to identify an approach for transit supportive changes and priority infrastructure investments: establish a multi-modal corridor, increase potential ridership, enable station areas to achieve their development potential, and identify infrastructure investments and policy changes.

7. STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS ROADMAP

Mr. Otterstrom and Chair Gilberts have met and are proposing that this meeting meet twice per year, with the next meeting taking place at the end of this year's construction season. And two meetings next year.

Proposed key discussion topics are as follows:

Today: Construction engagement
Fall 2021: Planning for launch, committee/community engagement
Winter 2022: Integration with larger land use/transportation transformation

Post Launch: Lessons learned and feedback, initial data outcomes

The committee agreed.

Mr. Rapez-Betty shared “a little piece” of the broader City Line campaign: the idea revolves around “how do you see yourself on the City Line”. This opens up opportunity to showcase different types of riders (i.e., student, restaurant attendee, etc.) Mr. Otterstrom offered to email same updates as sent to the STA board to keep this committee in the loop.

Committee Discussion: *“How can committee members be empowered to demonstrate coordination of the project communications outside of meetings?”*

Ms. Gardner thanked STA for their responsiveness to her and her neighbors. She asked if she could speak to Mr. Rapez-Betty about an idea for outreach. He requested she start an email chain with him.

Mr. Leman emphasized the importance of STA advertising sidewalk closers, primarily for those outside of downtown, in older neighborhoods (i.e., Chief Garry, Nevada Lidgerwood). Downtown usually has several options for safer routes. Mr. Otterstrom added that if individuals are prevented from mobility due to construction in front of their home, they could be eligible for paratransit during that time.

Chief Gilberts appreciates the offer of monthly updates. He requested a quick 2-3 question survey on a few topics to provide feedback.

Mr. Otterstrom summarized the suggestions: monthly updates to this committee, seeking opportunities to give other updates to individual organizations that these members represent, watching sidewalk construction and parking, prior to the next meeting – staff will prompt you in advance how we celebrate the launch – seeking your feedback and engagement.

8. CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Otterstrom displayed a City Line Bus photo. It will be at STA by the end of the year.

In an effort to operationalize or employ this group in helping with construction activities, STA has a 5 week look ahead schedule. Perhaps we could update this group with this.

9. ADJOURN

Chair Gilberts adjourned the meeting at 3:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karl Otterstrom, Director of Planning and Development
Steering Committee Secretary