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By: Alex Zank, alex.zank@dailyreporter.com August 23, 2016 3:23 pm

Milwaukee's downtown streetcar certainly won't be the first urban light-rail system for its construction manager, Kiewit Corp., which has made its past work on these sorts of projects a point of pride.

The city announced on Friday that Kiewit Infrastructure Co., a subsidiary of Omaha, Neb.-based Kiewit Corp., will be overseeing the construction of Milwaukee's long-planned \$124 million streetcar project.



(Rendering courtesy of www.milwaukeeestreetcar.com)

Ghassan Korban, commissioner of the Milwaukee Department of Public Works, has said the contractor was chosen in part for its experience in building light-rail systems elsewhere.

Angie Nemeth, a spokeswoman for Kiewit, said the company has been involved in hundreds of millions of dollars worth of projects that are similar to what it will be doing in Milwaukee. Much of that previous work bears similarities to Milwaukee's project, although "what makes these types of projects exciting for Kiewit is that none are exactly the same," Nemeth said in an emailed statement.

Milwaukee's streetcar project is to consist initially of a 2.1-mile route and a 0.4-mile extension to

the lakefront. Similar projects that Kiewit has worked on include:

- The Interstate 225 Rail Line, a \$350 million project to design and build about 10.5 miles of light-rail line in the Denver metro area;
- a nine-mile expansion of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit light rail Orange Line; and
- the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension Project, a nearly 5.5-mile expansion that connected Toronto to York, Canada, at an estimated cost of \$3.18 billion (Canadian).

These projects and similar ones in cities such as Chicago have given Kiewit the experience needed to manage traffic and deal with other complications that tend to arise as work proceeds on massive undertakings, Nemeth said. Milwaukee's streetcar, for instance, will come under city policies requiring local officials to stay in contact with the owners of property that will be directly affected by the project.

Sandy Rusch Walton, a spokeswoman for Milwaukee's Department of Public Works, said that requirement is meant to ensure city officials are aware of any concerns that might come along during work.

"Kiewit's vast experience in transportation and urban light-rail projects will play a strong role in managing the Milwaukee streetcar project to minimize impacts and ultimately, to deliver a successful end product," she said in an emailed statement.

Korban last week also drew attention to Kiewit's commitment to meeting the hiring goals that have been attached to the streetcar project. Those include a requirement that disadvantaged businesses receive 20 percent of the project's subcontract dollars, and that city workers certified through Milwaukee's Residents Preference Program perform at least 40 percent of the resulting construction-labor hours.

Nemeth said the company plans to meet the goals by working with community workforce-development groups and holding open houses and community meetings.

