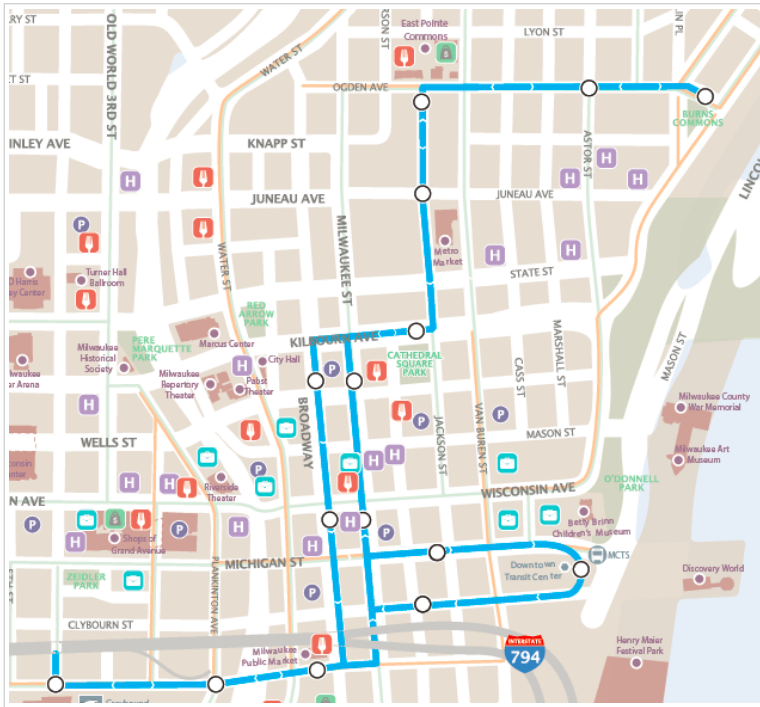


Streetcar committee planning lakefront line

By: Matt Taub, matt.taub@dailyreporter.com June 12, 2015 2:21 pm



Milwaukee is confident it can secure \$14.2 million to add an additional line to its planned streetcar project that would extend it to the lakefront.

At a Friday meeting of a committee in charge of the streetcar project, Tim Clancy, of the Concord Group, and Ashley Booth, of engineering firm HNTB, provided a 30-day update since the committee's [last meeting on May 8](#).

On June 5, Clancy said, the committee applied for a \$14.2 million [TIGER grant](#) — a discretionary federal transportation fund — that would allow the streetcar to add an additional line extending to Milwaukee's lakefront.

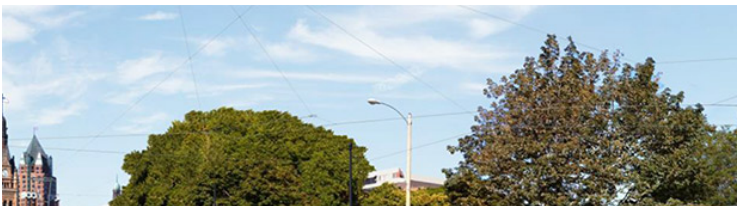
The .4-mile additional line would have a total cost of \$28.4 million, with matching funds provided by Milwaukee. The city previously allocated the money they would provide when the Common Council voted to authorize the streetcar in February. The extension would therefore not require an increase in local money going toward the project, Booth said.

Nonetheless, securing the grant for the additional line would raise the streetcar's overall price tag from \$123.9 million to more than \$128 million.

The extra route would involve a single streetcar running along East Michigan and Clybourn streets, providing a catalyst to a [variety of other construction projects](#), both in progress and proposed, including the [Northwestern Mutual Tower](#), the residential development at 833 E. Michigan St., the [Couture](#), a [Johnson Controls Tower](#), and the [Lakefront Gateway Project](#), Booth said.

While the federal grant award is not guaranteed, Booth had high hopes in light of the secured "local match" of money, an up-front agreement being worked out with utility companies about how to reroute their infrastructure, and more than 50 letters in support of the award from politicians, trade groups, local businesses and individuals.

The committee is also finalizing changes to the original planned streetcar route. The route will run multi-directional on Jackson street without ever entering Van Buren Street; it will also turn onto Kilbourn Avenue instead of Wells Street.





(Rendering courtesy of themilwaukeestreetcar.com)

The altered route will disrupt fewer existing utilities, but requires approval of a new environmental impact assessment that will be submitted shortly to the Federal Transit Administration, Clancy said. It will also allow for a new stop to be placed at Cathedral Square north of downtown Milwaukee.

Officials originally expected to complete the design by early summer, and award contracts by late summer. Due to the alignment change, those goals may be pushed back, but officials still hope to start construction by this fall. The work would then take place in multiple phases, with the project completion date set for July 2018.

Several contractors interested in supplying the streetcars have communicated with the committee concerning its request for proposals issued in April. Some clarifications have been offered to contractors that asked for more detailed information as to the design being sought for the vehicles. Proposals are due July 2.

The committee has spent \$300,000 on professional services since its last meeting. Expenditures to date are \$6.4 million, which is on track for the expected budget and has not exceeded projections.

Milwaukee's Common Council approved plans Feb. 10 to build the 2-mile downtown streetcar project connecting the city's central business district with Milwaukee's Intermodal Station and nearby neighborhoods.

The downtown streetcar is planned to be a starter system that will connect parts of the city's downtown, Third Ward, Lower East Side and the lakefront. City leaders have talked about using later extensions to connect downtown to other neighborhoods, including the north side, Walker's Point, the near west side and the east side of Milwaukee.

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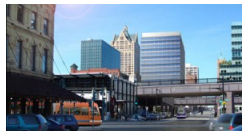
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