

**RESOLUTION 2012 - 14**

**CITY OF CRYSTAL**

**RESOLUTION TRANSMITTING THE CITY OF CRYSTAL'S  
OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON THE BOTTINEAU TRANSITWAY  
SCOPING PROCESS**

WHEREAS, the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) and the Metropolitan Council have initiated the Bottineau Transitway Scoping Process, which is the initial stage of development of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for construction of a proposed transitway adjacent the Bottineau Boulevard corridor; and

WHEREAS, the HCRRA and the Metropolitan Council have developed the Bottineau Boulevard Scoping Booklet for public review to elicit comments from stakeholders and members of the public on the purpose and need for the project, the alternatives proposed for study in the EIS, and project impacts or benefits that should be evaluated in the EIS; and

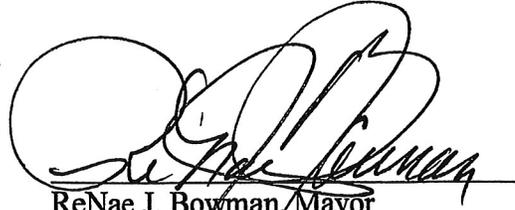
WHEREAS, the transitway is proposed to traverse the city of Crystal within the BNSF Railroad right-of-way along the Bottineau Boulevard corridor, with a proposed station location at or near 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue North (Bass Lake Road); and

WHEREAS, the alignment of a contemplated transitway offers benefits and presents impacts, both locally and system-wide, that demand further study in an EIS; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Crystal has reviewed the Bottineau Transitway Scoping Booklet and now desires to officially confirm and transmit its formal comments for consideration in the EIS.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CRYSTAL, that the city confirms its official comments on the Bottineau Transitway Scoping Process as contained in Exhibit A to this Resolution and transmits those comments to the HCRRA and Metropolitan Council for further consideration in the EIS process.

Approved this 6<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2012.

  
ReNae J. Boyman, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Christina Serres, City Clerk



EXHIBIT A  
To City Council Resolution 2012 - 14

The Crystal City Council transmits to the HCRRA and Metropolitan Council the following official comments on the Bottineau Transitway ("Transitway") Scoping Process:

**I. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROJECT**

- a. *Provided that the city's preferred alignment as indicated in II. below is identified ultimately as the Locally Preferred Alternative, the City Council finds that the proposed Transitway will:*
- i. Provide enhanced connections and an additional transit alternative to access jobs, areas of high growth, schools, housing, health care and activity centers;
  - ii. Respond to the region's increasing traffic congestion by providing an alternative to roadway travel as a method for managing transportation demand;
  - iii. Respond affirmatively to the needs of transit dependent populations;
  - iv. Offer time-efficient, express transit service to both urban and suburban destinations; and
  - v. Help satisfy the regional objective for growth, efficient development patterns and sound communities.

**II. ALTERNATIVES PROPOSED FOR STUDY**

- a. *From a local perspective, the City Council supports the alignment of the Transitway that transects Crystal (Segment "C") within the BNSF Railroad right-of-way as the reasonable alignment through the city. This local alignment is preferred because it:*
- i. Minimizes crossings at roadways and signalized intersections, thereby reducing conflicts between the transitway operations and motor vehicle traffic;
  - ii. Offers reasonable opportunities for station siting between Wilshire Boulevard and 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue North (Bass Lake Road);
  - iii. Proposes to share an existing railroad right-of-way with an existing freight rail service, thus requiring no additional right-of-way aside from that which may be necessary for the station and any related parking areas; and
  - iv. Provides a transitway station within Crystal's most significant concentration of existing shopping and employment, 312 existing multi-

family housing units within one-quarter mile, and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

b. ***From a system-wide perspective, the City Council finds that the preferred alignments for further study should be A-C-D1 and B-C-D1 for the following reasons:***

- i. The dramatically shorter travel times, two fewer stops and seven fewer signalized intersections associated with the D1 alignment are more attractive to potential new transit users and are in the best interests of the system when compared to the D2 alignment alternative;
- ii. This “express” service translates to optimized ridership numbers;
- iii. The investment in a fixed transitway component of a regional transit system is sizable, and the return on that investment is better realized by offering true express transit service to a resulting increased ridership;
- iv. The operating conditions of the D1 alignment are more compatible with general motor vehicle, bus, bicycle and pedestrian traffic and with neighboring businesses and residents for the long term;
- v. The D1 alignment achieves the level of mobility improvements and transitway system operating and safety conditions required for a dedicated transitway investment in the Twin Cities region; and
- vi. The D1 alignment maximizes the opportunity for addressing and mitigating potential impacts and optimizing the benefits of a dedicated transitway system.

c. ***Alternatives that include the D2 alignment should not go forward for further environmental review because:***

- i. Construction and funding of a fixed transitway along the D2 alignment would sacrifice the reduced overall travel times and higher overall ridership numbers offered by the D1 alignment;
- ii. When compared to the D1 alignment, the D2 requires two additional station stops that results in longer dwell time and seven additional signalized intersections that increases overall travel time, likely at the expense of ridership;
- iii. The D2 alignment has significant technical challenges associated with operating a transitway in a largely residential neighborhood and on arterial streets with relatively narrow existing rights-of-way, a practice unprecedented in North America;
- iv. The extraordinary number of property acquisitions (i.e., nearly all properties on the west side of Penn Avenue in Minneapolis and a number

of properties in Robbinsdale) required to optimize the D2 alignment will have lasting adverse impacts on neighborhood fabric and function and residents' sense of place;

- v. For all practical purposes, the costs of right-of-way acquisition to accommodate the D2 alignment render this alternative infeasible;
- vi. Costs associated with the investment in a fixed guideway along the D2 alignment duplicates existing bus service in contrast to the express service to be provided by the D1 alignment; and
- vii. A practical approach to providing satisfactory local transit service within the corridor of the D2 alignment would be to develop a system of feeder buses to stations on the D1 alignment and enhanced arterial bus service as already contemplated by Metro Transit.

d. *The City Council prefers that both LRT and BRT be studied further in light of the significant difference in capital costs between the two modes.*

### **III. PROJECT IMPACTS OR BENEFITS TO BE EVALUATED**

a. *The City Council expects that each of the issues cited below will be subject to further examination during the EIS process for the reasons stated.*

- i. Noise - Transitway operations will increase the frequency of noise above the baseline within the rail alignment through Crystal, particularly at crossings (Bass Lake Road, Corvallis, and West Broadway).
- ii. Vibration - Transitway operations will increase the frequency of vibrations above the baseline within the rail alignment through Crystal.
- iii. Vehicular traffic - Traffic control devices must offer protection at transitway crossings without compromising the integrity and capacity of the local street and county roadway systems.

b. *The City Council has identified various issues related to station location and operation specifically that will require further investigation and consideration during the station area planning phase of the transitway effort.*

- i. Parking - Neither park-and-ride nor kiss-and-ride lots are contemplated currently for the Crystal station. The lack of such parking or drop-off facilities suggests that the Crystal station will serve walk-up riders only, which is not a realistic expectation. The lack of such facilities will compromise pedestrian safety and pose traffic/pedestrian conflicts as riders are dropped off and picked up on adjacent roadways.

- ii. Pedestrian access to station - Pedestrian access to proposed Bass Lake Road station requires safe crossing of Bottineau Blvd, Bass Lake Road and the rail line.
- iii. Safety - The safety of pedestrians and non-motorized traffic must be protected.
- iv. Location - The siting of the Crystal station at a location between 56<sup>th</sup> Avenue North (Bass Lake Road) and Wilshire Boulevard is dependent upon various considerations that must be taken into account, including adjacent opportunities for redevelopment, visual prominence, traffic delays at nearby roadway crossings, and noise impacts on adjacent residential properties.