



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

*25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102*

*Telephone: 651-266-6626
Facsimile: 651-228-3341*

Date: September 26, 2013
To: Heritage Preservation Commission
From: Michelle Beaulieu, Christine Boulware
Re: Citywide Streetcar Feasibility Study

Background

The City of Saint Paul's Department of Planning and Economic Development has been managing the Citywide Streetcar Feasibility Study since Fall 2012. The study is being led by Nelson\Nygaard Consulting Associates, with HDR, Inc. on the engineering and Richardson, Richter & Associates, Inc. on public information. A working group comprised of interdepartmental City Staff and regional stakeholders has served to provide technical review and feedback, and the City's Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission has served as the steering committee for the project.

Streetcar service is defined by vehicles similar to, but shorter than, light rail vehicles, which run in the existing rights-of-way in a given city. Streetcars are rail vehicles, operating on tracks embedded in the roadway, powered by an overhead catenary power line. These vehicles are typically run individually, and are approximately the size of an articulated bus. Streetcar service typically makes stops every 1/8th of a mile, with stations more similar to existing sheltered bus stops than to light rail stations. Streetcar routes are typically shorter than light rail routes due to this local nature. Cities across the United States are studying or building streetcar lines to improve connectivity for community members, to create transit service that is more attractive to more people, and to act as a catalyst for economic development in the corridor.

The Citywide Streetcar Feasibility Study has completed Phase 2 of 3, which includes a proposed long-term streetcar network for Saint Paul. This planned network includes 7 lines that radiate from Saint Paul's downtown. Each line would serve existing areas of dense population and employment; run down corridors planned for transit-oriented development; and potentially attract new development to areas targeted for redevelopment. Phase 3 of the study is currently underway, and will propose a priority line for the City.

Committee comments

The Transportation Committee reviewed the recommendations of Phase 2 of the Citywide Streetcar Feasibility Study on July 29, 2013, and did not make any recommendations for changes.

The plan will eventually go back to the Transportation Committee at the conclusion of Phase 3 of the study; the committee will make a final recommendation to the Planning Commission, who will make a formal recommendation to the City Council regarding adoption of the plan.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION COMMENTS

Heritage Preservation Staff have been part of the working group that began meeting in the Fall 2012. This is an informational presentation; questions and comments from HPC are invited. The HPC will not be making a recommendation to the Planning Commission until the conclusion of Phase 3 of the plan; at that time the commission will review the plan for consistency the Historic Preservation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

The HPC serves as an advisory body to the mayor and city council on municipal heritage preservation matters. Chapter 73.04(1) states the HPC shall review and comment on plans and studies which relate to the historic and architectural heritage of the city. Further, all studies transmitted to the mayor and city council *shall contain the recommendations of both the division of planning and the heritage preservation commission*. A draft resolution is submitted for consideration by the HPC and a final copy will be forwarded to the division of planning, Planning Commission, Mayor and City Council.

Attachments:

1. PowerPoint Presentation notes sheet