

IMPLEMENTATION REPORT



East-West
Transit Study
RideKC[®]

May 19, 2023

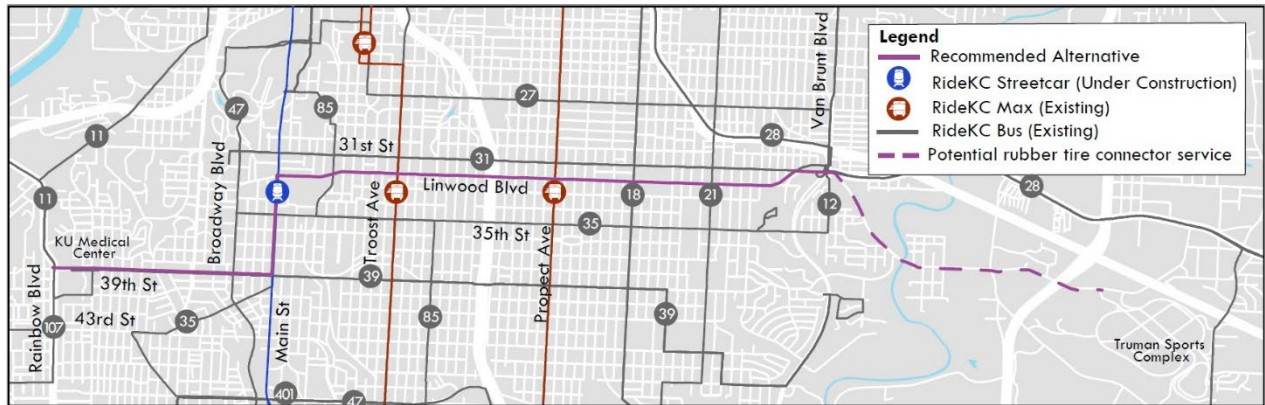
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INTRODUCTION

As described in the Alignment and Mode Screening Report, the preferred East-West corridor project is a streetcar operating along 39th Street, Main Street, and Linwood Blvd with termini in the general vicinity of Rainbow Boulevard on the west end of the corridor and Linwood and Van Brunt/Hardesty Avenue on the east end, as shown in Figure 1. The aforementioned project would be funded contingent upon new federal discretionary funding and new local funding, likely derived from regional or county-based funding source.

Figure 1: Final Recommended Streetcar Alignment



Implementation Timeline

Development of the streetcar from feasibility study through environmental review, design, construction, testing, and start of service is anticipated to be 9-10 years based on past experience (see Figure 2). Phase 1 of project planning is complete, and; the advanced planning phase will further define technical details and a funding strategy, followed by two to three years of Project Development (PD), which includes preliminary engineering, environmental review; and securing of local financial commitments; two years of final design; and approximately four years for construction, testing, and commissioning of the project before it opens for service. Based on this timeline the project is assumed to open for service in approximately 2032.

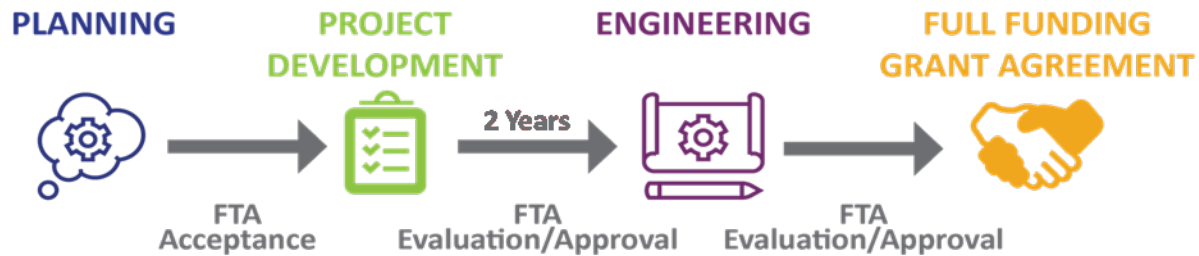
Figure 2: Anticipated Streetcar Implementation Process



PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

As shown in the anticipated implementation timeline, the initial planning study is complete. However, there are still a number of steps the project must complete. The project will progress from the initial phase of planning to advanced planning and then enter the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant Program's New Starts process, the first phase of which is Project Development. The following sections outline the steps that the project will undertake from the completion of this current planning phase through the start of revenue operations. Figure 3 provides an overview of the process the project will undertake.

Figure 3: Project Development Process



Advanced Planning

As previously noted, this project phase is culminating with the identification of streetcar as the preferred mode and 39th to Main Street to Linwood as the preferred alignment. Additional planning needs to be completed to further define the project in sufficient detail such that preliminary engineering and environmental review can be completed in Project Development. The project team is currently working to secure funding for the advanced planning efforts through the RAISE planning program. In the event this application is not successful, the project team will need to work together to identify additional funding mechanisms to advance the project.

Advanced planning will include the following tasks:

- Develop detailed service and operation plans. These will include detailed running time estimates and local route modifications that will determine fleet requirements and operating costs. Additionally, it will identify opportunities to integrate the proposed service into existing and/or supportive bus or other modal services in the corridor and long-term expansion opportunities.
- Develop detailed ridership forecasts
- Study traffic operations – design, policy and impacts
- Determine station locations and develop site-level conceptual design plans
- Begin conceptual design:
 - Determine feasibility of project elements such as dedicated lanes
 - Determine preliminary impacts to adjacent properties
 - Determine engineering constraints
- Continue public outreach on conceptual design plans and funding needs
- Refine and execute local/regional funding strategy
- Develop the project roadmap to enter Project Development and complete Engineering

As part of completing the planning phase, the project partners should begin the development of formal adoption of transit supportive land use policies. These are strategies that FTA will rate the project on

and will look for plans and policies that are adopted and implemented. The review and development of these strategies should include a review of parking policies, transit-oriented development, and affordable housing strategies.

Advanced planning will also include formal adoption of the project into the Mid-America Regional Council's (MARC) fiscally constrained long-range plan. During this phase, the project partners respective governing bodies will formally adopt the project as the locally preferred alternative. As this phase of study is completed the project will be in position to request Entry into Project Development from the FTA, which will begin the next phase of work for the project. As part of the request for Entry into Project Development, the project FTA will require that funding is identified to complete Project Development.

Project Development

Upon acceptance into Project Development, the project may begin incurring expenses that will eventually be counted toward the non-federal match requirements for the grant program. This phase of the project is statutorily required to be completed in two years from entry into PD. The PD phase primarily consists of preliminary engineering and completion of NEPA reviews. The following activities are required to be completed as part of PD.

- Completion of NEPA, assumed to be an Environmental Assessment class of action
- Completion of 30% design and detailed cost estimates
- Refinement of the project ridership forecasts
- Preparation of the project financial plan committing 30% of the non-New Starts funding to the project
- Development of the project delivery approach
- Development of the FTA project management plan and sub plans.
- Development of value engineering report
- Contracting plans and documents
- Identification of all required third party agreements including a schedule for completion.
- Draft Before and After Study data collection plan
- Preparation and submission of the New Starts Ratings Request Package

To ultimately qualify for a New Starts grant, the project must be rated against 9 criteria, which are grouped into two categories: project justification (consisting of 6 criteria) and Local Financial Commitment (consisting of three criteria). It must score as a Medium or better in both categories to be eligible for funding and to advance into Engineering. The evaluation criteria are defined in the Capital Investment Grant Policy Guidance document published by the FTA.¹ It is recommended that the project submit an initial rating request early in Project Development to mitigate project risk and allow the project time to make necessary changes within the two-year timeframe. The FTA only rates projects once a year in late summer.

Once the tasks previously discussed have been completed a request to enter Engineering will be submitted to FTA. It is important to have detailed cost estimates that represent at least a 30% level of design upon entering Engineering. Upon entering Engineering, FTA will lock the New Starts funding amount, (i.e. the actual dollar amount, not the percentage), at the level requested when entering Engineering.

[1] <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2023-01/CIG-Policy-Guidance-January-2023.pdf>

Engineering

Engineering is the final phase of the New Starts program prior to receiving the Construction Grant Agreement also referred to as Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA). During Engineering, the project is expected to complete final design, complete all critical third party agreements, and obtain the commitment of non-CIG funds, among other FTA [1] readiness requirements. Once the design has advanced to a significant level so that the project scope, cost, and schedule are considered reliable, as determined by FTA, and the project has at least 50% of the non-CIG funds committed it will become eligible for FTA to include a project funding recommendation in the *Annual Report on Funding Recommendations*. Following inclusion in the *Annual Report on Funding Recommendations*, FTA may begin negotiating a Construction Grant Agreement to be awarded upon completion of the Engineering phase. Note it is typical for FTA to spread New Starts funding disbursements over multiple years.

Construction and Testing

Upon receipt of the Construction Grant Agreement, the project will be able to begin construction. Construction of a streetcar is anticipated to take up to four years including testing.

Potential Project Timeline

The following is an outline of the implementation timeline for the recommended East-West project. It is not uncommon for the implementation plan to change as the project develops, thus this approach should be considered an initial plan that will guide the project's implementation over the next several years.

Figure 4: Conceptual Implementation Timeline

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Advanced Planning	█										
Adopt LPA		●									
Request Entry into PD			●								
Project Development			█								
Preliminary Engineering			█								
Environmental Review				█							
New Starts Ratings Request				●							
Request Entry into Engineering					●						
Engineering					█						
Final Design					█						
Full Funding Grant Application							●				
Construction							█				
Testing										█	
Vegin Revenue Operations											●