
**EAST
WEST BRT**
a feasibility study

MILWAUKEE COUNTY EAST-WEST BUS RAPID TRANSIT

Implementation Plan

REVISION 1

DATE July 5, 2016



Prepared for:

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1. ONGOING WORK

1.1 East-West Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study

East-West Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Feasibility Study represents a crucial early step toward developing higher quality transit service along one of the most important corridors for the Southeast Wisconsin region. The East-West corridor extends from downtown Milwaukee to the Regional Medical Center and the Milwaukee County Research Park, which would roughly follow Wisconsin Avenue, Bluemound Road, or State Street in the east-west direction.

This corridor is already served by high-quality local bus service. The primary goal of the study was to identify a regionally-oriented transportation solution that meets the individual needs of the corridor communities. The project duration was four months; it started in March 2016 and will end July 1, 2016. The study was conducted by Milwaukee County and Milwaukee Transport Services, which works to provide transit services in the Milwaukee County region. Other partners and stakeholders involved in the study include the following:

- Amalgamated Transit Union
- Americans Civil Liberties Union
- City of Milwaukee
- City of Wauwatosa
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Marquette University
- MetroGO!
- Milwaukee Downtown, Business Improvement District #21
- Milwaukee Regional Medical Center
- Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Urban & Rural Transit Association

The East-West Corridor Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is a BRT route that will run along Wisconsin Avenue and Bluemound Road from the Downtown Transit Center in Milwaukee

through the Milwaukee Regional Medical Campus in Wauwatosa to the Swan Road Park-and-Ride. While the LPA is routed along Wisconsin Avenue in downtown Milwaukee, a hybrid Wells/Wisconsin alignment will be carried forward into the next project phase as a back-up alternative, should it be determined that there are serious operational or infrastructure issues that would occur because of BRT along Wisconsin.

(Figure 1-1).

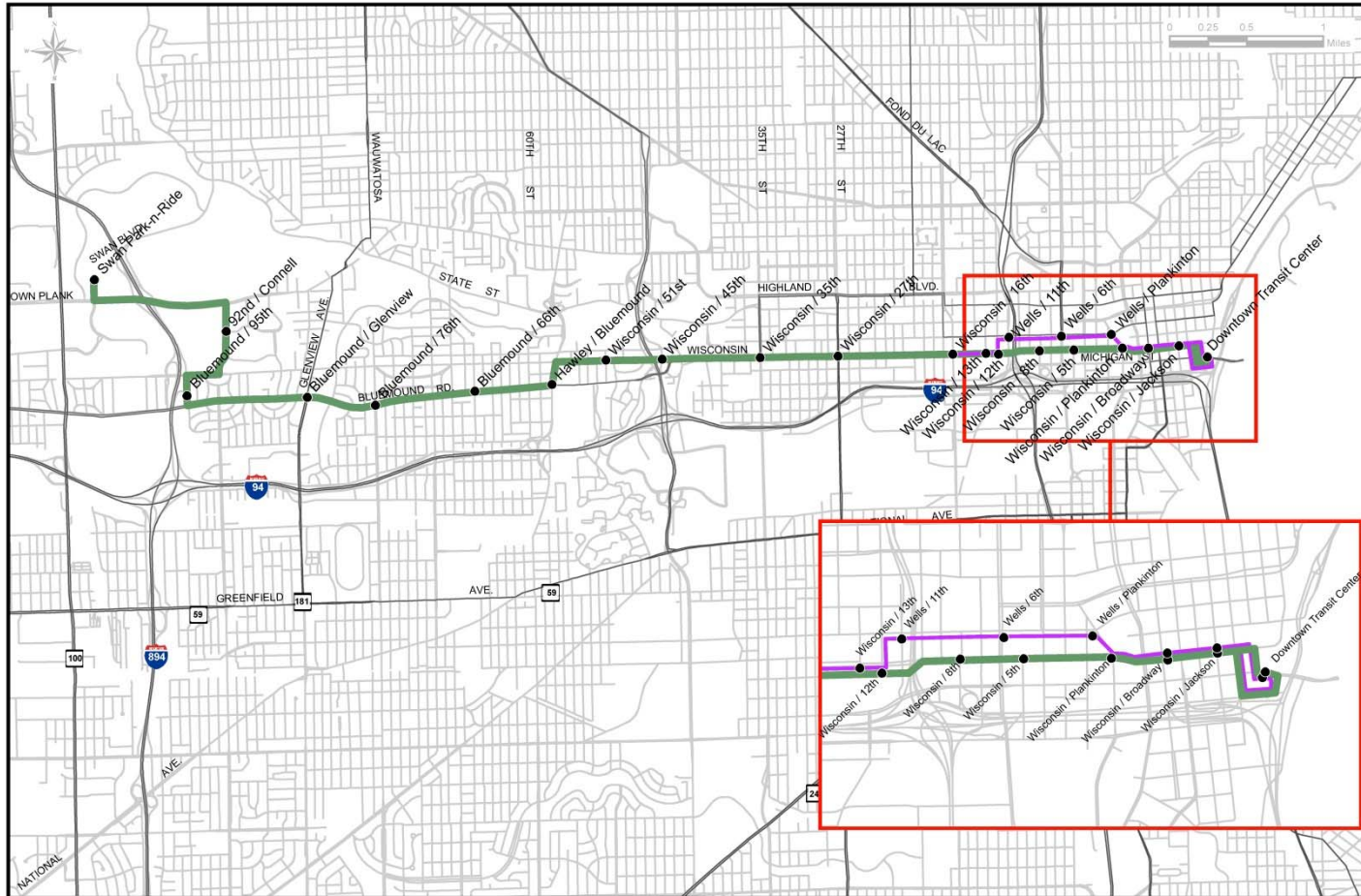
1.2 National Environmental Policy Act

Milwaukee County has begun preliminary work to ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The first step in this process will be to work with the FTA to make a Class of Action (COA) determination. At this time it is anticipated that the COA for this project will be a Categorical Exclusion (CE); however, the possibility remains that the project could require an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. The COA will depend upon the FTA's determination of the potential impacts of the locally preferred alternative. Milwaukee County anticipates receiving a COA determination in third quarter of 2016.

1.3 Request Entry into Small Starts Project Development

It is anticipated that the East-West BRT Project will be funded through a portion of the FTA's Capital Investment Program, commonly known as Small Starts. This requires Milwaukee County to request entry in the Small Starts program from the FTA. This can be done either during or following the completion of the NEPA process. Milwaukee County anticipates applying to enter Small Starts in July 2016.

Figure 1-1: Study Area



2. NEXT STEPS

2.1 Project Development

During the Small Starts Project Development phase, Milwaukee County will complete NEPA (CE) and conduct final engineering and design; and vehicle procurement. Milwaukee County will develop final plans, specifications, and a bid package for construction of the East-West BRT Project.

2.2 Small Starts Grant Agreement/Construction

Milwaukee County will work with the FTA to develop a Small Starts Grant Agreement, with grant expected in the winter of 2017/2018. An Expedited Grant Agreement is the means by which the FTA provides funds for the capital costs of Small Starts projects. It will identify the maximum federal share and capital cost for the project.

Upon receipt of the Small Starts Grant Agreement, Milwaukee County will begin the construction of the East-West BRT in late winter/early spring 2018. Construction is anticipated to take two construction seasons, or approximately 18 months. Following construction the East-West BRT would open for revenue service in 2020. Figure 2-1 shows the project's implantation schedule.

Figure 2-1: Implementation Schedule

