

Milwaukee hires lead streetcar contractor, allowing work to begin as early as fall

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Kiewit Infrastructure Co. of Omaha, Neb., was selected for the estimated \$60 million contract to lead the first phases of Milwaukee's streetcar construction.

The international contractor has extensive experience in transportation projects, which weighed heavily in its selection for the Milwaukee streetcar, said **Milwaukee Department of Public Works** commissioner **Ghassan Korban**. That experience shows Kiewit Infrastructure's ability to minimize impacts on businesses along the route, he said.

"They understand what it takes to build an urban rail system in the middle of a downtown," Korban said.

Kiewit Infrastructure was among seven companies that competed for the Milwaukee streetcar contract. Its projects include subway work in Toronto, a \$350 million light rail project in Denver and Aurora, Colo., and rail projects for the Chicago Transit Authority.

Kiewit Infrastructure will be construction manager for the initial downtown loop of the streetcar, and the spur leading to the downtown lakefront. It also will oversee construction of an operations and maintenance facility for the streetcar vehicles on Fourth Street, underneath the interstate bridges. The initial streetcar phase will open for service in 2018, and the lakefront spur will start service in 2019.

Kiewit's selection means construction work could begin in late fall on the streetcar system, Korban said.

"The kind of work we would choose to move forward with would have to not be impacted by inclement weather," Korban said.

The company will coordinate project scheduling with the city in the coming months, he said, including timing for ordering major materials such as streetcar rails.

"They bring their insight, bring their experience to allow some tweaking to help expedite or bring greater efficiency to the project," Korban said.

In addition to experience, Kiewit Infrastructure committed to completing the project within the city's allotted budget, Korban said. It has shown a "tremendous understanding of the local market," to meet the city's 21 percent goal for participation of disadvantaged business enterprises, he said. The contractor also showed good understanding of the training programs to help meet the city's resident hiring programs on the construction work.

Milwaukee residents in the Residents Preference Program are to work 40 percent of the hours on the construction project.

"They've shown full understanding and commitment to adhere to those requirements," Korban said.



The streetcar vehicles are being manufactured by Brookville Equipment Corp. in Pennsylvania, and the first one will arrive in Milwaukee in December 2017.

Sean Ryan
Reporter

