



Hybrid streetcars to be used on new Milwaukee rail system

Vehicles can operate without overhead power lines

UPDATED 6:31 PM CDT Jun 16, 2016

MILWAUKEE -

Officials revealed Thursday that Milwaukee's newest form of public transit will sport the latest in streetcar technology: a hybrid car that can operate partly without connection to overhead power lines.

The project's planners, part of an infrastructure firm called HNTB, announced that the city changed its order for streetcars and will instead buy the hybrid variety that can operate on battery power where there is no overhead power.

"The technology has advanced greatly over the last couple of years, so we feel confident in the technology now to move forward with that option," said Ashley Booth, planning director at HNTB.

Planners are using the hybrid streetcars across the entire line. But on 4th Street, from Wisconsin Avenue to the site of the new Milwaukee Bucks arena, and on the lakefront, the cars may be battery-powered rather than powered by an overhead line.

City officials said Milwaukee has applied for a federal grant to help fund that extension of the line.

The new, hybrid vehicles will cost more than the original ones, but planners said that cost may be offset by the need for fewer power lines.

City of Milwaukee Engineer Jeff Polenske echoed that message, saying, "The savings really comes from not having to build all the overhead system."

A contractor to build the system could be named within the next two weeks.

A new maintenance facility for the streetcars will be constructed not far from Milwaukee's intermodal station.

Work on the rails and their infrastructure is set to begin this fall.

Stay in the know while you're on the go. Get the WISN 12 NEWS app and follow our newsroom on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

- [Download for iPhone](#)
- [Download for Android](#)
- [Download for Amazon](#)
- [Like WISN 12 NEWS on Facebook](#)
- [Follow WISN 12 NEWS on Twitter](#)
- [Follow WISN 12 NEWS on Instagram](#)
- [Follow individual members of the WISN 12 NEWS team](#)



Copyright 2016 by [WISN.com](http://www.wisn.com). All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

