

From the Milwaukee Business Journal:

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Is Bronzeville the next stop for the Milwaukee streetcar?

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The planned extension of the Milwaukee streetcar toward the future arena site raises the prospect that its next expansion could include tracks heading out of downtown and into Bronzeville.

City officials today were to submit an application to the federal government for \$20 million to build a streetcar track between the Milwaukee Intermodal Station on St. Paul Avenue north to Highland Avenue. The downtown arena will break ground this summer at Fourth Street and Highland Avenue.

That seven-block route is the next extension in line for the streetcar system after a spur to the downtown lakefront is completed. After that, it is possible the city could keep building north, past the Park East corridor, into Haymarket Square and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and eventually up to Bronzeville, a neighborhood that lines North Avenue.

“It will be a very natural conversation to have at a policy-maker level



FILE PHOTO

The streetcar could reach north of the Park East corridor along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and eventually to the Bronzeville neighborhood.

Milwaukee public works commissioner Ghassan Korban. "We're getting closer to that conversation by getting that much closer to Bronzeville."

The prospect has political undertones. The downtown streetcar was criticized in 2014 debates for serving the downtown, but not the neighborhoods around it populated primarily by minorities.

Other envisioned extensions from the streetcar's initial phase, which will open to service in 2018, include lines to the **University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee** or south through the city's 3rd Ward and Wall neighborhoods.

There's a long road ahead before the streetcar even approaches Bronzeville. The city must secure a federal grant for the extension to Highland Avenue. Korban said the \$20 million the city is requesting is the most the streetcar is realistically likely to get through one federal grant application.

Common Council approval will be needed to cover potentially \$10 million to \$20 million to round out that project's budget. That discussion over more city streetcar construction money will likely occur this summer.

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