

"Winter is a challenge," he said. "Right now, the middle of winter — 2017 into 2018 — we tentatively will shut down for a month or two. Similar to a road job in the dead of winter where ideally you don't work."

City officials have been meeting with neighboring businesses and residents to notify them about construction plans, said Ghassan Korban, commissioner of the Department of Public Works.

"I would be surprised if anybody who lives on the route is surprised about this project," Korban said. "We've been talking about it for months, and we've been reaching out one-on-one. If anybody wants to sit down with us, we're ready."

Also on Friday, city officials announced a [request for proposals \(http://city.milwaukee.gov/mpw#_WKdr2sZNIp6\)](http://city.milwaukee.gov/mpw#_WKdr2sZNIp6) seeking an operator for the streetcar system.

The first streetcar, which is [being built by Brookville Equipment Corp. \(http://archive.jsonline.com/news/milwaukee/city-reaches-deal-with-streetcar-manufacturer-b99615600z1-347615961.html\)](http://archive.jsonline.com/news/milwaukee/city-reaches-deal-with-streetcar-manufacturer-b99615600z1-347615961.html) is scheduled to arrive in Milwaukee in December. That contract calls for [Brookville \(http://www.brookvillecorp.com/\)](http://www.brookvillecorp.com/) to initially build four cars, but the company may be tapped to make a fifth vehicle for the lakefront line in the near future. City officials say the company could eventually manufacture as many as 24 vehicles for Milwaukee.

City officials visited the company this month.

Service for the initial downtown route is expected to begin in fall 2018, and the lakefront line is expected to start operating in 2019.

The streetcar plan aims to connect the Milwaukee Intermodal Station with the city's lower east side. The project's capital budget is about \$128 million for a 2.5-mile route, with an estimated \$3.2 million annual operating and maintenance budget.

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