

T Transportation Committee

Metropolitan Council meeting of February 28, 2007

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date Prepared: February 15, 2007

Subject: Principles for Central Corridor LRT Project Scope Changes

Summary of Committee Discussion:

Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services and Mark Fuhrmann, Assistant General Manager Metro Transit presented this item. This item sets parameters for major scope changes that will be considered by the project throughout the PE process. McCarthy went over the 8 principles in the business item. Susag and Smith suggested that the parameter wording should clarify whether the impact is an increase or decrease factor and that the issues portion clarify that the alternative is the DEIS alternative. McCarthy will clarify the language in the business item before it goes before the full Council. Discussion followed regarding the Central Corridor downtown St. Paul loop. McCarthy stated that Ramsey County has done a study that is available. R.Aguilar would be interested in discussing the merits of the downtown loop. Motion made by R.Susag, seconded by G. Hilker and passed.

Recommendation: That the Metropolitan Council adopt the following guiding principles to be applied when considering any proposed Central Corridor LRT major project scope changes, defined as requiring re-opening of the DEIS:

To be considered, the proposed major scope change shall generally:

1. comply with current federal and state laws and guidelines;
2. not adversely impact the project schedule or project delivery;
3. positively impact (increase) ridership;
4. positively impact (increase) travel time saved;
5. positively impact (decrease) capital cost;
6. positively impact (decrease) operating cost;
7. positively impact (decrease) the FTA cost effectiveness index (CEI) value; and
8. have technical analysis of above factors completed and presented for documented public input garnered through a public hearing process conducted by the project partner sponsoring the proposed change.

T Transportation Committee

Meeting date: February 12, 2007

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date:	February 6, 2007
Subject:	Principles for Central Corridor LRT Project Scope Changes
District(s), Member(s):	7-Annette Meeks, 8-Lynnette Wittsack, 13-Rick Aguilar, 14-Vacant
Policy/Legal Reference:	FTA Guidance on New Starts Policies and Procedures
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Arlene McCarthy – Director, Metropolitan Transportation Services (651-602-1754) Mark Fuhrmann - Deputy Director, Metro Transit (612-349-7513)
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services and Metro Transit

Proposed Action/Motion

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the following guiding principles to be applied when considering any proposed Central Corridor LRT major project scope changes:

To be considered, the proposed major scope change shall generally:

9. comply with current federal and state laws and guidelines;
10. not adversely impact the project schedule or project delivery;
11. positively impact (increase) ridership;
12. positively impact (increase) travel time saved;
13. positively impact (decrease) capital cost;
14. positively impact (decrease) operating cost;
15. positively impact (decrease) the FTA cost effectiveness index (CEI) value; and
16. include documented public input garnered through a public hearing process conducted by the project partner sponsoring the proposed change.

Issue(s)

- The Council selected the Washington/University alignment, and LRT mode for the Central Corridor in June 2006. The DEIS alternative is an 11-mile light rail transit corridor on University and Washington Avenues between St. Paul (Union Depot) and Minneapolis (Multi-Modal Station) with 16 new stations, five shared stations with Hiawatha and a tunnel at the University of Minnesota.
- The Central Corridor LPA has an estimated cost of \$932 million based on 2010-2013 construction and 2014 start of revenue operations. Its CEI is approximately \$25. The CEI must be \$22.99 or less to secure a Full Funding Grant Agreement providing 50% federal funding.
- The CEI value is generally negatively impacted by decreases in ridership and increases in LRT passenger travel time, capital cost (both design/engineering and construction costs) and operating cost.
- Scope changes analyzed during Preliminary Engineering will expend both time and design/engineering funds.

Overview and Funding

As the Federal grantee in charge of the Central Corridor LRT project and the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Metropolitan Council ensures that LRT facilities in the metropolitan area are planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained in an efficient, cost-effective manner. The Central Corridor LPA was selected after a lengthy Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (AA/DEIS) process that included significant public comment. Setting parameters for project scope changes to be analyzed during the design and engineering of the project will ensure that resources are used effectively, the project schedule is maintained, and that a viable project meeting FTA requirements can be delivered.