

**T** Transportation Committee  
Metropolitan Council meeting of October 10, 2011

**Date** October 19, 2011  
**Prepared:**

**Subject:** Authorization to Purchase Light Rail Vehicle Level Sensor Replacements

**Proposed Action:**

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to purchase Knorr Brake replacement parts for the Hiawatha Rail Line on a sole source basis in an amount not to exceed \$350,000 over a one-year period.

**Summary of Committee Discussion / Questions:**

No discussion was held, consent item passed unanimously.

**T** Transportation Committee  
Meeting date: October 10, 2011  
Metropolitan Council Meeting: October 26, 2011

**ADVISORY INFORMATION**

Date: October 3, 2011  
Subject: Authorization to Purchase Light Rail Vehicle Level Sensor Replacements  
District(s), Member(s): All  
Policy/Legal Reference: Council Policy 3-3 Expenditures  
Staff Prepared/Presented: Brian Lamb, General Manager (612-349-7510)  
Vince Pellegrin, Chief Operating Officer (612-349-7511)  
Sheri Gingerich, Deputy Chief of Operations-Rail (612-341-5660)  
Ed Toomey, Director Rail Vehicle Maintenance (612-341-5605)  
Micky Gutzmann, Acting Director Council Contracts and Procurement (651-602-1741)  
Division/Department: Metro Transit

**Proposed Action**

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to purchase Knorr Brake replacement parts for the Hiawatha Rail Line on a sole source basis in an amount not to exceed \$350,000 over a one-year period.

**Background**

Knorr Brake Corporation is the original manufacturer of the Hiawatha Type 1 vehicle brake and suspension system. Knorr components consist of materials, software, and computer boards that are protected due to proprietary rights. Among the safety sensitive equipment critical to integrated system performance are the level sensors. These complex assemblies are designed for integration into specific vehicle systems and are proprietary in nature. The level sensors provide crucial inputs to the braking control logic, determining vehicle height adjustments, and braking rates.

As the parts need to be replaced on the Hiawatha rail vehicles, parts need to be on hand to ensure that there is a timely replacement cycle to uphold safety standards.

Knorr Brake Corporation does not have a network of distributors; therefore they provide sales and distribution directly to the Transit Authority. Honeywell was the manufacturer of the current sensor which is no longer manufactured and is out of warranty. Knorr has selected a different manufacturer with an improved design with the intention of increasing service life.

Procurement has obtained a letter from Knorr Brake Corporation outlining their sole source status and clarifying their relationship with the brake manufacturer. This documentation is needed in order to prove that Knorr Brake Corporation is a sole source.

**Rationale**

Service failures have become more frequent as these sensors have failed. The new design should improve the service life of this important component. The Minnesota

climate, especially winter, is very hard on brake components due to the operating conditions of snow/ice, salt, and water. This exposure has resulted in increased bearing failure to the level sensors.

The improved design should be beneficial in providing increased performance reliability which will have a positive impact on our customers.

**Funding**

Funding is available from the Rail Associated Capital Maintenance Fund MN 05-0019-00.

**Known Support / Opposition**

There is no known opposition.