

**T Transportation Committee
Meeting date: July 11, 2011**

Metropolitan Council Meeting: July 27, 2011

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date: June 27, 2011
Subject: I-35W Transit / Access Project – Interagency Agreement with Hennepin County
District(s), Member(s): District 7, Gary L. Cunningham
Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes 471.59 and 473.405
Staff Prepared/Presented: Brian Lamb, General Manager, 612-349-7510
Pat Jones, Asst. Director Engineering & Facilities, 612-349-7606
Division/Department: Metro Transit / Engineering and Facilities

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute an Interagency Agreement with Hennepin County to participate in the 30% design of improvements along the I-35W corridor between approximately 31st Street and its intersection with I-94 at a cost of \$135,000.

Background

Hennepin County, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), the City of Minneapolis and the Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit have partnered to develop a conceptual layout for the I-35W Transit / Access Project.

Partner organizations have identified various transportation and transit needs within the project area. These include supporting future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) operations, a transit connection with east-west operations on Lake Street, connectivity to the Greenway, replacement of aging bridges, and direct highway access ramps to and from Lake Street.

A MnDOT consultant, SRF, identified and evaluated alternatives to satisfy the needs. Partner organizations participated in the reviews and identified a preferred conceptual layout. The conceptual layout includes a median-based Transit Station in the vicinity of I-35W and Lake Street, similar in concept to that being constructed at I-35W and 46th Street.

Hennepin County issued a contract to Short Elliot Hendrickson (SEH) for preparation of a 30% design of the conceptual layout. In total, the 30% design is anticipated to cost the partners approximately \$5 million with the Metropolitan Council / Metro Transit share established at \$135,000.

Upon completion of the 30% design in 2013 and aggregation of required funding, the partners will be positioned to seek final design and construction services. Currently, such funds have not been identified. The overall cost of the project is estimated in the range of \$225 million.

Rationale

Participating with the partner organizations ensures that future transit operations are considered in the design. The \$135,000 represents less than 3% of the proposed 30% design contract. In comparison, the entire design of the similar I-35W and 46th Street BRT station completed last year totaled \$376,000. The \$135,000 share is reasonable.

The project at I-35W and Lake Street is moving along one step at a time without full funding. Council involvement will result in a coordinated (30%) design for a BRT station on I-35W at Lake Street. There is no assurance that funds will be identified for final design and construction or that future conditions may require changes to the 30% design. However, participation ensures that transit operations are incorporated into planned facilities.

Funding

Funding from local RTC is available for this project.

Known Support / Opposition

Hennepin County, MnDOT and the City of Minneapolis support this action. There is no known opposition.