

T Transportation Committee
Metropolitan Council meeting of July 25, 2012

Item: 2012-214

CONSENT

Date July 19, 2012
Prepared:
Subject: Property Acquisition for the I-35E and County Road E Park-and-Ride, Vadnais Heights

Proposed Action:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and purchase, at the appraised value, two properties and a permanent easement from Wal-Mart Realty Company totaling one and a half acres at I-35E and County Road E in Vadnais Heights.

Summary of Committee Discussion / Questions:

After a brief presentation by staff, Council Member Roxanne Smith asked whether the final purchase of these two Wal-Mart properties, totaling 1.5-acres, would be contingent on successful purchase of the third 2.6-acre property owned by Lori Misenor. Staff responded that the final purchase of the Wal-Mart properties will not be contingent on the purchase of the third property. The owner of the third property is a willing and motivated seller and is aware of the Metropolitan Council's/Metro Transit's interest in the property.

Council Member John Đoàn asked whether Metro Transit is still considering the option to lease existing parking spaces from Wal-Mart for the park-and-ride, noting that a shared parking arrangement with less overall impervious surface would be more favorable from an environmental sustainability perspective. Staff responded that the option to lease parking spaces from Wal-Mart is still a consideration, but will depend upon negotiations with Wal-Mart. In either case, staff will pursue purchase of enough property to accommodate the 2030 projected demand of 300 parking spaces. If a shared parking arrangement is successfully negotiated, a portion of the property could be left undeveloped for as long as the shared parking is available.

The item was moved, seconded and approved without further discussion for the Metropolitan Council meeting *Consent* agenda.

T Transportation Committee

Meeting date: July 9, 2012

Metropolitan Council Meeting: July 25, 2012

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date: July 9, 2012

Subject: Property Acquisition for the I-35E and County Road E
Park-and-Ride, Vadnais Heights

District(s), Member(s): District 11, Sandy Rummel

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes MN Statutes 473.129, 473.405,
117.025 and 117.042

Staff Prepared/Presented: Brian Lamb, General Manager, 612-349-7510
Marilyn Porter, Director, E&F, 612-349-7689
Maurice Roers, Facilities Planning, E&F, 612-349-7684

Division/Department: Metro Transit/Engineering & Facilities

Proposed Action

- 1) That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and purchase, at the appraised value, two properties and a permanent easement from Wal-Mart Realty Company totaling one and a half acres at I-35E and County Road E in Vadnais Heights.

Background

Metro Transit proposes to construct a 300-space surface park-and-ride lot in the southwest quadrant of the I-35E and County Road E interchange in Vadnais Heights, Minnesota. Transit service to the facility will be in conjunction with service to a second park-and-ride being planned at I-35E and County Road 14 in Lino Lakes. Metro Transit received a Chapter 152 grant from MnDOT to construct both park-and-rides in 2014.

The project in Vadnais Heights involves purchasing and developing approximately four acres of property available as three distinct parcels from two different owners. The four acres of property will accommodate projected 2030 demand for park-and-ride spaces to downtown St. Paul with additional flexibility for service to Minneapolis. Metro Transit now seeks to affect the immediate purchase of two parcels and a permanent easement, totaling one and a half acres owned by the Wal-Mart Realty Company. Acquisition of these two properties is critical for the project as they allow direct access to a proposed boarding area on the southbound entrance ramp of I-35E and County Road E. An additional business item will be forthcoming at a later date seeking Council approval to purchase a third remaining property, which is held by a separate owner, for the project.

The properties and easement to be purchased from the Wal-Mart Realty Company as a part of this action are shown in **Figure 1**.

Rationale

The proposed location is the best available option for establishing a park-and-ride along the I-35E north corridor in Vadnais Heights. The property owner is a willing seller. The City of Vadnais Heights endorses the concept of constructing a park-and-ride in this location. By acting immediately on purchasing these two parcels, Metro Transit will be positioned to obtain direct freeway access for in-bound buses, which is a key component of streamlining downtown St. Paul bound express bus service along the I-35E north corridor.

Funding

Funding for this portion of the property acquisition will be available from Regional Transit Capital in Project 62117. This funding is being brought forward in a separate capital budget amendment. The construction of the park-and-ride is to be funded via State of Minnesota, Chapter 152 Trunk Highway bonds.

Known Support / Opposition

The City of Vadnais Heights supports the development of a park-and-ride facility at the proposed location.

Figure 1 – Map of Project Area

