

## Summary: Metropolitan Council Response to Equity Commitments Coalition for SWLRT Requests

Requests from the Equity Commitments Coalition for SWLRT made in connection with the Southwest light rail transit (SWLRT) project both accelerated and sharpened the Metropolitan Council's work on transit equity in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region. This summary and the following document detail the Council's desire to work collaboratively with the many community-based groups and other entities and individuals who wish to achieve a more equitable and expansive 21st century transit system for our region.

### ***Equity is about creating connections that allow people and communities to prosper economically***

- The Council will expand access to jobs for persons of color and women by working with community organizations, technical and community colleges, unions, community-based training centers, philanthropic groups and others to grow the qualified workforce in the construction fields needed to build SWLRT.
- Working with these same groups, the Council will meet its equitable hiring goals on SWLRT and strive to exceed those goals when qualified workers are available to do so.
- The Council commits to grow the base of DBE qualified contractors through targeted outreach and by creating opportunities for DBEs to participate in business capacity building and development.
- The Council will explore establishing a capital fund targeted at entrepreneurs of color with appropriate government and philanthropic entities.

### ***Equity is about bringing the community to the planning table and working together to fashion solutions to mutual challenges and achieve better outcomes***

- The Council will include community-based groups into the implementation phases of Metro Transit's equity initiatives, specifically in reviewing the Service Improvement Plan (2015), development of the C Line (2016-2017) and SWLRT transit service planning (approx 2016-2019, upon full funding of SWLRT).
- 150-200 new or replacement shelters will be added throughout the region in the next 18 months, with a heavy focus in areas of racially concentrated poverty. Metro Transit will engage community members later this year to develop new guidelines for determining equitable shelter and amenity placement.
- The Council will convene local governments and community-based groups on coordinated transit and land use planning in areas where major investments are planned and will continue to pursue integrated regional policies. The Council will continue to advocate for a dedicated transit sales tax that will provide a pathway to continue to grow the system through BRT, LRT, considering streetcar projects, enhanced bike/ped connections, and improved amenities.

### ***Equitable Development for Van White station area***

- The Council heard the concerns of Harrison leaders and local businesses and will work with governmental partners to help facilitate the resolution of differences on the land use around the Van White Station.

### ***Timeline and Accountability***

- Many of the Council's equity commitments will take time to develop and implement. The Council looks forward to an ongoing partnership with community organizations, local governments and other interested entities as we establish more detailed timelines, funding plans, accountability mechanisms and community engagement efforts.