



Management Committee

\$8.92M Advancing Equity/Thrive projects in the Region



July 12, 2023

2021 Equity Projects 2022 Thrive Projects



Equity Evaluation of Regional Transportation Investment

Desired Outcome: Evaluation tool and specific recommendations for changing regional transportation investment and project selection processes to reduce structural racial inequities

Time Frame: June 2022 – May 2024 (consultant contracts)

Amount: \$420,000 award; Spent to date (actual \$269,078.56) - \$325,000 (through mid-June)

- **Short Description:** The project consultant will form and engage a representative Transportation Equity Policy Group (EPG) to provide recommendations on how regional transportation investment processes can be changed to result in more equitable regional transportation investment processes, decision-making and outcomes.
- **Study progress:**
 - A 16-member EPG was selected, along with ex-officio members representing the Council and MnDOT, was formed in mid-2023.
 - Members are compensated for the expertise, time and participation. Eight meetings of the EPG were held Sept. 2022 – May 2023.
 - Work to date has included discussing elements included in transportation equity, agreeing on a definition of transportation equity and identifying three project types to evaluate.

Division: MTS

Presenter(s): Charles Carlson, Heidi Schallberg

Equity Evaluation of Regional Transportation Investment

Continued



- **Upcoming study work:**
 - Summer 2023: Development of a Transportation Equity Evaluation Tool
 - Sept 2023: Half day workshop with the EPG to review and finalize tool
 - Oct 2023 – Jan 2024: Evaluation of three project type processes with EPG
 - Feb – May 2024: Develop and share EPG recommendations for investment and decision-making processes changes
 - May 2024 & on: Training and implementation of the evaluation tool
- **Study Issues & Changes:**
 - Added task for consultant to lead EPG application process and form EPG
 - Study budget was significantly underestimated for consultant staff effort required for project management and organizing and leading the 15 EPG meetings
 - Added tasks and scope for creating training module and pilot training
 - Upcoming approximate \$300,000 request for contract amendment for expanded scope and additional budget funded using MTS reserves

Division: MTS

Presenter(s): Charles Carlson, Heidi Schallberg

Regional fleet- zero emission buses and infrastructure evaluation

Desired Outcome: Evaluate regional fleet transition to zero-emission buses



Time Frame: April 2022 to December 2022 Amount: \$70,000 Spent to date \$70,000

Short Description: The project developed a plan for MTS and suburban transit provider services, fleet, and facilities. The plan includes service, facility, and utility considerations applicable to all providers and services.

Progress:

Project Complete. The plan was adopted by the Council on May 24, 2023. The plan will be implemented through pilot projects that will initially focus on suburban provider fleets due to public ownership of their garages.

The Council has initiated a study evaluating business, infrastructure, and service implications for contracted operation facilities, including Council facility ownership. The Council will also monitor development of emerging zero emission options for small buses, which comprise the majority of MTS' fleet but are not widely available.

Total project cost \$137,478 (balance funded by planned MTS funds)

Presenter(s): Charles Carlson and Gerri Sutton, MTS

Division: MTS

Regional VMT reduction- modal shift modeling

Desired Outcome: Input to creating a regional vehicle miles traveled reduction target



Time Frame: April 2022 – Dec 2023 **Amount: \$150,000 Spent to date \$ 57,837.84**

Short Description: The project involves consultant evaluation of travel data and development of an online tool to estimate potential vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emission reductions for various geographies due to modal shifts (i.e. auto trip moves to transit, walk, bike). Using data and modeling to estimate a “**maximum**” modal shift will help the Council develop and adopt targets for VMT reduction and help direct transit, bike, and walking infrastructure investment.

Progress: Contract for \$130,784 executed with University of Kentucky Research Foundation in September 2022. Technical analysis about 80% complete. Expect to present results Q3 2023 with project and full spending complete in late Q3/early Q4 2023.

Presenter(s): Charles Carlson & Amy Vennewitz, MTS

Division: MTS

Maintenance Technician Training

Desired Outcome: Reduce barriers to maintenance technician careers

Time Frame: June 2021 to September 2023 Amount: \$200,000 spent to date \$164,124.57

Short Description:

- This is for a Registered Apprenticeship program made up of internal and external participants.
- The program started January 3rd, 2023, with 14 participants, one participant withdrew from the program, leaving 13 participants as of today.

Progress:

- The remaining funds of \$ 35,875.43, will be applied to tools that are currently on order

Presenter: Jeremiah Riter, Assistant Director Technical Support, Bus Maintenance

Division: MT



Expanding Multicultural Marketing Reach & Frequency

Desired Outcome: Strengthen Metro Transit marketing activities and approaches to more effectively reach and resonate with the diverse communities we serve



Time Frame: June 2021 to June 2023 Amount: \$150,000 spent to date \$147,644.59

- Short Description: Invest in several initiatives to strengthen Metro Transit's marketing, including a multicultural focus group, contracting with multicultural media, and developing a MCUB vendor recruitment campaign.
- Measurements:
 - Complete BIPOC Focus Group
 - ✓ *July 2021*
 - Contracts established with multicultural media
 - ✓ *10 year-long contracts with BIPOC media in 2022*
 - ✓ *11 year-long contracts with BIPOC media in 2023*
 - MCUB vendor recruitment campaign
 - ✓ *Nov. 2021 and Feb. 2022 and Nov. 2022*
 - Creative Services collaboration fund projects
 - ✓ *1 project completed*

Division: MT

Presenter: Bruce Howard, Director, Marketing & Transit Information

Expanding Multicultural Marketing Reach & Frequency

Desired Outcome: Strengthen Metro Transit marketing activities and approaches to more effectively reach and resonate with the diverse communities we serve

Example: Creative Services Collaboration Fund

- Public Art Partnership
- Celebrate Juneteenth
- Leeya Jackson, BIPOC illustrator
- Ultra Super Kings - on 16 buses



Presenter: Bruce Howard, Director, Marketing & Transit Information

Division: MT

Light Rail Vehicle Technician Pathway Program

Desired Outcome: Design the framework for a career pathway for rail vehicle technicians

Time Frame: April 2022 to June 2023 Amount: \$90,000 Spent to date \$0

Short Description:

- Designing a pathway program in partnership with ATU Local 1005 that will help Metro Transit to build motivated, highly skilled technicians by customizing a pathway program to meet current and future Metro Transit Rail workforce needs.
- First year program costs include seed money to develop a legacy program model that provides an opportunity for current employees and individuals from all communities in the region to have access to a career pathway in light rail vehicle maintenance.
- Based on the final model design, Metro Transit would build future years' funds into the budget and/or would seek additional grant or funding partners to fully implement the program.
- Program design advances Thrive outcomes by strengthening Metro Transit's capacity to operate and maintain a transit system that connects people to opportunity on a mode of transportation powered by electricity. Furthermore, this specifically advances equity by providing participants with career opportunities.

Measurements: By the end of Q2 2023, program design will be complete and ready for recruitment and implementation.

Presenter(s): Edward Meyer - Rail Training, Aaron Koski – Workforce Development

Division: MT



Ticket Vending Machine Training

Desired Outcome: Design the framework for a career pathway for Ticket Vending maintenance

Time Frame: April 2022 to June 2023 Amount: \$90,000 Spent to date \$34,520

Short Description:

- Design and deliver innovative career pathways that connect metro area communities with hard to fill Transit and Council positions – Metro Transit Revenue Electronic Equipment Technician

Measurements: By the end of 2022, program design will be complete and ready for recruitment and implementation.

Progress:

3 employees begun training program Feb 2023

Contracted with Hennepin Technical College to provide instruction

Program completed Q2 2024

Presenter(s): Aaron Koski – Workforce Development

Division: MT



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July 26, 2023

MCES-Continue career skills program from 2021

Desired Outcome: Increase the number of BIPOC, Persons with Disabilities, and youth who want to work and build a career at MCES as Interceptor Service Workers.

Time Frame: June 2021 to March 2024

Amount: \$400,000 spent to

date \$0 (expected salary/training costs to start October 2023)

Short Description:

- Focusing on youth who face barriers to employment
- Provide a combination of wastewater education through our partnership with St. Paul Tech, on-the-job training with MCES, and coaching, mentorship, and program advocacy through their referring agency.
- Eligible to earn their Wastewater Treatment License, as well as take full advantage of the benefits offered to all students at St. Paul Tech. including tutoring.

Measurements:

- Number of youth from our targeted categories hired into and completing the ES Career Skills Program. 2.
- Program participants hired into full-time positions with ES as Interceptor Service Workers and/or Plant Operator Trainees
- Satisfaction of community partners with the engagement and two-way partnership with the Council

Current Progress:

- Working on final scope of recruitment selection and Union MOUs
- Working with Aaron Koski/HR and team to leverage recruitment methods
- Working with Labor Relations on Union MOU and contract-related matters

Presenter(s): Jenn Zuchowski- ES Workforce & Equity, Bert Tracy - ES Interceptor Services Business Unit (ISBU)

Division: ES



MCES-career exposure program – painters

Desired Outcome: Increase the number of BIPOC, women, veterans, and people with disabilities working as industrial painters at ES.

**Time Frame: April 2022 – March 2024
(expected salary costs to start August 2022)**

Amount: \$200,000 spent \$89,756.02

Short Description:

- Increase BIPOC, women, veterans, and people with disabilities representation in the industrial painting field
- Partner with the Local Painter’s union to identify, train and develop
- Develop paid two–year program to allow people to gain knowledge of industrial painting in a wastewater setting and our careers and organization.

Measurements:

- Number of youth from our targeted categories hired into and completing the ES Career Skills
- Number of participants who successfully complete the two-year program.
- Number of participants hired into full-time positions with ES as Industrial Painters after participating in the program.
- Satisfaction of community partners with the engagement and two-way partnership with the Council

Current Progress:

- Hired 2 veterans; **one is being promoted to a full-time position**, the other didn’t pass probation
- In the process of recruiting 2 more painters; start time anticipated Sept. 2, 2023

Presenter(s): Jenn Zuchowski, ES Workforce & Equity; John Tierney, ES Mechanical Maintenance

Division: ES



Local Housing Incentives Account Program

Desired Outcome: LHIA funding can reduce racial disparities in housing stability and housing affordability by creating a full range of housing options across the region.

Time Frame: 2021 Grant Cycle – Dec 2024 Amount: \$4.0M – awarded to date \$4.0M

Description: Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) is an existing annual program that provides grants to create or preserve affordable housing, prioritizing deeply affordable, larger family units and supportive housing for households experiencing homelessness.

The additional \$4M that the Council allocated to LHIA for 2021 allowed us to fund six additional proposals in Minneapolis, Edina, Rogers, St. Louis Park, and suburban Hennepin and Washington Counties

Measurements:

- 345 additional rental homes and 19 ownership homes funded
 - 34 homes for the lowest-income households who earn less than 30% of Area Median Income (AMI)
 - 113 units preserved
- 557 total affordable units funded; 160% increase in units supported over baseline funding level.

Presenter(s): Sarah Berke, Senior Manager, Livable Communities & Ashleigh Johnson, Senior Planner, Housing

Division: CD

LHIA Affordable Homeownership Pilot

Desired Outcome: Create affordable homeownership opportunities with a focus on expanding geographic choice and reducing racial disparities in homeownership

Time Frame: 2022 Grant Cycle – Dec 2025 Amount: \$2.0M - Awarded to date \$2.0M

Description: The Pilot offered funding through the Local Housing Incentives Account for affordable homeownership projects, prioritizing parts of the region where few affordable homeownership opportunities exist and/or where racial disparities in homeownership are highest.

The Council awarded nine homeownership Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) awards, totaling \$2 million, to build 25 homes across the region. With this new Pilot funding, the Council awarded almost double the amount of grants than in previous years through LHIA (four homeownership awards in 2021, 14 homeownership awards in 2022).

Measurements:

- 25 homeownership units funded
- 16 applicants; 9 awards
- 5 of the applicants had not been awarded LHIA grants in the past five years.

Presenter(s): Sarah Berke, Senior Manager, Livable Communities & Ashleigh Johnson, Senior Planner, Housing

Division: CD



Equity Audit

Desired Outcome: Review and understand current process to determine if and where gaps exist in current policies.



Time Frame: April 2022 – December 2023

Amount: \$250,000 Spent to date \$0

Description: The equity audit is designed to review spending trends so to better understand gaps and how to close any discovered gaps related to spending with small businesses, minority owned, and women owned. Understand current policies and what can be done to update policies addressing inequities found during the review.

Measurement:

- Train staff on the findings
- Update and communicate policies addressing gaps found
- Number of processes evaluated

Sponsors: Cyrenthia Jordan, OEEEO Director

Division: RA

Advance Equity in the Region through Contracting

Desired Outcome: Reducing racial disparities through advancing equity in contracting



Time Frame: June 2021 to December 2023

Amount: \$600,000 – Spent to date

\$10,533.75. This program also has \$ for Temporary help of \$300,000 – spent to date \$0

Description: This collaborative proposal includes: 1) Financial incentives for exceeding MCUB goals 2) Funding to support the creation of on-the-job training opportunities in the construction trades, and 3) Building capacity for MCUB business.

These three initiatives work together to reduce gender and racial disparities that exist in our regional construction market.

Measurement: Success will be measured by project data. Project data to be measured and reported includes: Women/BIPOC-owned business participation, contract dollars distributed to MCUBs in excess of the established goal, MCUB revenue, number of women & BIPOC individuals employed on Council projects and feedback from MCUBs

Sponsors: Jody Jacoby, Director, Procurement; and Cyrenthia Jordan, OEEO and HR Director

Division: RA