

## Metropolitan Council

Meeting date: January 22, 2014

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 22, 2014

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**Subject:** Corridors of Opportunity Transition to Partnership for Regional Opportunity (PRO)

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** N/A

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Nora Riemenschneider, 651-602-1361

**Division/Department:** All

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### Proposed Action

Information only. No action required.

### Background

Chair Sue Haigh and Lee Sheehy, Program Director of Region & Communities at the McKnight Foundation, have been leading "[Corridors of Opportunity](#)" for the past three years, an initiative that sought to create collaborative strategies for housing, business development and related infrastructure improvements in the region's emerging transitway corridors, with a principle of ensuring benefits of transit and opportunities are equitably shared among people of all races, backgrounds and income levels. Funding came from a three-year \$5 million Regional Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, with the Metropolitan Council as the recipient and fiscal agent, and Living Cities Integration Initiative, with the St. Paul Foundation as fiscal agent of these funds. Both grant programs are coming to an end in early 2014.

In discussions throughout 2013 about what to do around implementing the plans and results of Corridors of Opportunity projects and how to continue and broaden the impact of the work, the leadership board unanimously agreed to continue meeting in 2014. The group chose to broaden the focus to a region-wide vision of prosperity, equity and sustainability. They also committed to meeting for only a single year, with a goal to focus on opportunities to align partner organizations' programs, policies and resources to implement the vision and goals.

In 2014, Chair Haigh and Lee Sheehy are continuing to co-chair this work together under a new name and region-wide vision - "Partnership for Regional Opportunity" with a vision to grow a prosperous, equitable and sustainable region.

The Partnership for Regional Opportunity (PRO) will bring together top leadership from state, regional and local government, philanthropy, non-profit organizations, and business interests, to enhance the region's competitiveness by:

- Improving the economic prospects of low-income people and low-wealth communities
- Promoting high quality development near existing assets (e.g. employment centers, transitways, and commercial and industrial corridors)

- Advancing a 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation system.

### **Rationale**

The leadership members are committed to meeting throughout 2014 and contributing resources from their agencies toward advancing implementation of the vision and goals.

### **Funding**

N/A

### **Known Support / Opposition**

Chair Haigh has volunteered to continue co-chairing this initiative with Lee Sheehy in 2014. The members of the Corridors of Opportunity Policy Board have all committed to participate.