

Committee Report

Business Item No. 2016-77 SW

Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 27, 2016

Subject: That the Metropolitan Council authorize a public hearing to accept comments on proposed service changes outlined in the West End and Route 9 Transit Study concept plan.

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize a public hearing to accept comments on proposed service changes outlined in the West End and Route 9 Transit Study concept plan.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Steve Mahowald, Senior Planner, presented an outline of the study's scope, goals, evaluation criteria, timeline and proposed public outreach.

Council Member Letofsky noted the importance of implementing any changes equitably and commented she looks forward to the results of this study, as her family uses Route 9. Council Member Commers questioned whether we know where people are traveling from to get to the West End jobs shown on the job concentration map. Mahowald said that Service Development staff continues to drill down on that information and that one of the project's goals is to create better access to these jobs regionally. Munt expressed concern that there are no sidewalks or good pedestrian facilities for people for the last ½ mile to their workplace. Since funding is part of the issue, she hopes that legislators could see some of the poor pedestrian connections our riders face. Mahowald said that Metro Transit continues to push for better pedestrian facilities when talking to MnDOT, counties and cities.

The item was moved by Council Member Letofsky and was seconded by Council Member Elkins. It passed unanimously.

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: April 25, 2016

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 27, 2016

Subject: West End and Route 9 Transit Study Authorization for Public Hearing

District(s), Member(s): District 3-Jennifer Munt, District 6-Gail Dorfman, District 7-Gary Cunningham

Policy/Legal Reference: Public Accountability Policy 2-1, Public Hearings Procedure 2-1b, Transportation Service Changes and Restructuring 1-3a, Public Involvement in the Transportation Planning Process 1-3b

Staff Prepared/Presented: Brian Lamb, General Manager 612-349-7510; Adam Harrington, Director Service Development 612-349-7779; Cyndi Harper, Manager Route Planning 612-349-7723; Steve Mahowald, Senior Planner 612-349-7775

Division/Department: Metro Transit/Service Development

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize a public hearing to accept comments on proposed service changes outlined in the West End and Route 9 Transit Study concept plan.

Background

Metro Transit's West End and Route 9 Transit Study is evaluating existing transit service and opportunities for improvements and efficiencies along Route 9 (west of downtown Minneapolis) and near the growing high-density job and residential opportunities in the West End area development near TH 100 and I-394. The study area includes parts of north Minneapolis, Golden Valley, St. Louis Park and Minnetonka, as shown on the attached map. Routes specifically under review for this project include Route 9 west of downtown Minneapolis, Route 649 and Route 675 east of the Louisiana Avenue Transit Center.

Goals of the study include simplifying the structure of Route 9, providing better connectivity between the West End and downtown Minneapolis, improving the performance and productivity of service in the study area, and ensuring that under-represented communities that rely on transit share in the benefits of service improvements. Potential service changes will be considered based on how well they meet these goals using evaluation criteria that focus on route structure and network, the market's propensity to support transit, and service performance (ridership and resources).

The West End and Route 9 Transit Study will include a review of existing conditions, other transit plans and projects in the study area, and an analysis of ridership patterns, unmet needs, and existing and projected land use patterns and demographics. Staff is currently working on a draft plan outlining proposed service changes, which may include introducing new routes and/or eliminating existing routes or route branches and will be presented to the Council in advance of the public hearing. Project timeline:

- Late May-early June: present concept plan to Council
- June 25-July 10: public comment period
- July: Modify concept plan based on public comment
- Late July-early August: present final plan to Council
- December 3: implementation of service changes

Rationale

Council policy requires authorization for public hearing 45 days before the hearing begins. State law requires public notice of the public hearing at least 30 days in advance. In order to improve public review and participation, staff is proposing a Saturday community meeting in addition to the official public hearing. The proposed hearing and open house locations, dates and times are listed below. Additional community meetings may be added as details of the concept plan are finalized.

Public Hearing

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Presentation at 5:00 p.m.

Harrison Education Center

501 Irving Avenue North, Minneapolis

Community Meeting

Saturday, June 25, 2016

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Presentation at 1:30 p.m.

Showplace ICON Theatres Community Rm

1625 West End Blvd., St. Louis Park

In addition to providing comments at the public hearing and community meeting, the public will be invited to submit comments via telephone, fax, e-mail and the Council website.

Funding

The public hearing and community meeting will be funded through existing operating budgets. The service changes resulting from the project will be funded within existing Metro Transit and Metropolitan Council transit service resources.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to scheduling the public hearing for this study.

West End and Route 9 Transit Study

