

Committee Report

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: June 24, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: July 10, 2024

Business Item: 2024-156

Highway System Harms Study, Contract 23P207

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 23P207 with Bolton & Menk, Inc. for consulting services for the Highway System Harms Study in an amount not to exceed \$980,000.

Summary of Transportation Committee Discussion/Questions

The Highway System Harms Study will identify the types and levels of long-term and continuing harms and impacts of the Metropolitan Highway System on adjacent communities and populations, propose mitigation investment actions, and will prioritize mitigation investments and locations for funding and eventual inclusion in the regional transportation policy plan. Committee members had no questions on the item.

Motion by Carter, Toni, seconded by Morales. Motion carried.



Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: June 24, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: July 10, 2024

Business Item: 2024-156

Highway System Harms Study, Contract 23P207

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| District(s), Member(s): | All |
| Policy/Legal Reference: | FM 14-2 - Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods, Services, and Real Estate Policy |
| Staff Prepared/Presented: | Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director, Finance & Planning (651-602-1058) Bethany Brandt-Sargent, Senior Planner (651-602-1725) |
| Division/Department: | Transportation / Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) |

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 23P207 with Bolton & Menk, Inc. for consulting services for the Highway System Harms Study in an amount not to exceed \$980,000.

Background

The region's highway system comprises 16% of centerline road miles and carries 80 percent of all vehicle miles traveled. A portion of this system includes freeways and controlled access highways. While these roadways support the region's economy and mobility needs, construction of these highways imposed significant impacts, costs, and burdens on communities and people in the path of and living nearby these highways. These impacts were borne most strongly by members of underserved communities including Black people, Indigenous people, and other populations of color, and low-income populations, and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequity. In Minnesota, these freeways and expressways comprise what is defined as the Metropolitan Highway System. Communities near the Metropolitan Highway System today still bear the harms, impacts, and consequences from the original highway construction and the continued operation, maintenance, and presence of these facilities. This study will identify the types and levels of long-term and continuing harms and impacts of the Metropolitan Highway System on adjacent communities and populations, propose mitigation investment actions, and will prioritize mitigation investments and locations for funding and eventual inclusion in the regional transportation policy plan. This study is included in the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program.

A Pre-Solicitation meeting was held on February 9, 2024, to obtain information and input from the Vendors concerning the upcoming solicitation. The Pre-Solicitation Meeting gained Vendor feedback concerning the current scope of work and maximized engagement and Vendor participation for future solicitation. A Request for Proposals was issued on February 27, 2024. A pre-proposal meeting was hosted by Council staff on March 7, 2024, outlining the solicitation requirements, discussing project specifications, and responding to plan holder inquiries. There were forty-three registered plan holders with twenty-six identified as consultants, and fifteen plan holders identified as minority, woman, veteran, small, or disadvantaged business enterprises. The Council received nine proposals to be evaluated for award consideration and used proposer

quality, qualifications, experience, and price as the criteria for evaluation. The evaluation panel reached a consensus on June 3, 2024, that the proposal submitted by Bolton & Menk, Inc. is most advantageous to the Council.

Rationale

The Highway System Harms Study is important work for advancing transportation equity in the region. This project will measure the impacts to communities near the region's highways and identify project development processes, investment opportunities, and best practices to mitigate, minimize, and avoid further harms.

The execution of a non-construction services contract that exceeds \$500,000 requires Council approval.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This work advances the Thrive outcome of Equity by defining harms and methods to repair disproportionate outcomes, caused directly or indirectly, by the Metropolitan Highway System.

Funding

Funding for this contract is available from the federal Consolidated Planning Grant, which comes to the Council as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region. This funding, combined with a local match, is documented in the federally required Unified Planning Work Program and is in the Council's operating budget.

Small Business Inclusion

The Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity (OEEO) assigned a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal of 11% for this solicitation. OEEO determined that the firm being recommended for award met the DBE requirements of this contract.

