

Committee Report

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: November 25, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: December 11, 2024

Business Item: 2024-312

METRO Blue Line Extension – Limited Notice to Proceed No. 3 for Engineering Services Contract #22P103A

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to issue Limited Notice to Proceed (LNTP) #3 for the Engineering Services Consultant Contract #22P103A in an amount of \$37,475,448. This is contingent upon the Q4 capital budget amendment Business Item 2024-332 JT SW and Hennepin County Board approval on 12/12/2024.

Summary of Transportation Committee Discussion/Questions

Council Members asked clarifying questions about the project milestones. Dolkar asked specifics about DBE goals, OEEA Assistant Director Ashanti Payne shared the differences between DBE and Workforce Goals.

Motion by Chamblis, seconded by Morales



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District(s), Member(s):	District 2 (Chamblis), District 7 (Osman), District 8 (Cameron)
Policy/Legal Reference:	FM 14-2 Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods, Services, and Real Estate Policy
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Lesley Kandaras, Interim General Manager, 612-349-7513 Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager, 612-349-7507 Nick Landwer, Blue Line Ext. Dir. of Design and Engr, 651-373-3847 Annie Xiong, Blue Line Ext. Agreements Lead, 651-602-1996
Division/Department:	Metro Transit – Blue Line Extension Project Office

Proposed Action

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Background

The METRO Blue Line Extension Project (“the Project”) is located in Hennepin County extending from downtown Minneapolis to the northwest serving the communities of Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park and providing transit improvements in the highly traveled northwest area of the Twin Cities.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approved the Project’s entry into development on August 22, 2014. In August 2020, the Council announced plans to move forward without utilizing freight rail right-of-way, leading to the release of an initial route modification report in March 2021. This report proposed revised routes that excluded freight rail property. Following a public comment period, the METRO Blue Line Extension Route Modification Report was published in April 2022. On June 22, 2022, the Metropolitan Council approved the proposed route modifications outlined in the report (see Business Item 2022-158).

The Council authorized the negotiation and execution of the engineering services contract for the Project in April 2023 (see Business Item 2023-24); and issued LNTP #1 and #2 to the Engineering Services Contract #22P103A to facilitate preliminary engineering activities sufficient to complete the Municipal Consent process. The Project was given Municipal Consent by all municipalities in October 2024.

The LNTP #3 for contract #22P103A will allow for preparation of design plans, final engineering activities, identifying the right-of-way impacts and developing updated cost estimates.

Rationale

The Council Policy requires that interagency agreements valued at greater than \$500,000 be approved by the Council. CGA #22I038 establishes a framework for the partnership between Hennepin County/HCRRA and Metropolitan Council for delivering the Blue Line Extension Project, and will make funds available for project activities, anticipated to be authorized in separate capital budget amendment(s).

Thrive Lens Analysis

Investment in high-quality transportation options will advance the Thrive outcome of prosperity by making the region more economically competitive through increased workers' access to employment, and support to employers by increasing available workforce with affordable, convenient transportation.

The Project advances the Equity outcome by distributing transit resources throughout the region and improving access to jobs, educational opportunities, and health services to diverse communities.

Advancing the Project addresses the Livability outcome by increasing access to transit connections to the greater METRO system, including current and planned light rail and bus rapid transit lines, for communities in the region.

Funding

Local funding is fully provided through both executed and pending Capital Grant Agreements with Hennepin County and the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority and incorporated into the Council's Authorized Capital Budget under Project #61403. Phased Limited Notices to Proceed are planned for this contract to align with the Council Authorized Funding available for this work under Project #61403. LNTP #3 will extend through the end of the current Capital Grant Agreement.

Small Business Inclusion

The Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity (OEEO) assigned a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal of 19% for the contract. As of September 30, 2024, the current achievement on this contract is 18.4%. The OEEO has been monitoring the contractor's DBE plan and good faith efforts towards meeting the DBE goal. To date, the efforts have been sufficient and anticipates the DBE participation increasing as the contract continues.

