

Action Transmittal

Transportation Advisory Board



Committee Meeting Date: May 1, 2024

Date: April 24, 2024

Action Transmittal: 2024-22

Scope Change Request – Metro Transit Regional Mobility Hubs

To: Technical Advisory Committee
From: TAC Funding & Programming Committee
Prepared By: Joe Barbeau, Planning Analyst, 651-602-1705

Requested Action

Metro Transit requests a scope change for its Regional Mobility Hubs Project (SP# TRS-TCMT-24H) to move two hub locations and shift budget from technology amenities to multimodal amenities.

Recommended Motion

That the Technical Advisory Committee recommend that TAB approve Metro Transit's scope change request to two hub locations and shift budget from technology amenities to multimodal amenities.

Background and Purpose

Metro Transit was awarded was awarded \$1,600,000 in the Unique Projects category to fund seven mobility hubs; four in Minneapolis and one each in Brooklyn Center, Saint Paul, and Maplewood. Improvements made at these were to include multimodal infrastructure improvements, technology improvements, resilient infrastructure investments, and placemaking amenities. The City of Minneapolis is a subrecipient for the four Minneapolis hubs.

On behalf of the city Metro Transit is requesting the relocation of two hubs along with shift of budget from technology amenities to multimodal amenities to better fit the identified project needs.

Hub Locations

Metro Transit wishes to relocate two of the project's seven hubs as follows:

- Central Avenue NE and 26th Ave NE to Central Avenue NE and 14th Ave NE. The rationale for this move includes that initial site planning and F Line ABRT station planning make this site less desirable for multimodal connectivity and it lacks the ability to fit the designed project features. The alternate site is located roughly one mile south on Central Avenue. This new site is city-owned and will have better connection to the F Line.
- Penn Ave N and Lowry Avenue N to 26th St W and Nicollet Avenue. A key rationale for this desired move includes safety concerns at the Penn Avenue N location. The alternate site, located roughly five miles away, is demographically similar to the original site, has stronger community support, and is fully controlled by the City of Minneapolis.

Technology Budget Shift to Amenities

While Metro Transit is the applicant, the City of Minneapolis is driving project development for the

four hubs within the city. City staff has learned that Metro Transit will include real-time transit information screens adjacent to three of these four hubs. This had led city staff toward a desire to develop fewer beacons in favor of less-digital information sources. These funds would be shifted to building out infrastructure and augmenting other areas where inflation has occurred.

Relationship to Regional Policy

Projects that receive funding through the Regional Solicitation and HSIP Solicitation processes are subject to the regional scope change policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the project is designed and constructed according to the plans and intent described in the original application. The scope change policy allows project sponsors to adjust their projects as needed while still providing substantially the same benefits described in their original project applications.

Staff Analysis

Scoring Analysis: This application was scored on a primarily qualitative basis through the new Unique Projects assessment projects in 2022. Given that the application scored 3.1, slightly better than another funded application (3.0) and significantly better than the un-funded application (2.1) staff does not believe an analysis of potential scoring change is valuable and that the decisions around what to approve should be based on the degree to which the proposed changes depart from the original application.

Geographic Analysis: Regarding the movement of two of the hubs, the key question for TAB is whether the two new locations are a departure from the original application. This provides two options:

- Allow relocation of the hubs.
- Allow the project to be completed without movement of the hubs.
 - With the five hubs that are retained in their current locations.
 - With six hubs (i.e., allowing the shorter movement of the Central Avenue hub but not the longer movement of the Penn Avenue and Lowry Avenue hub).
- Deny the scope change request.

Given the similar efforts and output of the project and the minimal precedent in its favor, staff recommends allowing the relocations. This precedent for moving points within multi-point projects includes:

- [2019-09](#): Allowing replacement of an on-street separated bike lane with installation of 12 ADA ramps.
- [2018-22](#): Allowing replacement of intersections being done in another project with other project elements (signal replacement, sidewalk work, etc.).

Budget Analysis: Options for the budgetary change include allowing the shift and not allowing the shift. Regarding the movement of budget, while the budget is shown in the application, the specific project elements are not spelled out. It is common for multi-modal projects like this to evolve on specifics and staff therefore recommends approval of the budgetary change request.

Funding: Whether to reduce federal funding is dependent on the decisions above. Staff suggests retention of federal funding unless:

- The two new hub locations are denied, in which case 2/7 of the original federal amount (\$457,143) should be removed.
 - Or 1/7 of the original amount (\$228,571) if one relocation is denied.
- The budget shift is denied, in which case 80% of the reduced technology amount (\$272,000) should be removed.
- Both requests are denied, in which case 2/7 of the original federal amount and half of the reduced technology amount (since two locations would disappear) should be removed (\$593,143).
 - Or if only one hub movement is denied, 1/7 of the original federal amount and 3/4 of the reduced technology amount (since three locations would be maintained) should be removed (\$432,571).

Committee Comments and Actions

At its April 18, 2024, meeting the TAC Funding and Programming Committee voted unanimously to recommend that TAC recommend to TAB approve Metro Transit’s scope change request to two hub locations and shift budget from technology amenities to multimodal amenities.

Routing

To	Action Requested	Date Completed (Date Scheduled)
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	April 18, 2024
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	<i>May 1, 2024</i>
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Adopt	<i>May 15, 2024</i>





560 Sixth Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55411-4398

March 29, 2024

Michael Thompson
Chair, TAC Funding and Programming Committee
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1805

Re: Scope Change request to TRS-TCMT-24H– Regional Mobility Hubs Project

Dear Mr. Thompson,

Metro Transit on behalf of the City of Minneapolis respectfully requests that the Funding and Programming Committee of the Metropolitan Council Transportation Advisory Board consider the attached Scope Change request for the above referenced project.

In 2022, Metro Transit was awarded federal funding, with the City of Minneapolis as a subrecipient, through the Regional Solicitation Unique Projects category to build a series of mobility hubs. The City of Minneapolis hubs were in four locations around the City:

1. Penn Ave N & Lowry Ave N
2. Central Ave NE & 26th Ave NE
3. A Lake Street Hub between I-35 and Hiawatha Ave (to be determined through engagement & design)
4. Cedar Ave & 3rd St.

Metro Transit is requesting two changes on behalf of the City of Minneapolis as part of this project. First, based on community input, the City is proposing shifting two hubs to more central locations to address the mobility needs of the community. Second, due to upcoming BRT investments from Metro Transit, the City is requesting to shift budget from technology amenities to multimodal amenities to better fit the identified project needs.

Hub Locations

Project development has been ongoing since late 2022 and through this planning and engagement staff has learned a few things that will affect project locations and specific amenities:

- There are safety and security concerns from the Minneapolis Police Department (MPD), the local City Council Member and the community about hosting a permanent mobility hub at the Penn Ave N & Lowry Ave N site.
- Initial site planning at 26th Ave & Central Ave along with initial station planning for the upcoming Metro Transit F Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route makes the original chosen site less desirable for multimodal connectivity and the ability to physically fit in the desired project features.
- Metro Transit is planning to include real-time transit information screens at three of the four planned sites because of new BRT construction at these locations.

While hosting a temporary mobility hub at the Penn Ave N & Lowry Ave N location last season, MPD approached the local City Council Member and community stakeholders about the impact of having a mobility hub and its amenities at this location and their belief that it was attracting crime and other undesirable behavior. MPD and the Council Member asked Hennepin County to close and fence the parcel restricting any access to the site and directed Public Works to remove the mobility hub and parklet. Given these concerns and that the City doesn't ultimately control the parcel has led City staff to want to move this hub to a new location at Nicollet Avenue and 26th St W. This site is very similar demographically to the original site, has a stronger community of supportive businesses and residents, and as it would be in the right-of-way, the City also fully controls the site. This new location is alongside dedicated bike infrastructure, has EV chargers as part of the EV Spot Network, and will likely see a BRT Line in the future as the Lake Street Kmart development site will open up Nicollet to through traffic once again.

This past summer, Metro Transit released their approved corridor plan for the F Line BRT line. Metro Transit's plan for upcoming station locations didn't include 26th Ave NE & Central Ave NE and the closest site on their plan (Central Ave NE & Lowry Ave NE) doesn't have sufficient space in the right-of-way for us to install many of the features we'd desired. After discussions with Metro Transit, Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development staff, and community stakeholders, City staff made the determination that moving the site roughly 10 blocks to the south at 14th Ave NE & Central Ave NE would be a better fit to achieve project goals. That intersection is slated for a new F Line BRT station and is an open parcel that the City owns directly. This new site has significantly better connectivity to the F Line BRT, and will allow us greater site control, increased flexibility and space to install every amenity desired including public space with new seating, lighting, package lockers and other amenities along with new EV chargers, a cargo bike sharing library. Additionally, over the past few years, there have been several new apartment buildings developed around the site, with more slated to be built in the next few years, that will need the increased mobility options a new mobility hub would bring.

Technology Budget

Through initial planning this past year, City staff learned that Metro Transit will be including real-time transit information screens adjacent to three of the four planned sites. This development has led City staff to rethink the "Beacons" originally included in the budget under Technology. Beacons will still be developed but will transition to a less digital model and focus more on informational resources to help travelers and residents better understand mobility hubs, how the different included mobility services work, how to sign up for service, etc. In the revised budget, the funds originally dedicated to "Beacons" has been reduced, and the majority of the remaining funds have been repurposed to the Multimodal

Amenities Category to 1) build out core infrastructure at 14th Ave NE & Central Ave NE site as it's currently an undeveloped parcel, 2) add in EV infrastructure at 14th Ave NE & Central Ave NE, and 3) augment other sites and budget categories as prices have risen significantly and changed since the original application in 2022, such as the increased cost of steel and its impact on things like lighting costs.

At this time, Metro Transit on behalf of the City of Minneapolis requests a scope change that would move the locations of two of the four mobility hub sites within the city and shift some Technology budget to Multimodal Amenities. Approval of this scope change will allow for a stronger mobility hub program as these shifts will allow for better siting, increased connectivity with future BRT routes and other transit, will leave the City with a stronger ability to complete the project as the city will control the land at both new sites and that the new sites offer greater space and flexibility to install amenities. The resulting revisions to the budget also lead us to feel confident that we still expect to meet the original project scope and deliver all the desired components, therefore we kindly request to retain the full original federal funding amount of \$2,000,000.

With your approval, we respectfully request the above-mentioned revision be made to the 2023-2026 STIP. Please advise of any additional information you may need and contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Meredith Klekotka, AICP
Shared Mobility Program Manager

Cc: Colleen Brown
Jody Carr
Cindy Krumsieg
Dan Erickson
Anna Flintoft, Metro Transit
Dillon Fried, City of Minneapolis
Russ Brooks, City of Minneapolis

FUNDING DATA FOR SCOPE CHANGE REQUEST

1. Original Application:

Regional Solicitation Year	2022
Application Funding Category	Unique Projects
HSIP Solicitation?	No
Application Total Project Cost	\$2,000,000
Federal Award	\$1,600,000
Application Federal Percentage of Total Project Cost	80%

Project Elements Being Removed:

	Original Application Cost
Penn Ave N & Lowry Ave N location	N/A
26th St NE & Central Ave NE location	N/A

New Project Elements:

	Cost (Based on Year of Costs in Original Application)
14th St NE & Central Ave NE	N/A
26th St E & Nicollet Ave	N/A

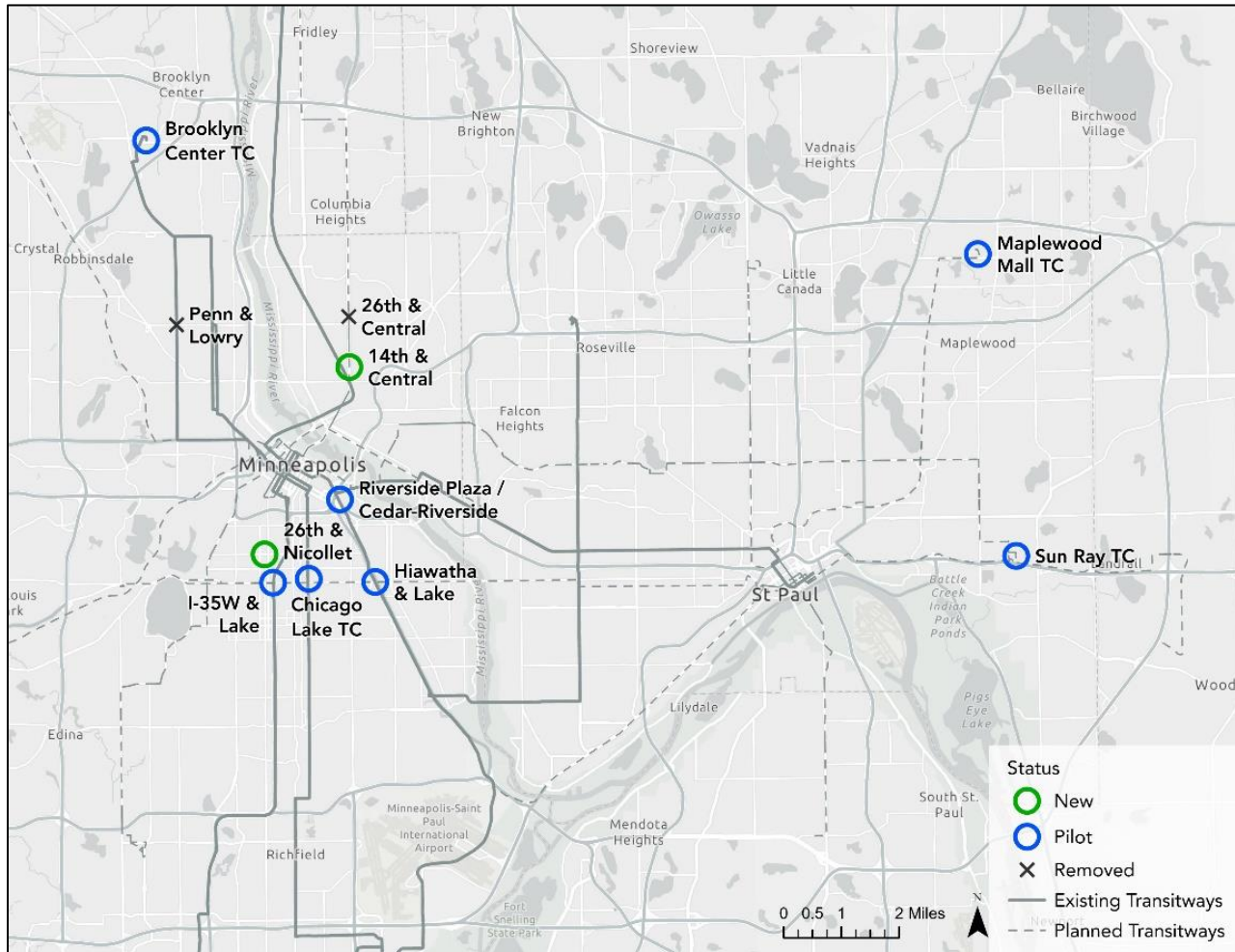
2. FUNDING SCENARIO

MOBILITY HUBS ESTIMATED BUDGET

SOURCES OF SUPPORT	Metro Transit	Minneapolis	Minneapolis - Updated	Updated Total
FEDERAL	600,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	1,600,000.00
LOCAL	150,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00	400,000.00
Total Support	750,000.00	1,250,000.00	1,250,000.00	2,000,000.00
EXPENSES	Metro Transit	Minneapolis	Minneapolis - Updated	Updated Total
General Administration				
Salaries - MT	92,000.00			92,000.00
Fringes - MT	48,760.00			48,760.00
Salaries - MPLS		66,174.46	59,947.81	59,947.81
Fringes - MPLS		35,632.47	32,279.64	32,279.64
Installation Costs		98,693.07	92,272.55	92,272.55
Office	1,000.00			1,000.00
Legal & Finance	1,000.00			1,000.00
Subtotal	142,760.00	200,500.00	184,500.00	327,260.00
Professional Services	Metro Transit	Minneapolis	Minneapolis - Updated	Updated Total
Contractors	70,000.00	245,000.00	275,000.00	
Subtotal	70,000.00	245,000.00	275,000.00	345,000.00
Materials	Metro Transit	Minneapolis	Minneapolis - Updated	Updated Total
Technology	17,240.00	490,000.00	150,000.00	167,240.00
Multimodal infrastructure/improvements	300,000.00	88,500.00	248,000.00	548,000.00
Placemaking/Activation & Amenities	180,000.00	202,000.00	368,500.00	548,500.00
Resilience Hubs	40,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00	64,000.00
Subtotal	537,240.00	804,500.00	790,500.00	1,327,740.00
Total Expenses	750,000.00	1,250,000.00	1,250,000.00	2,000,000.00

3. PROJECT MAP

Project map identifying mobility hub location changes for the City of Minneapolis sites



Map 1: Updated Regional Mobility Hub Map