

T Transportation Committee

Meeting date: July 9, 2012

Metropolitan Council Meeting: July 25, 2012

ADVISORY INFORMATION

Date: July 9, 2012

**Subject: Property Acquisition for the I-35E and County Road E
Park-and-Ride, Vadnais Heights**

District(s), Member(s): District 11, Sandy Rummel

**Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes MN Statutes 473.129, 473.405,
117.025 and 117.042**

**Staff Prepared/Presented: Brian Lamb, General Manager, 612-349-7510
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Division/Department: Metro Transit/Engineering & Facilities

Proposed Action

- 1) That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and purchase, at the appraised value, two properties and a permanent easement from Wal-Mart Realty Company totaling one and a half acres at I-35E and County Road E in Vadnais Heights.

Background

Metro Transit proposes to construct a 300-space surface park-and-ride lot in the southwest quadrant of the I-35E and County Road E interchange in Vadnais Heights, Minnesota. Transit service to the facility will be in conjunction with service to a second park-and-ride being planned at I-35E and County Road 14 in Lino Lakes. Metro Transit received a Chapter 152 grant from MnDOT to construct both park-and-rides in 2014.

The project in Vadnais Heights involves purchasing and developing approximately four acres of property available as three distinct parcels from two different owners. The four acres of property will accommodate projected 2030 demand for park-and-ride spaces to downtown St. Paul with additional flexibility for service to Minneapolis. Metro Transit now seeks to affect the immediate purchase of two parcels and a permanent easement, totaling one and a half acres owned by the Wal-Mart Realty Company. Acquisition of these two properties is critical for the project as they allow direct access to a proposed boarding area on the southbound entrance ramp of I-35E and County Road E. An additional business item will be forthcoming at a later date seeking Council approval to purchase a third remaining property, which is held by a separate owner, for the project.

The properties and easement to be purchased from the Wal-Mart Realty Company as a part of this action are shown in **Figure 1**.

Rationale

The proposed location is the best available option for establishing a park-and-ride along the I-35E north corridor in Vadnais Heights. The property owner is a willing seller. The City of Vadnais Heights endorses the concept of constructing a park-and-ride in this location. By acting immediately on purchasing these two parcels, Metro Transit will be positioned to obtain direct freeway access for in-bound buses, which is a key component of streamlining downtown St. Paul bound express bus service along the I-35E north corridor.

Funding

Funding for this portion of the property acquisition will be available from Regional Transit Capital in Project 62117. This funding is being brought forward in a separate capital budget amendment. The construction of the park-and-ride is to be funded via State of Minnesota, Chapter 152 Trunk Highway bonds.

Known Support / Opposition

The City of Vadnais Heights supports the development of a park-and-ride facility at the proposed location.

Figure 1 – Map of Project Area

