

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: **May 13, 2013**

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of: **May 22, 2013**

Subject Procurement of Low Floor Metro Mobility Buses – 2013

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: State of Minnesota Cooperative Vehicle Procurement contract release number B-347(5); and Council Procedure 1-2c Sustainability in Fleet Procedure

Staff Prepared/Presented: Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS (651)602-1754

Micky Gutzmann, Director of Purchasing – Metropolitan Council (651)602-1741

Gerri Sutton, Asst. Dir. Contracted Transit Services (651)602-1672

Paul Colton, Sr. Manager – Metro Mobility (651)602-1668

Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services MTS - Metro Mobility

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to execute a purchase agreement with Høglund Bus (MnDOT Contract 56190) for up to seven low floor expansion buses in an amount not to exceed \$833,000.

Background

This procurement of seven buses is in alignment with the Council's fleet replacement/expansion schedule and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Metro Mobility. This approval allows Metro Mobility to pilot low floor technology and will utilize Federal 5307 and Regional Transit Capital funds. These new buses can be delivered as early as August of 2013.

The new low floor buses will be on a modified Chevrolet 4500 chassis. The bus body and modifications are manufactured by Arboc at their factory in northern Indiana. The bus is equipped with a folding ramp that can receive up to 800 lbs. The ramp has a 6:1 slope when deployed at street level when kneeling. The kneeling feature is similar to the Metro Transit buses in which the height of the bus can be regulated by an air bag system.

This bus acquisition utilizes the State of Minnesota Cooperative Vehicle Procurement Contract Release B-347(5) which is compliant with all State and Federal regulations and expires on December 31, 2013.

Rationale

The seven expansion buses are necessary as a result of continued Metro Mobility ridership growth of 8.96% in 2012 and 5.5% growth during the first two months of 2013.

The low floor technology is being pursued to pilot test a bus expected to result in faster loading times for both ambulatory and wheelchair while also being much safer. Staff will be comparing and analyzing the load times with the lift-equipped fleet to determine what potential operational saving might be gained over the life of the vehicle.

These buses will be configured with six seats and three wheelchair positions – similar to the current Metro Mobility fleet. The layout is designed for easier maneuverability of

mobility devices into their tie-down positions as well as improved flexibility for larger mobility devices. This vehicle model was released in 2008 and is currently operated in St. Cloud (17 buses), Rochester (6 buses), Grand Forks (4 buses), and MVTA (4 buses) with favorable reviews and few issues. The Council's Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) looked at a demo model and has provided staff with very favorable comments on the proposed layout and ramp features.

Funding

Capital funding for this purchase agreement is provided for in Council Action Item 2013-080 - First Quarter Unified Capital Program Amendment. The low-floor model costs about \$56,000 more than a standard Metro Mobility bus.

Known Support / Opposition

No known opposition.