

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: April 14, 2014

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 30, 2014

**Subject:** Authorize release of the Orange Line Project Plan Update for public comment

**District(s), Member(s):** District 5, Steve Elkins; District 7, Gary Cunningham; District 8, Adam Duininck; District 15, Steven Chávez **Policy/Legal Reference:** 2014 Unified (Operational) Budget

**Policy/Legal Reference:** Public Accountability Policy 2-1; Public Involvement in the Transportation Planning Process 1-3b

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Brian Lamb, General Manager, 612-349-7510, Charles Carlson, Sr. Mgr., BRT/Small Starts, 612-349-7639

**Division/Department:** Metro Transit, BRT/Small Starts Project Office

### Proposed Action

Metropolitan Council authorizes release of the draft Orange Line Project Plan Update for public review and comment.

- Public comments will be collected by Metro Transit through Friday, May 30, 2014 via mail and email, and at community events and meetings in the I-35W corridor
- BRT Project Office staff will summarize public comments and report the findings to the Metropolitan Council in June.

### Background

Metro Transit has developed a draft Project Plan Update to document the locally-preferred components of the METRO Orange Line BRT project based on 2013 station planning and design, detailed service planning, and refined cost estimates. The Project Plan Update, upon completion, will serve to inform an application to the Federal Small Starts program, help FTA determine an environmental path for the Orange Line, and update the Council's Transportation Policy Plan.

This comment period encourages transparent and meaningful discussion with the public about the progression of the Orange Line project, and provides an opportunity for Metro Transit and Metropolitan Council to better understand the preferences and needs for BRT in various communities in the I-35W corridor. This work supplements engagement activities outlined and implemented as part of the 2013 *Orange Line Public Engagement Plan*.

### Rationale

A formal public comment period or public hearing is not required at this stage of planning, however, the Project Plan Update is intended to provide critical direction and focus as the Orange Line enters Small Starts Project Development and begins environmental processes this year.

### Funding

The Project Plan Update is funded using Metro Transit operating budget resources, supplemented by capital project funding partnerships at specific station locations.

### Known Support / Opposition

Orange Line project partners, including five cities, three counties, MnDOT, and MVTA, have been closely involved in the planning efforts



that are summarized in this document. All agencies are expected to review and provide input on the draft during the public comment period. There is no known opposition.