

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: August 11, 2014

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of August 27, 2014

**Subject:** 2015 Capital and Operating Grant Applications to Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB)

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** Metropolitan Council Policy 3-2-2; 2008 MN Session Laws, Chapter 152, Article 4, Sec. 2, Subd. 5; and 2011 MN Session Laws, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Session, Chapter 3, Article 2, Sec. 2, Subd. 5

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

Brian J. Lamb, Metro Transit General Manager 612-349-7510

Mark W. Fuhrmann, Metro Transit Deputy Gen. Mgr. 651-602-1942

Heather Johnson, Transportation Grants Coordinator 651-602-1764

**Division/Department:** Metro Transit and Metropolitan Transportation Services

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to apply for calendar year 2015 grants from the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) for the following projects:

#### Capital

1. Orange Line (I-35W South BRT): Est. \$7,500,000
2. Green Line Extension (Southwest LRT): Est. \$63,605,000
3. Blue Line: Est. \$6,000,000
4. Blue Line Extension (Bottineau LRT): Est. \$15,900,000
5. I-35W BRT Express Enhancements: Est. \$173,900
6. Red Line Cedar Grove Transit Station: Est. \$10,400,000

#### Operating

1. Northstar Commuter Rail: Est. \$6,300,000
2. Blue Line: Est. \$10,600,000
3. Green Line: Est. \$11,900,000
4. I-35W South BRT Express Operating: Est. \$179,000
5. I-35W South BRT Express Enhancements: Est. \$15,000
6. Cedar Avenue BRT Express: Est. \$405,000
7. Red Line: Est.: \$1,600,000

### Background

CTIB was created in 2008 by state legislation and concurrence by Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, and Washington Counties. CTIB provides capital and operating grants to transitway projects serving the five participating counties. The Grant Evaluation and Ranking System Committee (GEARS) evaluates grant applications and makes funding recommendations to CTIB.

Grant applications for the current grant solicitation are due September 5, 2014. All applications exceeding \$250,000 or that staff deem appropriate to bring to Council require action prior to submission.

## **Rationale**

### Capital Grants

CTIB capital grant funds contribute to capital projects identified in the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan and assist reaching the regional goal of doubling transit ridership by 2030. Capital requests assume a CTIB funding share ranging from 30% to 80%, with Cedar Grove Transit Station requesting the highest CTIB share of 80%.

2015 capital projects are as follows:

- The Orange Line capital request will support Orange Line project development, design, and engineering activities.
- The Southwest LRT (Green Line Extension) capital request will support project development, engineering, and environmental activities.
- The Blue Line capital request will include 5 light rail vehicles. These vehicles will bring the existing fleet to proper spare ratio, improve system efficiency and maintain reliability of revenue service to improve future system ridership.
- The Blue Line Extension capital request will support BLRT Extension project development activities.
- The Cedar Grove Transit Station capital request will support project development, engineering, and construction activities of a Truck Highway 77 on-line, center median BRT station and connections to existing facilities.
- The I-35W BRT – Enhancements capital grant will be used to purchase an additional vehicle, allowing for additional capacity at peak times. Eligibility of this project is currently being determined by CTIB.

### Operating Grants

Operating grants will fund continued operations of existing transitways. State law limits state contributions to light rail operations to 50 percent of the net operating cost with the assumption that CTIB funds will be used to pay the remaining up to the 50 percent of the net operating cost. CTIB funds will also be used to pay 41.95% of the net cost of NorthStar commuter rail operations and 50% of the net cost of the Red Line, Cedar Avenue BRT Express, and I-35W South Highway BRT Express bus operations.

Operating funds will also be used for additional capacity on I-35W South operations. Ridership on the I-35W South BRT service continues to increase each year. Daily ridership has grown from 829 in April 2012, to 1075 in April 2014. The operating grant will expand service from the 28 daily trips to 30 daily trips in 2015.

## **Funding**

The funding and commitment requests listed above total an estimated \$134.6 million with \$103.6 million requested for capital and \$31 million requested for operating. The listed grant amounts are estimates that will be finalized prior to the application deadlines. The Council will prepare the Blue Line LRT Extension capital request with assistance from Hennepin County. CTIB requires that capital projects maximize the use and availability of federal funds and have a 10 percent non-federal contribution from the state or Metropolitan Council.

**Known Support / Opposition**

No known opposition. Resolutions of support for capital projects are being sought from the county(s) in which a capital project is located, as required by CTIB.