

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: January 27, 2014

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of February 12, 2104

Subject: Adopt METRO Red Line Cedar Grove Station Access Improvement Concept G and support recommendation of the Trunk Highway (TH) 77 managed lane option.

District(s), Member(s): 5 – Elkins, 15 – Chavez, 16 - Wulff

Policy/Legal Reference: 2030 TPP Policy 3: Investment in Regional Mobility
2030 TPP Policy 11: Highway System Management and Improvements
2030 TPP Policy 12: Transit System Planning

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Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) and Metro Transit

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the METRO Red Line Cedar Grove Transit Station Access Improvement Concept G and support recommendation of the Trunk Highway 77 (TH 77) managed lane option.

Background

METRO Red Line BRT service began in June, 2013 with five stations. The Cedar Grove Transit Station is located in the southeast quadrant of TH 77 and TH 13 in Eagan. Currently, METRO Red Line and other transit vehicles exit at Diffley Road and drive north on Nicols Road to the station, and reverse this route to return to TH 77. The current route takes extra time and delays the transit trip since the station does not have direct access to TH 77.

In January, 2012 Dakota County joined with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to combine Cedar Grove Transit Station access engineering with MnDOT's TH 77 managed lane preliminary engineering. Both study components were led by MnDOT. The joint study considered various concepts, conducted technical analysis, vetted options through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) and at public open houses.

For the roadway, the preferred option supported by the TAC and PAC for the TH 77 managed lane includes construction of an additional northbound third lane from 138th Street in Apple Valley to near Diffley Road in Eagan and restriping northbound TH 77 from Diffley Road to Old Shakopee Road. The benefits of the TH 77 managed lane cannot be fully achieved without additional improvements to I-494 between 35W and TH 77. Improvements to I-494 are not currently designed, funded or scheduled, although this segment will be studied by MnDOT in 2014. The Dakota County Regional Rail Authority (DCRRA) took action supporting the TH 77 managed lane recommendation at its January 7, 2014 meeting. The current 2030 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) includes TH 77 as a Tier 3 Managed Lane Vision Project from 141st Street to I-494. The 2040 Transportation Policy Plan, slated for adoption in late 2014, will need to reconcile the 138th Street recommendation with the 141st Street designation in the 2030 TPP. MnDOT will have to request a controlled access approval on the project design for any work within the TH 77 right-of-way.

The Cedar Grove Transit Station access improvements included seven concepts for which a detailed technical analysis was conducted and reviewed by the TAC. On December 18, 2013 the PAC reviewed technical information for four remaining concepts and completed the meeting with consensus support for Concept G (see attachments) which is a TH7 77 center median station with an enclosed walkway connecting to the existing Cedar Grove Transit Station facility. This preferred concept provides the best overall travel time savings for METRO Red Line riders and is the lowest estimated cost at \$14.6 million. The DCRRA took action to adopt the METRO Red Line Cedar Grove Transit Station Access Improvement Concept G at its January 7, 2014 meeting. While the 2030 TPP does not go into specifics of station design and type, *Strategy 12c: Transit Centers and Stations* states that “Transit Centers and Stations will also link transit to local land use and enable the network to provide efficient service . . .”. Dakota County staff and Metropolitan Council staff recommend that Metro Transit serve as the lead agency for the next phase of station design and construction. As such, Metro Transit would also have to request a controlled access approval on the project design for any work within the TH 77 right-of-way.

Rationale

The proposed Cedar Grove Transit Station Access Improvement Concept G improves the accessibility of the existing station, reducing the METRO Red Line round trip travel time by 4.3 minutes (15.4%) in the northbound direction and 5.9 minutes (24.6%) in the southbound direction. This concept is aligned with the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan. The new station will reduce annual Red Line O&M costs by an estimated \$223,000 for CTIB/Council and annual MVTA operation costs by an estimated \$30,000.

The managed lane vision in the TPP lists a potential future lane on TH 77. Such a lane would allow the existing and new transit routes using the Cedar Grove Transit Station in its new configuration to garner the full travel time advantages it can provide. Additionally, the managed lane will provide improved travel time and reliability for METRO Red Line and express transit trips as well as for carpools and SOV drivers willing to pay.

Funding

Funding for the \$14.6M Cedar Grove Transit Station Concept G has not yet been secured. Potential funding sources include federal CMAQ, State bonds, Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) and local funds.

Known Support / Opposition

No known opposition. The PAC had representation from MnDOT, Metropolitan Council, DCRRA, Hennepin County, Bloomington, Eagan, Apple Valley, and MVTA.

Existing Transit Access From Hwy 77 to Cedar Grove Park-and-Ride



