

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: September 8, 2014

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of September 24, 2014

Subject: Assignment of 2013 Counties Transit Improvement Board Capital Grant Award from Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority to Metropolitan Council for the Blue Line Extension Project

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Mn Statutes, Section 473.399, 473.129, and 473.405

Staff Prepared/Presented:

Brian Lamb, General Manager, MetroTransit, 612-349-7510
Mark Fuhrmann, Program Director, 651-602-1942,
Chris Beckwith, Deputy Director, TSD, 651-602-1433,
Kathryn O'Brien, Assist. Dir., Enviro. & Agreements, 651-602-1927,
Alicia Vap, Manager, Planning & Agreements, 651-602-1961

Division/Department: Metro Transit

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute the Assignment of 2013 Counties Transit Improvement Board Capital Grant Award from Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority to Metropolitan Council for the Blue Line Extension Project the term of which shall end December 31, 2015.

Background

The Blue Line Extension Project (Bottineau Transitway) is a 13-mile project in the northwest Twin Cities area through the communities of Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park.

The Project received approval by the Federal Transit Administration for entry into Project Development (PD), in August 2014. Metropolitan Council staff is in the process of securing a contract for PD engineering services and will be requesting Council action shortly for authorization to negotiate and execute that contract.

The Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) awarded a grant in 2013 to the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) in the amount of \$2.4 million for the PD phase of the Blue Line Extension project. The proposed agreement provides a method to transfer funding from HCRRA to the Council for the PD phase, which began last month upon approval by FTA. A similar agreement was entered into for the Green Line Extension (SWLRT) project when it entered the New Starts program in 2011.

Rationale

Execution of the Assignment of Capital Grant Agreement is needed in order to access funding committed for the BLRT extension project by CTIB.

Funding

Funding commitments by CTIB for the BLRT Extension project total \$27.6 million, a portion of which is represented by the \$2.4 million granted in 2013 (and addressed in this proposed three-party agreement). HCRRA has committed \$17.4 million for Project Development, and \$1 million was allotted by the Council from the 2014 Capital Investment Bonding Bill.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to the execution of the three agreements.