

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: April 9, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 25, 2018

Subject:	I-35W @ 94 MnDOT Funds for Transit
District(s), Member(s):	District 5 (Elkins), District 7 (Cunningham), District 8 (Letofsky), District 15 (Chavez)
Policy/Legal Reference:	Policy 1-3 Transportation Planning & Transit Services Procedure 1-3c Transportation Relationship to State, and local gov't Statute 473.411 Transit and Highway Systems
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Brian Lamb, General Manager, 612-349-7510 Nick Thompson, Director MTS, 651-602-1754 Ed Petrie, Director Finance, 612-349-7642 Adam Harrington, Director Service Development, 612-349-7797
Division/Department:	Metro Transit Service Development

Proposed Action(s)

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to:

- Execute an agreement 18I023 with MNDOT to receive \$3 million for support of increased transit service during 35W@94 Downtown to Crosstown project construction.
- Develop and execute an agreement with the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority for \$1.1M. Minnesota Valley Transit Authority will use funds for support of increased transit service during 35W@94 Downtown to Crosstown project construction.

Background

On I-35W South, Metro Transit operates 240 daily bus trips, and MVTA operates 280 daily bus trips; together carrying about 14,000 daily rides with downtown Minneapolis being the primary destination.

The 35W@94 Downtown to Crosstown project will provide significant transit benefit when complete in 2021 and support Orange Line including: 12th Street Bus Only access to 35W south from downtown Minneapolis, Lake Street Transit Station, and extending MNPASS lane between 46th and 26th Streets.

Stage 1 of this project is already in progress and includes reconstruction of bridges on Franklin Avenue and 38th Street requiring bus route detours, as well as intermittent lane reductions impacting bus operations.

The scale of the construction for Stage 2 beginning June 9, 2018 requires complete closure of TH65 access into downtown Minneapolis for 120 days. Other lane and road access closures impacting traffic will take place for the duration of the project estimated to be complete in 2021. This will have a significant impact on transit travel time and reliability as transit schedules currently exist. MNDOT and Council agree on the value of supporting existing and expanding service to encourage commuters and other travelers to use transit during this project and reduce traffic congestion.

Rationale

To ensure bus schedule reliability of existing service and improve attractiveness of transit as an alternative to driving – especially for the first 120 days of Stage 2, the Metro Transit service plan includes the addition of scheduled and standby

buses and many additional bus trips. This plan will improve frequency of all day bus service on Route 535, widen the span of service on some Metro Transit express routes in the corridor, so all routes serve downtown Minneapolis 6:00-9:00am and 3:00-6:00pm, and add operating resources to existing routes (local and express) on 35W and adjacent streets for schedule reliability. Plan details available at <https://www.metrotransit.org/35w>

Transit service performance will be evaluated to determine appropriate service levels each stage of construction.

This agreement provides funding in SFY2019 (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019), and is renewable at the beginning of SFY2020.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This agreement aligns with Thrive by supporting prosperity during a difficult travel environment, provides improved transit access to all in the 35W south corridor, supports mitigation of traffic congestion and air pollution, improves the livability of residents during construction.

Funding

Operating cost estimate for Metro Transit plan is \$5.8 million the first year during maximum road closures, and likely tapering down as construction disruptions reduce throughout the project.

As MVTA operates a significant amount of bus service the Council will, by separate agreement provide \$1.1 million to MVTA in 2018, leaving \$1.9 million for Metro Transit. Metro Transit balance of \$3.9 million expense is included in operating budget.

This agreement is renewable at the beginning of SFY2020.

Known Support / Opposition

No known opposition.