

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: August 12, 2019

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of August 28, 2019

Subject: Southwest Light Rail Transit (Green Line Extension) TCWR Flagging Agreement

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Minn. Stat. 473.399.

Staff Prepared/Presented: Wes Kooistra, General Manager, 651-349-1723
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Division/Department: Metro Transit / Green Line Extension Project Office

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute an agreement for flagging services related to the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) project with Twin Cities and Western Railroad (TCWR) in the amount not to exceed \$9.5 million for the duration of project construction.

Background

The Council acquired the Kenilworth Corridor and Bass Lake Spur freight corridors from the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority and Canadian Pacific for the SWLRT Project. Twin Cities and Western Railroad (TCWR) operates overhead freight rail service over these corridors. Construction of the SWLRT Project requires freight rail flaggers whose purpose is to notify construction workers of approaching freight trains. The Council issued an emergency declaration (Business Item 2019-178) to execute a bridge contract in June 2019 with TCWR to provide flagging services in the short term. This allowed the Council to negotiate a long-term flagging agreement with TCWR for the duration of SWLRT Project construction. It is anticipated that the terms of the agreement will require TCWR to provide up to eight (8) fulltime flaggers dedicated during SWLRT Project construction and the Council will reimburse TCWR a flat hourly rate based on actuals.

Rationale

TCWR, as the freight operator, is best suited to provide flagging services. Operator flagging aligns with industry standard practices and simplifies flagging by reducing the number of parties involved.

Thrive Lens Analysis

- Stewardship
Safety and protection of workers and natural resources from accidents is a primary goal of the Council. With approximately eight miles of SWLRT construction adjacent to active freight rails, it is imperative that we keep the construction crews safe through proper flagging and to maintain FRA compliance.
- Livability
The Green Line Extension will increase the region's prosperity as it will provide access to 80,900 forecasted jobs and a new transportation option for 55,800 forecasted residents within ½ mile of the planned new stations in addition to the 145,300 forecasted jobs and 35,600 forecasted residents in downtown Minneapolis.

- Prosperity
The Green Line Extension reflects strategic investment in regional infrastructure that will promote economic competitiveness and create prosperity for the region.

Funding

Funds for flagging services are included in the project budget. These services are eligible project costs that can be funded by the Federal Transit Administration and local funding partners and included in the Council's authorized capital budget.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to this action.