

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: February 25, 2019

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of February 27, 2019

Subject: Release for Public Comment Draft Amendment #2 to the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan to Amend the METRO Gold Line Project and Amend the I-94 Project from MN 101 to I-494

District(s), Member(s): District 1, Vacant; District 11, Sandy Rummel; District 12, Harry Melander; District 13, Richard Kramer; District 14, Jon Commers

Policy/Legal Reference: MN Statutes Sec. 473.175 and 473.176; FAST Act

Staff Prepared/Presented: Nick Thompson, Director MTS, 651-602-1754

Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director MTS, 651-602-1058

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Division/Department: Transportation/MTS

Proposed Action

That, for the purposes of holding a public hearing and receiving public comment, the Metropolitan Council:

- Release the attached draft amendment #2 to the [2040 Transportation Policy Plan](#) to amend the METRO Gold Line project and to amend the I-94 project from MN 101 to I-494 for public review and comment.
- Authorize a public comment period from February 28, 2019, to April 12, 2019, including a public hearing on the draft document to be held on April 2, 2019, at 4:00 PM.

Background

Under federal transportation planning law, the Council is required to develop a long-range transportation plan that is updated at least every four years. The plan must be multimodal and identify transportation system goals and investment priorities over at least a 20-year period. The plan is required to identify regionally significant transportation investments that will be implemented within the timeframe of the plan and must maintain fiscal balance between anticipated project costs and funding. The current 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) was adopted on October 24, 2018.

The 2040 TPP includes a fiscally constrained list of major projects for investment in the region by 2040, known as the Current Revenue Scenario. All dedicated-guideway transitway projects and highway projects that add lanes to a Principal Arterial Highway are considered major projects under federal guidance. These projects must be identified as funded in a region's long-range transportation plan (i.e., the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan) in order to qualify for federal funding and respectively to begin construction. The attached proposed 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment #2 document describes the project changes in detail.

Project #1: The METRO Gold Line project locally preferred alternative (LPA) was originally added to the 2040 TPP with the plan's adoption in February 2015. The LPA was subsequently revised to shift the project from terminating in Lake Elmo to terminating in Woodbury when the TPP was updated in October 2018. Ongoing corridor work

related to early design of the project throughout 2018 resulted in a recommendation for a short extension of the project in Woodbury to a new station and terminus.

Project #2: This amendment proposes to add general purpose lanes along I-94 from Dayton Parkway to MN 101 to the TPP's Current Revenue Scenario at the request of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), following the project development process and completion of an Environmental Assessment for a pavement project currently included in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan.

The 2040 TPP is currently being amended to include the Riverview corridor locally preferred alternative with final adoption anticipated by the Metropolitan Council in February 2019. This second amendment would alter the amended Plan and its consideration by the Council will be contingent upon the first Plan amendment being adopted by the Council beforehand.

Rationale

Transitway project locally preferred alternatives in the fiscally constrained Transportation Policy Plan must be amended if planned stations are added or removed from the project. Federal Transit Administration guidance for Capital Investment Grants requires an LPA to be addressed in the TPP prior to the completion of the Project Development phase, which is scheduled to end for the Gold Line project in January 2020. The proposed change to the LPA does not affect the project's cost or timeline, so the LPA criteria to change the TPP only require that resolutions of support are adopted by local affected governments. These resolutions are expected to be passed by the City of Woodbury and Washington County prior to the Council's release of the draft amendment for public comment.

Highway projects can be added to the fiscally constrained Transportation Policy Plan when the following criteria are met.

- The proposal is consistent with the goals, objectives and strategies of the region's 2040 Transportation Policy Plan
- Documentation is submitted showing how the project can be built with revenues in the fiscally constrained plan (or reasonable proposed additional revenues)
- Air Quality Conformity is maintained
- Public Involvement is conducted

MnDOT has provided the appropriate information to meet these criteria for the added lanes along I-94 from Dayton Parkway to MN 101 in Northwest Hennepin County.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The draft 2040 TPP amendment #2 addresses all of the *Thrive MSP 2040* outcomes and principles as part of the broader Plan's six transportation system goals and their corresponding objectives and strategies. The text specifically discusses how the amendment supports the goals of Access to Destinations, Competitive Economy, and Land Use and Local Planning through strategies and any associated performance measures that are impacted by the added project. These impacts are strongly aligned with the Thrive outcomes of Prosperity and Livability. The text also specifically discusses impacts to transportation finance, equity, and the environment, supporting the Thrive outcomes of Stewardship, Equity, and Sustainability.

Funding

Under federal law, regionally significant transportation projects and the expected funding for the projects must be identified in the fiscally constrained long-range plan before being eligible for federal funding and included in the region's Transportation Improvement Program. There is a discussion on the impacts on transportation finance in the amendment text.

Known Support / Opposition

The draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan update has been recommended for release for public comments by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and TAC Planning. MTS staff worked closely with the METRO Gold Line Project Office and MnDOT to review the requirements for a TPP amendment and to draft the necessary materials for this action.

Public Comment Opportunities for the Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment #2

Public Hearing

The Council will host a public hearing to receive formal testimony on the draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan amendment on Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at 4 p.m., in the Metropolitan Council chambers, 390 N. Robert St., St. Paul.

Public comment period from February 28, 2019, to April 12, 2019

The Metropolitan Council will also receive public comments via the following methods:

- **Mail:** Public Information, Metropolitan Council, 390 N. Robert. St., St. Paul, MN 55101
- **Email:** public.info@metc.state.mn.us
- **Recorded line:** 651-602-1500
- **TTY:** 651-291-0904