

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: June 10, 2019

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of June 26, 2019

Subject: Consideration of Anticipated Surplus Property for Disposition

District(s), Member(s): District 11, Susan Vento and District 15, Phillip Sterner

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statute 473.129

Staff Prepared/Presented: Wes Kooistra, Metro Transit General Manager

Marilyn Porter, Engineering & Facilities Director

Claudius Toussaint, Principal Engineer

Division/Department: Metro Transit – Engineering and Facilities

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council declare three parcels, acquired by the Council and no longer needed for transit operations, as surplus; authorize disposition of the surplus parcels consistent with Council policy and Federal regulations.

Background

Parcel #1

In 2013, the Council used federal and local funds to purchase a 2.6-acre property for the construction of a park-and-ride in the City of Vadnais Heights. In 2014, Metro Transit constructed a 294-space surface park-and-ride lot on the parcel. However, the City of Vadnais Heights does not favor transit parking on a 26,811 square foot portion of the parcel, as the areas south of Wal Mart is reserved for future development. The City of Vadnais Heights has asked the Council to consider disposing the portion of land. Metro Transit staff has determined that the parcel is no longer necessary for Council purposes. The existing parking spaces provide sufficient capacity for the potential future service improvements. The disposition of this parcel is consistent with federal regulations.

Parcel #2

In 2014, the Council purchased an additional 1.8-acre property, also purchased with federal and local funds, for the Vadnais Heights park-and-ride. The property, however, is subject to a northwesterly access easement in favor of Spire Credit Union. The credit union has requested that the Council convey the easement to their fee simple ownership. The 3,493 square-foot access area is separated from the park-and-ride by landscaping and is not used for transit purposes. Metro Transit staff have determined that the access area will not be needed in the foreseeable future. The disposition of this parcel is consistent with federal regulations.

Parcel #3

In 1997, Council used local funds to purchase a 1.69-acre property for the construction of a transit center in the City of Inver Gove Height. However, with the establishment of light rail transit service along Hiawatha Avenue/Highway 55 in Minneapolis and the opening of two park-and-ride facilities associated with the LRT at Fort Snelling, usage of West St. Paul facilities has declined as these riders have shifted to Fort Snelling.

Resultantly, Metro Transit staff do not believe that a transit center near the junction Hwy 52 & I-494 is warranted or likely to be viable in the foreseeable future.

Rationale

The Council may determine from time to time that certain real property is no longer needed for Council purposes and that such real property shall be considered “surplus”. The Council may dispose of such real property, subject to applicable laws and regulations including Minnesota Statutes 473.129. The Council may sell such surplus real property to the highest bidder through a public bidding process, for no less than the appraised market value; unless the Council determines that the Council’s priorities or objectives would be better served by disposing of the property in some other manner authorized by law.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The proposed action that local infrastructure and land uses are planned in such a way that is consistent with managing access along the roadway system. Proximity to the to the park & ride allows for capitalization on investments in the regional transit system by facilitating development of adjacent parcels. The proposed action supports the stewardship outcome through use of funds and strategic investment in regional infrastructure.

Funding

FTA grant regulations permit the federal share of the sale proceeds to remain with the Council, the grantee. The federal condition with retaining the sale proceeds locally is that they must be used for FTA grant eligible capital projects. Proceeds may be utilized for bus and/or rail capital projects consistent with the Council’s adopted capital program and budget and the State Transportation Improvement Program.

Known Support / Opposition

There is No known opposition.