

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: August 8, 2022

For the Metropolitan Council: August 24, 2022

Business Item: 2022-211

Joint Powers Agreement with the State of Minnesota for Transit Link Service

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: Minnesota Statutes § 471.59, subd. 10

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Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Joint Powers Agreement #221021 with the State of Minnesota through its Commissioner of Transportation to allow the Council to transport Transit Link customers to destinations in Minnesota outside the metropolitan area as defined by Minn. Stat. § 473.121.

Background

The Transit Link dial-a-ride program was implemented in 2010, serving customers within the “metropolitan area.” Minn. Stat. § 473.123, subd. 1 provides that the Council’s jurisdiction is the “metropolitan area.” Under Minn. Stat. § 473.123 subd. 2, that term includes only Anoka, Carver, Dakota (excluding Northfield and Cannon Falls), Hennepin (excluding Hanover and Rockford), Ramsey, Scott (excluding New Prague), and Washington counties.

Prior to the implementation of the Transit Link service, customers who lived outside the metropolitan area were sometimes able to access services in communities outside the metropolitan area, using local community-based dial-a-ride programs. Those programs no longer exist, leaving some residents of the metropolitan area with limited access to meet medical, business, and other essential life needs in nearby communities outside of the “metropolitan area.”

Rationale

There are communities adjacent to, but outside of, the seven-county metro area with senior centers, business districts and medical facilities used by residents within the metropolitan area. This agreement provides the renewal of the necessary partnership with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to deliver Transit Link service to and from areas outside of the metropolitan area.

Destinations served outside of the seven-county metro area will be limited to points within a two-mile buffer of the metropolitan area. Transit Link is available to residents of the seven-county metropolitan area but will also accommodate transfers coming into the metropolitan area from neighboring public transit programs.

This approach is consistent with the operating parameters that were approved by a Transit Link

advisory committee and have been in place since the launch of Transit Link in 2010.

Thrive Lens Analysis

Extension of the Transit Link service area into communities adjacent to the metropolitan area promotes the following outcomes of the Thrive MSP 2040 plan:

1. Equity
 - a. This agreement helps connect residents to various opportunities and provides a viable transportation option for people of all races, ethnicities, incomes, and abilities so that they can access necessary resources adjacent to the metropolitan area.
2. Livability
 - a. The service focuses on the quality of resident's lives and experiences within the region. Additionally, the increased service area helps to enhance the quality of life for many people, as they are able to reach important resources and facilities outside of the metropolitan area.
3. Integration
 - a. The shared effort in this agreement advances our region most effectively towards the shared outcome of efficient coordination with Greater Minnesota transit programs.
4. Stewardship
 - a. The buffer creates financial savings by enabling customers near the perimeter of the metropolitan area to meet their basic needs while shortening trip distances.

Funding

This is a zero-cost project for the Council, there will be no impact to funding.

Small Business Inclusion

This is a Joint Powers Agreement with a government entity. Therefore, the Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity did not establish a small business inclusion goal.

