

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: September 25, 2023

For the Metropolitan Council: October 11, 2023

Business Item: 2023-195

METRO B Line – Amendment 1 to Hennepin County Joint Powers and Cooperative Construction Agreement 221046

District(s), Member(s): District 6 (Lilligren)

Policy/Legal Reference: MN Statutes 117.012, 473.405, and Council Policy FM 15-1 Income/Grants

Staff Prepared/Presented: Lesley Kandaras, General Manager, 612-349-7517
Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager, 612-349-7507
Katie Roth, Director, Arterial BRT, 612-349-7772
Frank Alarcon, Manager, BRT Projects, 612-349-7692

Division/Department: Metro Transit / Arterial BRT

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute Amendment 1 to contract 221046, Joint Powers and Cooperative Construction Agreement with Hennepin County, to receive approximately \$27,000,000 in additional funds for construction of County-requested improvements along the METRO B Line corridor.

Background

The B Line project involves construction of BRT stations along a 13-mile corridor from Uptown in Minneapolis to Union Depot in Saint Paul, primarily along Lake Street in Minneapolis and Marshall and Selby Avenues in Saint Paul. Since 2018, Metro Transit has coordinated B Line corridor planning and design with Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and the cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul.

Hennepin County has identified the need to construct pedestrian, bicycle, signal, and pavement improvements along Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue to improve safety and accessibility for roadway users. Council and Hennepin County staff have determined that constructing these improvements as part of B Line construction contracts held by the Council is most advantageous to both agencies and the public. The B Line project is being delivered largely through two Council-held construction contracts: the East Construction Package (under construction in 2023) and the West Construction Package (planned to be constructed in 2024).

In April 2023, the Council and Hennepin County executed agreement 221046, authorizing the receipt of approximately \$9 million from Hennepin County for construction of county-requested improvements in the East Construction Package and design of county-requested improvements in the West Construction Package. Amendment 1 will allow the Council to receive additional funds from Hennepin County for construction of the county-requested improvements in the West Construction Package. At the time of initial execution of 221046, construction costs for the West Construction Package were not included in the agreement due to continued design advancement of county-requested improvements and timing of Hennepin County funding availability.

Rationale

Council Policy requires interagency agreements valued at greater than \$500,000 be approved by the Council. This amendment will make County funds available to amend the B Line engineering and construction administration contract and award the B Line West Construction Package contract in future Council actions.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The B Line will upgrade and substantially replace Route 21, Metro Transit's second-highest ridership bus route. Investment in high-quality transportation options in the Route 21 corridor will advance the Thrive outcome of Prosperity, by making the region more economically competitive through increased workers' access to employment, and support to employers by increasing available workforce with affordable, convenient transportation.

The B Line project advances the Thrive outcome of Equity by investing in a transit corridor serving communities of color. More than half of Route 21 riders identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC). Investment in the B Line will provide riders with faster service and a more comfortable waiting and riding experience, and county-funded improvements along the corridor will improve safety and transit operations.

The proposed action also advances the Thrive outcome of Stewardship by planning for METRO B Line corridor improvements efficiently with regional partnership from Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis.

Funding

The proposed action will authorize an amendment to an existing interagency agreement to make additional funds in the amount of approximately \$27,000,000 available from Hennepin County for the County's locally requested improvements along Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue. The County's funding is separate from the B Line project, and budget authorization is not required.

Small Business Inclusion

There is no contracting related to this action so no DBE goal was set. The construction work associated with this action will be delivered as part of a future Council contract and OEEEO will review that project for a DBE goal.

