

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: February 12, 2024

For the Metropolitan Council: February 28, 2024

Business Item: 2024-44

METRO E Line – Cooperative Construction Agreement with Hennepin County for University Avenue / 4th Street SE

District(s), Member(s): District 7 (Osman)
Policy/Legal Reference: FM 14-2 - Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy
Staff Prepared/Presented: Lesley Kandaras, General Manager, 612-349-7513
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Division/Department: Metro Transit / Arterial BRT

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute agreement 23I029 with Hennepin County for the County's construction of METRO E Line BRT station platforms in conjunction with the County's University and 4th Roadway Improvement Project in the amount of \$2,550,000.

Background

Authorization to negotiate and execute agreement 23I029 was previously granted by the Metropolitan Council on July 26, 2023 (Business Item 2023-124). The authorization amount was based on estimated costs at the 100% design level. Following Council action, the County provided a revised cost estimate and subsequently solicited and opened construction bids for the project. Following bid opening, E Line costs under this agreement exceed the previously authorized agreement value. This business item seeks revised authorization to negotiate and execute this agreement at the updated value.

The METRO E Line is a planned arterial BRT line that will operate on a 13.3-mile corridor substantially replacing Route 6. The construction of the E Line stations at University & U of M Rec Center, University & 15th Avenue, University & 11th Avenue, 4th Street & Ridder Arena, 4th Street and 15th Avenue, and 4th Street & 10th Avenue coincide with the County's roadway improvement project along University Avenue and 4th Street from I-35W to Oak Street in Minneapolis, also known as the University-4th Project. Metro Transit and Hennepin County have coordinated for the foundation and subgrade construction of the E Line platforms to be completed in conjunction with the County's University-4th Project.

Across a multi-year collaborative design process, Metro Transit and Hennepin County staff have determined that including E Line construction elements in a single construction contract to be held by the County is most advantageous to both agencies and the public. Through this agreement, the Council will contribute funds to the County's construction contract for the six E Line station platforms along University Avenue and 4th Street.

Rationale

Council Policy requires intergovernmental agreements valued at greater than \$500,000 be approved by the Council.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The E Line will upgrade Route 6, one of Metro Transit's highest ridership bus routes. Investment in high-quality transit options in the Route 6 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 E Line project advances the Thrive outcome of Equity by improving transit access for communities of color and for workers at low wage jobs. Investment in the E Line will provide riders with faster service and a more comfortable waiting and riding experience.

The proposed action also advances the Thrive outcome of Stewardship by planning for E Line corridor improvements efficiently with regional partnership with Hennepin County.

Funding

The proposed action will authorize payment to Hennepin County in the amount not to exceed \$2,550,000 for construction of the E Line stations on University Avenue and 4th Street. Funding for this agreement is available within the Metro Transit authorized capital program in project 61004 (E Line).

Small Business Inclusion

Hennepin County will award this construction contract following procedures for federally funded projects. MnDOT's DBE program will be applied to this contract.

