

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee meeting date: July 14, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: July 23, 2025

Business Item: 2025-155

Blue Line Franklin Ave Renovation Design, Contract 25P213

District(s), Member(s):	District 6, Councilmember Robert Lilligren
Policy/Legal Reference:	FM 14-2 Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods, Services, and Real Estate Policy
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Lesley Kandaras, Metro Transit General Manager Brian Funk, Metro Transit Deputy General Manager Marilyn Porter, Director, Engineering and Facilities Jim Harwood, Assistant Director, Engineering and Facilities Derek Berube, Manager, Engineering and Facilities Liz Morice, Senior Project Coordinator, 612-474-4353

Division/Department: Metro Transit Engineering and Facilities

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 25P213 with Kimley-Horn and Associates for the METRO Blue Line Franklin Ave Station Renovation design and construction support services, in an amount not to exceed \$3,299,839.

Background

The Metropolitan Council is planning a major renovation of the METRO Blue Line's Franklin Ave LRT Station. The station opened in 2004 and serves METRO Blue Line LRT, connecting downtown Minneapolis, South Minneapolis neighborhoods along Highway 55, Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport, and Mall of America. The station is grade-separated and connects riders to routes 2, 9, 22 and 67 at street level and to other destinations and streets at station level. The LRT station and tracks occupy a bridge which includes the Hiawatha LRT trail. The station is accessed by two enclosed elevator towers: one on each side of Franklin Avenue. Each side of Franklin Avenue also has stairs, and the northeast side of the station has a ramp. Both towers and all the platform elements (shelters, canopy, benches) are within the scope of this renovation.

The purpose of this project is to provide more reliable, safe, and consistent access between the LRT platform and the street. This project will improve customer experience by increasing station upkeep, comfort, visibility, wayfinding and lighting. Using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies, the design will enhance personal safety for customers and provide better facilities for security staff. The project will reduce the daily maintenance resources needed by supporting staff with enhanced on-site equipment and operational spaces and helping to extend the life of station investments through use of durable, energy-efficient materials. The project will affirm community identity by creating meaningful opportunities for community input and developing designs that reflect the cultural context of the station.

In accordance with the Brooks Act, the evaluation of proposals followed a two-step process. An evaluation panel representing Council staff ranked and selected the most technically qualified proposer. Following approval of the evaluation panel findings, conclusions, and recommendation, the costing data of the highest ranked proposers were reviewed by a negotiation panel that negotiated pricing and agreed that the final prices have been determined to be fair and reasonable.

A Request for Proposal was issued February 24, 2025. A preproposal meeting was hosted by Council staff that outlined the solicitation requirements, project specifications and responded to plan holder inquiries. On April 9, 2025, the Council received five proposals to be evaluated for the consideration of award.

The panel recommends the proposal submitted by Kimley-Horn's as the most advantageous to the Council. Because this contract includes final design and design services during construction, a limited notice to proceed will be granted through 60% design. Once environmental work is completed (expected in late 2025 or early 2026), the remaining work in the contract will be authorized.

Rationale

The execution of a professional service contract exceeding \$500,000 requires Council approval.

Thrive lens analysis

On Feb. 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. Under the Thrive lens, the following outcomes are advanced.

Investment in this station advances multiple Thrive outcomes. Located in the heart of South Minneapolis and in one of the most diverse areas of the region, this station provides vital access to the neighborhood for visitors and residents alike, furthering the **Equity** outcome. This project will help provide **Prosperity** in our region through access to employment and educational opportunities near the LRT.

The station area includes childcare centers, supermarkets, food shelves, the Franklin Library, and thousands of affordable housing units, providing important access to community resources and furthering the Thrive goal of **Livability**. Additionally, East Franklin Ave is a City of Minneapolis-designated cultural district and has destinations such as American Indian Center, Little Earth, and the Indian Health Board.

Updates will make this station easier to maintain and keep the station in good working condition, advancing the outcome of **Stewardship** and responsibly leveraging our existing infrastructure investments. Lastly, in addition to using more energy-efficient and durable station components, the outcome of **Sustainability** will be further supported by improved multi-modal access and safer first and last mile connections in this vital mobility hub.

Funding

Funding is available and authorized in project 62511 and is included in the CIP for future years. This station was awarded a \$7 million Regional Solicitation grant for construction. Funding will be included in future Council authorized capital budget amendments.

Small business inclusion

The Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity (OEEEO) assigned a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal of 12% for this solicitation. OEEEO determined that the firm being recommended for award has met the DBE requirements of this contract.

