



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development

Date: January 31, 2012

To: Honorable Lisa Goodman, Chair Community Development Committee

Referral to: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Honorable Betsy Hodges, Chair Ways & Means/Budget Committee

Subject: **Cedar Avenue Sidewalk Reconstruction and Lighting (from the West Bank Central Corridor Light Rail Station to Interstate 94)**

Recommendation:

Authorize use of Common Project TOD set-aside funds to match grant dollars awarded to the City of Minneapolis by the Hennepin County TOD program and fill a funding gap for the Cedar Avenue Sidewalk Reconstruction and Lighting Project.

1) Amend the 2012 General Appropriation Resolution by increasing the Community Planning & Economic Development Agency Fund 01CPZ –Common Project Reserve (01CPZ-8900900) appropriation by \$300,000 from the fund balance to transfer the amount to fund 01CAZ (Common Project – Uncertified).

2) Increase the 2012 Revenue Budget for the Community Planning & Economic Development Agency Fund 01CAZ – Common Project-Uncertified (01CAZ-8900900-375504) by \$300,000.

3) Amend the 2012 General Appropriation Resolution by increasing the Community Planning & Economic Development Agency Fund 01CAZ – Common Project-Uncertified (01CAZ-8900320) appropriation by \$300,000 from the available fund balance.

Previous Directives:

June 25, 1999 – Minneapolis City Council approved allocation of \$4,000,000 from Common Project reserve to the Hiawatha LRT Corridor TOD set-aside

April 16, 2010 – Minneapolis City Council authorized the submission of City grant applications for Cedar Avenue Pedestrian Improvements and Franklin Avenue LRT Station Area Pedestrian Improvements to the 2010 Hennepin County Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Program.

September 24, 2010 – Minneapolis City Council accepted & appropriated grant awards for Cedar-Riverside LRT & Franklin LRT Station Area public realm improvements; Passed Resolution increasing appropriation.

Department Information

Prepared by: Joe Bernard, Senior City Planner, CPED Planning, x2422 Approved by: Chuck Lutz, Interim Director of Community Planning and Economic Development Presenters in Committee: Joe Bernard

Financial Impact

- Action is within current department budget, requires utilization of Common Project TOD funds

Community Impact

- Neighborhood Notification
Not applicable
- City Goals
 - Livable Communities, Health Lives – Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives
 - Strategic directions
 - Equitable, integrated transit system
 - Active lifestyles: walkable, bikeable, swimmable
 - Eco-Focused – Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future
 - Strategic directions
 - Trees: a solid green investment
 - A City That Works – Minneapolis is a model of fiscal responsibility, technological innovation and values-based, results-driven municipal government
 - Strategic directions
 - Infrastructure — streets, bridges, sidewalks, sewers, bike lanes & paths — well-managed and maintained
 - Strong partnerships with parks, schools, government, non-profits and private sector
- Comprehensive Plan
 - Policy 2.1: Encourage growth and reinvestment by sustaining the development of a multi-modal transportation system.
 - Policy 2.3: Encourage walking throughout the city by ensuring that routes are safe, comfortable, pleasant, and accessible.
 - Policy 4.11: Attract businesses to the city through strategic infrastructure investments.
- Zoning Code
Not applicable

Supporting Information

Background

In June, 1999 the Hiawatha LRT Corridor TOD Program was established and \$4,000,000 in revenue was set aside to provide funding for public redevelopment costs associated with TOD projects in the Hiawatha LRT Corridor. Currently there is \$1,800,000 remaining available. The funding is static. No new revenues have been added to the program since its inception. Eligible costs are only those capital costs relating to eligible TOD projects along the Hiawatha LRT Corridor located within the Common Project. This source has supported past projects including gap financing for catalyst TOD projects (loans), TOD property acquisition, matching source for leveraging grants, station enhancements, and development supportive infrastructure.

In April, 2010 the Minneapolis City Council authorized the submittal of thirteen applications to the 2010 Hennepin County Transit-Oriented Development Program solicitation. The Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) funding program supports both infrastructure projects and housing or commercial developments that reinforce the community and the transit system, exhibit a compact and efficient use of available land rather than automobile oriented sprawl, support healthy and active living, and contain a diversity and mix of uses with daily conveniences and transit at the center. Applications were submitted by the City of Minneapolis for the Cedar Avenue Pedestrian Improvements project and the Franklin Avenue LRT Station Area Pedestrian Improvements project.

In June, 2010 the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board approved a 2010 Hennepin County TOD grant award for the City of Minneapolis Cedar-Riverside LRT and Franklin LRT Station Area Public Realm Improvement Project in the amount of \$375,000, with the funding divided between the Cedar Riverside (\$300,000) and Franklin Avenue (\$75,000) projects. A 50% match is required by Hennepin County for infrastructure work funded by the TOD grant program. The match can be from any source.

The scope of work proposed for Cedar Avenue includes replacement of sidewalks, trees, tree grates, and curb where necessary from the West Bank LRT station to approximately Interstate 94. Pedestrian lighting and structured soils (currently not in place) are also proposed. No additional enhancements to the streetscape are proposed as part of this project.

Existing materials vary in both content and condition. Most of the sidewalks in the project area were last reconstructed with non-standard materials in the early 1970s. Maintenance of these materials has been inconsistent, resulting in piecemeal replacement and an ultimately unsafe and unpleasant pedestrian experience. Implementing standard materials throughout the corridor is intended to encourage better maintenance and a safer pedestrian experience for all users. Improving the pedestrian realm is also intended to increase the desirability of redevelopment parcels held by various public agencies near the West Bank and Cedar Riverside LRT stations.

CPED staff has worked closely in consultation with Public Works in estimating the total project cost at \$750,000. Staff proposes two funding sources to match the \$300,000 committed to the project through the Hennepin County TOD program.

Funding Source	Amount
Hennepin County TOD Grant	\$300,000
Central Corridor Project Office	\$150,000
Hiawatha Common Project TOD Fund	\$300,000
Total	\$750,000

The Central Corridor Project Office has indicated their intent to complete sidewalk, tree, tree grate, structured soil, and curb replacement where needed on Cedar Avenue from the West Bank station to Riverside Avenue. Staff estimates the value of this work at \$150,000. To fill the remaining project gap and fulfill the Hennepin County Grant matching requirements, staff recommends using up to \$300,000 in Hiawatha Common Project TOD set-aside funding. Provided funding is secured, work will be completed by the end of 2012 as required by the Hennepin County TOD Grant program.

Related Investment

Aside from the Central Corridor line itself, several other major investments have been made or are ongoing in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood that relate to the intended outcomes of

this project. Investments by both public and private entities intend to prepare the station area for the new transportation and land use conditions that will be created with the opening of the Central Corridor in 2014.

- Riverside Avenue is currently undergoing a two year reconstruction that will enhance the pedestrian and bicycle experience near the West Bank station. The project includes a four to three driving lane conversion.
- Riverside bicycle lanes will complement other recent investment in cycling infrastructure on 19th and 20th Avenues in the neighborhood – completed with grant dollars from the Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program.
- North of the West Bank station, plans are in development to improve pedestrian conditions at the 7 Corners intersection, also with grant dollars from the Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program.
- Reconstruction of 4th Street and 15th Avenue (west of Riverside Avenue) is slated to occur in 2014, which will help strengthen the pedestrian and bicycle connection between the Hiawatha and Central Corridor light rail stations in the neighborhood.
- Hennepin County completed a series of improvements to Cedar Avenue this past year. The roadway was resurfaced with mitigation funds from the Interstate 35W bridge collapse, curb ramps in the corridor were replaced, and the Cedar Avenue Bridge that abuts the West Bank station was re-decked, increasing the pedestrian space adjacent to the station entrance.
- The West Bank Business Association and Cedar Riverside Partnership are leading an effort to establish a special services district that will assist in maintaining all of the improved public realm space in the neighborhood.
- The Cedar Cultural Center is leading an effort to improve three public/private plazas in the neighborhood with financial support from the Sherman Group, the University District Alliance, and others. Two of these plazas are located on Cedar Avenue adjacent to the scope of work proposed in this report.

CC: Council Member Gordon, Ward 2

Attachments

1. Map of project area
2. Photos of existing conditions
3. Map of redevelopment opportunity in the area