

**A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT ELEMENTS OF THE 35W
TRANSIT ACCESS PROJECT IN COOPERATION WITH HENNEPIN
COUNTY, THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION,
AND THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**

WHEREAS before 2007 the 35W Transit Access Project had grown to include mainline freeway expansion from 42nd Street to the 94 Commons corridor; replacement of nine bridges in the 35W corridor between Franklin Avenue and 38th Street; movement of freeway ramps from 35th and 36th Streets to 38th Street; and the addition of an entrance ramp from Lake Street to 35W northbound, an exit ramp from 35W southbound to Lake Street, and an exit ramp from 35W northbound to 28th Street; and provision for a potential future transit station, all at a cost of more than \$500 million, and the City's only option was to accept or reject the entire project;

WHEREAS the City Council passed a resolution on the 35W Transit Access Project on December 7, 2007 which directed staff to develop a menu of options for a fiscally responsible plan with a high quality inside lane multi-modal Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station at Lake Street, a high quality connection to the Midtown Greenway, and access at Lake Street as part of the 35W access improvements, with the highest priority given to regional efforts to promote the use of transit, and since then City of Minneapolis staff have been working to implement this direction;

WHEREAS a significant component of the 2007 Urban Partnership Agreement with the U.S. Department of Transportation is the implementation of BRT along 35W, and a station at Lake Street is a critical piece of regional BRT;

WHEREAS the City of Minneapolis and its partners - Hennepin County as project lead, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Council - have been working over the past five years to plan and design the project elements of the 35W Transit Access Project to 30% complete plans, while defining the project as reaching only from 28th Street at the north to 31st Street at the south;

WHEREAS the plans developed to date include these project elements at a total cost of \$151 million, and it is now time for the City and its project partners to determine which project elements should be included:

1. Freeway improvements including four bridges in the 35W corridor between 28th Street and 31st Street, including constructing moving lanes around the new inline transit station described below. This project element is projected to cost \$46 million.

2. A new high quality inside lane multi-modal transit station near Lake Street will significantly improve Bus Rapid Transit service on 35W at the freeway level and transit patrons using buses on Lake Street. Connections for pedestrians and bicyclists between the transit station and the Midtown Greenway will be provided via a high quality off-street “green crescent” trail. The transit station will provide a comfortable and convenient location for transit patrons to wait for buses, ticket vending, and other transit passenger amenities, including potential future programming for commercial activity. This project element is projected to cost \$43 million.
3. A new exit from southbound 35W to Lake Street will provide direct access to Lake Street and surrounding destinations, relieve approximately 25% of the traffic demand on the 35W southbound exit to 35th Street, improve freeway operation and safety by reducing weaving traffic conflicts between the 31st Street entrance and the 35th Street exit; and it may be a catalyst for Lake Street revitalization. This project element is projected to cost \$22 million.
4. While a new entrance from Lake Street to 35W northbound would provide direct access from Lake Street to the freeway, it would do so at a substantial cost due to necessary replacement of the 26th Street and Franklin bridges over 35W and additional property acquisition for a wider freeway section north of 28th Street. This project element is projected to cost \$37 million.
5. A new exit from northbound 35W to 28th Street would provide direct access from the freeway to popular South Minneapolis destinations including neighborhoods, health care facilities, retail, employment centers, educational facilities, cultural centers, social services and other destinations; reduce traffic demand along 2nd Avenue and through critical intersections at 31st Street and at Lake Street; improve transit service times along Lake Street; relieve approximately 25% of the traffic demand on the 35W northbound exit to 31st Street; and improve freeway operation and safety by reducing weaving traffic conflicts between the 35th Street entrance and the 31st Street exit. This project element is projected to cost \$3 million.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Minneapolis supports the following project elements of the 35W Transit Access Project, with a total projected cost of \$114 million, in cooperation with Hennepin County, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Council. These four project elements have been analyzed, and the resulting overall benefit to cost ratio is 1.70.

1. A high quality inside lane multi-modal BRT station at Lake Street, along with a high quality bike and pedestrian connection to the Midtown Greenway, as the City’s highest priority;
2. Freeway improvements between 28th Street and 31st Street to accommodate the successful regional operation of BRT;

3. A new exit from southbound 35W to Lake Street; and
4. A new exit from northbound 35W to 28th Street.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Minneapolis does not support a new entrance from Lake Street to 35W northbound, and that the City of Minneapolis, together with its project partners, will direct staff working on completing 30% design plans to stop work on a new entrance from Lake Street to 35W northbound, which will allow for design work on the remaining project elements to proceed more quickly, although an entrance from Lake Street to 35W northbound will not be precluded in the future as part of the project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Minneapolis considers stormwater mitigation to be a project cost, to be paid along with other design and construction expenses, and not to be borne by any individual local jurisdictions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Minneapolis commits to collaborating with Hennepin County, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Council to develop and deliver traffic calming measures in South Minneapolis neighborhoods, including the potential conversion of one-way streets to two-way streets. Traffic calming measures should be developed and delivered in the area impacted by the 28th Street exit, and in the area impacted by the 31st Street exit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Minneapolis commits to collaborating with Hennepin County, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Metropolitan Council to develop and deliver enhancements to the transit rider experience in South Minneapolis neighborhoods, including improvements to existing transit shelters in the area and installation of additional transit shelters in the area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Minneapolis supports a design for the transit station which accommodates future programming for commercial activity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Minneapolis, together with its project partners, will approach the Federal Highway Administration as soon as possible to pursue project funding possibilities.