



## Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Public Works

**Date:** April 16, 2013

**To:** Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee

**Subject:** **Issuance of RFQ for Nicollet Mall Redesign**

**Recommendation:**

Receive and file an update on the redesign and reconstruction of Nicollet Mall and the issuance of an RFQ to identify qualified design teams.

**Previous Directives:**

- December 12, 2012 - 2012R-655, Adopting the 2013-2017 Five Year Capital Program, including \$555,000 for Nicollet Mall Planning (PV084).

**Department Information**

Prepared by: Ben Hecker, Interagency Coordinator, Public Works

Approved by: Steve Kotke, Director, Public Works \_\_\_\_\_

Presenters in Committee: David Frank, Director of Transit Development, CPED

Peter Brown, Project Consultant

**Reviews**

- Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Approval       Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Civil Rights Approval Approval       Date \_\_\_\_\_
- Policy Review Group (PRG): Approval       Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial Impact** *(delete all lines not applicable to your request)*

- No financial impact
- Action is within the Business Plan

**Community Impact**

- Neighborhood Notification
- City Goals
- Comprehensive Plan
- Zoning Code
- Other

## **Supporting Information**

### History

Nicollet Mall was created as a transit mall in 1965, and it was reconstructed most recently in 1991 with the granite paving system that remains in place today. While the design of the Mall has essentially stayed the same since 1965, competitor regions have invested in new innovative public spaces to recruit top talent and business. The 1990 rebuild included a paving system for the sidewalks made up of multiple colors of granite that was electrically heated. Unfortunately, the heating system failed and the paving materials can be slippery and have not hold up well in Minnesota's northern climate. The granite pavers heave, crack, break, are difficult and costly to repair or replace, and create tripping hazards as well as an unsightly urban experience. Worse, as this system has deteriorated the City has been exposed to constantly escalating maintenance and repair costs. Nicollet Mall was innovative in 1965 when it became a transit mall, and now is the time to be innovative again. Nicollet Mall is more than a street – it is the outside world's window onto Minnesota and the place where investors get their first impression of Minnesota's potential for growth.

### Project Overview

The City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Downtown Council formed the Nicollet Mall Work Group in the Spring of 2013 for the purpose of working together to ensure the redesign and reconstruction of a first-class, 21<sup>st</sup> century Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis. The committee plans to implement a design competition to develop a new vision and concept design for the reconstruction of Nicollet Mall to ensure that it remains the leading center for business in the State of Minnesota. Once complete, the project will cement Nicollet Mall's position as the region's premiere business, transit, and entertainment connection - a linear spine through downtown connecting green spaces, shops, office towers, and catalyzing new investment and development.

The reconstructed Nicollet Mall will combine high-quality urban design with appropriate materials and systems to create a public space that is both beautiful and that will withstand heavy use and the Minnesota climate. The new Mall will attract many more workers, residents, and guests to the center of downtown Minneapolis to work, shop, attend arts and sports events, and take part in the many recreation opportunities available, while an enhanced connection to the Mississippi riverfront will highlight our State's most famous natural amenity.

### Scope, Schedule, and Budget

The reconstruction of Nicollet Mall is expected to cost approximately \$30-40M and will be funded with a combination of Minnesota State bond proceeds and assessments of surrounding property owners. The construction budget for the project will include the complete reconstruction of the street and sidewalks from building face to building face, for the twelve blocks between Washington Avenue and Grant Street. Construction is expected to be complete by 2015-2016. Detailed design work through construction documents is expected to be a collaboration of the winning urban design team, Minneapolis Public Works engineering staff, and an appropriate engineering and planning firm, if different from the urban design team.

### Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee

A working group comprising elected officials from the City and members of the Downtown Council has been meeting to lay the groundwork for the project scope and process. Beginning in May a nine member Implementation Committee will convene to guide the project from now through completion. The committee will comprise four members selected

by the MDC, and five members selected by the City. Appointments to the Implementation Committee will be recommended at a future committee meeting.

### Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Design Competition

The Nicollet Mall Working Group has determined that a design competition will be the best way to collect a range of ideas from a broad array of design teams that may be distilled into a single project. The City and MDC's purpose in administering this competition is to obtain *alternative visions* for a future Nicollet Mall and to inform the *consultant selection process* so that the City retains the best qualified design team for the project. The competition will begin with the issuance of an RFQ to identify qualified urban design teams, followed by the issuance of an RFP/Design Brief in May.

The competition process will culminate in the fall 2013 selection of the winning team, which will be retained by the City to execute the detailed schematic design for the Nicollet Mall reconstruction project. The winning team will consolidate the best ideas from their own and the other submissions, if appropriate, into a single vision for Nicollet Mall. This vision will then be used to promote the Nicollet Mall reconstruction project generally; to obtain consensus on assessments from the business community and property owners; and to obtain consensus from the community through a public participation process. But first, the design competition will require the four teams to show their creativity and skill at two levels.

The City and MDC will be using a three-stage, qualifications-based selection process that will include the RFQ, a Design Competition, and a Final Presentation and Interview stage after which the winning team will be selected.

- **Stage I: RFQ:** The purpose of the RFQ process will be to finalize a short list of four qualified design teams that will be invited to participate in the design competition.
- **Stage II: Design Competition:** The City will issue the Design Competition Brief to the short list of four qualified teams. Each team will have 8-10 weeks to complete and submit their visions and designs for Nicollet Mall. During this period, each team will visit Minneapolis for a site visit and work session with key stakeholders and City staff.
- **Stage III: Presentations and Interviews:** The four teams will be asked to visit Minneapolis a second time to present their submissions publically and to interview with the Implementation Committee. The winning team will be selected based upon public feedback, the outcome of the interview process, and a final recommendation from the Implementation Committee to Minneapolis City Council.

### Next Steps

The RFQ will be issued at the end of April. Responses will be reviewed and finalists identified by the Steering Committee in May. An RFP/Design Brief and four design team finalists will be recommended for Council approval at that time.