



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

**Date:** September 24, 2013

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

**Subject:** **Nicollet Mall Redesign and Reconstruction: Design Consultant Selection**

### Recommendation:

Authorize the appropriate city officials to negotiate and enter into a contract with James Corner Field Operations for completion of concept design for the Nicollet Mall reconstruction project in an amount not to exceed \$600,000. No additional appropriation is required.

### Previous Directives:

- June 18, 2013 – Issuance of an RFP and execution of design stipends with finalist design teams
- April 16, 2013 – Receive and file update on Nicollet Mall Redesign and issuance of RFQ.
- 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 \_\_ Concurrent \_\_\_\_\_
- Civil Rights Approval Approval \_\_ Date \_\_ Concurrent \_\_\_\_\_
- Policy Review Group (PRG): Approval \_NA\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Financial Impact

- No financial impact
- Action is within the Business Plan

## **Supporting Information**

### History

Nicollet Mall was created as a transit mall in 1965, and was reconstructed most recently in 1991 with the granite paving system that remains in place today. While the design of the Mall has essentially remained the same since 1965, competitor regions have invested in new, innovative public spaces to recruit top talent and business. The 1991 rebuild included a paving system for the sidewalks comprised of electrically heated, multi-colored granite. Unfortunately, because the heating system failed the paving materials can be slippery and have not withstood 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 maintenance and repair costs have continued to escalate. Nicollet Mall was innovative in 1965 when it became a transit mall. Now is the time to be innovative again. Nicollet Mall is more than a street – it is the outside world's window into 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 (MDC) are working together to ensure the redesign and reconstruction of a first-class, 21<sup>st</sup> century Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis. The goal of the collaboration is 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 beautiful, durable and able to withstand 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 sporting events, and take part in the many recreational 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 will be a collaborative effort between 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 (NMIC)

A nine-member Implementation Committee has guided the project through selection of the design team. The committee comprises four members selected by the MDC, and five members selected by the City:

Steven Bosacker (Chair)  
Council Member Goodman  
Council Member Lilligren  
Neil Reardon  
Mayor Rybak  
David Marquis  
Bob Pfefferle  
David Wilson  
David Wright

### Design Competition

The Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee determined that a design competition would be the best way to identify an urban design consultant and to collect a range of ideas from three design teams that may be distilled into a single vision for Nicollet Mall. The City and MDC's purpose in administering this competition was 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 winning team will be retained by the City to execute concept design and the detailed design through construction documents 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. The development of this vision will 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 during the concept design phase. The design competition required the three teams to show their creativity and skill at two different levels – vision and detailed design.

The City and MDC used a three-stage, qualifications-based selection process that included an RFQ, a Consultant Selection Design Competition, and a Final Presentation and Interview stage.

- **Stage I: RFQ:** The purpose of the RFQ process was to finalize a short list of four qualified design teams that will be invited to participate in the design competition.
- **Stage II: Consultant Selection Design Competition:** The City issued Design Competition Brief to the four qualified teams. Each team was given 8 weeks to complete and submit their visions and designs for Nicollet Mall.
- **Stage III: Presentations and Interviews:** The four teams were asked to visit Minneapolis in September to present their submissions publically, and to interview with the staff team and a Review Panel, which included the Implementation Committee and three members of the design community.

### Design Competition Finalists

The City issued the RFQ on April 29<sup>th</sup>. Qualifications were reviewed by staff and the Implementation Committee. The city received 20 responsive submissions that were evaluated based upon the selection criteria provided in the RFQ.

Based on this review, the Implementation Committee and City Council issued a Design Competition Brief and RFP, and entered into stipend agreements with the following three

teams: Daoust Lestage, James Corner Field Operations, and Tom Leader Studio/!Melk. Each team was asked to submit three documents in response to the RFP: Design Submission, Proposal for Full Design Services, and Fee Proposal.

### Consultant Selection Panel

The selection panel comprised the full membership of the NMIC along with four additional experts:

- Bill Butler, Pelli Clark Pelli, New Haven, architect of the Minneapolis Central Library
- Chris Hume, Urban Affairs columnist and Architecture Critic for the Toronto Star
- Mia Lehrer, FASLA, Mia Lehrer + Associates, Landscape Architects, Los Angeles
- Rep. Raymond Dehn, MN Legislature

### Selected Design Team

Based on staff interviews, site visits, interviews with the Consultant Selection Panel, and public presentations, the Nicollet Mall Implementation Committee selected James Corner Field Operations (JCFO) and recommends the City Council authorize staff to negotiate a contract for services. The JCFO team demonstrated clear strengths:

- Confident, self-assured, integrated team
- Internationally renowned lead firm with strong leaders who have local connections (JFCO)
- Knowledgeable local team members (Coen, Snow, Kestrel) – ready to go
- Listened and creatively responded to the design brief
- Confident approach to tree planting technologies and strategies
- Knowledgeable about paving materials and systems
- Balancing of capital cost and O&M and programming budgets
- Thoughtful approaches to lighting, skyway connections, bicycles
- Creative approaches to public engagement

### Next Steps

Upon execution of a contract, staff will partner with JCFO to develop a detailed public process for completion of a Concept Design by May, 2014. It is anticipated that public engagement will begin in November.