



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

Date: November 19, 2013

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

Subject: **West Broadway Transit Alternatives Study**

Recommendation:

That the proper City officers be authorized to negotiate and enter into a cooperative funding agreement with the Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority for a West Broadway Transit Alternatives Study in an amount not to exceed \$205,000, pending approval of funds in the City's 2014 budget.

Previous Directives:

- April, 2012 – City Council authorized submittal of an application for federal Alternatives Analysis Program funding to conduct an alternatives analysis for transit improvements in the West Broadway corridor.
- February 15, 2012 – City Council approved comments on the scope of issues to be studied in the Bottineau Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
- March 23, 2010 – T&PW received and filed Streetcar Funding Study.
- January 22, 2008 – T&PW received and filed Streetcar Feasibility Study.

Department Information:

Prepared by: Anna Flintoft, Transportation Planner, 673-3885

Approved by: _____

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., Director of Public Works

Presenters in Committee: Anna Flintoft

Financial Impact

- Funding is contingent upon approval of funds included in the Mayor's 2014 Recommended Budget.

Community Impact

- City Goals: Jobs & Economic Vitality - Planes, trains and streetcars move goods and workers smartly; Strong commercial corridors, thriving business corners. Livable Communities, Healthy Lives - Equitable, integrated transit system.

Supporting Information

In February 2012, the City of Minneapolis provided comments on the scope of issues to be studied in the Bottineau Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement. In the comments, the City expressed concerns that the two most promising LRT alignments both have significant negative impacts on the North Minneapolis community: (1) because the D1 LRT alignment largely bypasses North Minneapolis and (2) because the D2 LRT alignment doesn't physically fit into the existing, narrow street rights-of-way on West Broadway and Penn Avenue N without significant impacts to homes and traffic lanes. In contrast, streetcar or rapid bus on West Broadway would directly serve the North Minneapolis community and fit within existing street rights-of-way because, unlike LRT, streetcar and rapid bus operate primarily in mixed traffic lanes. As a result, one of the City's DEIS comments was that, separate from the Bottineau Transitway project, the Twin Cities region pursue arterial transitway improvements (streetcar or rapid bus) on West Broadway Avenue. West Broadway is part of the City of Minneapolis' proposed modern streetcar network and part of Metropolitan Council's arterial bus rapid transit network. Arterial bus rapid transit is also recommended for other north Minneapolis corridors: Penn Avenue and Emerson/Fremont Avenue.

The next step for determining appropriate transit improvements for West Broadway Avenue is to conduct an alternatives analysis. In April 2012, the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and Metropolitan Council agreed to jointly fund the local match for a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) FY 2012 Discretionary Livability Funding Opportunity Alternatives Analysis Program grant. In the fall of 2012, this federal program was eliminated. The original local funding partners, Metropolitan Council, City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, acknowledge that this is still an important corridor for consideration of a transit improvement. The revised study is estimated to cost \$615,000, with each funding partner contributing \$205,000. The study is expected to begin in early 2014 and be completed in approximately 12 months. Funding is included in the Mayor's Recommended 2014 Budget.