



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

Date: April 18, 2006
To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee
Subject: **Non-Motorized Pilot Project Update and
Blue Cross Blue Shield Grant Application**

Recommendation:

Receive and File

Previous Directives:

None

Prepared by: Donald Pflaum, Transportation Engineer, 612-673-2129

Approved by:

Klara A. Fabry, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenters: Barb Thoman, Transit for Livable Communities
Donald Pflaum, Transportation Engineer

Permanent Review Committee (PRC) Approval _____ Not applicable X

Policy review Group (PRG) Approval _____ Not applicable X

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

- No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget.
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase – Capital Only
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Other financial impact (Explain):
- Request provided to the Budget Office when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Non-Motorized Pilot Program Update

In 2005 Congress reauthorized the federal transportation bill – SAFETEA-LU with the Non-Motorized Pilot Program (NMPP) included in that legislation. NMPP is intended to demonstrate the viability of bicycling and walking as transportation modes when bicycle and pedestrian investments are made in a concentrated area. The NMPP legislation identified four communities to participate -- Sheboygan County, WI, Marin County, CA, Columbia, MO and Minneapolis.

The program authorized \$25 million for each community to be spent over the course of 4 years. It is estimated that \$21 million will be the net funding available per community after federal obligation withholding. Some funding will be required to assess community impact and to

evaluate performance measures set by the Federal Highway Administration. In addition, reports to Congress by each community are required after 2 years and 4 years into the program.

Transit for Livable Communities (TLC) was selected by Congress to be the local organization to coordinate the Minneapolis region. Congressman Oberstar, author of this language, has clarified the intent of the funds to be spent only in Minneapolis, with consideration for facilities that provide access to Minneapolis from adjoining communities, in order to maximize mode shift.

The Federal Highway Administration has met with all four communities and has set eligibility criteria for NMPP projects/programs. Although infrastructure investments such as paths, sidewalks, and crosswalk improvements, etc. are eligible for funding, likewise ped/bike planning, educational and promotional activities are also eligible.

Transit for Livable Communities is the responsible organization for setting the local program criteria, for soliciting projects/programs, and designating projects/programs to be funded. A project advisory team of local bicycling and walking advocates, agency representatives, private sector representatives, and members of the public will be asked by TLC to serve on this committee. This committee will review, rank and recommend NMPP projects/programs to the TLC board for final approval. Also, TLC will soon decide the solicitation process (e.g. how many funding solicitations will be conducted, what the education/promotion versus infrastructure funding splits will be, etc.).

TLC will be responsible for educating and involving the public regarding the NMPP. To this end, TLC has recently hired a project coordinator, Steve Clark.

Public Works will be assisting TLC in many ways. Public Works will be working with other city agencies and departments to compile a list of bicycle and pedestrian projects and initiatives that will best compete for Non-Motorized Pilot Program funds and will best address the legislative intent to increase bicycling and walking mode shares. This list will be brought before the City Council/Mayor after TLC has announced its grant solicitation process. At this time is it still premature for the city to designate projects to compete for the NMPP since TLC has not yet established selection criteria. Bicycling related projects will be thoroughly discussed and prioritized by the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee based on the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan work.

Blue Cross Blue Shield Grant Application:

Access Minneapolis (10 Year Transportation Action Plan) is analyzing and will bring forth recommendations related to the pedestrian and bicycle systems. Transit for Livable Communities using Non-Motorized Pilot Program funding has expressed interest in funding a Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan. In general a master plan would identify and prioritize pedestrian issues, needs and guidelines such that candidate projects and initiatives can be implemented.

At the same time, Blue Cross Blue Shield is soliciting communities to submit applications for the Active Community Assessment and Engagement grant opportunity. This grant program is funded through the tobacco settlement and is intended to create more active communities. This first round of grants is primarily focused on planning and community engagement. Public Works in cooperation with the Minneapolis Health Department and CPED will be submitting a \$50,000 grant application to be used toward Downtown Minneapolis pedestrian planning and to promote walking as a healthy way to move about the city. Overall, Public Works will be coordinating such efforts and seeking all opportunities that will result in a comprehensive pedestrian focused and friendly city.