



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

Date: January 22, 2008

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

Subject: **Access Minneapolis: Streetcar Feasibility Study**

Recommendation: Receive and File Final Streetcar Feasibility Study dated December 2007

Previous Directives:

- April 2, 2004 Resolution 2004R-139 – Appropriated \$300,000 for citywide transportation planning
- June 8, 2004 – TPW received & filed study goals and timelines
- November 5, 2004 – Authorized the issuance of a Request for Proposals to solicit consultant proposals for the Transportation Action Plan
- November 5, 2004 – Authorized entering into interagency agreements with Hennepin county and Metropolitan Council regarding funding participation
- March 18, 2005 – Approved consultant selection and authorized execution of contract
- March 18, 2005 – Authorized entering into interagency agreement with Mn/DOT regarding funding participation
- July 1, 2005 – Appointed Project Steering Committee
- March 10, 2006 – Authorized amendment to consultant contract to complete a Streetcar Feasibility Study
- November 3, 2006 – Authorized amendment to consultant contract to complete additional traffic analysis and public outreach
- December 22, 2006 – Approved contract extension with three partner agencies for funding reimbursement to 12/31/2007
- March 20, 2007 – TPW received and filed draft Downtown Action Plan
- April 13, 2007 – Resolution 2007R-187 appropriated \$247,000 to Action Plan
- May 15, 2007 – TPW approval of the consultant contract extension and budget
- June 29, 2007 – Council approval of Downtown Action Plan
- September 25, 2007 – TPW received and filed draft Citywide Action Plan and draft Streetcar Feasibility Study and authorized release of RFP for consultant assistance in developing design guidelines for the reconstruction of existing streets that may have streetcar service in the future.

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Approved by:

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

Presenters: Charleen Zimmer, Project Manager

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
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Business Plan: X Action is within the plan. Action requires a change to plan.
- Other financial impact (Explain):
- Request provided to department's Finance Dept. contact when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Community Impact

- Neighborhood Notification – Nine public meetings were held in October, 2007 in various locations around the city. A news release announcing the meetings was sent to all general and neighborhood publications; email notices were sent to Project Steering Committee, neighborhood organizations, city advisory committees, downtown business organizations and interested stakeholders; information posted on city website; notices were included in several Council member newsletters and in Metro Transit's on-bus "TakeOut" newsletter.
- City Goals – meets the goals of:
 - Connected Communities
 - Integrated, multimodal transportation choices border-to-border
 - Walkable, bikeable
 - Enriched Environment
 - Energy into renewable and alternative energy
 - Fully implement the City's Sustainable Work Plan
- Comprehensive Plan – implements the transportation polices set forth in the city's comprehensive plan

Background/Supporting Information:

Access Minneapolis is documented in four components: a) Downtown 10-Year Transportation Action Plan, b) Citywide 10-Year Transportation Action Plan, c) Street and Sidewalk Design Guidelines, and d) Streetcar Feasibility Study.

The draft Downtown Action Plan was approved by City Council on June 29, 2007 and implementation is underway on several plan elements.

The draft Citywide Action Plan and the draft Streetcar Feasibility Study were presented to the Transportation and Public Works Committee as Receive & File items on September 25, 2007. Nine public meetings were held in October 2007. Approximately 200 people attended those meetings, providing both verbal and written feedback on the project. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) appointed by the City Council has met and discussed these plans for approximately two years.

The Streetcar Feasibility Study has been revised based on public and PSC input. While a number of organizational and editorial changes were made for better clarity, there were no substantive changes to the document based on this input. The final report dated December 2007, along with a summary of public comments received, is posted on the Minneapolis website at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/> under the project documents

section. The feasibility study and public comments will be summarized at the T&PW Committee meeting. Public Works recommends this final study report be received and filed.

Next Steps for Streetcar Efforts

Several critical next steps have been identified requiring additional study to further assess the financial feasibility of streetcar implementation and to determine the highest priority corridor segment(s) for implementation. These tasks include:

- Further evaluate alternative financing tools and develop a financing strategy for streetcars to determine overall financial feasibility. An interdepartmental staff team is working on this task and is in the process of hiring consulting services to assist in this work. Funding is available in the 2008 budget to complete this work.
- Assess the interest of the development community and affected property owners in financially supporting the construction of streetcar in the identified Minimum Operating Segments of the proposed streetcar corridors. Staff will initiate this effort in early 2008. Funding is available in the 2008 budget to complete this work.
- Identify potential maintenance facility sites for each of the identified Minimum Operating Segments of the proposed streetcar corridors. This information is required to more clearly determine which Minimum Operating Segments could be implemented first and which would need to wait for construction of another segment for access to a maintenance facility. Staff will initiate this effort in early 2008. Funding is available in the 2008 budget to complete this work.
- Develop design guidance for the design and reconstruction of streets that may have a future streetcar line to ensure that future streetcar operation is not precluded and unnecessary additional costs are not incurred in the future. This work is currently underway and is needed to make appropriate design decisions on the future Chicago Avenue reconstruction project.

It is Public Works' intention to return to the City Council for appropriate actions related to the financial feasibility of the construction and operation of a streetcar system and, if an appropriate financing strategy can be found, recommendations on priorities for implementation.

Cc: Mayor R.T. Rybak
All City Council Members