

MEMORANDUM

October 30, 2014

To: MVTA Board

From Michael Abegg, Planner

Subject: Resolution of Support for CTIB Application

Requested Action

Approve a resolution in support of a Metropolitan Council application for CTIB funding of 2010 Cedar Avenue Transitway service.

Background

With the upcoming openings of the Lakeville Cedar Park & Ride and the Cedar Grove Transit Station, there is a need for transit service expansion to serve the two new locations. As these stations are a part of the Cedar Avenue Transitway (BRT) project, it is appropriate that these service expansions be funded by the Counties Transitway Investment Board. MVTA is ineligible to apply for CTIB funding; however, Metropolitan Council is an eligible applicant and has proposed to apply for funds for service to be operated by MVTA.

At Lakeville Cedar, the 2010 application would be to fund for the full year the service level that will begin on September 28, 2009, consisting of five trips in each direction that serve both the new park & ride as well as the Apple Valley Transit Station. This includes one additional full-length round trip between Lakeville and Minneapolis and the extension of four other round trips.

At Cedar Grove Transit Station, the Council has requested support for a service plan that would add three round trips between the new station and downtown Minneapolis. MVTA staff believe this service would be poorly utilized in 2010, given the higher level of Minneapolis service at surrounding park & rides coupled with slack demand for Minneapolis express services.

MVTA staff believe that the market opportunity that exists into 2010 for Cedar Grove is to operate service to the University of Minnesota and possibly to the Wells Fargo Home Mortgage/Abbott Northwestern Hospital campus area. The former is a market that has continued to show strong growth in the face of the weak economy, while the latter is a market that has consistently shown as important for south metro commuters. Such a service would effectively build on the other major component of service at Cedar Grove, which is the re-orientation of MVTA's local trunk routes to maximize transfer opportunities south of the Minnesota River.

MVTA staff project that a service configured with two peak and two off-peak round trips serving the U of M and WFHM/Abbott areas would require a similar level of funding as the original

proposal of three round trips to downtown Minneapolis. Furthermore, it would work to solve an existing gap in the transit network in a way consistent with the goals of a bus transitway such as Cedar Avenue. This concept has been met with preliminary support of Metro Transit staff, as a way to effectively utilize a new facility in a time of lower system demand. However, it appears that Metropolitan Council staff do not support this service plan but prefer to apply for CTIB funding of the original service concept.

Impact

It is not actually clear whether this resolution is necessary for the Council to apply for the CTIB funding. The CTIB requirement reads, "For projects that cross jurisdictions, resolutions of project support from each county or county regional railroad authority is required to accompany the grant application." Since MVTA is neither a county nor a county regional railroad authority, the application should not be rejected because it lacks MVTA's resolution of support. However, it is generally agreed that MVTA should be the operator of all proposed service at Cedar Grove Transit Station (and indeed, in the entire Cedar Avenue Transitway corridor), so including MVTA's support of the project seems relevant to the success of the application.

While MVTA staff support a different configuration for the 2010 element of service than Council staff, we suggest approving a resolution in support of the expansion of Cedar Grove service in multiple configurations. Simply indicating that MVTA believes the highest priority at this time should be the peak/off-peak combination including the University of Minnesota and/or WFHM/Abbott *does not* indicate a lack of support for the implementation of the downtown service.

Recommendation

Adopt the attached resolution indicating support for a Metropolitan Council application for CTIB funding of service expansion, including prioritization of service to non-downtown Minneapolis destination from Cedar Grove.

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