

To: MVTA Board

Date: April 26, 2010

From: Lois Spear

Re: Approve Environmental Assessment for Cedar Avenue BRT Service

Requested Action

Approve conducting an environmental assessment (EA) of station-to-station BRT service along the Cedar Avenue Transitway at a cost not to exceed \$100,000.

Background

The FTA has requested that an EA be completed for the Cedar Avenue station-to-station service that is scheduled to begin September 2012. FTA rules require that an approved EA is needed before the MVTA can procure the station-to-station buses and operate service on the Cedar Avenue Transitway. Because of the lead time on buses, ROW acquisition and station design work at the stops, the EA needs to get underway to meet projected timelines. It will take at least six months to complete the EA including the public process portion and then another one to two months for the FTA to review and approve the document.

The BRT service EA will complement the Transitway EA (already completed by Dakota County) and will draw upon a significant portion of the same data. In addition, modeling may be needed that will use the same or similar data as in the Transitway EA. Because of the overlap in area, data and subject matter between the Transitway EA and the BRT service EA, staff is recommending that the work be sole sourced and that MVTA hire the same consultant (SEH) that completed the Cedar Avenue Transitway EA for the BRT service EA.

Sole sourcing this purchase can be justified because procurement for these types of services under Minnesota law does not require a competitive procurement and hiring SEH will allow MVTA to take advantage of the knowledge and work already done on the Transitway EA by SEH. This will result in a reduction in time getting up to speed on the subject matter, gathering data and model development which translates into a less expensive, more efficient product. The use of a sole source procurement method was discussed with FTA and they had no objections since no federal money was involved.

Staff is recommending that the Board approve hiring SEH to complete an EA for the Cedar Avenue Transitway BRT service at a cost not to exceed \$100,000. Staff will negotiate the final scope of work and pricing with SEH after further consultation with FTA on the required EA elements and final study principals. Staff expects that the final contract pricing will be below the \$100,000.

Impact

Cedar Avenue bond funds need to be secured from Met Council through a grant agreement. In the interim, fund balance will be used to cash flow the work.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board approve hiring SEH to complete an EA of the Cedar Avenue Transitway BRT service at a cost not to exceed \$100,000.