

Committee Report

Transportation Committee



Committee meeting date: August 24, 2026

For the Metropolitan Council: September 9, 2026

Business Item: 2026-155

METRO Bronze Line Bus Rapid Transit – Environmental, Engineering, and Project Management Contract 26P018

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council (“the Council”) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 26P018 with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc, to provide environmental, engineering and project management services for the METRO Bronze Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project (“Project”) in an amount not to exceed \$23,447,572.

Summary of Transportation Committee discussion/questions

Metro Transit Bronze Line Director Craig Lamothe and Principal Contract Administrator Edwin Awason presented the business item. The item was presented without questions or comments from Council Members.

Motion by Obisakin, seconded by Osman. Barber recused. Motion carried.

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METRO Bronze Line Bus Rapid Transit – Environmental, Engineering, and Project Management
Contract 26P018

District(s), member(s): District 13 (Lee), District 14 (Carter)

Policy/legal reference: FM14-2 - Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods and Services Policy;
Minn. Stat. § 473.405

Staff prepared/presented: Lesley Kandas, General Manager, 612-349-7513
Nick Thompson, Deputy General Manager, 612-349-7507
Craig Lamothe, Director, 651-602-1978
Edwin Awason, Principal Contract Administrator, 612-349-7562

Division/department: Metro Transit / Planning and Capital Programs

Proposed Action

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Background

The Project is a reimagined, community-responsive version of the former METRO Purple Line BRT Project, which was officially rebranded as the METRO Bronze Line on December 2, 2025. The Project is a proposed 9.8-mile BRT corridor connecting downtown Saint Paul, Saint Paul's East Side, and Maplewood. The Project includes 22 BRT stations (17 new and 5 existing) and two new BRT bridges at Arcade Street and Johnson Parkway. The project will also include pedestrian and bicycle access; roadway, streetscape, and landscape improvements; and restructured local bus route connections

This contract will provide environmental services, engineering services, and project management services to support the METRO Bronze Line BRT Project. Ramsey County’s scope includes full road reconstruction along Maryland and White Bear Avenue in Maplewood, landscaping and some signal improvement, while the Council scope includes all the 22 stations, 2 new BRT bridges and signal improvement at some intersections. Environmental review will support Council and County’s scope of the project as a whole by advancing environmental review, permitting, and regulatory compliance throughout the design and construction phases. Engineering services will support the Council portion of the Project by advancing the design through the 30%, 60%, 90%, and final design milestones and providing engineering support during construction.

Project management services will support the Council portion of the Project by providing Project controls and contract administration, including cost estimating and cost management, scheduling, risk management, change management, ridership forecasting, communications and public involvement, right-of-way coordination, and third-party and interagency agreements.

A Request for Proposals was issued on March 4, 2026. A pre-proposal meeting was conducted by Council staff on March 16, 2026, during which the solicitation requirements were outlined, the Project scope and specifications were discussed, and responses were provided to questions from plan holders. There were forty-one registered plan holders, including thirty-one consulting firms, three subconsultants, one plan room, and seventeen plan holders identified as minority, women, small, veteran or disadvantaged business enterprises. The Council received two proposals on April 21, 2026, to be evaluated for the consideration of award.

An evaluation panel of Council staff and external stakeholders evaluated proposals in consideration of award based on proposal quality, qualifications/experience of the proposer, service delivery plan, key personnel, qualifications/experience of the subconsultants and price. The evaluation panel reached consensus that the proposal submitted by Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc as the most advantageous to the Council, and recommends award.

Rationale

The execution of an architecture and engineering contract exceeding \$2,000,000 requires Council approval.

Thrive Lens Analysis

On February 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040 (Thrive). Investment in high-quality transportation options will advance the Prosperity outcome of Thrive by making the region more economically competitive through increased workers' access to employment, and support to employers by increasing available workforce with affordable and convenient transportation.

The Project advances the Equity outcome of Thrive by distributing transit resources throughout the region and improving access to jobs, educational opportunities, and health services to diverse communities. More than half of the corridor population identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC). 17 percent of the households along the corridor do not have access to a car and nearly 20 percent of households are living below the poverty level. Increased access to financial opportunities, educational opportunities, and health services are a key outcome of implementing the Project, advancing the Livability outcome of Thrive.

Funding

The Project is fully funded at \$23,447,572 with funding commitments from Ramsey County, the Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority (RCRRA), and the Council. The Ramsey County and RCRRA funding commitments are provided through the Council's Capital Grant Agreement (CGA) No. 26I016, which was approved by the Council on August 12, 2026. The Council's Q3 2026 Capital Budget Amendment (CBA), that will be presented to the Council on September 9, 2026, recognizes these external funding commitments through the CGA and provides an additional up to \$10,305,000 million of Council funding to fully fund the Project.

Small Business Inclusion

The Office of Civil Rights and Small Business Programs (OCR SB) established a 22% Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business (MCUB) participation goal for the Project. OCR SB has reviewed the recommended proposer's commitment and determined that it has satisfied the Council's MCUB participation requirements for this contract.

