

SUBJECT:

Approval of a resolution authorizing the President/CEO, or his designee, to formally request the inclusion of funding for Project Connect preliminary engineering and environmental analysis as a component of the City of Austin's 2018 Bond Proposal.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Refer to executive summary for clarification.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Strategic Goal Alignment:

1. Customer
2. Ridership
3. Community

Strategic Objectives:

- 2.1 Foster a new regional vision,
- 2.2 Lead public transportation and development
- 2.3 Pursue service expansion opportunities
- 2.4 Encourage/promote transit-oriented development
- 2.5 Generate funding
- 3.1 Educate and inform stakeholders and the community about Capital Metro's vision and mission and the value public transit brings to a community
- 3.2 Build Strong Community Partnerships that further Capital Metro's mission and vision
- 3.3 Create service strategies that utilize community and stakeholder feedback
- 3.4 Support plans and programs designed to build ridership and increase market share of alternate transit use. (This requires support from all departments including planning, IT, Ops, and Marketing)

EXPLANATION OF STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

The action proposed in this resolution directly supports strategic plan goals one, two and three, along with multiple objectives, by pursuing supplemental funding to advance priority projects from the Project Connect Plan. Such funding will help Capital Metro develop a more robust regional high-capacity transit network.

BUSINESS CASE:

While Capital Metro expects to be able to fund a portion of the needed preliminary engineering and environmental analysis work that is required for priority projects to move forward to final design, construction and implementation, neither the current annual budget or the long range financial plan can fully support these efforts at this time. Given the regional and significant benefits anticipated from this program of projects, additional funding from partner agencies merits consideration.



COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

This agenda will be presented at the Board of Directors meeting on March 26, 2018.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Project Connect is expected to move into its third and final phase in the next several months. Phase III will include developing funding and phasing plans for the high-capacity transit network and related projects and programs, with completion anticipated early in the October timeframe based on current schedules. While the emphasis is on the network and a comprehensive system, it will still be made up of discrete corridors, projects and services. To advance these efforts towards implementation, funding is required for preliminary engineering and environmental work on each component. This work provides more detail, more accurate cost estimates and a better understanding of any environmental impacts and the mitigations that may be required. This work is also essential for projects that may become eligible for federal funding. Finally, this work provides the level of detail needed to answer questions from the community and to justify the purpose and need for each component of Project Connect.

To avoid delays and to provide continuity and continued progress in the development of Project Connect, this preliminary engineering and environmental analysis work should be initiated in late 2018 or very early 2019 for those projects that are in the first tier for development. Later, additional projects are expected to move into preliminary engineering and environmental review as per the phasing plan that will be developed in Phase III. Funding for this work is not currently in the Capital Metro Capital Improvement Program. Based on staff analysis, funding needs extend across several categories as defined in Project Connect: Connector corridors; Commuter corridors; Circulator corridors; and Enhancement projects. In total, it is expected that this work will require an estimated \$17.5-\$22.5 million pending the results of upcoming community engagement and board prioritization. While these costs are significant, they are very much in line with similar efforts from peer transit agencies nationwide.

Capital Metro does not have the full resources at present, or in the long-range financial plan, to support this entire scope of work. At present the agency expects to be able to bring forward up to \$5 million for this needed work over the next two fiscal years. Because the significant and truly regional benefits of Project Connect extend far beyond Capital Metro there is reason to seek funding support from partner agencies. Early discussions have been initiated with Travis County regarding the possibility of funding preliminary engineering and environmental work for the high-capacity transit corridor extending from Downtown Austin through eastern Travis County to the City of Manor, commonly referred to as the Green Line. An opportunity also exists with the City of Austin and their proposed 2018 bond package. Project Connect directly supports Imagine Austin and other goals and objectives of the city. For this reason, staff requests that the Capital Metro Board of Directors adopt the attached resolution.



DBE/SBE PARTICIPATION: Does not apply.

PROCUREMENT: Does not apply.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT: Strategic Planning



**RESOLUTION
OF THE
CAPITAL METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF TRAVIS

RESOLUTION (ID # AI-2018-727)

2018 Bond Request

WHEREAS, Capital Metro is developing a high-capacity transit system plan (“Project Connect”) with extensive community and stakeholder engagement designed to address the region’s need for improved mobility choices, help manage rapid population growth, improve regional connectivity and reduce transportation costs for households to improve affordability; and

WHEREAS, Project Connect will be completing the planning phase of the project in 2018, and ready for the next step - developing specific priority projects through preliminary engineering and environmental analysis so that they may advance to final design, construction and implementation; and

WHEREAS, conducting preliminary engineering work and environmental analysis on Project Connect corridors and projects will require an estimated \$17.5-\$22.5 million depending on the results of upcoming community engagement and board prioritization; and

WHEREAS, absent funding partnerships, Capital Metro’s budget can support no more than an estimated \$5 million of the work in the 2019-2020 time period, resulting in an incomplete program of projects moving forward in the near term; and

WHEREAS, Project Connect has been and will continue to be closely coordinated with City of Austin transportation initiatives including the 2016 Mobility Bond Corridor Program and the Austin Strategic Mobility Plan and is complementary to and supportive of those programs; and

WHEREAS the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors is aware of a potential 2018 bond package being considered by the Austin City Council for a November 2018 referendum.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors that to support the timely continuation and further



development of Project Connect mobility options and to fully develop a regional high-capacity transit system plan it is necessary and appropriate to seek supplemental funding for project-specific preliminary engineering and environmental analysis; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in consideration of pending deliberations on a potential 2018 bond package by the Austin City Council, the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors respectfully requests that up to \$15 million in funding included in the bond package to be allocated, and conveyed via interlocal agreement to Capital Metro, to support the development of preliminary engineering and environmental analysis for priority projects that emerge out of Project Connect; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority Board of Directors also respectfully requests that funding be allocated to support the development of transit equity corridors in areas including, but not limited to, the southern Pleasant Valley corridor, where critical roadway infrastructure gaps exist that constrain the ability of Capital Metro to develop routes and services that would meet community needs and expand access to opportunities for under-served populations.

Secretary of the Board
Juli Word

Date: _____