

November 29, 2022

Charles Carlson
Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Services
Metropolitan Council
Via email: charles.carlson@metc.state.mn.us

Dear Mr. Carlson,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Transitway Advancement Policy being considered by the Met Council on November 30. The policy framework and implementation steps are of great interest to partners in the region since it will inform critical decisions about advancing transitway projects.

We certainly support Metro Transit identifying risks that have arisen for a project as it has progressed. This is reasonable and prudent. However, I'm sure we'd all agree that we'd rather not discover an unmitigated risk at an advanced stage of a project. A Metro Transit project that will have reached an advanced stage, such as engineering, is one that has already been vetted and determined to bring value to the system and transportation needs of the region.

We can avoid surprises by working together as Metro Transit and local governments, earlier in the process. This will demonstrate local support and ensure a more complete picture of all the elements needed for a successful project. For example, signal prioritization is now seen as standard for arterial bus rapid transit (ABRT) and successful ABRT needs surrounding infrastructure that supports pedestrian safety and multi-modal transportation. If properly included in the project scope, the cost will be more accurate when seeking state and federal support.

A major category of "risk" the policy refers to is insufficient funds for long-term capital maintenance and operations. This is a systemic issue that is best addressed at a system level and not a project-by-project basis. We support a stable and dedicated source of funds for Metro Transit to build, maintain and operate transit for the region. It would be a good time to seek appropriate funds from the State to meet the transportation needs of metro residents, visitors, and businesses.

The policy says that when a risk is identified partner roles and responsibilities will be established and risks handled through project partnerships or funding agreements. Are the future expectations from partners different than they are today? That needs to be clarified. We look forward to continuing to engage with you as more details are developed.

Thank you,



Margaret Anderson Kelliher
Director—Public Works
City of Minneapolis