

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
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TRANSPORTATION **A**CCESSIBILITY **A**DVISORY **C**OMMITTEE **M**EETING
Wednesday, October 3, 2012

1. Call to Order

At 12:35 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Nicole Villavicencio. **Public present:** Karen Hubescher from H.S.I., Claudia Fuglie and Fay Simer from MnDOT. **Council staff present:** Jan Dietrich and Claire Schleichert from Metro Transit, David Russell, Andy Streasick, Paul Colton, Todd Graham and Alison Coleman.

Members Present: Ron Biss on the phone, John Schatzlein, Kjensmo Walker, Margot Imdieke Cross, Wayne Wittman, Darrell Paulsen, Jerolyn Pofahl, John Lund, Chad McGuire, Nichole Villavicencio and Willie Daniels. **Members Absent:** James Williams. **Members excused:** Kim Kang, Bruce Lattu and Heidi Myhre.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Schatzlein moved to approve the agenda. Wittman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3. Approval of September 5, 2012 Minutes

Lund moved to approve the minutes. McGuire seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. Metro Mobility Stats

Andy Streasick spoke to the TAAC committee. There was a handout that listed the stats for the month of August 2012. The ADA denials were at zero. If somebody calls at least a day ahead of time to book a ride where the start and end are in the ADA service area (3/4 of a mile from where the city bus goes). That is considered an ADA trip and there were zero denials. The next stats are for the STS or Special Transportation Service denials in the core demand. All six of the providers have some portion of their service that is non ADA. That is based on the 2006 Senate Taxing District part of Metro Mobility's service area. When looking at STS denials for the purpose of presenting to the TAAC they look at the core (the non ADA portion of rides for providers for Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, the core providers). The Ridership of the Core Demand excludes the other five county providers. For Ridership Agency Metro Mobility has two contracts with First Transit. One to provide service for most of Ramsey County and part of Hennepin County and one to provide agency service. Agency service is when the passengers are all going to the same place at roughly the same time during the day. They send certain buses that are earmarked to pick them up.

ADA Denials-0; STS Denials Core Demand-0; Ridership Core Demand- 96,900; Ridership Agency- 32,266; Trips per Rev Hour Core Demand-1.85 ; Trips per Rev Hour Agency- 3.57; % No-Shows Core Demand-2.5%; % Cancels Core Demand- 26.3%; % Ride time < 60 Minutes Core Demand- 94.25% Average Weekday – 4,317 rides; % Timely Core Demand- 97.82%; Preventable Accidents Core Demand- 4; Complaints- 51; Revenue Hours- 53,356; County/PDO Provider Ridership (June) - 22,606.

5. MMSC Input on How to Make TAAC Better Known

David Russell spoke to the TAAC committee. They placed an article in the Metropolitan Council newsletter, *The Wire*. They explained who they are, what they do and what the purpose of the organization is for. Russell will present to the Metropolitan Transportation Services quarterly meeting about what the TAAC is its role and purpose in public transportation.

6. Regional 2040 Population, Household and Employment Forecasts

Todd Graham spoke to the TAAC committee. He is a researcher and forecaster with the Met Council Research. His purpose is to share how they do forecasts, looking at the future at the Met Council. This presentation is on the region level forecasts that was presented to the Council in April and the local level forecasts.

Forecasts models are an attempt to represent real world systems in a simplified way. But also in a way that allows us the advantages of understanding the whole picture. The challenges of this are, first understanding enough about the moving parts of the real world that you want to represent. Then second, applying some mathematical techniques to reasonably simulate all that in a computer model space. At the Met Council, what I am supposed to deliver is a forecast of population households and employment projected for future milestone years and allocated to every city and town in the region. This forecast is developed through modeling. The real world systems that we are challenged to understand and then simulate are the regional economy, demographic processes and location choice decisions over a 20 or 30 year time horizon. These are very long term forecasts.

This discussion will present project background, why and how they forecast and then discuss the models as a platform for exploring alternative futures.

Regional planning is a forward looking enterprise. Expectations and forecasts about the future is the starting point. At the Met Council the planning process begins with expectations. They look at where and when they expect growth to happen. This matters because across certain systems there is a concurrency expectation. Regional and local planners are planning and staging their services and systems with both regional and local resources. The goal is to work from the same schedule of expectations, the same numbers.

More than that they are using models to try and advance some understanding among planners and policy makers of the leverage that they have to condition the future. To push or pull land uses, location choices and travel behavior patterns. Once they get through this work they will have forecasts at the local level that will reflect spatial patterns in response to regional policy, which is still being developed. That will reflect the future regional transportation network. Not just buses or transit services but the highways and street networks as well.

This is a challenge. They recognized that at the time they started this work the forecast policies and plans are all tied together. The Council this year and into next year is talking about regional policy. They are called on to bring forecast modeling that can illustrate how will different baskets of policy lead to different outcomes. This is different from what was done 10 years ago. The future models are in the process of being implemented to serve as a platform for the exploration of different scenarios. They will formally consider real estate economics. That is something new in the modeling. They will simulate what will happen in a real estate market constrained by regional policies. They will be coordinating this local modeling and forecasting of the number of households and jobs with the travel demand modelers who forecast what the highway and transportation network conditions will be 20 or 30 years hence. The

two systems do interact (land use and transportation). So they have a need for the models to interact as well.

In the past they had an approach that looked mainly at historic trends of development and aspirational planning assumptions of local municipalities. Those were the main things that drove the local forecasts. Going forward into the future the new approach is to have our transportation model and our land use model working together constrained by policy assumptions and the plans that we get from cities and towns.

They start with regional economic modeling. The results are passed on to a regional demographic sub model which they use to forecast how many households of different types they expect in the future. Those regional level totals are passed on to a land use model and in the implementation of that land use model, that model interacts with our travel demand model.

They presented to the full Metropolitan Council in April the preliminary forecast of what they expect for regional economic activity out to the year 2040. They started from the premise that regional economic performance is going to be the driver determining employment levels. If there is a successful regional economy, good business conditions, a good cost structure and are competitive with other parts of the country there will be economic and employment growth.

The information presented today is the forecast that is a part of the Thrive 2040 plan. The forecasts are not the entirety of the plan. The forecasts are a statement of what is expected to happen in the future. The first phase of the forecast is region level forecast. There is preliminary results from that work. The region level forecasts will change a little as they move along through the process.

The work that is in progress are the local forecasts. Where do they expect the growth for the region to end up spatially? Where in the region do they expect the growth to occur? The region will gain almost 900,000 people. Those people will live somewhere specific.

The forecasts will be developed in tandem with the Thrive 2040 plan. They will try to include in their modeling the policy assumptions that are determined by the Council members. The region level forecast is the farther one along. They think that regional policies about land use, transportation or environment have the most leverage to change or impact spatial distributions, probably less leverage to change regional totals.

The Met Council partners with state agency Department of Employment and Economic Development. They share the license with them. They are using the same software. Within this model they are able to model policies that are economic in nature. They are able to model policies that are substantial and significant at the regional level. There is not local level detail in the model.

They are expecting the regional economy is well positioned to grow into the future. They expect the region to gain about 570,000 jobs over a period of 30 years. This region is gaining about 25,000 jobs per year. There is a pretty strong population growth in this region. There are more people being born than die each year. The senior citizen population (age 65 and up) is the population section that is growing the fastest over the next 30 years. The baby boomer population, which is the largest population segment, is reaching age 65 and beyond. Going forward into the future, Generation Y is as numerous as the baby boom population. Because of the growing number of senior citizens, there are likely to be housing, transportation and transit service implications.

In a typical given year about 100,000 people move to the Twin Cities and about 90,000 people leave the Twin Cities. They have projected that in this decade they will have a net gain of 75,000 people. Because of the people leaving and arriving they do see a shift in the race and origin of people in the future population. In the future the Twin Cities region will look more like the rest of the nation and the

rest of the world. A good share of that is international immigration. In recent years, much of that is from Latin America, Africa and Southern Asia. The model considers three regions: the Twin Cities seven county area as one region, the other 80 counties in the state as a second region and the rest of the country the third region.

Indieke Cross asked that information on the disability community be added to the planning and this presentation.

The other thing that is not complete yet is in addition to the region level modeling totals there is a need to allocate the totals down to the individual community and individual neighborhoods. That involves the implementation of two other models. One is a real estate market simulation model and the other is the travel demand model.

7. Share the Road – Pedestrians

Fay Simer spoke to the TAAC committee. She is a planner with MnDOT's Bike and Pedestrian section. She shared information on the new pedestrian safety education campaign that was just launched last week as part of the "Share the Road" effort.

They started with their crash statistics. They looked at where the crashes happened most frequently between pedestrians and vehicles and why. About 50 percent of the time drivers are found at fault for crashes and about 50 percent of the time pedestrians were found at fault for crashes.

The kinds of messages they developed for drivers are 1) Just to be looking for pedestrians. 2) They wanted to emphasize Minnesota's Crosswalk Law. In Minnesota every corner is a crosswalk whether there are signs or not. Any corner where two roads intersect a driver is legally required to stop for a crossing pedestrian.

When dealing with pedestrians they wanted to focus on common sense behaviors. 1) Inattentiveness 2) Distractions - especially with the popularity of smart phones and mobile devices. They need to look out at all times and know that when they are in the street they need to always be looking for cars.

It is a very broad campaign. They have done a few things to focus specifically on males age 16 to 25 because they are over represented in fatalities. School age pedestrians are another target audience. MnDOT has a "Safe Routes to School" program. They haven't done a lot with it this launch but that is an area where they could merge those two programs and do more outreach to school age children. A third target audience would be vulnerable adults, seniors and persons with impaired mobility just because crashes tend to be more severe when they do happen to those groups.

All of this campaign is to promote safe walking behaviors, safe driving behaviors and to reduce pedestrian and vehicle crashes. MnDOT has been working with their partners over the past year to refine the messages that they put into this campaign. They have the funding to do a big launch right now but over the long term they are looking for more of a grass roots implementation. They have been working with some of the active living communities in Greater Minnesota, the Department of Health, Department of Education, Minnesota Safety Council, the Department of Public Safety and groups that work with other groups to get the word out.

The kickoff was last week. There are ads on billboards, radio and in restaurants. The big flagship kickoff was called crossing ambassador events. There were six different locations in St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, Rochester and St. Cloud where people were holding banners that had pedestrian safety messages on them walking through crosswalks for about three hours during rush hour. Every

driver and pedestrian who went through that intersection saw that messaging. Several news stations stopped by the site in St. Paul.

About 30 percent of pedestrians who were involved in a fatal crash and were tested had high alcohol content in their blood stream.

A handful of local communities have started initiatives on their own to enforce pedestrian laws (Robbinsdale, Edina and Grand Rapids). They were locally driven.

Indieke Cross said: “Bicycles have to follow vehicular laws and people in wheelchairs are pedestrians and they have to follow pedestrian laws. In statute it specifically says that we are to use the sidewalk if the sidewalk is available to us. If the sidewalk isn’t available to us we are to use the roadway but then we go towards the traffic as pedestrians do as opposed to bicycles that follow traffic.”

8. Member Comment

None.

9. Public Comment

Claudia Fuglie spoke to the TAAC committee. They have the safety crosswalks in Robbinsdale.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.