Transportation Advisory Board
of the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities

TO: Transportation Advisory Board Executive Committee

FROM: Kevin Roggenbuck, Transportation Coordinator

DATE: August 7, 2012

RE: Changing TAB subcommittee structure to Committee of the Whole.
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During the one-on-one visits with TAB members earlier this year, several members asked to the Board to consider eliminating the standing subcommittees, the TAB Policy Committee and the TAB Programming Committee, and having all discussion and action take place at the full TAB as a Committee of the Whole. The reason for this request is mainly because much of the discussion at the subcommittee meetings is repeated at full TAB meeting. Chair Hargis agreed to discuss and directed staff to develop a format for a Committee of the Whole structure and list of advantages/disadvantages for discussion at the August 15 TAB meeting.

Proposal.
To eliminate the standing subcommittees, TAB Programming Committee and TAB Policy Committee; to appoint ad hoc committees for the largest action items and work tasks (e.g. regional solicitation funding options, Transportation Policy Plan update, etc…) and function as a TAB Committee of the Whole. Information items, action items and special agenda items will be fully discussed at the full TAB meeting. The advantages come mainly from time savings and the disadvantages are mainly shortened process.

TAB Committee of the Whole Format
The TAB agenda would have to be revised to fit the new format without the Policy and Programming subcommittees. Without subcommittee chairs to report action and discussion items to the full TAB, these items would be presented to the TAB by the appropriate agency staff. One possible format for TAB meetings could be the following:

    I.   Call to Order
   II.   Adoption of the Agenda
  III.   Approval of the Minutes
 IV.   Public Forum (currently for items not on the agenda. The public addresses the Policy and Programming Committee on agenda items. Could be modified to allow comment on anything, on or off the agenda)
   V.   TAB Chair Report
 VI.   Technical Advisory Committee Report
VII.   Business Items (TAB action items with an action transmittal, presented by staff)
VIII.   Information Items (Any item just for discussion, could also include the Special Agenda items, presented by staff)
 IX.   Items of TAB Members
  X.   Agency Reports
 XI.   Other Business
XII.   Adjourn

Ad-Hoc Committees
The elimination of the Policy and Programming subcommittees removes one opportunity for
TAB members to discuss and comment on a topic. The TAB may give itself the option of
forming ad-hoc committees to report to the TAB Committee of the Whole on the more important
or complicated action and information items. Staff would present directly to the ad-hoc
committee, and the committee chair would then report to the TAB Committee of the Whole,
much the way the subcommittee chairs do now.

Advantages
- Full discussion of each item by the full body leads to better understanding of the issues
  by the full membership. Discussion blends policy and programming topics since policy
  decisions affect how funding is allocated and the allocation of funds can be considered a
  policy issue.
- Less travel time for half of the TAB members, support staff and presenters. Also less
  meeting preparation time for support staff. Attend one meeting per month instead of
  two.

Disadvantages
- TAB meeting days are long days; likely more than three hours.
- TAB member absences are magnified because the Board meets only one each month.
  Members could miss an opportunity to weigh in on a topic.
- No opportunity to mull over an issue or answer questions between subcommittee
  meeting and the full TAB meeting. This is the current situation in January through June
  with TAB Programming Committee and July through December with TAB Policy
  Committee.