

ACTION TRANSMITTAL 2014-37

DATE: June 5, 2014
TO: Transportation Advisory Board
FROM: Technical Advisory Committee
PREPARED BY: Amy Vennewitz, MTS Deputy Director
SUBJECT: Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan
REQUESTED ACTION: Recommend approval of the Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan for release for public comment
RECOMMENDED MOTION: Recommend that the Transportation Advisory Board recommend the Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan for release for public comment with the request that the Council address the attached comments prior to its release

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION: MTS staff has worked with agency and local government stakeholders since April 2013 to create the Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP). Stakeholders have been represented on the Partner Agency Work Group (PAWG) and Policymaker Task Force (PTF) and include representatives from the TAB, TAC-Planning committee, cities, counties, MnDOT, MAC, MPCA, DNR, Suburban Transit Providers, the Minnesota Council on Disability, and CTIB. The two groups have reviewed and commented on various chapters and sections throughout the production of the draft document.

The full Draft 2040 TPP was released on May 9th on Dropbox and an FTP site for access and review by members of the aforementioned stakeholder groups.

RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY: The Metropolitan Council and its Transportation Advisory Board are required, under both state and federal law, to develop a multimodal long-range regional transportation plan that identifies transportation system goals, needs, and investment priorities over at least a 20-year period. The Draft 2040 TPP meets these requirements

STAFF ANALYSIS: The Draft 2040 TPP is proposed for review and recommendation for release for public comment. The document provides a vision for development of the regional transportation system based upon the outcomes and principles expressed in the regional development guide, Thrive MSP 2040 (adopted May 28, 2014). The document also responds to federal legislation passed in 2013 (MAP-21) that requires performance-based metropolitan transportation plans, by defining transportation system goals, objectives and strategies to achieve the desired outcomes for the regional transportation system.

Upon review and recommendation of this draft document, the Metropolitan Council will make additional revisions in response to comments from TAB and TAC and release a revised draft document for the purpose of receiving public comment and holding a public hearing.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION: TAC-Planning provided the attached separate document with comments for the Technical Advisory Committee's consideration. The TAC did not add or remove any comments from TAC-Planning's document. The TAC is sending the full set of comments to the Transportation Advisory Board to determine which comments to recommend for Council consideration.

ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE COMPLETED
TAC Planning Committee	Review & Recommend	May 29, 2014
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	June 4, 2014
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Recommend	
Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee	Review & Recommend	
Metropolitan Council	Review & Adopt	

TAC-PLANNING COMMITTEE COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT 2040 TPP

Meetings of May 22nd and May 29th 2014

The comments and discussion of the TAC Planning committee on the draft 2040 TPP are summarized in three parts below as follows:

- The first section summarizes high level comments that appeared to have consensus from a majority of the committee members and which the committee recommends be addressed;
- The second grouping of comments contains issues and concerns raised by various members of the committee for which there was not clear consensus among the members on if, and how, the comment should be addressed; and
- The third grouping of comments contains more specific, editorial type comments many of which the Council staff indicated would be addressed in the revised draft.
- The fourth section is focused on process and schedule for this final stage of the TTP development.

In each grouping of comments, the comments are organized in the order in which the sections appear within the draft plan.

Comments with Consensus to Address

Part I: Transportation for a Thriving Region

1. Part I of the plan is generally too long and does not provide a good summary of the key content at the opening. (Council staff agreed, confirmed the Policymaker Task Force gave the same direction, indicated that Part I is being refined, and reported that staff hope to be able to provide revised text to the full TAB prior to its review.)
2. In Part I, the vision for the regional highway system needs to be more clearly articulated.
3. Part I should provide a more prominent message on the need for increased transportation funding.
4. In Part I, B Transportation Challenges and Opportunities, the committee appreciated the discussion on the potential effects of technology but thought it needed a more positive and proactive tone better conveying the potential benefits of technology.

Part II: Implementing the Transportation Vision for the MSP Region

5. Part II, B Transportation Policy Plan Strategies should acknowledge the various positive actions that local partners are already taking, such as local work on ‘complete streets’. These could be included in ‘call out’ boxes in the final document (not the public comment version).
6. Part II, B Transportation Policy Plan Strategy, Section E – The MPCA provided detailed written comments regarding air quality and consistency with state requirements and these technical comments should be addressed in the revised document.
7. Part II, C Land Use and Local Planning, the committee asked whether the forecasts identified in Thrive MSP 2040 would happen on their own or if they have been shaped by

- the investment of public dollars (highway, transit, sewers, parks) that encourages development. Some language should be included concerning this interaction. (Page 68)
8. It was suggested that a statement be added on how communities and counties might need help in reaching the density targets recommended for station area planning in Table 4 of the Land Use chapter.
 9. Part II, D Transportation Finance (page 93), it should be corrected that non-freeway principal arterials continue to be eligible for funding through the Regional Solicitation.
 10. Part II, D Transportation Finance needs to recognize the significant funding needs of the Local Transportation System. A specific number does not need to be included in the Increased Revenue scenario.
 11. Part II, D Transportation Finance should recognize that when development occurs, the developers often contribute revenues to the improvement of the local transportation system.
 12. Part II, E Highway Investment Direction and Plan, Table 14, Regional Mobility Investments (Investment categories 6 through 10) potential funding should be reported using ranges rather than specific numbers to manage expectations and clearly demonstrate the uncertainty of the funding levels.
 13. Part II, E Highway Investment Direction and Plan needs to more clearly articulate that safety and security will be part of every highway investment.
 14. Part II, E Highway Investment Direction and Plan discusses expressway corridors studies underway. Better linkage/reference to the TPP work program “expressway to freeway study” that will prioritize the intersection conversion needs determined for these and other expressway corridors metro wide.
 15. Part II, E Highway Investment Direction and Plan – provide clear cross references between the investment plans and performance outcomes in Part III.
 16. Part II, F Transit Investment Direction, the committee made and unanimously approved a motion to include a reference to the proposed Nicollet-Central Line as part of the current revenue scenario to recognize the value capture authority received by the city of Minneapolis and its potential to provide a source of funding to accelerate the project if additional competitive funding is received.
 17. Part II, G Bicycle and Pedestrian Investment Direction needs to recognize that bicycle transportation facilities and bicycle recreational facilities are overlapping and not mutually exclusive.
 18. Part II, G Bicycle and Pedestrian Investment Direction should recognize that there is a need for increased regional and MnDOT funding, and cost participation support, beyond the local funding contribution.

Part III: Federal Requirements for the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan

19. Part III the Federal Requirements section should include an introductory section explaining the purpose of the various elements included in this section.
20. It was recommended the Work Program be moved out of Part III into the end of Part II following the investment chapters.

Issues and Concerns Raised without Consensus or Conclusion

Part I: Transportation for a Thriving Region

1. Page 4 -- the equity outcome should be modified or clarified
2. Pages 21 & 23 -- The committee discussed the Thrive MSP 2040 community designations. Some committee members voiced concern over the designations assigned to local communities and how the designations would be used. Thrive MSP 2040 staff responded that the community designations are not intended to be used in investment prioritization.

Part II: Implementing the Transportation Vision

3. Part II, F Transit Investment Direction and Plan – There was discussion but no agreement on whether or not arterial BRT should be considered as a ‘Transitway’.
4. Part II, F Transit Investment Direction and Plan – The committee received a handout of comments submitted previously from CTIB among which was included a request to remove the proposed transitway prioritization work. However, it was noted that given limited funding, prioritization was necessary. There was no determination by TAC planning on how that would be accomplished region-wide since not all counties are represented by CTIB.

Part III: Federal Requirements

5. Some committee members questioned if Equity & Environmental Justice should be included in the Federal Requirements section since equity is not a federal requirement, it is a regional outcome identified through Thrive MSP 2040.

Additional Comments

Part I: Transportation for a Thriving Region

1. Part I Figure 1-1 showing the community designations needs a legend added to describe the designations. It would also be helpful to have interactive capability.

Part II: Implementing the Transportation Vision for the MSP Region

2. Part II, clarify throughout the plan when the use of the term ‘the Council’ refers to the Council in its MPO role including the Transportation Advisory Board and all of its advisory committees.
3. Part II, B Transportation Policy Plan Strategies, the phrase ‘State of Good’ repair should be mentioned in regard to transit.
4. Strategy A1 should be re-worded from “...will place the highest priority...” to “...will place a high priority...”
5. Part II, B Transportation Policy Plan Strategies B1 and F13 – supporting text should refer to security at transit facilities and on buses
6. Part II, B Transportation Policy Plan Strategies B4 – add a supportive local action, for example people riding on transit experience fewer traffic fatalities.
7. Part II, B Transportation Policy Plan Strategy D1 – Add local supporting actions.
8. A comment was made to delete the second bullet under ‘*Supportive local actions*’ on page 34.

9. The second sentence under C1 (page 37) should reference the 'MPO' rather than the 'Council'.
10. In paragraph 2 (page 38) a change in wording was discussed. Instead of '*most highways*', perhaps it should read '*on highways where it is most feasible or where reasonable*'.
11. On page 46, section C11, eliminate the reference to '*when resources allow*' to reflect a more positive tone.
12. On page 78, there was some discussion on the placement of Arterial BRT in Table 4 and that it should be moved to clearly be included in the transitway section.
13. In the Land Use chapter references to bicycles as well as pedestrians should be included in the section headings as bicycle references are currently only found in the text.
14. On page 95 there is a reference to \$100 million in federal funding; a question was raised as to on what it was based and indicated that it should be described somewhere as background material.
15. The Spot Mobility Improvement figure and related text on page 118 should include a reference to the source of the identified projects.
16. In the Bicycle and Pedestrian chapter it was asked that the Brown's Creek Trail be added to Figure 26 on page 202.
17. Under the Work Program the MnPASS System Plan study should note inclusion of involvement from local communities.
18. The streetcar policy work noted in the Transit chapter should be incorporated into the Work Program with a description of the proposed work.
19. The Work Program should include mention of the sources and limited availability of funding for the proposed work.
20. Include a reference to the Minnesota river system as well as the Mississippi river system on page 74 under Freight Related Studies.
21. A number of the counties submitted detailed comments that the staff should consider incorporating. Council staff indicated these changes would largely be included. In the draft for public comment.

Comments Regarding Process

The Partner Agency working group expanded the breath of technical representation for the process and their input was appreciated by TAC Planning Committee. Participation from the non-central city, city representatives dwindled towards the end of the process and a key portion of the Plan, Land Use and Local Planning, did not receive a high level of review by this key stakeholder group which is of concern.

The Council staff should be acknowledged for their efforts to develop a comprehensive overhaul of the Transportation Policy Plan. This process is a huge undertaking and we recognize there are many moving parts to balance. It was further complicated because the Thrive MSP 2040 process was completed several months behind schedule. The fact that the final draft of Thrive was not available yet at the time TAC planning was scheduled to review and recommend to the TAC resulted in concern by several TAC planning members.

The document availability, release of Thrive should have resulted in a schedule adjustment for the TPP. TAC planning is disappointed that schedule for review through the formal TAC/TAB process could not be accommodated but we did our best to complete the review within the timeframe provided.