

Responses to Commissioner Randy Maluchnik Questions

1. Can you provide a historical summary of how areas of disparity projects ranked under the current solicitation process?

The Regional Solicitation has been completely redesigned for all criteria and is not comparable to the past solicitations. There was a decision early in the evaluation process to not evaluate past projects to compare how they had done under the previous solicitation and how they might fare under the new solicitation. The new Solicitation emphasizes criteria that tie to the Council's newly adopted Thrive MSP 2040 and the outcomes that the region hopes to achieve. It is expected that all projects will be evaluated and fare a bit differently than under the past solicitation. This is why a "zero based" evaluation of the Regional Solicitation process was initiated.

2. Which areas of disparity will not be positively affected by the proposed full built-out of the regional LRT/BRT system?

The Transit Increased Revenue Scenario as presented in the Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) is a vision for significantly expanding both the regional bus and transitway systems. The vision would include implementation of at least an annual 1% increase in base bus service along with necessary bus capital expansion and build out a number of LRT, exclusive BRT, highway BRT and arterial BRT corridors. It is expected that all parts of the metropolitan region would be better served by transit under the Increased Revenue Scenario vision. This level of transit investment will make the region more competitive, provide better access to jobs and opportunity for all, and have a positive impact on the sustainability and livability of our region. However, at this time the transit Increased Revenue Scenario is an unfunded vision that will not be possible without increased funding.

3. Is there any data that demonstrates that areas of disparity are being under-served?

It has long been recognized that the burdens of highway construction in the past sixty years disproportionately fell on low income and minority communities, who still experience the effects of neighborhood division and direct pollution impacts, and the MPCA is increasingly seeing this as a public health threat. The Council's "Choice, Place, and Opportunity", in its background research on disparities, identified transportation, both safe walking environments and transit access as needs.

A national report on pedestrian fatalities released earlier this year found that "people of color are disproportionately represented among pedestrian fatalities." The Dangerous by Design 2014 report from Smart Growth America found that for Minnesota, the pedestrian fatality rate per 100,000 persons from 2003-2010 was 6.07 for American Indians, 1.17 for Asian/Pacific Islanders, and 1.38 for Black or African Americans. [<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/dangerous-by-design/dbd2014/national-overview/>]

In addition, an August 2014 analysis of pedestrian fatalities between 2008-2012 done by Governing magazine found that across the country, "poorer neighborhoods have disproportionately higher rates of pedestrian deaths." [<http://www.governing.com/topics/public-justice-safety/gov-pedestrian-deaths-analysis.html>]

The Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan includes a work program item to study potential disparities in transportation safety outcomes by race and income specifically for the metro region.

4. Is there any data that supports the current proposed equity points positively impact the areas of disparity?

The use of the [Housing Performance Scores](#) is intended to reward communities that are providing housing opportunities for low and moderate income households or that have implemented local plans, programs, and policies to provide such housing opportunities.

The Housing Performance Scores include:

- Share of existing housing stock that is affordable (both rental and owner-occupied) to households earning 60% of area median income (\$49,750 in 2014):
 - Homes selling for \$162,500 or less
 - 2-bedroom units renting for \$1,122 or less
- New affordable housing added since 1996
- Local fiscal tools and incentives to encourage affordable housing, such as tax increment financing, tax abatement, or fee waivers
- Waivers, reductions or adjustments to local controls, such as zoning and variances, to reduce the cost of housing development
- Local initiatives to support housing preservation and rehabilitation

Previously, the Regional Solicitation looked at the new affordable units that each community added as a share of the affordable housing goal negotiated with the Council for the 1996-2010 period. Looking at this for the current decade to date:

- 65 cities with Affordable Housing Need added no affordable units in 2011-2012
- 39 cities with Affordable Housing Need have added 10 percent or less of their decade-long need
- Six cities have added 10 to 20 percent of their decade-long need
- Three cities have added at least 20 percent of their decade-long need in the first two years of the decade.

Both the Council and the consultants who have been assisting with the evaluation of the Regional Solicitation believe that this approach provided insufficient differentiation among cities. Moreover, in a limited funding environment, the actual construction of affordable housing lags behind the cities that are making a good faith effort to add and, equally critically, preserve housing opportunities for low and moderate income households.

The Housing Performance Scores have a much broader range of scores. The 2012 scores range from 7 to 98 with a median score of 50. As a result, the Housing Performance Scores will have a greater impact on the allocation of resources than the previous approach to account for affordable housing.

The Council has used the Housing Performance scores in the evaluation of applications for Livable Communities Act (LCA) funding from each of the LCA funding accounts since 2000 as a means of recognizing and rewarding communities with a clear and demonstrable commitment to providing affordable housing opportunities. The Housing Performance Scores have typically accounted for between 10 and 13 percent of an application's overall score depending upon the funding account.

5. Is there any analysis that the current proposed equity point system would increase the creation of areas of disparity throughout the metropolitan region?

No

6. Are there areas of high concentration of aging or disabled populations that can be identified on our regional map?

- [AgeDisability.pdf](#) – map showing that concentrations of seniors/kids under 15/people with disabilities are generally located in the core of the region. (In keeping with the definition of RCAPs and ACPs, we defined these concentrations as tracts where the share of seniors/kids under 15/people with disabilities was at least twice the regional share, give or take a few percentage points.)
- [TravelTime_Region.pdf](#) – map showing that average commute times generally increase as you get farther from the core of the region, as would be expected. While the dark shades (indicating longer commutes) on the edges of the region are particularly prominent, there are relatively few commuters in these areas. The “[Commuters_Region.pdf](#)” map demonstrates this.
- [TravelTime_Closeup.pdf](#) – map highlighting an exception to the above pattern. Much of Edina and Eden Prairie (for example) have shorter commute times than most of North Minneapolis (for example). This is not simply because North Minneapolis has more transit commuters and transit takes longer; where mode-specific data are available, North Minneapolis commuters who drive alone to work have longer average commute times than Edina commuters who drive alone.

7. What is the exact requirement by MAP 21 regarding equity and what is the related MAP 21 legal citation?

The legal requirement for environmental justice comes from *Executive Order 12898: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations* and subsequent guidance from FHWA and FTA. Federal guidance from USDOT (DOT Order 5610.2(a) clarifies that environmental justice principles apply to planning and programming activities through the identification of programs, policies, and activities. Council policy (Thrive MSP 2040) extends environmental justice principles to include age and ability. In many racially concentrated areas of poverty (for example North Minneapolis, Frogtown, and the near east side of St. Paul), commute times are higher than similarly dense urban neighborhoods in the region.

In addition to the above-cited federal guidance, the most recent federal Transportation Planning Certification Review for the Met Council from 2012 included a comment that “the [federal] review team encourages the Met Council to identify projects in the TIP that provide benefits to minority and low income populations.”

8. Has there been a regional transportation system study to determine effective strategies that can assure success in bringing prosperity to the areas of disparity?

For our region to thrive, all parts of our region must prosper. The Council recognizes that the challenges of equity require aligning efforts across multiple entities, including cities, counties, school districts, non-profits, and philanthropy. No single entity and no single policy area alone can address the challenges of historical disinvestment in these neighborhoods.

The Draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan includes a work plan item to determine effective equity strategies: “To fully integrate equity into the transportation planning process, the Council will conduct additional analysis on transportation-related issues. Two potential areas for study are safety outcomes by race and income and spending on preservation and maintenance and condition of transportation facilities by race and income. To aid in using equity as a factor in setting priorities for transportation investments, the Council will also develop more robust methods of analyzing the benefits and impacts of these investments by race and income.” (pp. 317)

9. Did Metropolitan Council members make any effort to ascertain facts related to developing public policies to positively impact the prosperity of the areas of disparity?

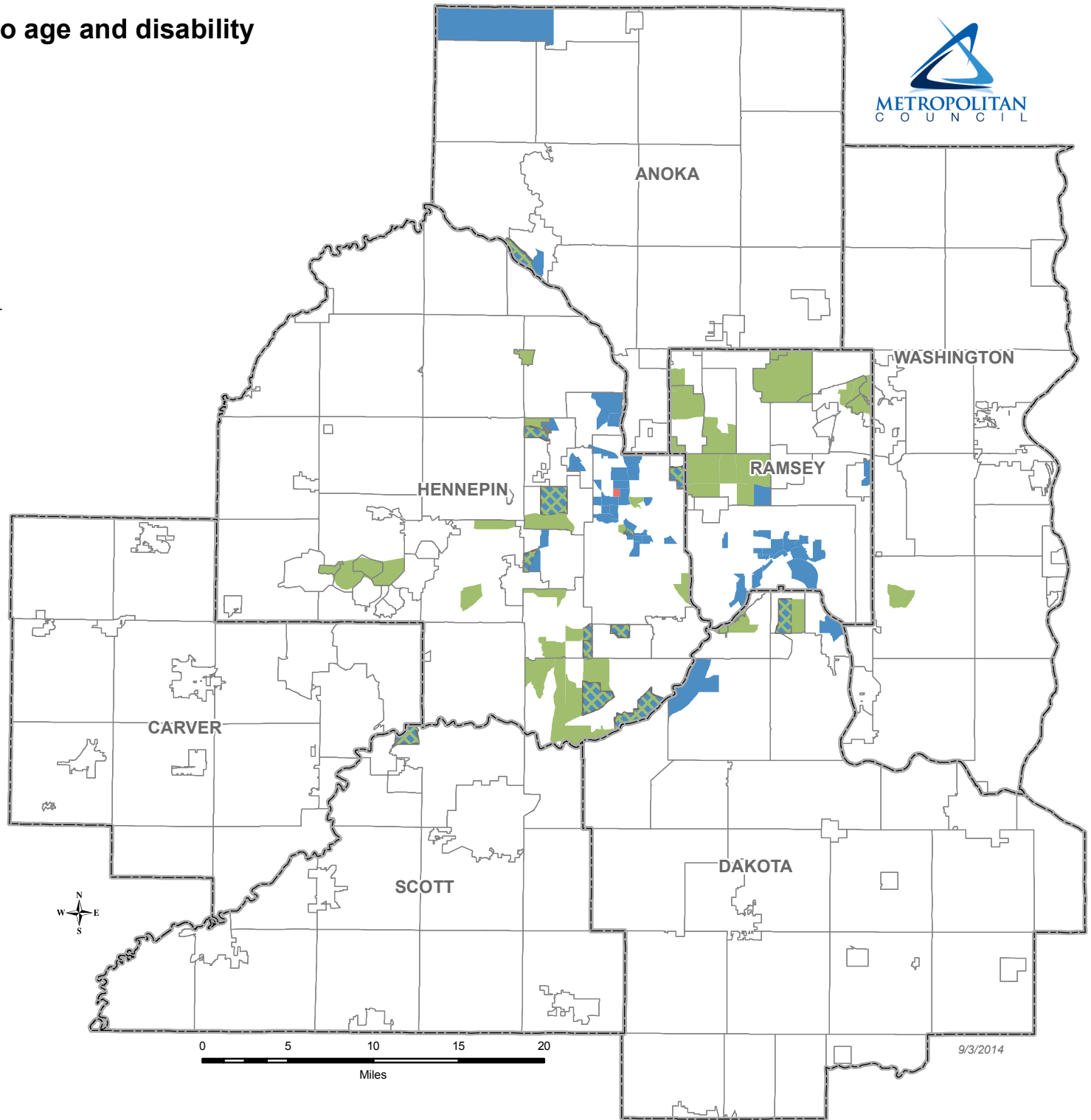
Yes – See #8

Concentrations with respect to age and disability



Age and Disability

- At least 20% age 65+ (region = 11%)
- At least 15% with disability (region = 9%)
- At least 15% with disability; at least 20% age 65+
- At least 40% under age 15 (region = 20%)
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries



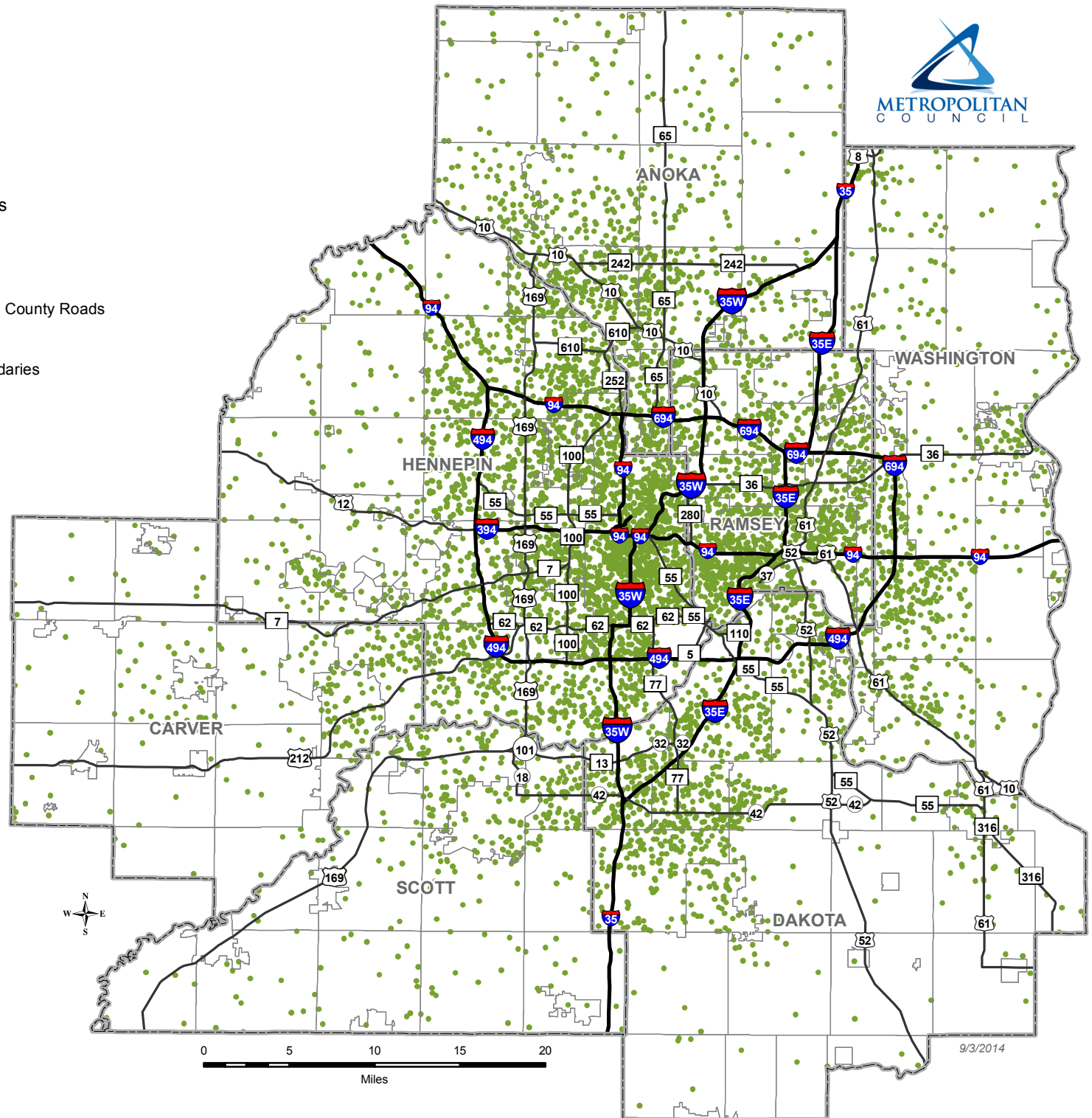
9/3/2014

Commuters in the Region

1 dot = 200 commuters

Highways

- Interstate Highways
- State, US Highways and County Roads
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries



9/3/2014

Average Travel Time to Work

Average Travel Time to Work

- Less than 20.0 minutes
- 20.0 to 24.9 minutes
- 25.0 to 29.9 minutes
- 30.0 minutes or more
- No data available

Highways

- Interstate Highways
- State, US Highways and County Roads
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries

