

**Minutes of the
REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

Monday, April 14, 2014

Committee Members Present: **Adam Duinick, Chair** **Lona Schreiber, Vice Chair**
 Katie Rodriguez **Jon Commers**
 Jennifer Munt **Edward Reynoso**
 McCarthy, Marie

Committee Members Absent: **James Brimeyer** **Steve Elkins**

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Duinick called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. April 14, 2014.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Duinick requested that item 2014-83 on the agenda be moved to the first item, preceding item 2014-80. It was moved by Munt, seconded by Rodriguez to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

It was moved by Schreiber, seconded by McCarthy to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2014 meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

TAB LIAISON REPORT

Duinick reported on the TAB. He stated that the Regional Solicitation Evaluation team had a productive meeting last week, and is making progress on the technical memo outlining methodology of scoring and weighting of projects. Emphasis is being made on Equity and other issues important to the Council.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION - MTS

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy introduced MTS Planning Analyst Steven Elmer, who is being recognized for his work on the Regional Transportation Bicycle Study. Chair Duinick presented the award to Elmer.

MTS DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Arlene McCarthy reported the following:

1. The draft 2040 TPP is proceeding. The Transportation Committee has received high level briefings as the TPP progresses. Staff will be attending Council and COW meetings in the coming weeks presenting more detailed briefings. The draft document will be going through the TAC/TAB process prior to the public comment period beginning 5/09/14.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb reported the following:

1. **Bus Ridership Rebounds in March**
After a difficult winter, ridership began to rebound in March. Last month's bus ridership – including express, urban local and suburban local service – was up 2.75 percent compared to March 2013. Year-to-date, there have been more than 16.8 million bus rides, down 1 percent compared to the first quarter of 2013. Ridership on the METRO Blue Line showed improvement in March, but remains down more than 11 percent for the first quarter. Northstar ridership was down just over 3 percent last month, and is down 5 percent for the year, but remains above budget. Total ridership for the first quarter is 18.9 million, down about 2.4 percent compared to last year. The ridership declines are attributable to severe winter weather, which led to six days of school cancelations in January and February. U Pass ridership increased 3.85 percent last month, and is up more than 1 percent this year. In total, there have been 954,241 U Pass rides this year.

2. New Buses Begin Arriving

Metro Transit began receiving the first of what will be 74 new 40-foot Gillig buses earlier this month. The buses are replacing older models that have been in regular route service for 12 years. The buses have traditional front-ends that distinguish them from BRT-style buses. These buses should be in service before the State Fair. A total of 184 new 40-foot buses will be delivered over the next five years.

3. Transit Police, St. Paul Police Partner on University Avenue Enforcement

Metro Transit Police and St. Paul Police are teaming up to educate drivers and pedestrians about safe behaviors near the METRO Green Line. The METRO Green Line Safety Education and Enforcement Campaign will kick-off with a media event at 1 p.m. Thursday at the Green Line's Snelling Avenue Station. Police and outreach staff will be focused on proper use of mid-block crossings, yielding to pedestrians and obeying traffic and crossing signals throughout the corridor. Officers will conduct dedicated patrols in squads on bicycle and on foot along University Avenue and in downtown St. Paul. Outreach staff will engage pedestrians and distribute safety materials to pedestrians around station areas. Green Line trains will soon begin full-schedule testing, running as often as every 10 minutes throughout the day. Testing and training will continue on the Green Line through June.

4. Wild Ride to Continue through Playoffs

Metro Transit will continue to offer free rides to Minnesota Wild games as the team enters the playoffs this month. Home games at the Xcel Energy Center are scheduled for Monday, April 21, and Thursday, April 24. If the series is extended, another home game will be held on Monday, April 28. Fans need only to show their gameday ticket to ride to and from the game on a bus or METRO line. Free rides are available two hours before the game until two hours after. Also, UofM police, City of Minneapolis police and Metro Transit police joined forces recently to work on campus safety and prevention of vandalism during the UofM basketball and hockey playoff celebrations.

5. Twins Season Begins with New Family Pass

Fans attending a Twins game at Target Field have a new, cost-effective way to get the game this season. Families traveling to the game together on a bus or METRO line can save money with a Twins Family Pass, offered for the first time this season. The pass is good for roundtrip fares for two adults and up to three kids (ages 6-17) or seniors (65+). Passes cost \$8.50 on weekdays and \$7 on weekends. The Northstar Twins Family Pass will also be available again this season. Northstar will serve all home games this season. The METRO Blue Line, Twins Express and several local bus routes all serve Target Field. There are a total of 81 regular season home games.

BUSINESS

Consent Items

There were no consent items at this meeting.

Non-Consent Items

2014-83: Adopt 2030 TPP Amendment adding and funding MnDOT Corridors of Commerce Projects and approve 2030 TPP Administrative modification for streetcars

MTS Planning Analyst Mary Karlsson and Senior Planner Cole Hiniker presented this item.

Rodriguez presented a letter of support for the I-94 project from the City of Rogers and asked that the comments from Rogers be added to the public comment report being accepted as part of this action. Staff will add Rogers' comments; the motion was approved with this condition.

Karlsson answered a question from Commers that TPP amendments do not go through the TAB for approval recommendations, consistent with the Transportation Planning and Programming Guide (November 2013). Usually, TPP amendments have a narrow scope and typically are urgent in nature. The full TPP update does go to the TAB for approval recommendation before Met Council.

Commerz asked from which sources MnDOT will repay the Corridors of Commerce bonds. Pat Bursaw (MnDOT) stated the bonds will be repaid from the Trunk Highway program, not from operations funding, and will follow up to confirm (this was later confirmed). Regarding page 9, revision 10, Commerz questioned if the region is being asked to take on long-term maintenance costs that to-date have not received appropriate attention. He emphasized that the funding for the I-94 and TH 610 projects are a significant share of the mobility funding anticipated to be available for the foreseeable future and he would like the opportunity in the future to evaluate the productivity and ongoing operation and maintenance costs of proposed investments like these. Duininck added that the TAB has also discussed Commerz' concerns, and that if the Corridors of Commerce is to be on-going, then the TAB feels that the TAB and Met Council should be allowed input on the criteria used to select projects for Corridors of Commerce.

Motion by Rodriguez, seconded by Schreiber that the Metropolitan Council:

- Accept the attached public comment report
- Adopt the attached amendment to the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan that:
 - Adds a project on Interstate 94 between Rogers and St. Michael and its funding
 - Adds and advances funding for completion of Trunk Highway 610
- Affirm the Amendment maintains the fiscal constraint and air quality conformity of the plan
- Approve the attached administrative modification for modern streetcars

Motion passed.

2014-80: 2014-2017 TIP Amendment for I-94

MTS Senior Planner Heidi Schallberg presented this item. Commerz asked if there have been examples in recent history of projects that have not met Air Quality Conformity. MTS Manager Technical Planning Support Mark Filipi answered that there have not been cases of non-conformity in this region. There have been some instances around the country where projects have not met conformity and have been redesigned, and project managers have worked the issues out with the appropriate state pollution control agency and EPA.

Motion by Rodriguez, seconded by Reynoso that the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), pending approval of a related Transportation Policy Plan amendment, to add a project (SP# 2780-66) in 2015 for auxiliary lane construction on I-94 from TH 241 in St. Michael to TH 101 in Rogers, including a westbound exit ramp extension at TH 101 and a westbound third lane from TH 101 to TH 241 using \$40,000,000 in state bonds.

Motion passed.

2014-81: Authorize the Regional Administrator to sign a Memorandum of Agreement regarding determination of conformity of transportation Plans, Programs, and Projects to State Implementation Plans

MTS Manager Technical Planning Support Mark Filipi presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Reynoso, seconded by McCarthy that the Metropolitan Council authorizes the Regional Administrator to sign a Memorandum of Agreement regarding determination of conformity of transportation Plans, Programs, and Projects to State Implementation Plans with FHWA, FTA, EPA, MnDOT, MPCA, and the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Interstate Council. Motion passed.

This item will go the Council as a consent item.

2014-79: Accept the Regional Bicycle System Study Final Report

MTS Planning Analyst Steven Elmer presented this item. Elmer replied "yes" to Duininck's question whether the intent is to update the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network every four years through the TPP process.

Motion by Munt, seconded by Rodriguez that the Metropolitan Council accept the attached Regional Bicycle System Study Final Report dated March 2014.

Motion passed.

This item will go to the Council as a consent item

2014-78: Approve Updated Metropolitan Council 2014 Title VI Program for FTA

Metropolitan Council Office of Equal Opportunity Director Wanda Kirkpatrick thanked staff Cyndi Harper, John Levin and Adam Harrington for their work on this project. Kirkpatrick introduced OEO Consultant Luis Morales who presented this item. Munt questioned OEO's approach to "stretch" beyond the minimum requirements of Title VI to reach out to disadvantaged populations. Kirkpatrick cited several examples of staff outreach to ensure that the public is informed and assured their voice will be heard.

Motion by Commers, seconded by McCarthy that the Metropolitan Council approve the 2014 Federal Transit Administration Title VI Program.

Motion passed.

This item will go to the Council as a consent item

2014-65: Adoption Approval of the 1st Quarter Budget Amendment to the 2014 Unified Budget
Metro Transit Director of Finance Ed Petrie and MTS Principal Financial Analyst Sean Pfeiffer presented their respective divisions' budget amendments. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Commers, seconded by Munt that the Metropolitan Council amend the 2014 Unified Budget – Capital Program (annual appropriation) and Authorized Capital Program (multi-year authorization) as indicated and in accordance with the attached tables.

Motion passed.

2014-82: Authorization to amend a contract for the Regional Solicitation Evaluation with SRF Consulting Group, Inc. to include application development work and funding
TAB Coordinator Elaine Koutsoukos presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Munt that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to amend the Regional Solicitation Evaluation contract with SRF Consulting Group, Inc. to include an increased scope of work for application development and increase the contract amount by \$275,200 for a revised total of \$508,674.

Motion passed.

This item will go to the Council as a consent item

2014-84: Concur with Transportation Demand Management project funding
MTS Planner Katie White presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Reynoso, seconded by Commers that the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to award Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to seven transportation demand management (TDM) projects at the recommended funding level per the attachment.

Motion passed.

This item will go to the Council as a consent item

2014-77: Authorize release of the Orange Line Project Plan Update for public comment
Metro Transit Sr. Manager BRT/Small Starts Charles Carlson presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Munt, seconded by Rodriguez that the Metropolitan Council authorizes release of the draft Orange Line Project Plan Update for public review and comment.

- Public comments will be collected by Metro Transit through Friday, May 30, 2014 via mail and email, and at community events and meetings in the I-35W corridor
- BRT Project Office staff will summarize public comments and report the findings to the Metropolitan Council in June.

Motion passed.

This item will go to the Council as a consent item

INFORMATION

1. Gateway Corridor Update

Washington County Commissioner Lisa Weik and Washington County Transit Planner Andy Gitzlaff presented this item. Commers asked how the population and job growth projects were measured. Gitzlaff responded that a 1-mile buffer between the terminuses of the alignment was used. In response to a question from Munt, Gitzlaff will verify what limits were used in determining the population in the corridor without an automobile.

2. Potential Rider Customer Research

Metro Transit Director Customer Service & Marketing Bruce Howard presented this item. The information on the presentation was based on the results of the customer survey, and will help Metro Transit to improve service and perceptions of transit to attract new customers. Council members and staff noted that the fare system is complicated and sometimes a deterrent to potential riders, and the Transportation Committee hopes to look into improving the fare system.

3. Metro Transit Social Media Update

Metro Transit Digital Communications Specialist Eric Wheeler and Public Relations Specialist Drew Kerr presented this item. They presented examples of how Metro Transit is reaching out to the public and riders through social media.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.