

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: December 22, 2014

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 14, 2015

Subject: Approve Final Adoption of the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and Accept Public Comment Report

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: MN Statutes Sec. 473.175 and 473.176; MAP-21

Staff Prepared/Presented: Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS, 651-602-1754
Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director MTS, 651-602-1058

Division/Department: Transportation/MTS

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council accept the attached Public Comment Report on the Draft *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* and adopt the revised final version of the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan*.

Background

The Council, as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, is required by both state and federal law to prepare and update a long-range transportation plan for the region every four years. The current Transportation Policy Plan was approved by the Federal Highway Administration in February 2011 and to comply with the required four-year timeframe must be updated by February 2015.

The Council and its partners began the process of updating the Transportation Policy Plan in April 2013. Stakeholders were represented on the TPP Policymaker Task Force which included representatives of the Council, TAB, MnDOT and CTIB; and on the Partner Agency Work Group (PAWG) which included all the members of the TAC Planning committee and additional representatives of local units of government and agencies to provide broader geographic balance and additional technical expertise. The two groups reviewed and commented on portions of the draft document throughout its development. TAB members also participated in a half day TPP investment workshop in late 2013 and received monthly updates on the plan's development during the first half of 2014.

In June 2014 TAB and TAC provided comments on the draft plan and recommended that the Council approve the release of the draft 2040 TPP for public comment. The draft 2040 TPP was released for public comment on August 14, ten public meetings were held throughout the region with over 150 participants, a public hearing was held on September 17 and the public comment period closed on October 1.

The Council received comments from 126 "commenters" including individuals, local units of government and state, local or non-profit agencies via letters, e-mails, and testimony. About 900 total comments were received, resulting in approximately 750 unique comments. The TAB received a presentation on the major comments and proposed revisions in November 2014. In addition, the Council provided policy direction on the proposed changes at two working meetings and the recommended revisions have been incorporated into the plan. A Public Comment Report has been prepared documenting the comments, Council responses and proposed changes to the draft TPP in response to the comments.

The proposed final 2040 Transportation Policy Plan is available for review at: <http://www.metrocouncil.org/tpp-update> Both a version showing the draft TPP with tracked changes and a version showing the proposed final document is available. The 2040 TPP Public Comment Report is also available on the

website. Staff are continuing to review the documents and if necessary will make minor changes and edits to the document. Any changes will be tracked and will be summarized for the Transportation Committee at its January 12, 2015 meeting, prior to final adoption by the full Council.

Rationale

The TPP is required by state law to guide long term investment in the metropolitan transportation system. Federal law requires the metropolitan planning organization for a region to update and adopt a long-range transportation policy plan at least once every four years. This *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* will meet that requirement, thus allowing continued expenditure of federal transportation funds within the metropolitan planning area boundary.

Funding

None required.

Known Support / Opposition

Comments indicating support and opposition to sections of the draft plan, along with revisions incorporated in response to the comments are contained in the TPP Public Comment Report. In addition, the TAB provided review and comment of the proposed final 2040 TPP at its meeting on December 17. The TAB passed a motion indicating overall support of the plan and another motion that comments made by individual members (see attachment) be provided to the Council.

TAB Comments on Proposed 2040 TPP
December 17, 2014

Adam Duininck - Thanked those that worked on the TPP through the Policy Task Force, the late 2013 workshop and discussions at TAB meetings.

John Gunyou – Regarding the trail section, thanked staff for working to fine tune the bike/ped section.

Matt Look – The 5-county consortium took a position on comments on the TPP. Not all counties were met with, nor have received answers to the issues that were provided by the five counties. This is considered unresolved. Freight issues due to congestion will affect citizens. The focus is on transit, other funding could be used to prevent congestion and inflation.

Sue Sanger – Comfortable with the document, but would like to see more attention to:

1. Strategies to help address transportation issues for an aging population
2. Acknowledge changing technologies, ex.: driverless cars – how will that change roadway networks and transportation projects going forward
3. Need for expanded transit options for pockets of poverty that are outside the designated low-income areas designated in the equity section
4. No definition of equity in the context of road projects, cannot evaluate if accomplishments are made without definition

Randy Maluchnik – He submitted a 10-page document by email prior to this meeting, stating the original 17 questions from the 5 counties, MC's responses to 5-counties, and the 5-county comments on MC responses. He requested that his 10-page comment letter (attached) be forwarded to TAB members and part of the TAB meeting record. He also requested that the definition of "equity from Thrive be forwarded to TAB members". Agrees that the TPP doesn't address how to reach aging population and the need for a definition of equity. Need to address areas of disparities throughout the entire region.

Karl Drotning – On page 237, there has been a deletion of text that refers to the needs of Dakota County in future principal and "A" minor arterials. He asked that the language be amended back into the plan acknowledging that there is a need for addition study and inclusion of Dakota County's needs. The future of our "A" Minor Arterial system, and the growth developing, building and funding it, is absolutely crucial to the developing communities. Density requirements/guidance may have been reduced, but may be creating standards for developing communities that aren't achievable. General support for the plan, but not major components, although there is a need to vote and move forward.

Kenya McKnight – include the term "indigenous" in the equity language. Regarding demographics, need to include youth (millennial population) as the youth will be driving economics going forward, and are changing transportation trends & choices. They are affecting the need for investments in a multi-modal system.

Kevin Reich – Minneapolis stands by their comments, the process was adequate; they looked to support the Thrive plan when making the final analysis for commenting on the TPP.

Bill Goins – Based on an estimate by Great MSP, our region could have 100,000 jobs that could be vacant. Our competition is with other regions nationally and internationally and this plan needs to help us compete.

Scott McBride – MnDOT supports the plan. MnDOT has updated several of its plans (statewide multi-modal plan, statewide highway investment plan, etc.) and the TPP lines up well with those plans. There was a lot of outreach and inclusion when developing this plan.

Russ Stark – Streetcars are important to St. Paul, but not in the plan and looking forward to that policy development. St. Paul is o.k. for the balance of the plan and the work continues.

Bill Goins – In 2020, jobs will need qualified people: how do we draw people for jobs with transit options?

Dave Van Hattum – Supports the plan and process, not everyone got what they want. Asked what the “other” mode in Amy’s graphic is, other than biking. TBI shows what is happening with travel demand – increase in walking and biking while driving is flat. Requested that “Regional Solicitation” be added to flexible funding to clarify.

Jan Callison – The fact that there is not enough money makes this difficult and contentious.



Randy Maluchnik
Office of County Commissioner
Carver County Government Center
Human Services Building
602 East Fourth Street
Chaska, MN 55318-1202
Phone: 952 361-1510
Fax: 952 361-1581

December 19, 2014

Mr. Bill Hargis, Chair
Transportation Advisory Board
390 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55101-1805

Dear Chair Hargis:

The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) met on December 17, 2014 and reviewed the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Public Comment Report prepared by Council staff. This document included responses to most but not all of the 17 items of concern raised by the five suburban counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Scott and Washington. As the Carver County representative on TAB I have attached some follow up comments to the Council response and request these be added to the record and be considered by the Council.

It is my belief that my fellow suburban county TAB representatives will agree with these comments, however, it should be noted that they have not endorsed them.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Randy Maluchnik
Carver County Commissioner

Enclosure

December 19, 2014

Follow up Comments to Metropolitan Council Response to Five Suburban County 17 Items of Concern.

The Metropolitan Council has prepared a 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Public Comment Report dated December 11, 2014 which includes direct and indirect responses to the 17 items of common concern that affect the suburban counties. The Public Comment Report contains 194 pages and the relevant pages are listed with each item.

The following summarizes the Council response with suggested follow up:

Item #1: THRIVE MSP 2040, 2040 TPP, and Regional Solicitation should be developed sequentially to enable true public participation and allow one document to inform the next, the accepted practice for long-range planning and implementation.

Council Response (pg. 78 of draft report. Pg. 184 of final report, but not directly referenced.): Preparation of the regional development guide and the TPP have historically overlapped. THRIVE MSP 2040 took 2 years to develop with extensive public involvement. Federal requirements to update the TPP at least every 4 years means the TPP and regional development guide do not always align. The TPP needs to be adopted by February 2015 to meet federal requirements.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: N/A. Concern does not address TPP Content.

Follow up Comments: *The Council should review the schedule needs closer when preparing these important policy documents to ensure proper alignment and agency involvement. THRIVE MSP 2040, the 2040 TPP and the Regional Solicitation were clearly too much to take on within the time and resources available. Completely redoing the Regional Solicitation was not warranted considering its past success and at the very least should have waited until the 2040 TPP was adopted.*

Item #2: The TPP development process and timeline limited opportunities for two-way dialogue and the accelerated schedule constrained Council staff’s availability to review and respond to stakeholder comments.

Council Response (pg. 79 of draft report, page 184 of final report but not directly referenced): There was unprecedented stakeholder and public input including extensive county and city involvement with the Partner Agency Work Group (PAWG) and Policymaker Task Force with more than 30 meetings. Council agrees that a strong partnership with the Counties is key to creating good policy for the region. The TAB/TAC process have always provided for this collaboration. The Council welcomes a conversation on how to improve involvement and representation of county interests.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: N/A. Concern does not address TPP Content.

Follow up Comments: *The Council’s willingness to consider improvements to county involvement and representation is appreciated and it is agreed that the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)/ Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) process provides structure for collaboration. The following remain applicable:*

- a. The makeup and role of TAB needs to be revised to improve county and other elected official representation.*
- b. Although the intent of the working group and task force was to involve the cities and counties, it did not work based on the timing and process. The Council staff should meet one on one with counties before updating policy documents of this importance. This would allow the Council to understand county interests and concerns before the document is written which should streamline the process.*

Item #3: FHWA and MnDOT visions for a robust regional transportation system that meets the goals mandated by MAP-21 should be included in the increased revenue scenario in the Highway Investment chapter.

Council Response (pg. 36 of final report): FHWA does a complete review of the TPP after it has been adopted. Federal planning law requires the plan to be fiscally constrained. The

Council agrees the fiscally constrained plan (current revenue scenario) depicts a fairly bleak picture of highway improvements. However, it is realistic and aligns with MnDOT's Minnesota Statewide Investment Plan. The increased revenue scenario aligns with the TFAC but accounts for inflation and shortfalls in operational costs.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: N/A. Concern does not address TPP Content.

Follow up Comments: *Counties need to be included in the discussions involving the formal review by the FHWA. The vision for the regional transportation system is inadequate. It is requested that the Council funds a Work Program to detail the transportation needs of the whole region and to articulate a vision that identifies the current and future funding gaps.*

Item #4: The Transportation Advisory Board must play a strong role in the preparation and approval of the TPP.

Council Response (pg. 63 of draft report. No response in final report): State law requires the Council coordinates the update of the TPP with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and specifies the membership of the TAB. Roles and responsibility of the Council and TAB are defined in a 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and MnDOT and the June 2012 Transportation Planning and Programming Guide. FHWA affirmed the Council as the region's designated MPO in 2011. TAB members were on the Policy Advisory Task Force and TAB was given regular updates of the draft TPP.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: N/A. Concern does not address TPP Content.

Follow up Comments: *The State and Federal law related to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) is understood. The TAB should be designated the MPO under federal law for the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Given the preeminent role the TPP and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) play in governing the distribution of federal transportation funds and the state's transportation investments within the metropolitan area, it is critical that the concerns and interests of all localities as represented by their elected representatives be taken into account. The current composition of the TAB does not do that nor does its composition meet the requirements of federal law.*

Item #5: It is important that the TPP Goals, Objectives and Strategies clearly define the responsible party and enabling authority.

Council Response (pg. 8): While the goals and objectives are new, the strategies have existed in many previous versions of the TPP and a significant number of them are just reformatted in the 2040 TPP. The strategies are reflective of statutory requirements, positive actions, best practices, and federal requirements for a performance based plan. “Will” statements are positive actions that support the work of the Council and its partners in implementing an effective regional transportation system. “Should” statements are directed primarily at local governments in their own investments and land use decisions. There is only one “must” related to the statutory authority for the Council to review the transportation elements of local comprehensive plans. The use of these statements was vetted with the PAWG and PTF.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: None

***Follow up Comments:** These definitions of intent should be documented in the TPP itself. Other opinion type statements not supported by cited data contained in the TPP should be removed.*

Item #6: The Highway Investment chapter should create a vision for a regional highway system that is consistent with documented travel behavior and Metropolitan Council defined regional growth projections.

Council Response (pg.48): Growth will occur in suburban communities even with the limited highway investment under the current revenue scenario.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: None

***Follow up Comments:** This response suggests that communities will have to live with the transportation issues created by growth or deal with them by themselves. The implications of this response are unacceptable given that 55% of the population and household growth and 37% of the employment growth is expected to occur in the 5 suburban counties by 2040. This indicates a severe lack of vision for the transportation system serving the whole region. It is requested that the Council funds a Work Program to*

detail the transportation needs of the whole region and to articulate a vision that identifies the current and future funding gaps.

Item #7: The increased revenue scenario in the Highway Investment chapter should be expanded to articulate a vision for a robust regional highway system.

Council Response (pg.37, 43): The increased revenue scenario aligns with the recommendations of the Transportation Finance Advisory Committee (TFAC) but also recognizes funding needs for highway operations, safety, pedestrian and bicycle and ADA improvements needs. The TPP defines unfunded needs in broad investment categories, not specific projects. The TPP will be amended to include new projects with new revenue. This will require a robust public process. Special funding programs such as TED, CIMs, CoC are not included as they are outside of the current revenue scenario.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: None

***Follow up Comments:** The increased revenue scenario does list specific projects, namely an expansion of the MnPASS system and a handful of interchanges. This contradicts the response. Having these projects listed sets the stage and expectation for the region if more revenue is realized. The procedure for deciding which projects should be included in the increased revenue scenario is unclear and did not involve all counties. A comprehensive plan with other equally worthy projects should be included. It is suggested that the increased revenue scenario either be expanded to include a complete vision with funding needs or be removed completely until this vision can be properly articulated.*

Item #8: The TPP should emphasize the importance of the “A” Minor system and non-freeway Principal Arterial to the regional highway system. The TPP should acknowledge the role of local governments in planning and building these important components of the system.

Council Response (pg. 48): The Council agrees that the importance of the A-minor arterials should be emphasized more in the TPP. The Council will add a Work Program to work with cities and counties to better understand the needs and funding gaps on the A-minor system. These needs will be better documented in future updates of the TPP.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: Several text changes made throughout the Existing System and Highway Investment chapters

***Follow up Comments:** Thank-you for agreeing to add the Work Program. In addition, it is suggested that the specific conclusions and follow up recommendations of the “A” Minor System Evaluation Study be shown in this TPP.*

Item #9: The TPP should apply the outcomes and principles of THRIVE MSP 2040 equally to all seven metropolitan counties.

Council Response (pg. 150): The Council is committed to pursuing all the Thrive outcomes and principles throughout the 7-county region but the path to achieving them will be not be the same for every area. The Council will work with communities to establish indicators to measure progress towards the outcomes over time which will inform plans and investment. This will occur through the Work Program chapter titled “Identifying and Refining Performance Measures for Planning and Programming”

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: None

***Follow up Comments:** Text changes committing to this response should be made within the TPP. Goals and Indicators to measure progress to each Thrive outcome and principle should be listed by community designation.*

Item #10: The TPP Highway Investment chapter should be expanded to acknowledge the important role that connections to suburban counties and Greater Minnesota play in the regional and state economy.

Council Response (pg. 49, 53): MnDOT is responsible for statewide freight planning. The Council will work with MnDOT on the update of the Statewide Freight Plan to identify highway or other locations of freight bottlenecks or related issues affecting the region’s and the state’s economic competitiveness. The Council will add a Work Program study item to “Identify Truck/Highway Freight Needs”. No additional improvement projects will be added to the TPP unless new revenue is realized. The plan will acknowledge that in many rural parts of the metro region, improvements to highways that would primarily benefit freight and residents of Greater MN should be considered for funding such as Greater MN portion of the Corridors of Commerce program.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: Description of new study added to Work Plan related to identifying truck/highway freight needs. Prior to the 2018 TPP update the Council will continue to collect and analyses truck volumes using evolving methods to determine high priority highway and intermodal facility improvements. Language will be added stating that improvements that primarily benefit freight and residents of Greater MN should be considered for funding sources like Corridors of Commerce that would otherwise be dedicated for use outside the Twin Cities metro area.

Follow up Comments: *The Council's commitment to study the freight needs of the state and the connections to the Twin Cities is appreciated. It is suggested that the Council incorporate the findings and recommendations of the 2013 Twin Cities Metropolitan Region Freight Study into the TPP.*

Given the importance of the connections in the rural parts of the suburban it is requested that the available funding programs prioritize freight improvement projects regardless of MnDOT district or planning area boundary. Saying the Greater MN portion of funding programs should fund projects in rural areas of the metro is one thing but getting it to happen is another. What follow up will occur to make this a possibility?

Item #11: The TPP should highlight the importance of advancing both transportation and recreational bicycle trails.

Council Response (pg. 116): The TPP will be modified to include a clearer description of how the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network and regional trails complement each other. Available funding is described in the bicycle and pedestrian section of the TPP as well as the region's need for additional funding.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: Modify Fig. G1 to include all planned regional trails that have Met. Council adopted master Plans. Amend text in plan to describe relationship between RBTN and regional trails.

Follow up Comments: *Thank-you for the changes. Again, a lot of work and funding has been put into the regional trail system and now the RBTN takes priority for federal funding. All planned regional trails that complete a regional corridor should be considered on the same level of importance as the TIER 1 RBTNs.*

Item # 12: The TPP land use density minimums may discourage investment in the region's planned transit corridors.

Council Response (pg. 22): Density requirements apply to new or redevelopment or “areas of change”. Requirements are different based on Community Designation in Thrive which allows for flexibility. Requirements are intended to ensure that local land use planning does not lead to inefficient or costly transit service.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: The Land Use and Local Planning chapter will be edited to reflect: Density requirements are for “areas of change” only and differ based on community designation. Density requirements for suburban and emerging suburban edges in Table C-2 will be reduced from 20 to 15 for dedicated ROW transitways and 10 to 8 for highway BRTs. Clarity will be added that density requirements are intended to prevent inefficient or costly transit service. Clarification will be added on methodology and Council expectation that go along with this requirement.

Follow up Comments: *Thank-you for the revisions*

Item # 13: The TPP restricts certain types of land uses such as “surface parking lots” immediately around transit station areas.

Council Response (pg. 22, 25): The Council wants to proactively encourage supplemental uses and urban form and not just discourage auto-oriented uses and urban forms. The Land Use section will be edited to be less regulatory and more demonstrative. However, the Council could reduce funding if there is a lesser commitment by locals until they become financially sustainable at a level similar to other transit investment in the region. Table C-3 will be edited to reflect that surface parking lots at Park and Rides are not prohibited.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: Land Use and Local Planning chapter edited to reflect: Assert Council’s value related to land use. Discussion of uses and design features changed to be less regulatory and more proactive. Add list of transit-supportive uses and urban forms to Table C-3 noting that list is not exhaustive. Show how Council will use the concepts when reviewing investments and that the level of community commitment will tie to support for funding. Density requirements are for “areas of change” only and differ based on community designation. Density requirement for suburban and emerging suburban edges in Table C-2 have been reduced from 20 to 15 for dedicated ROW transitways and 10 to 8 for highway BRTs. Clarity that density requirements are intended

to prevent inefficient or costly transit service. Clarification on methodology and Council expectation that go along with this requirement.

Surface parking lots at Park and Rides are acceptable as interim use and structured parking may be acceptable as long term use near transit station areas.

Follow up Comments: Thank-you for the revisions.

III. Regional Solicitation

Item #14: The new Regional Solicitation should be written after the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan is fully adopted.

Item #15: The new Regional Solicitation should reflect the recommendations of the working groups formed to guide its development.

Item #16: The new Regional Solicitation should apply the outcomes of Stewardship, Prosperity, Equity, Livability and Sustainability as outlined in Thrive equally to all seven metropolitan counties.

Council Response (pg. 187, 188): Item # 14: Began the new regional solicitation in 2013. It took longer than expected to finish. Cannot delay it now without endangering project delivery for 2017-2019.

Item # 15: no response, referred to Council staff.

Item # 16: Thrive does not require the outcomes to be applied equally across the region as different parts of the region have different needs.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: N/A. Concern does not address TPP Content.

Follow up Comments: Item # 14: The major overhaul of the regional solicitation was not necessary and should have waited until the 2040 TPP was adopted. The solicitation could have been released with minor changes in 2013 using the 2030 TPP for policy guidance.

Item # 15: None. Solicitation has been released.

Item# 16: The response has misinterpreted the comment/concern. It is agreed that each part of the region has different needs. The point is that some areas are favored in the regional solicitation scoring process simply by their location.

Item #17: The Equity and Housing criteria in the new Regional Solicitation should provide an equal opportunity for all candidates to compete for federal funding.

Council Response (pg. 188): Environmental Justice is not just “avoid, minimize, or mitigate”. It includes the principle “to prevent the denial of reduction in or significant delay in receipt of benefits”. The regional solicitation applications will need to explain benefits to receive points. American Community Survey prefers tract data as it doubles the sample size and reduces margins of error. However, Fig C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4 have been revised to show more accurate tract level data.

Council Recommended TPP Text Changes: Fig C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4 have been revised to show more accurate tract level data.

Follow up Comments: *It is not appropriate to use these criteria in the solicitation until the transportation benefits and corresponding performance measures are established. The Council should create a Work Program before the next regional solicitation to determine these benefits and how to measure them.*
