

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

September 26, 2016

LOCATION: Metro Transit F.T. Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN

Committee Members Present: Chair Lona Schreiber, Cara Letofsky, Deb Barber, Steve Elkins, Gail Dorfman, Marie McCarthy, Jon Commers, Katie Rodriguez

Committee Members Absent: Edward Reynoso, Jennifer Munt

TAB Liaison Present: None

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Schreiber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:03 pm on September 26, 2016 in the Metro Transit F.T. Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis, MN.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Commers, seconded by Letofsky to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
It was moved by Barber, seconded by Elkins to approve the minutes of the September 12, 2016 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – Metro Transit

The following person was presented an Employee Recognition Award for their work:

Metro Transit Manager Vehicle Maintenance James O'Brien presented the award to Metro Transit LRT Helper Seng Yang.

The following people were also recognized for their recent national recognitions:
Metro Transit Deputy Chief Operating Officer - Bus Brian Funk recognized Christine Kuennen as being accepted into the APTA Leadership program.
Metro Transit Director, Bus Transportation Christy Bailly recognized Chang Yang as being named on APTA's *40 Under 40* list.
Council member Dorfman asked if Chang's father was still employed at Metro Transit (yes; driver out of East Metro) and what exactly the APTA Leadership program was (yearlong program that includes a North American group of 25 that is selected from hundreds of applicants, that get together to focus on learning and also an industry wide project, which is presented at the end of the year).

Council member Rodriguez expressed her gratitude for being able to attend the APTA award ceremony in Los Angeles. While attending a session, Rodriguez noted there was lot negative comments about unions so was proud that when Metro Transit accepted their *System of the Year* award there were two unions representatives on stage. Rodriguez also mentioned that there is a lot of respect for Metro Transit among other transit agencies/regions and how interesting it was too see how the other regions' Transit Board Governances are uniquely set up.

TAB LIAISON REPORT

Council member Rodriguez reported that the TAB has not had a business meeting since the 9/12/16 Transportation Committee meeting. There were though two tours of the baggage handling at the airport and the FedEx facility, which included two speakers (on the effort to bring the World's Fair here and the bullet train from here to Rochester).

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES INTERIM DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Interim Director Amy Vennewitz reported:

In Friday's report there was an item noting that Metro Mobility has started a pilot project due to this fall being the busiest ever. With the pilot project, we are moving non ADA rides off of Metro Mobility providers and referring them to Medical Assistance Transportation providers. The customers would still get their rides through an external provider if they want it and we are still paying for it. But since it's a different process, if any Council members hear from customers who have concerns/questions/problems please let Gerri Sutton (x1672) or Andrew Krueger (x1689) know.

Later this fall, will bring back results and recommendations on whether project would continue or not.

Metro Transit General Manager Brian Lamb:

System of the Year

Representatives from our front-line, management and senior staff, along with Council Member Katie Rodriguez, recently accepted Metro Transit's System of the Year award at APTA's Annual Meeting. During the event, we had a chance to share a short video that highlights several of the accomplishments that were included in our System of the Year nomination.

Last Saturday, we brought the trophy to Target Field Station to celebrate this recognition with staff, retirees, customers and partners. The well-attended event showcased the work of many departments that have contributed to our success, including Bus Maintenance, Transit Information and Metro Transit Police.

Particularly enjoyable was the chance to re-connect with retirees, including a 93-year-old operator who wore his originally-issued jacket and who recently renewed his driver's license. We'll continue to celebrate our award in the months ahead, distributing commemorative pins to all staff and placing decals with our System of the Year logo on all of our buses and trains beginning this month.

LRT Technician Training Program

After successfully creating a pipeline to employment in Bus Maintenance, we're moving forward on a similarly-designed program for our light rail division. Like the Metro Transit Technician program launched last year, participants will work one-on-one with coaches from Twin Cities Rise, work alongside rail technicians and earn a two-year degree that puts them in position for full-time roles as signals, communications or light rail vehicle technicians. The program was supported by the Minnesota State Legislature, which provided \$400,000 in funding during the last session.

Metro Transit and our partners at Twin Cities Rise are actively recruiting for the program, and applications will be accepted through the end of October. Up to 40 participants will begin the program at the end of this year and about half of these individuals will begin on-the-job training next spring. After that, participants will work full-time as rail maintenance interns while earning their two-year degree. Application information is available on our website.

Ryder Cup

Up to a quarter-million golf fans from across the world are expected to visit the Twin Cities beginning this week for the Ryder Cup, and Metro Transit will play a part in getting many of them to and from the event. Express bus service will be provided between downtown Minneapolis and Chaska's Hazeltine National Golf Club. Six-day, round-trip transit passes cost \$120 and single-day roundtrip passes are \$20. The prices were set to fully offset the cost of providing the service.

Based on advanced ticket sales, we'll offer six outbound and inbound trips on the practice dates (Tues-Thurs) and nine outbound and eight inbound trips during the competition (Fri-Sun). Meet Minneapolis and downtown hotels continue to share our service as the recommended method of getting to the Ryder Cup. Around 1,800 tickets had been sold as of this morning, and we expect to sell several hundred more this week. (Anecdotally, single-day parking passes were going for \$200-\$300 on secondary sale sites.)

Council member Dorfman asked about cash payment (in lieu of ticket) to which General Manager Lamb responded that we aren't designed to take cash and would encourage customers to purchase their ticket online, which can be done all the way up till the day they ride.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

1. **2016-180:** 2017-2020 TIP Amendment: Brooklyn Center Evergreen School Area Trail and Sidewalk System

It was moved by Rodriguez, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to remove curb-and-gutter from the City of Brooklyn Center's Evergreen School Area Trail and Sidewalk System project (SP # 109-591-001). This action would occur pending the approval of the 2017-2020 TIP.

Motion carried.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2016-150 SW:** Blue Line Light Rail Transit Extension (BLRT) Project Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Determination of Adequacy

Metro Transit Assistant Director Environmental & Agreements Kathryn O'Brien presented this item.

Dorfman expressed her thanks for all the hard work that has been put into these difficult projects. There were no questions from committee members.

It was moved by Dorfman, seconded by Letofsky:

That the Metropolitan Council (Council): (1) determine the adequacy of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) for the Blue Line Light Rail Transit Extension (BLRT); and (2) authorize its Chair to sign the Final EIS Determination of Adequacy on behalf of the Council.

Motion carried.

2. **2016-190 SW:** Designation of Potential TOD Sites

Metro Transit Director Transit Orient Development Lucy Galbraith presented this item. Council members Rodriguez and Letofsky expressed their thanks for TOD Office work. There were no questions from committee members.

It was moved by Letofsky, seconded by Elkins:

That the Metropolitan Council designate the attached list of Council properties as potential TOD projects eligible for use of the TOD fund allocated to the TOD Office. Funds will be used for expenses necessary to pursue TOD opportunities on these sites. Examples of expenses include due diligence work such as title reports, surveys, appraisals, etc.

Motion carried.

2. 2016-192 SW: Authorize 2017 Capital and Operating Grant Applications to Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB)

Metro Transit Director Finance Ed Petrie presented this item. There were no comments or questions from committee members.

It was moved by Barber, seconded by Rodriguez:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to apply for calendar year 2017 grants from the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) for the following projects:

Capital

- 1. METRO Orange Line Est. \$12,000,000
- 2. METRO Green Line Extension Est. \$138,000,000
- 3. METRO Blue Line Extension Est. \$66,000,000

Operating

- 4. Northstar Commuter Rail Est. \$7,000,000
- 5. METRO Blue & Green Lines Est. \$24,600,000
- 6. I-35W South BRT Express Est. \$360,000
- 7. Cedar Avenue BRT Express Est. \$200,000
- 8. METRO Red Line BRT Est. \$1,650,000

Motion carried.

INFORMATION

1. Red Rock Corridor Implementation Plan

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Katie White introduced Washington County Commissioner Karla Bigham and Washington County Planner Hally Turner who presented this item. From a Community Development committee meeting that was held in Cottage Grove about a year ago, Council member Dorfman stated that the message heard strongly was that there are all these jobs coming into the area and transit is critical in attracting and retaining employees. Council member Letofsky added that there was a discussion on the challenge about higher density housing and questioned if the market will be ready to make this successful? Commissioner Bigham responded that every other year there is a community residential survey, in which the number one result was the need for public transit/transportation in that area; so between business and community there is a lot of support and excitement for this line. Regarding housing, Bigham does believe it can be successful. A current example is there is a private developer going before Newport City Council in spring to get approval on an apartment building near the Newport Park & Ride. Comp plans will be key along this corridor; St. Paul Park is an up and coming place in East Metro and while Cottage Grove does have a need for high density housing (apartments, townhomes, senior housing), there is currently a plan coming through to add some senior housing. Also now they are a Community Development agency, which allows a lot more tools/flexibility and getting that ramped up for fall.

Chair Schreiber asked if there was 2 or 3 operating freight lines in/around this corridor and if there are challenges with that. Bigham and Turner responded that yes, there are lines (one of which 4 – 5% of all rail in US passes through) but the preferred BRT route does not interfere with railroad operations.

2. Draft State Multimodal Transportation Plan and Draft State Highway Improvement Plan

Metropolitan Transportation Services Senior Planner Katie White introduced MnDOT Project Directors Philip Schaffner and Brad Utecht who presented this item. Schaffner and Utecht answered questions

from council members: where complete streets showed up in plan (advanced in healthy communities), progress of work regarding State law requirement for State Aid Design guidelines (committee has been formed that includes MnDOT design and cities/counties and work is under way, target date of next spring even though past July might have been deadline), regarding consistency with the next Generation Energy act, how is the department framing that purview (for purposes of the plan, target that was set was for transportation network as a whole – state level), does the finances get into detailed percentages that come from city/state (currently no; has been discussed to produce additional resources to explain these pieces), start/end date for Multimodal plan (2017 through 2036), clarification on what is considered additional revenues (anything above revenue available - \$21B) and if there was a Transportation bill passed, would the plan change (yes; there would be some re-work prior to the 4 year process).

3. C Line – Glenwood Avenue Study Update

Metro Transit Project Manager, BRT/Small Starts Katie Roth and Metro Transit Project Manager, BRT/Small Starts and Metro Transit Planner, BRT/Small Starts Scott Janowiak presented this item. Dorfman shared a result from a recent study that 46% all renters living on north side of Minneapolis were evicted over the last three years and questioned how do you engage a community that is in constant flux, to which Roth responded that she wasn't familiar with that study (would be interested in overlaying that data) but that outreach can be a challenge. Answering questions from Letofsky, Roth explained that both alignments (Olson & Glenwood) coming in north/west to downtown would converge at 7th St. garage but that what the outbound downtown route would be is still being explored and in part riders who catch a bus on Olson would be able to walk a short/comparable distance to a station on Glenwood (Route 19 would still run just at a reduced service). Rodriguez questioned why not continue bus service on Olson and only build BRT on Glenwood, to which Roth noted that we know there is a need for service and without the Blue Line extension in place, customer aren't being well served and that there is a confluence of other construction in the area (Glenwood under construction in 2018 & 2019, bridge over corridor to be closed and Hennepin county rebuilding a substantial part of the corridor).

Chair Schreiber and Committee members had a brief discussion regarding streamlining future agendas.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:16 pm.

Becky Davidson
Recording Secretary