

Summary Report

Transportation Advisory Board



Meeting Date: October 16, 2024

Reports

1. **Chair's Report** – Hovland reported that TAB Executive Committee met prior to TAB. Discussed elements of Active Transportation item on the agenda later in the meeting. Heard information on the legislatively imposed mandate on MDOT on greenhouse gas reduction strategies through February 2025. MnDOT staff will present information at the November TAB meeting.

2. **MnDOT Report** – Sahebjam reported MnDOT is getting ready with winter preparations. MnDOT has challenges and are looking for more people to work to help plow snow. Per the fatality report yesterday, we have had 338 fatalities so far this year. It is projected to be more than 400 by the end of the year.

Jeppson commented that the Advisory Council on Traffic Safety are actively working through eight position statements regarding traffic safety and focusing on how the body can contribute to better behavior, more safe behavior, and lowering of those crashes. Jeppson will provide updates as the groups works through the position statements.

3. **MPCA** – Kohlasch reported that there are a number of grants open for climate resiliency and local communities. One is for planning grants for local communities. Another is for implementation of local resiliency actions by local and tribal governments. Heavy duty on-road diesel replacement grants for \$4 million closes today. For Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, MPCA anticipates next round of the grants will be open in November. EPA announced that they have an additional billion dollars for electric school buses throughout the country. The funding will be available for electric school buses and bus charging infrastructure.

4. **MAC Report** – Rief reported that MAC is working on the 2025 operating budget. Revenues are forecasted for 2025 to be approximately \$500 million, with operating expenses around \$300 million, debt service is about \$150 million, and \$50 million for the capital program. Operating budget will be approved in December, along with the capital program. The capital program for seven years is approximately \$3.5 billion. MAC published the Assessment of Environmental Effects. Document summarizes capital program projects, which projects are required to follow a state environmental review process. Delta has announced just recently two new seasonal service routes, one to Rome and one to Copenhagen to start in May of 2025. At next MAC meeting, JD powers will be on site to present a JD powers airport award, MSP was number one across all seven of the categories.

5. **Metropolitan Council Report** – Barber reported that Network Now is out for public comment. Some routes that were suspended during Covid will be discontinued. The comment periods for the Regional Development Guide and the Transportation Policy Plan have closed. The comments are being processed.

6. **Suburban Transit Association** – Hanson reported Maple Grove Transit and Plymouth Metrolink issued a request for proposals for a joint transit study to improve service

connections in the northwest metro. Minnesota Valley Transit Authority provided more than 49,000 rides to the Renaissance Festival this year – a new ridership record. Together with SouthWest Transit's 32,000 rides, these two providers recorded over 71,000 Ren Fest rides. In an effort to continue its commitment to equity and accessibility throughout its service area, MVTA is planning to expand its Connect microtransit service to Prior Lake and Shakopee starting in January. SouthWest reported that ridership is up 29 percent overall from last year, with special events ridership up 86 percent and express service up 12 percent. SouthWest's autonomous vehicle service will launch on November 18. The Minnesota Public Transit Association has named SouthWest Transit the 2024 Transit System of the Year, recognizing SouthWest's leadership in community impact and commitment to innovation.

Business

TAB approved the following items (forwarded to the Transportation Committee).

1. 2024-43: Streamlined TIP Amendment for Three 7W Projects (October 28, 2024, Transportation Committee – dependent on FHWA-FTA approval of 2025-2028 TIP prior to this date)

The Transportation Advisory Board recommended that the Metropolitan Council approve the following 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments:

- Add new project to construct storm sewer improvements along North Fork Crow River (SP# 227-080-001).
- Add new project to construct roundabouts and ramp heads at Interstate 94 and Wright County Road 137 (SP# 8680-200).
- Add new project to replace an old bridge with a new bridge over Wright County Road 19 (SP# 8680-199).

2. 2024-44: Streamlined TIP Amendment for Seven Projects (October 28, 2024, Transportation Committee – dependent on FHWA-FTA approval of 2025-2028 TIP prior to this date)

The Transportation Advisory Board recommended that the Metropolitan Council approve the following 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments:

- Add local funding and change the scope of Anoka County's project to construct a mini roundabout at CSAH 6 from 0.05 miles west of 5th St to 0.05 miles east of 7th St in Fridley (SP# 002-606-014).
- Cost decrease for a mill and overlay on MN 20 from River Road in Cannon Falls to 280th St E at Goodhue and Dakota County Line in Cannon Falls Township (SP# 2504-18).
- Scope change to add pavement reconstruction on two bridges to a project repairing, painting, and reconstructing superstructures on 13 total bridges along Interstate 94 and Interstate 35E in Saint Paul (SP# 6282-216).
- Cost decrease for a mill and overlay on MN 316 from US 61 in Welch Township to Tuttle in Hastings (SP# 1926-23), and construction of turn lanes on MN 316 at various locations in Ravenna Township (SP# 1926-216S).
- Cost increase for a bridge repair project on Interstate 94 Hudson bridge over the St. Croix River in Lakeland and Hudson (SP# 8281-06).
- Add a new project to replace a rail bridge over Interstate 494 in Bloomington 0.8 miles east of the junction of Interstates 494 and 35W (SP# 2785-455).
- Add a streamlining study of the Grand Round park and parkway system in Saint Paul (SP# 8825-1327).

3. 2024-42: Active Transportation Project Grant Requirements

The Transportation Advisory Board approve the following Active Transportation pilot grant



management policies and authorize staff to execute grant agreements in accordance with these policies:

1. Program Year: Recipients of Active Transportation grants must prepare and release the project construction contract for bids prior to December 31, 2026, or the grant award will be subject to review and potential cancellation by the TAB.
2. Grant Funding Disbursements: Grant recipients will be awarded 50% of the grant funds upon grant execution and the remaining 50% of funds will be reimbursed as costs are incurred above the initial 50% of costs.
3. Eligible Project Costs: The Regional Solicitation's eligible project costs policy will apply.
4. Project Plan Documentation: Grant recipients will be required to submit final construction plan sheets prior to project bidding.
5. Project Scope Change Policy: The Regional Solicitation's Scope Change Policy will apply.
6. Right-of-Way Acquisition: Right-of-way documentation to confirm ownership of property will be required, but acquisition certifications will not be required prior to release of grant funds.
7. Environmental Review: Environmental review documentation will not be required.
8. Small Disadvantaged Business Contracting Program: Projects receiving more than \$750,000 in grant funding and that will bid out work to a subcontracting firm are required to participate in the Metropolitan Council's Underutilized Business (MCUB) program for construction contracting. If a grant recipient has an equivalent adopted program, this requirement will be waived.

Information

1. Regional Solicitation Evaluation Updates

Hovland reported on the Policymaker Workgroup. The next policymaker meeting is before TAB on November 20 at 10:00 am. There will be no October meeting, but a homework/survey will be sent to committee members to be done in October. There will be workshop after TAB on December 18 on potential application categories and the overall structure of the Regional Solicitation. Open to all TAB and Council Transportation Committee members. TAB alternates can attend. The workshop will be 1:30-4:00 in the US Bank building, 16th floor.

Johnson reported on the Active Transportation Workgroup. After completing the grant requirements, the group will focus on how to spend \$24 million per year on active transportation projects and how this will fit with the Regional Solicitation. They will be reviewing various funding sources and how they can be used thoughtfully. The Workgroup will meet two more times this year, October 24 and December 3 at 3:00 pm.

2. MnDOT Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Derek Leuer, MnDOT, presented the item. The plan sets direction to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries. TAB members had questions on breakdown on the fatalities. Preliminary data can be found at [Reports / Statistics - Monthly Preliminary Fatal Crash Numbers \(mn.gov\)](#).

3. Equity Evaluation of Regional Transportation Investment Processes

Amy Vennewitz, MTS; Husniyah Bradley, Council Equity Policy Group; Joo Hee Pomplun, Council Equity Policy Group; Ashley Hudson, Bolton-Menk; and Allison Bell, Bellwether Consulting, presented the item.

Link to October 16, 2024, TAB agenda and materials, [101624 Agenda - Transportation Advisory Board \(metrocouncil.org\)](#).

