

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: January 27, 2025

For the Metropolitan Council: February 12, 2025

Business Item: 2025-3 JT

Accept the public comment report and adopt the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan

District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minn. Stat. 473.146, 23 U.S.C. § 134, and 49 U.S.C. § 5303
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Charles Carlson, Executive Director, MTS Amy Vennewitz, Director, Metropolitan Transportation Planning Cole Hiniker, Senior Manager, Multimodal Planning Jed Hanson, Senior Planner, Multimodal Planning
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

- Accept the public comment report for the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan.
- Adopt the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan as a component of Imagine 2050.

Background

This item is part of the Imagine 2050 plan and will be consolidated at the Metropolitan Council with other items to adopt the entirety of Imagine 2050 and its system and policy plans. Each of the appropriate Met Council committees and advisory committees or boards will review and take action on their specific components of Imagine 2050. The Transportation Committee is considering in this action the Transportation Policy Plan and its public comment report. The Transportation Advisory Board recommended the plan for adoption at its January 15, 2025, meeting.

The Met Council is required to produce a regional long-range transportation plan under both federal and state law:

- Minn. Stat. § 473.146 requires a transportation chapter of the regional development guide for all transportation modes, including aviation. This plan must be updated every ten years following release of the decennial U.S. Census.
- 23 U.S.C. § 134 and 49 U.S.C. § 5303 require the development of long-range transportation plans for all metropolitan regions in the country that addresses all surface transportation modes. These plans must be updated every five years.

Every ten years after the decennial census, the Met Council prepares a major update to the Regional Development Guide and the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) to align with state and federal law. The Met Council must collaborate with the Transportation Advisory Board in the development of the Transportation Policy Plan.

2050 Transportation Policy Plan Development Process

The Met Council began development of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan in early 2022. Two primary advisory groups were created and used to inform the development of the Plan:

- The 2050 TPP Advisory Work Group (AWG) was a group of Met Council and TAB members along with representatives from state agencies and transit providers. They met 15 times to advise on the plan content.
- The 2050 TPP Technical Working Group (TWG) included staff from agencies that were represented on TAC Planning Committee and other perspectives like the University of Minnesota, Department of Health, and the Twin Cities Shared Mobility Collaborative. They met 23 times to advise on the plan content.

Met Council staff also worked with other advisory committees to review specific parts of the draft Transportation Policy Plan. These groups include the Transit Planning Technical Working Group, the Bicycle-Pedestrian Planning Technical Working Group, and the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee. Additional engagement opportunities were conducted on an as requested basis. The final drafts are the culmination of this work and direction from Met Council members.

There were several phases of the plan development that contributed to the draft being considered:

Early Engagement and Plan Input

- [Transportation System Performance Evaluation](#) – a comprehensive look back at system performance over the past decade using performance metrics from the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan for insights and trends.
- Contributing studies and plans – conducted over many years on a wide range of topics that helped inform policy direction, investment needs, and evaluation of the plan. See an early overview and [presentation of this work from the June 2022 TPP Technical Working Group](#).
- Early 2023 listening sessions – over 50 listening sessions and interviews with a variety of stakeholders on the transportation system vision and needs going forward, focused primarily on the regional goals and objectives. See a [summary presentation from April 2023 Met Council Committee of the Whole](#).
- Targeted community engagement – the Met Council also used an equity engagement contract to reach populations that might not be otherwise engaged through typical Met Council channels. This contract was used primarily to engage on the regional goals, objectives, policies, and actions at various stages of the plan development.
- Policy development teams – eight policy development teams were formed to advise on topically specific policies and actions. This work resulted in over 25 meetings on content development and culminated in 3 workshops to provide additional review across all the policy topics. Additional review was conducted with discussions with community partners.

Document Drafting and Circulation for Informal Partner Review

- The content for the draft 2050 Transportation Policy was circulated in stages to the AWG and TWG for informal review in late 2023 through early 2024. Drafts were also shared with Met Council members, TAB members, and TAB's Technical Advisory Committee members for further review. Over 3,000 comments were received during this informal review process and the plan was further revised in response to feedback received.

Document Release for Public Comment

- Following the informal review process and revisions, the draft plan was reviewed and recommended for release for public comment by TAC Planning, TAC, and the TAB. The Met Council released the plan for public comment on August 15th, 2024, and comments were accepted through October 7th, 2024, alongside Imagine 2050 and other system and policy plans. The Met Council held a public hearing to accept comments on the plan on September 25th, 2024.



- Approximately 400 public comments were received on the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan, including comments substantively related to long-range transportation planning that were submitted on other Imagine 2050 plan sections. Met Council staff have reviewed each comment, considered responsive changes, and have drafted proposed responses in the attached report. A revised copy of the Transportation Policy Plan with marked changes responsive to comments was provided to the Transportation Advisory Board and Met Council Transportation Committee in December. These changes were widely distributed to technical stakeholders who participated in Transportation Policy Plan development. The changes were [summarized in a previous information item](#). The public comment report is attached to this business item.
- Since the drafts provided in December, several minor changes were made to update performance measures, model and forecast results, other data, formatting, and one non-policy text change to the Regional Transportation Finance section. The finance change was made in response to county feedback to remove a reference to local cost participation policies.

Rationale

The 2050 Transportation Policy Plan allows the region to continue to receive federal and state transportation funds and begins the state-required process for local comprehensive plan updates. The Met Council conducted an extensive engagement and research process for developing the draft 2050 Transportation Policy Plan in consultation with many regional transportation and planning partners. Drafts of the plan have been published twice for review and comment, resulting in over 3,400 comments that informed plan revisions.

Met Council staff have reviewed the plan for all necessary state and federal requirements. Feedback regarding federal requirements was received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) during the Met Council's quadrennial transportation management area certification review, and outstanding recommendations will be addressed through future plan modifications, amendments, or complementary planning work.

Thrive Lens Analysis

Imagine 2050 and its system and policy plans have been developed in the spirit of the Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes of stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability, and sustainability. Each 10-year update to the Regional Development Guide builds on the previous guide. Imagine 2050 includes responses to the Thrive MSP 2040 outcome and updated values, vision, and goals for the region in 2050. Its shared regional goals guide all policy work, including additional detail related to equity, racial disparities, and climate change.

Upon adoption, the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan will supersede the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan as the basis for evaluating transportation planning consistency with regional policy and plans. This will generally apply to other regular planning products in their next update (e.g., 2026 Regional Solicitation, 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program), though some incorporation of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan may occur earlier.

Funding

The planning process and engagement activities have been funded as a regular part of budgeted transportation and regional planning activities.

Small Business Inclusion

There are no direct impacts to small businesses with the proposed action.



Attachments

- Public Comment Report
- Transportation Policy Plan sections
 - Section 1 Overview
 - Section 2 Policies and Actions
 - Section 3 Regional Transportation Finance
 - Section 4 Highway Investment Plan
 - Section 5 Roadway Functional Classification
 - Section 6 Preliminary Interchange Approval Process
 - Section 7 Congestion Management Process
 - Section 8 Transit Investment Plan
 - Section 9 Transit Design and Performance Guidelines
 - Section 10 Bicycle Investment Plan
 - Section 11 Pedestrian Investment Plan
 - Section 12 Travel Demand Management Investment Plan
 - Section 13 Freight Investment Plan
 - Section 14 Aviation System Plan
 - Section 15 Aviation Supporting Information
 - Section 16 Evaluation and Performance
 - Section 17 Work Program
 - Section 18 Long-range Capital Project Lists
 - Section 19 Environmental Justice Analysis

