

Minutes

TAB Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting date: May 7, 2025,

Time: 9:00 AM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anoka Co – Joe MacPherson (Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brooklyn Park – Marcus Culver | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT – Molly McCartney (Vice Chair) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver Co – Lyndon Robjent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chanhassen – Charlie Howley | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPCA – Innocent Eyoh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dakota Co – Erin Laberee | <input type="checkbox"/> Eagan – Russ Matthys | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MAC – Bridget Rief |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ramsey Co – Brian Isaacson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eden Prairie – Robert Ellis | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STA – Matt Fyten |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin Co – Chad Ellos | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fridley – Jim Kosluchar | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro Transit – Jonathan Ahn |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Co – Craig Jenson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lakeville – Paul Oehme | <input type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Freight – Shelly Meyer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington Co – Madeline Dahlheimer (Alt) | <input type="checkbox"/> Plymouth – Michael Thompson | <input type="checkbox"/> DEED – Colleen Eddy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended Urban Area – Chad Hausmann | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodbury – Chris Hartzell | <input type="checkbox"/> MnDNR – Spooner Walsh |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MTS Planning – Steve Peterson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis Engineering – Jenifer Hager | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bicycle – Kyle Sobota |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council CD – Patrick Boylan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis Planning – Kathleen Mayell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian – Mackenzie Turner Barga |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TAB – Elaine Koutsoukos | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Saint Paul Engineering – Nick Peterson | <input type="checkbox"/> FHWA – Scott Mareck |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Saint Paul Planning – Reuben Collins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present, E = excused |

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair MacPherson called the regular meeting of the TAB Technical Advisory Committee to order at 9:00 a.m.

Agenda approved

Chair MacPherson noted that a roll call vote is not needed for approval of the agenda unless a committee member offers an amendment to the agenda. Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Molly McCartney, MnDOT, and seconded by Jim Kosluchar, Fridley, to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2025, regular meeting of the TAB Technical Advisory Committee.

Motion carried.

Public comment on committee business

None

TAB Report

Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, reported on the April 16, 2025, Transportation Advisory Board meeting.

Business – Committee reports

Executive Committee (Joe MacPherson, Chair)

Chair MacPherson reported on the Executive Committee meeting.

1. **2025-14:** Streamlined TIP Amendment Request – Wright County's I-94, CR 37, and CSAH 37 Reconstruction and Roundabouts (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning, summarized the action. Wright County requests an amendment to the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to change the scope, length, and cost on two roundabouts at County Road 137/CSAH 37 at I-94. The proposed change would add 0.79 miles of reconstruction with two additional roundabouts. Chair MacPherson explained that the project extension is largely driven by the impact of a new Costco. It was moved by Patrick Boylan, Council CD, and seconded by Chad Ellos, Hennepin Co., that the Technical Advisory Committee recommend that TAB recommend approval of an amendment to the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program to change the scope and increase the cost of Wright County's I-94, County Road 137, and CSAH 37 reconstruction and roundabout project. **Motion carried.**

2. **2025-15:** Streamlined TIP Amendment Request: MVTA's Apple Valley Transit Station Modernization (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Barbeau summarized the action, which is a request to amend the 2025-2028 TIP to add MVTA's Apple Valley Transit Station modernization, which had been included in the 2024-2027 as a 2024 project, as a 2025 project. The reason for this is that the project was originally scheduled for a 2024 obligation but fell into 2025. Motion by Paul Oehme, Lakeville, and seconded by Boylan, that the Technical Advisory Committee recommend that TAB recommend approval of an amendment to the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program to add MVTA's Apple Valley Transit Station Modernization project. **Motion carried.**

TAC Transit Planning Technical Working Group (Bradley Bobbitt, MTS Planning)

Bradley Bobbitt, MTS Planning, reported on the March 26th, 2025, meeting of the TAC Transit Planning Technical Working Group.

Planning Committee (Gina Mitteco, Chair)

Gina Mitteco, MnDOT, reported on the April 10th, 2025, meeting of the TAC Planning Committee.

Funding and Programming Committee (Jim Kosluchar, Chair)

Kosluchar, reported that the Funding and Programming Committee did not meet in April. The next meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2025.

Information

1. Blue Line Extension and Gold Line Extension Transitway Project Updates (Nick Thompson, Metro Transit and Bradley Bobbitt, MTS Planning)

Nick Thompson, Metro Transit and Bradley Bobbitt, MTS Planning, presented.

Chair MacPherson asked whether the overall project remains within budget after the removal of the streetcar portion and the addition of the Gold Line Extension. Thompson responded that an updated budget has been developed. The project assumes both federal funding and a local cost share from Hennepin County and is considered fully funded within fiscal constraints.

Boylan asked whether there is a deadline for municipal consent and whether any changes are anticipated. Thompson clarified that municipal consent is project-specific that communities can add conditions, including the example of the addition of a 13th Blue Line station. These changes will be reflected in an updated project budget later this year. Thompson stated that local approval of a new Purple Line alignment is expected this

summer, which would require LPA approval and a TPP amendment next year. The Purple Line does not require municipal consent since it is not light-rail transit.

Chair MacPherson asked about travel time for the Blue Line Extension. Thompson responded that travel time from the North End into the city is projected at 42 to 44 minutes, with 13 new stations and several park-and-ride facilities.

Innocent Eyoh, MPCA, asked for clarification on the status of Blue Line Extension project funding. Thompson explained that Metro Transit anticipates federal funding through the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program, covering up to 49% of costs, with the remainder funded by Hennepin County via sales and use taxes. He noted that CIG funding at the federal level is not guaranteed.

Jonathan Ahn, Metro Transit, asked how the Gold Line Extension is being coordinated with the Rethinking I-94 initiative, particularly regarding design and timelines. Thompson stated that the Gold Line Extension is expected to open prior to any construction resulting from the I-94 environmental and planning process. He added that coordination with MnDOT is ongoing. For example, the Snelling Avenue station will be built as a temporary facility to allow for flexibility depending on the outcome of MnDOT's final design decisions. Molly McCartney, MnDOT, added that the Rethinking I-94 project is still in the environmental review stage and no major construction will begin until after 2030.

Chair MacPherson expressed concern over the large figures presented—\$831 million in additional funding and \$753 million anticipated from the FTA—and asked how secure those funds are and what the contingency plan would be if they do not materialize. Bobbitt responded that the draft amendment assumes a 49% federal share based on experience. If the actual federal share is less than anticipated, state law requires that Hennepin County cover the difference. The specific law is referenced in the draft amendment.

Chair MacPherson also asked about operations and maintenance funding, specifically whether it would come from the new metro area sales tax, including the 83% share allocated to Metro Transit. Bobbitt and Thompson confirmed that this is correct. Thompson added that prior to the 2023 legislation, operating costs were split 50/50 between counties and the Met Council. Under the new law, the Met Council now assumes full responsibility for operations and long-term maintenance, funded through the new sales tax.

2. Regional Transportation and Climate Change Multimodal Measures Study (Tony Fischer, MTS Planning)

Tony Fischer, MTS Planning, presented. Brian Isaacson asked whether the GHG estimation methodologies account for changes in land use. Fischer responded that the methodologies are intended to capture the impacts of different project types—such as transit and highway expansion—which can influence land use. Specifically: Highway-induced demand models partially capture land use impacts. Transit methodologies rely on ridership estimates from the regional solicitation process, which may reflect land use assumptions. However, the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) process includes land use model outputs but does not reflect transportation impacts back into land use projections.

McCartney asked about coordination with MnDOT, especially regarding mitigation requirements for highway expansions. Fischer confirmed conversations have occurred with MnDOT and acknowledged multiple ongoing internal efforts within the Met Council. While collaboration is occurring, Fischer admitted more structured coordination may be needed. McCartney suggested forming a regional working group to streamline GHG emission work. Fischer agreed and acknowledged confusion due to overlapping but disconnected efforts.

Lyndon Robjent, Carver Co. asked about the purpose of the GHG methodology work. Fischer explained that the effort stems from the Regional Development Guide and TPP climate impact goals. The project seeks to improve GHG estimates via the travel demand model,

explores methodologies for GHG estimation in the TIP process, and seeks to develop methods to evaluate GHG impacts by project type for the Regional Solicitation.

Robjent asked how this effort differs from MnDOT's GHG Technical Advisory Committee. Fischer clarified that the MnDOT effort is focused on roadway projects and compliance with statutory mitigation requirements, while the Met Council's work is intended to support early-stage planning and tracking across all project types.

Robjent emphasized the need to better align these various GHG initiatives to avoid confusion and ensure consistency, especially given the political sensitivity of climate-related transportation policies. Steve Peterson, MTS Planning, noted the Council was tasked by TAB to evaluate the GHG impact of the regional solicitation program and that Fischer's study provides a high-level overview. McCartney said that there are a lot of questions to answer in state law and stated that a pre-design planning phase will be needed.

Marcus Culver, Brooklyn Park, raised concerns about inconsistencies in how construction-related emissions are handled across different project types and methodologies. He expressed uncertainty about how the collected data would eventually be applied to funding decisions or mitigation requirements and emphasized the need for transparency and consistency. Nick Peterson, Saint Paul, echoed Culver's points and stressed the importance of aligning early GHG data with later environmental review documentation to reduce legal risks. Chair MacPherson recommended a joint meeting between MnDOT and Met Council to reconcile overlaps, ensure alignment, and address potential discrepancies before moving forward.

3. Regional Solicitation Evaluation Update (Steve Peterson, MTS Planning)

Steve Peterson presented. Chair MacPherson asked whether the transit group still supports the \$25 million arterial bus rapid transit set-aside used in past solicitations. Steve Peterson responded that he was not present for the transit group meeting and deferred to Barbeau. Barbeau stated that the transit group did not discuss the set-aside in depth and that he couldn't determine whether there is implicit support for continuing it. Chair MacPherson noted that this topic should be revisited when presenting it to the TAB to provide context about the unused funding bucket.

Paul Oehme, Lakeville, as chair of the Technical Steering Committee, agreed with Steve Peterson's summary. He emphasized unresolved issues in the bicycle/pedestrian category, such as defining the regional bike network, handling projects that overlap with Active Transportation (AT)-funded efforts, and addressing non-infrastructure requests. Robjent suggested establishing an interchange setaside for interchange projects due to their large costs and the impact of GHG laws on the number of such projects that can be programmed. Robjent raised concerns about allowing major collectors in roadway applications. While this would broaden eligibility, it requires careful consideration. He expressed support for making regional trail projects eligible for federal funds under their own category to ensure they don't compete directly with RBTN or barrier projects. He also suggested local bike networks should primarily benefit from AT funding, since metro counties have their own AT funds, and cities may have greater local bike infrastructure needs.

Kosluchar suggested analyzing past solicitations to identify trends in regional bike network and AT project classifications. He suggested that such a review could inform future decisions, particularly in identifying where regional trails or off-RBTN projects fall and how they compete. Kosluchar expressed appreciation for Robjent's comments on the importance of cities in AT funding. MacPherson noted that elected officials and leadership are awaiting recommendations from the working groups and TAC. He asked Steve Peterson if there are plans to increase the frequency of meetings for groups with heavier workloads. Steve Peterson confirmed that after the May 30th workshop, group progress will be reassessed. He identified bike/pedestrian, roadways, and GHG/EV charging categories as particularly complex and likely needing more frequent meetings to meet deadlines.

Other business

McCartney said that the Corridors of Commerce project submissions have been received and are currently undergoing a local screening and recommendation process. Each county in the seven-county area can nominate up to two projects. She noted that Steve Peterson, MTS may have information at the next Funding and Programming Committee meeting for a project outside the county-submitted applications. She added that the process includes internal scoring and ranking, with an announcement expected in the fall, noting allocation of approximately \$55 million over two time periods for capital funding. She said that a solicitation for the Freight Investment Program will be released this summer for around \$50 million covering fiscal years 2029 and 2030, with a maximum award of \$10 million; an announcement is expected early in 2026. She highlighted that new expansion projects will not be eligible unless they are already in the TIP or have gone through design and layout approvals, though that may still change.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Council contact:

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