

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805

Notes of a Meeting of the
TAC-PLANNING COMMITTEE
September 8, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Holly Anderson, Jack Byers, Paul Czech, Innocent Eyoh, Jack Forslund, Lisa Freese, Jean Keely, Michael Larson, Katie White

OTHERS PRESENT: Michelle Fure (Metropolitan Council Communications), Paul Morris (SRF), and Mai Thor (Metropolitan Council Communications), Joe Barbeau (MTS Staff)

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by Freese.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Byers moved and White seconded adoption of the agenda. Item passed unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the July 2016 Meeting

Keely moved and White seconded approval of the minutes of the July 2016 meeting. Item passed unanimously.

4. Action Items

2016-49: Public Participation Plan

Mai Thor of the Metropolitan Council presented on the update to the Public Participation Plan (PPP). She discussed guiding principles, goals and outcomes, activities to which the PPP applies, public participation strategies, and measuring success before taking questions.

Larson asked how individual projects are accountable to the PPP. White replied that the PPP only applies to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Air Quality Conformity Determination (AQCD), and the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP). Other efforts are guided by the Public Engagement Plan (PEP). She added that planning staff runs requests for proposal and other items through the Communications staff to be sure that public outreach is properly incorporated.

Larson asked whether the PEP and PPP can be integrated. White replied that the PEP does not always meet USDOT requirements. Fure added that while the PPP supports the PEP, it is designed to meet specific transportation requirements.

Byers asked whether the PPP comes back to the Committee after public review. Fure replied that time is allotted for that in case it is needed.

Byers asked how success is measured. Fure replied that, specific goals are set. Goals are about such things as the experience residents have with input, transparency, accessibility, and influence residents have over the process.

Eyoh said that the public involvement in air quality planning is important.

Freese said that outside of people involved with the formal committee structure, community members outside of the I-494/I-694 beltway are not very involved and suggested that language about geographic outreach be included. Fure replied that the intent is to encourage outreach to all geographies and to do a better job early in the process.

White moved and Larson seconded a recommendation to TAC for adoption of the Public Participation Plan for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area for the purpose of receiving public comment. Item passed.

5. Info Items

Czech informed the Committee that Mike Sobolewski, who was scheduled to present the two info items, was unable to attend the meeting. He added that Sobolewski is retiring in January 2017.

CMSP IV – Mike Sobolewski, MnDOT and Paul Morris, SRF

Morris presented on the fourth phase of the Congestion Management Safety Plan (CMSP). He discussed the project's schedule; milestones; study area; the first technical report, to be completed this month; project interviews; the system problem statement; performance measures; stakeholder outreach; and next steps.

Byers asked whether there is any freedom in scoping the project, given that it is not federally mandated. Czech replied that there is some flexibility, particularly on the MnDOT system regarding things like design exceptions.

Byers asked whether improvements would probably be related to design. Czech said that improvements would more likely be taking advantage of existing capacity. Byers asked whether transit could be considered. Czech said that during the previous phase, representatives of other modes were engaged, though other modes are not a key focus.

494 / 62 Project – Mike Sobolewski, MnDOT and Paul Morris, SRF

Morris presented and update on the I-494 / Trunk Highway (TH) 62 Congestion Relief Study, the objective of which is to develop and evaluate MnPASS-managed lane improvements, spot mobility improvements, and transit advantage enhancements within the study area. He discussed the schedule, study elements, public outreach, an interactive Web site, and next steps.

White said that while I-494 is lined by a lot of office use, TH 62 has a lot of nearby residences and recommended that feedback be broken out by corridor. She asked

whether specific opportunities were needed for TH 62. Czech said that targeted phone surveys included that area.

Byers asked, given their rare arrangement as a parallel freeway pair, whether there is any scenario that involves I-494 remaining as is while TH 62 becomes entirely MnPASS. Morris replied that the approach has been to leave the general-purpose lanes as is and to try to install one MnPASS lane, the only exception being an auxiliary lane on I-494 in Bloomington, which Czech pointed out will not be a MnPASS lane. White added that there would be concern regarding limiting mobility for those that live along the TH 62 corridor. Others added that it is likely not politically feasible.

Larson asked whether users of the MnPASS lane would risk missing their exits. Forslund said that this may be a positive, as it could lead the MnPASS lane to facilitate regional trips.

Eyoh asked whether the I-494 Corridor Commission was contacted. Morris said that the group was very engaged.

6. Other Business

White said that Steve Peterson has been promoted to Manager and will attend meetings in place of Mark Filipi.

7. Adjournment

Larson moved and Czechs seconded adjournment of the meeting. Item passed.