

Metropolitan Council

Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, 560 Sixth Avenue North, Minneapolis MN 55411

**Meeting of the Transportation Committee  
Monday, March 12, 2012**

Members Present	Steve Elkins, Chair Lona Schreiber, Vice Chair John Đoàn	Roxanne Smith Adam Duininck James Brimeyer	Edward Reynoso Jennifer Munt
Members Absent	Jon Commers		
Staff Presiding	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	
TAB Liaison	none present		

**CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum was present when Committee Chair Elkins called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:05 p.m. on March 12, 2012 at Metropolitan Council Chambers St. Paul.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Motion by Munt, seconded by Smith to adopt the agenda for the March 12, 2012 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Smith, seconded by Schreiber to approve the minutes from the February 27, 2012 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion passed.

**METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT**

Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS, reported the following:

Federal Transportation Bill

The House is in recess this week. The path for the House bill is uncertain as they are discussing the length of the bill (5 yrs vs 2 yrs.) and have leadership changes. The status changes daily. The Senate is debating amendments to their bill at this time. A vote on the amendments by the Senate is expected tomorrow, and there may be a vote on the Senate bill as early as tomorrow evening.

**METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

Brian Lamb, General Manager, Metro Transit, reported the following:

Saint Patrick's Day is this Saturday

Once again, Metro Transit is partnering with MillerCoors Brewing Company to promote taking transit instead of driving on St. Patrick's Day with free rides on all buses, light rail and Northstar commuter rail beginning Saturday at 6:00 p.m. Metropolitan Council and Minnesota Valley Transit Authority routes are also offering free rides. We receive reimbursement from MillerCoors for rides taken during the promotion. On Saturday, Metro Transit staff will participate in both the Saint Paul parade at 12 noon and the Minneapolis parade at 6:30 that evening to promote the free ride program. Please come join our staff at either or both parades on Saturday. Take our staff bus or meet us at the parade site. Contact Metro Transit Marketing Director Bruce Howard for details.

### Ridership

Ridership through February continues to grow. Customers have boarded Metro Transit buses and trains nearly 300,000 more times than last year at this time – growth of two-and-a-third percent. Express bus service is up the largest percent, at 8.2 percent; Northstar is up three-and-a-third percent and Hiawatha ridership is up more than seven percent. Urban local service is up seven-tenths of a percent to nearly 9.7 million rides.

### Central Corridor Construction

Orange barrels have been popping up along Central Corridor Light Rail as construction crews started their heavy construction work along University Avenue in St. Paul and Minneapolis, as well as Cedar Street in downtown St. Paul. The project office sends weekly construction updates via e-mail to subscribers - those updates are also posted on the website [centralcorridor.org](http://centralcorridor.org). Bus customers in the corridor are informed of detours at bus stops and onboard publications as well as the Transit Information Center, Twitter and a dedicated web site at [metrotransit.org/construction](http://metrotransit.org/construction), which has received thousands of visits this month already.

### Open Houses

Last week, Metro Transit wrapped up a series of four open houses on BRT, our rapid bus service. This week, we'll conclude a series of three open houses on connecting bus service to Central Corridor. Service Development reports that open houses have been very well attended with very engaged participants. We've received valuable feedback from transit riders and other stakeholders to help us shape our plans on these two important projects.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Consent Items**

There were no consent items at this meeting.

### **Non-Consent Items**

#### SW 2012-86: Application to Host 2014 Rail~Volution Conference

Director MTS Arlene McCarthy presented this item and noted that the action should include language authorizing the approval of the resolution attached to the business item (as noted below in italics). She stated that CTIB also plans on passing a similar resolution and these resolutions will indicate strong support to Rail~Volution along with the application to host the conference.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Munt:

That the Metropolitan Council authorizes *approval of Resolution 2012-5 attached, and authorizes* staff to prepare and submit a formal application to Rail~Volution to host the 2014 Rail~Volution Conference, in conjunction with the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

Motion passed unanimously.

#### SW 2012-84: Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (Green Line): Subordinate Funding Agreement with University of Minnesota for Leighton Lab Relocation

MT Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Reynoso, seconded by Smith:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute a Subordinate Funding Agreement (SFA) #18 in an amount not to exceed \$435,000 under the existing Master Funding Agreement to reimburse the University of Minnesota for the relocation of the Leighton Lab in Amundson Hall for the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) Project.

Motion passed unanimously.

#### 2012-87: Southwest Light Rail Transit Project (Green Line Extension): Master and Subordinate Funding Agreements with the Minnesota Department of Transportation

MT Deputy General Manager Mark Fuhrmann presented this item and responded to a question from Brimeyer regarding the status of engineering services for the SWLRT. Fuhrmann stated that staff is concluding evaluation of the engineering proposals and hope to come to the Transportation Committee late March or early April with a recommendation.

Motion by Munt, seconded by Đoàn:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute the following agreements with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Project:

- A Master Funding Agreement; and
- A Subordinate Funding Agreement in an amount not-to-exceed \$473,000 for reimbursement of allowable staff costs in 2012.

Motion passed unanimously.

Hearing no objection, Chair Elkins stated that this item could proceed to the full Council as a consent item.

## **INFORMATION**

### **1. Mileage-Based User Fee (MBUF) Report**

Chair Elkins introduced Jim Hovland - Mayor of Edina and Chair of the MBUF Policy Task Force, and Lee Munnich – U of M Humphrey School of Public Affairs, who presented this item. They also provided copies of the full report to committee members. Chair Elkins and Councilmember Đoàn were also involved in the MBUF Policy Task Force. The task force has laid the ground work for sorting through some of the issues that a mileage-based user fee system might have. Elkins was part of a technology demonstration, and stated that the privacy concerns that the public have expressed can be addressed through the technology. Reynoso noted that there are concerns and unanswered issues with the trucking industry. Hovland and Munnich answered questions from members regarding what other programs of this type have been adopted in other countries. The MBUF system will continue to be explored in a measured, informed and thoughtful manner guided by the six findings and recommendations noted in the presentation.

### **2. Minnetonka Transit Study**

Metro Transit Senior Transportation Planner Steve Mahowald presented this item. Elkins questioned whether there has been an analysis of revenue implications if Minnetonka were to completely opt-out of the regional system. Lamb responded that there is question how much revenue would be available to Minnetonka, and this may need statutory clarification. The City of Minnetonka is currently reviewing its options. A final report is to be completed by Fall 2012 with 2013 implementation.

### **3. Solicitation for 2012 Competitive Federal Grants: State of Good Repair, Clean Fuels, Bus Livability**

Metro Transit Director of Engineering and Facilities Marilyn Porter presented this item. She reviewed the three categories of grants for which Metro Transit will apply, and the type of projects and elements included in each category. The timeline for submitting these grant applications is March and April. Lamb stated the timeline for these type of competitive federal grants has had a quick turn-around in the past.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Elkins adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 5:45 p.m. March 12, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,  
LuAnne Major, Recording Secretary