

Minutes of the

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

February 28, 2022

LOCATION: Due to COVID-19 this meeting was held electronically.

Committee Members Present: Deb Barber, Molly Cummings, Kris Fredson, Francisco Gonzalez, Phillip Sterner, Raymond Zeran

Committee Members Absent: Reva Chamblis

TAB Liaison Present: Peter Dugan

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum was present when Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Council's Transportation Committee to order at 4:01 p.m. on Monday, February 28, 2022.

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Fredson to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2022 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. Motion carried.

Aye: 5 Barber, Cummings, Fredson, Gonzalez, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 2 Chamblis, Sterner

TAB REPORT

Dugan reported on new TAB members and shared agency reports.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR AND METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Charles Carlson reported:

Planning

As mentioned last meeting as an upcoming item, the 2022 regional solicitation opened on February 22. Applications are due April 14 and a number of training sessions are scheduled.

Finance

The state's economic forecast was released today. MMB projects a surplus of \$9.3 billion, an increase of 1.5 billion from the November forecast. We watch this closely for Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) revenues, which as you know are a significant source of transit funds. In the new forecast MVST does not change significantly, cumulatively within one percent of the November forecast over the four forecasted fiscal years.

Operations

We have great appreciation for our drivers helping customers through snow events in the past week. Services like Metro Mobility require additional care on board and off board and we appreciate our drivers' dedication to safety and our customers' understanding when snow-events delay travel across the system

Fredson asked for clarification about MVST. Carlson noted the difference between the forecast and receipts.

Metro Transit Chief of Staff Lesley Kandaras on behalf of General Manager Wes Kooistra reported:
Gold Line

As you know, the Gold Line is a planned 10-mile long bus rapid transit line, running in primarily bus-only lanes, that will connect St. Paul, Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale, and Woodbury to the growing METRO system. Today, the Gold Line Project achieved the significant milestone of formally requesting the Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) from the Federal Transit Administration. Over 959 individual items are required as part of the FFGA application to demonstrate the Project's readiness for construction. Among those items is the Civil Construction plans which are over 4000 sheets alone. Another key requirement by the FTA is the demonstration of local funding commitments. That requirement was achieved earlier this month when the County Boards of Ramsey County and Washington County passed funding resolutions for about half of the total cost of the project. The project has benefitted from a strong partnership between Met Council/Metro Transit, the two Counties, and MnDOT since the Met Council became the lead agency in 2017 and the project entered the FTA's Capital Investment Grants Program in 2018. The Cities have also been engaged throughout design both in shaping project decisions that best serve the communities but also in coordination with local station area planning. Next, the FTA staff will review the application over the next several months and prepare the Grant materials for federal approvals anticipated later this year. While the Met Council and its Gold Line partners await the FFGA, the Project team will continue to prepare for Construction with advertising the Civil Construction contract for bids in March.

COVID

Since the last Committee meeting on February 14, Metro Transit employees have reported 17 COVID cases. This is in contrast to January, when we had more than 330 cases recorded. We are on track to end February with about 10% that recorded case volume. As you've likely heard as well, last Friday, the CDC announced new mask guidance based on community spread and hospitalization factors. Minnesota Department of Health and the Met Council are reviewing the new guidance to make our own adjustments, but at this moment, we continue to have mask requirements inside all work locations. The Federal Mask Mandate imposed by TSA for all persons on buses, trains and airplanes remains in effect and currently has an expiration date of March 18.

Micro Transit Pilot

Metro Transit Micro is Metro Transit's micro transit pilot. Metro Transit is preparing to launch the pilot this summer in north Minneapolis for a one-year demonstration period. For context, Microtransit is software-based, on demand shared ride requested through an app or over the phone. When we last updated you on this planned microtransit pilot project in 2021, we were targeting a launch in April of this year. However, we needed to push out that timeline to this summer due to operator shortage concerns. The Council is currently in negotiations with a preferred software vendor after the RFP closed late 2021. This pilot is a joint effort between MTS and Metro Transit, MTS staff are working on an operations RFP that will be out in Q1 2022. Mainly, we wanted to mention this change of schedule today because staff are reaching out to community stakeholders about the project, and we wanted to make sure you all have the latest information as well.

TDAD

This year, Transit Driver Appreciation Day is on Friday, March 18. To thank and celebrate our operators that day, we will be serving breakfast and lunch at each of our garages and light rail facilities and greeting drivers in downtown Minneapolis, downtown St. Paul, and at the Mall of America. You will receive more information about Transit Driver Appreciation Day via email by this Friday, March 4, this will include details on how you can participate in thanking operators for their amazing work, day in and day out.

Cummings congratulated staff for their progress.

BUSINESS

Consent Items:

Motion was made by Fredson, seconded by Cummings and carried, to approve the following consent item:

Aye: 6 Barber, Cummings, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran
Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Chamblis

1. **2022-56:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: North Creek Greenway Program Year Extension, Cost Increase, and Technical Corrections

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council (“Council”) adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) to change the year, increase the cost, and make technical corrections to the description of Dakota County’s North Creek Greenway project in Lakeville and Farmington.

1. **2022-57:** 2022-2025 TIP Amendment: US 52 Median Crossovers and Temporary Shoulder Widening

Motion: That the Metropolitan Council (“Council”) adopt an amendment to the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) to expand the length of MnDOT’s US 52 median crossovers and temporary shoulder widening project in Dakota County.

Non-Consent Items:

1. **2022-46:** Release E Line Recommended Corridor Plan for Public Comment
Metro Transit Senior Planner Kyle O’Donnell Burrows presented this item.

Cummings urged that staff does “the best for the most” and listen to all of the voices that give input. Fredson asked about the scale of the stations.

Motion by Cummings, seconded by Sterner:
That the Metropolitan Council (“the Council”)

- Authorize release of the METRO E Line Recommended Corridor Plan for public review and comment
- Direct staff to collect public comments through Friday, April 8, 2022, summarize comments, and report the findings to the Metropolitan Council

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Barber, Cummings, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran
Nay: 0
Absent: 1 Chamblis

2. **2022-48:** Gold Line Administrative Settlement on Parcel 416 (Wooddale Shopping Center)
Metro Transit Administration Director Robin Caufman presented this item.

Sterner asked if the seller was willing, he asked about the terminology used. Gonzalez expressed appreciation for the project.

Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Fredson:

That the Metropolitan Council (“the Council”) authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute an administrative settlement on Parcel 416 (Wooddale Shopping Center) in an amount not to exceed \$3,974,340 for the METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit Project (“Project”).

Motion carried, hearing no objection Chair Barber stated this item could move consent to Council.

Aye: 6 Barber, Cummings, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Chamblis

3. **2022-47:** 2022 Transportation Committee Work Plan

Metro Transit General Manager Wes Kooistra and Metropolitan Transportation Services Director Charles Carlson presented this item.

Barber voiced appreciation for the work of Metro Transit and Metropolitan Transportation Services to collaborate on this item.

Motion by Fredson, seconded by Cummings:

That the Metropolitan Council adopt the attached as its 2022 Work Plan.

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Barber, Cummings, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Chamblis

4. **2022-60:** TPP Public Comment Report and Approval

Metropolitan Transportation Services TAB/TAC Process and Highway Manager Steve Peterson presented this item.

Cummings stated appreciation for the consideration of stakeholders.

Motion by Sterner, seconded by Gonzalez:

1. Accept the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment #1 Public Comment Report (attached) and,
2. Adopt Amendment #1 (attached) to the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan, including redlined edits proposed by staff in response to public comment, to amend in the arterial bus rapid transit Network Next system and amend in six MnDOT freight project selections

Motion carried.

Aye: 6 Barber, Cummings, Fredson, Gonzalez, Sterner, Zeran

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 Chamblis

INFORMATION

1. Metro Transit Quarterly Service Changes and Operator Staffing Update

Metro Transit Chief Operating Officer Brian Funk and Metro Transit Service Development Director Adam Harrington presented this item.

Cummings noted how important the operators are and asked that managers thank them every chance they get.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary