

# Minutes

## TAC Planning Committee



**Meeting date:** February 13, 2025

**Time:** 1:00 PM

**Location:** Virtual

### Members present:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anoka Co – Jorge Bernal                        | <input type="checkbox"/> FHWA – Josh Pearson (ex officio)                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Paul – Anton Jerve              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brooklyn Park – Dan Ruiz                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin Co – Chad Ellos, alternate for Dan Patterson    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Co – Terri Dill               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver Co – Drew Pflaumer                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro Transit – Patrick Haney                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban Transit Assoc – Vacant                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chanhassen – Charlie Howley                    | <input type="checkbox"/> MAC – Bridget Rief  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TAB Coordinator – Elaine Koutsoukos |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Community Development – Patrick Boylan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis – Kelsey Fogt, alternate for Kathleen Mayell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington Co – Sara Allen          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council MTS – Dave Burns                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT – Jessica Hyink                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woodbury – Chris Hartzell           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dakota Co – Gina Mitteco (Chair)               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPCA – Innocent Eyoh                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present, E = excused              |
|  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ramsey Co – Kevin Roggenbuck                             |   |

### Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Mitteco, Dakota County, called the regular meeting of the TAC Planning Committee to order at 1:01 p.m.

### Approval of agenda

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

### Approval of minutes

It was moved by Chris Hartzell, Woodbury, and seconded by Drew Pflaumer, Carver County, to approve the minutes of the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, regular meeting of the TAC Planning Committee.

**Motion carried.**

### Public comment on committee business

There were no public comments.

### Business

There were no business items.

### Information

1. Comprehensive Planning Transportation Minimum Requirements (Joe Widing, MTS Planning)

Joe Widing presented the draft minimum transportation requirements for 2050 local comprehensive plans.

Charlie Howley, Chanhassen, asked about the definition of “high frequency” transit service. Widing and Patrick Haney, Metro Transit, said it is defined as service with frequency of 15

minutes or better during most of the day. Widing said system statements will identify high frequency routes.

Howley asked funding barriers are considered barriers for trail improvements, particularly when a city cannot reach agreements with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) or a county on cost-sharing policies. Widing said he could not speak to the definition of that term but it would be fine to identify this challenge in a comprehensive plan.

Howley said small suburban communities would need help to address greenhouse gas (GHG) and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction requirements. Widing and Patrick Boylan, Met Council Community Development, clarified that the Met Council is developing a tool to help communities understand their role in regional GHG reduction targets and identify strategies to address these targets.

Innocent Eyoh asked how the Met Council will assist local communities responding to legislative requirements about GHG and VMT reduction. Widing said the tool will help communities measure their impact and develop locally relevant strategies.

Chair Mitteco asked if the GHG tool would help develop strategies that work for rural and suburban communities. Boylan confirmed the tools would allow communities to assess different strategies, but each community must select those best suited to its context. Boylan said the tool will allow cities to input strategies and visualize their potential effects on GHG emissions. The tool will help communities experiment with different strategies, though the effectiveness of these strategies will vary. The tool will not prescribe specific actions but offer a conceptual understanding of how strategies can affect GHG emissions. Both Widing and Boylan acknowledged uncertainty in predicting long-term effectiveness of strategies between now and 2050.

Drew Pflaumer, Carver County, asked if these targets are in terms of VMT per capita and total VMT, noting the challenge to reduce total VMT with population growth. Widing acknowledged this point and said MnDOT's statewide targets are based on VMT per capita. Widing said the GHG targets are region-specific.

Innocent Eyoh, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), said MPCA is updating its climate action framework, which will include several strategies for reducing GHG emissions and addressing climate change impacts. This document will provide communities guidance on reducing emissions. Widing expressed interest in listing this framework in the tools available for communities and requested MPCA send the updated framework once available.

Howley if cities are responsible for VMT or GHG reduction planning on state and county roads within their city, or if their responsibility is limited to local roads. Cole Hiniker, MTS Planning, said VMT estimates for communities are based on trips starting or ending in the community; estimates are not tied to specific roadways. Hiniker said the focus is on decisions that a community can make that affect VMT generated within the community.

Kevin Roggenbuck, Ramsey County, asked about the potential impacts of federal executive orders, particularly those related to the "Green New Deal," on local planning efforts regarding GHGs and transportation. Roggenbuck asked whether Met Council staff is tracking these federal issues and if the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) needs to change. Hiniker said the Met Council is tracking federal actions and their impact on planning, especially as they relate to federal funding programs. Hiniker said the minimum requirements relate to state-required planning processes, which offer greater autonomy for regional policies. Unless there is a substantial change in state law, the long-range plans and current planning requirements will likely remain unaffected.

Chair Mitteco asked how minimum requirements will be finalized and if the TAB or Met Council act on these requirements. Widing said the minimum requirements have or will be presented for review to various committees and work groups for feedback, including the Pedestrian-Bicycle and Transit Planning Working Groups and Met Council Transportation Committee. Widing said these requirements are an implementing action of the Regional Development



Guide not acted on by the TAB or another committee. The minimum requirements need to be finalized by the end of April. Best practices and guidance will be developed over the summer and likely released toward the end of the year. Boylan said system statements will be released in September 2025 and cities, counties, and townships are required complete plan updates by the end of 2028. The Met Council will be updating the Local Planning Handbook, tools, and resources and providing educational outreach to assist local communities. Hiniker said no presentation to the Transportation Advisory Board is planned as the basis for these requirements were adopted within the Imagine 2050 plan itself, but Met Council staff are open to presenting specific information for TAB's awareness. Chair Mitteco said the GHG requirement raised many questions, especially concerning how it will affect growing communities. Chair Mitteco asked how best to inform policymakers and local governments about the process. Widing spoke about his previous experience in local government responding to minimum requirements.

2. Regional Transportation and Climate Change Multimodal Measures – study update (Tony Fischer, MTS Planning, and Stephanie Kong, ICF)

Tony Fischer presented an update on the Regional Transportation and Climate Change Multimodal Measures study.

Eyoh, who was a member of the study team, noted the difficulty of acquiring local-specific data. Obtaining and reworking data from MPCA and the Department of Public Safety can be time-consuming. Eyoh suggested using funding from the Carbon Reduction Program to hire consultants or acquire access to data to support this research. Fischer acknowledged the challenges in obtaining certain data, though Fischer said he is more concerned with before-and-after conditions that are not always collected.

Eyoh asked when the final report would be completed. Fischer said the report would likely be finished in a few months after some final follow-ups.

Chair Mitteco asked if any of the methods presented are already used in the Regional Solicitation. Fischer said greenhouse gas emissions are not currently considered in the Regional Solicitation, but this work will contribute to future greenhouse gas estimates. Some existing measures, like transit ridership and destinations near bicycle-pedestrian facilities, can inform greenhouse gas estimates.

Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, said the current application includes both current and forecasted AADT data. Koutsoukos said some projects include Synchro estimates for delay reduction, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen dioxide emissions are included. Fischer said that measures of greenhouse gas emissions are different than criteria pollutants, though there is some overlap. Synchro estimates of greenhouse gas emissions use outdated factors; instead, the study used fuel consumption to estimate greenhouse gas emissions.

3. Regional Solicitation Evaluation – study update (Steve Peterson, MTS Planning)

Steve Peterson, MTS Planning presented.

Chair Mitteco asked if there are any major areas of the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) missing from hybrid category structure presented, specifically mentioning the absence of equity under the listed categories. Peterson said the December policymaker workgroup reviewed TPP objectives and policies in a prioritization activity, and the equity and natural systems objectives received lower scores when considered for application categories. Work group members favored including these topics in other ways, like scoring or qualifying requirements.

Chair Mitteco asked Peterson to describe the distinction between qualifying criteria and scoring measures. Peterson provided an example for equity: a qualifying criteria could require that all projects analyze the population living within half a mile of the project area; for a scoring measure, applicants would receive points based on their response to specific questions. There will be a special issue working group to consider criteria and measures for this topic. Chair Mitteco asked if that group had been. Peterson said next Wednesday, he will propose seven special issue working groups to the policymaker working group for feedback.



Chris Hartzell, Woodbury, asked how equity intersects with regional balance, expressing concern about messaging the topic. Peterson said they are trying to keep these topics separate, but people often use terminology interchangeably. Peterson said equity has a focused population-based definition while geographic balance concerns funding distribution across the region. Met Council staff view these as separate but important topics for future planning. Hartzell expressed concern about the resulting lens if regional balance became more important than equity in those discussions.

Koutsoukos prompted members to start thinking about which groups they would like to participate in, with the goal to setup meetings by March and start discussions in April or May.

Chad Ellos, Hennepin County, asked why regional active transportation funding was included under Regional Solicitation bicycle and pedestrian funding. Ellos said one of the goals of this evaluation is to make the application process easier, and that tying these processes could continue to be a challenge for some applicants due to level of effort. Chair Mitteco reminded the group that there is a separate policymaker group advising the active transportation funding. Peterson said they have heard from technical partners to not mix federal and local funding, and a desire to make the local funding application easier. Peterson said there are some minimum application requirements in state law, but some of the more flexible opportunities for this funding in purpose and timing are still under discussion.

Roggenbuck said Ramsey County is interested in making Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance a focus of improvements rather than parts of larger reconstruction projects. Roggenbuck asked if these types of improvements would be eligible under the safety or local pedestrian network connections applications. Peterson said the goals-based structure could open projects to qualifying under more than one category, and that he could see standalone ADA improvements fitting within local pedestrian network projects or as proactive safety measures. Peterson said that ADA improvements had not received high scores as a standalone category in the December policymaker working group.

Ellos returned to the topic of regional active transportation funding, asking why it appears under Regional Solicitation category structure if it is a separate program. Peterson said the active transportation funding falls under the larger Regional Solicitation umbrella, even though it may have different funding sources and application timing. Peterson said at some time it may split out in a more distinct process, but for purposes of this evaluation, it was helpful to consider what would be better suited for federal or non-federal funds. Ellos said it would be helpful to show the relationship of funding sources under the Regional Solicitation umbrella, mentioning the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) as an example.

Chair Mitteco asked Peterson to walk through the timeline again. Peterson said an information item on the proposed structure will be brought to the TAC Funding & Programming Committee, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and TAB starting in March through April, and potentially TAC Planning in March. After, special issue working groups would start to consider topics like scoring measures and minimum and maximum awards. The goal is having completed applications available for public review and committees to approve in fall 2025. Applications would likely be open from February 2026 to April 2026, followed by project selection in fall 2026.

### **Other business**

There were no other business items.

### **Adjournment**

Business completed. The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

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### **Council contact:**

Jed Hanson, Senior Planner, [Jed.Hanson@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:Jed.Hanson@metc.state.mn.us), 651-602-1716