

Metropolitan Council

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

Meeting of the Transportation Committee Monday, February 27, 2012

Members Present	Steve Elkins, Chair Lona Schreiber, Vice Chair John Đoàn	Roxanne Smith Adam Duinink	Edward Reynoso Jennifer Munt
Members Absent	Jon Commers	James Brimeyer	
Staff Presiding	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	
TAB Liaison	Robert Lilligren		

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 February 27, 2012 at Metropolitan Council Chambers St. Paul.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Elkins noted that Information Item 1 (Interchange Update) has been taken off of this agenda, and also Information Item 6 (Legislative Overview) will be moved to a later date. Motion by Munt, seconded by Duinink to adopt the amended agenda for the February 27, 2012 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Reynoso, seconded by Duinink to approve the minutes from the February 13, 2012 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion passed.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – Metro Transit

Brian Lamb introduced the following persons to present the employee recognition awards to their staff:

Sharon Feiner, Supervisor of Creative Services, presented to Charles Decker, Senior Graphic Designer, for his overall work and specifically for his work in the past weeks on the now adopted T METRO system brand and logo, vehicles, and signage.

Bruce Howard, Director of Customer Services and Marketing, presented to Pam Steffen, Customer Relations Supervisor, for her work organizing MT staff to direct customers at HLRT stations following the suspension of HLRT service between 38th Ave. and Franklin Stations, as a result of the closure of the Martin Sabo Bridge over Highway 55.

Tom Humphrey, Asst. Dir, Bus Maintenance, presented to Donna Nieman, Bus Maintenance Clerk, for her willingness to take on extra duties as needed, during staffing changes.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

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

Blue Line/Hiawatha Light Rail Service Disruption

On Friday afternoon, the longest service disruption in the history of the Hiawatha Light Rail line ceased as inspectors deemed the Martin Sabo pedestrian bridge that passes above the rail line adequately shored up with temporary supports. Last Monday at about 5:30 in the morning, we began a sustained replacement bus service that carried customers between 38th Street Station and Franklin Avenue Station with between 6 and 12 buses depending on the time

of day. This service matched Hiawatha's schedule for four-and-a-half days. As you heard in employee recognition, we earned a lot of compliments from customers for the operation and our support of customers.

Bus Stop Test on West 7th Street Underway

We're conducting a test of a new bus stop sign design at nearly 40 locations along West 7th Street in St. Paul from Highway 5 to the Downtown Zone limit. Each sign has a **unique** "Stop Number" printed on it. Customers with web-enabled mobile devices can use NexTrip and this number to retrieve predicted real-time departures for buses serving each of these stops. The sign also includes the regional transit information phone number (612-373-3333) and web site (metrotransit.org) as well as updated colors. The test will continue throughout 2012. We're currently soliciting feedback from customers, bus operators and the community – more details are available at metrotransit.org/signstest. We're tracking the use of these stop numbers compared with other numbers in the system and we'll provide more information on the test later in the year.

Contest Videos on Sustainable Transportation Posted

A contest hosted by the publication *Architecture MN* features video submissions about sustainable transportation. Metro Transit is featured in several of the videos – one in particular features the theme of accessibility with a person navigating the city by wheelchair. One line that stuck out from that video is "I guess I learned today that buses and trains are the easy part."

"Viewer's Choice" finalists and five jury selections will be announced at a public screening at Minneapolis' Walker Art Center on March 1st. You can view the videos now by linking through from the "Transit in the Media" section at metrotransit.org.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT

Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS, reported the following:

Update on Transportation Bill

In Washington D.C. the Senate continues to work on amendments to their 2-year transportation bill. The House announced last week that they had two revisions: 1) removal of the provision to eliminate dedicated funding for transit; and 2) reduce the bill length to less than 5 years, the new length not announced yet. The Senate and House bills are now more similar, but a 2-year bill doesn't allow for long-range planning.

FHWA Visit

Last Wednesday, McCarthy attended a meeting with FHWA Administrator Derrell Turner and FHWA Deputy Administrator Greg Nadeau and others. Nadeau expressed an interest in meeting with Minnesota's transportation associations and other stakeholders. At the meeting, McCarthy noted the plans for managed lanes and the need for help at the federal level with funding for multi-modal projects.

Rail-Volution

Metro Council is joining Rail-Volution and is applying with CTIB to host a conference in 2014. Rail-Volution has moved up its timeline to choose host cities; applications are due mid-March for Rail-Volution consideration in April. A business item to approve submitting an application will appear at the March 12, 2012 Transportation Committee, same week to the full Council.

TAB LIAISON REPORT

Robert Lilligren reported that on 2/15/12 the TAB approved a grant of \$500,000 to MPCA for electric vehicle charging stations. This item was discussed at length at the TAB and approved by the TAB by a 14-11 vote. This item appears on the Transportation Committee agenda today. TAB also approved TIP amendments included on the agenda today. TAB also approved a number of sunset date extension requests. The number of sunset date requests prompted policy discussions at TAB. There is interest from TAB members to re-examine its policies, procedures and solicitation criteria.

BUSINESS

Consent Items

A motion was made by Munt, seconded by Smith to approve items 2012-15, 2012-76, 2012-77, and 2012-75 as consent items. Motion passed

2012-15: That the Metropolitan Council approve the proposed changes to the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) bylaws as approved by the (TAAC) on February 1, 2012 and shown in Attachment 1 to the Business Item.

2012-76: That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include FTA Section 5307 funds for I-35E and CR 14 Park & Ride in Lino Lakes 9TAB Action 2012-09).

2012-77: That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to combine SP#2785-378: replacement of the Xerxes Ave. bridge over I-494 with the project scope of SP#2785-364: add auxiliary lane on I-494 from I-35W to TH 100 and reflect a new total cost (TAB Action 2012-10).

2012-75: That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to exercise purchase options on contract 08P114 with Motor Coach Industries (MCI) to purchase six coach buses in an amount not to exceed \$3,244,800.

Non-Consent Items

2012-73: Authorization to Award Contract for Work Uniform Rental Program

Director Contracts and Procurement Micky Gutzmann presented this item and noted that the contract is \$250,000 less than the last contract, speculating this is due to competitive marketing, and some technology improvements by the vendor.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Munt:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into a contract with G&K Services for Metro Transit work uniform rental in an amount not to exceed \$675,000.00 over a five year period.

Motion passed, with Reynoso abstaining from the vote.

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

2012-70: Metro Mobility Agency Contract Recommendation

Metro Mobility Senior Manager Paul Colton, presented this item. He noted that First Transit is guaranteeing a higher level of service that will be incorporated into the new contract.

Motion by Munt, seconded by Duinink:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into a contract for the operation of Metro Mobility Agency transit service for the term July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2017 with First Transit Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$27,855,940.

Motion passed, with Reynoso abstaining from the vote.

Information: Controlled Access Approval Overview

MTS Senior Planner Ann Braden presented an overview of the controlled access approval process to familiarize the committee on this subject. These requests would usually appear before the committee as consent items.

2012-71: Controlled Access Approval for construction of an interchange at TH 169 and CSAH 30 (93rd Avenue) in Brooklyn Park, Review #20910-2.

MTS Senior Planner Ann Braden presented this item. Schreiber noted that although there has been no opposition to this project from governmental entities, there has been some citizen opposition, but she and Reynoso both stated that this project is very necessary.

Motion by Schreiber, seconded by Smith:

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by MnDOT to construct an interchange at TH 169 and 93rd Avenue in Brooklyn Park, conditional upon any significant changes in the design of the proposed project being subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council prior to construction.

Motion passed.

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

2012-72: Controlled Access Approval for construction of an interchange at TH 36 and Hilton Trail in Washington County

MTS Senior Planner Ann Braden presented this item. There were no questions from committee members.

Motion by Duinink, seconded by Đoàn:

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by MnDOT to construct an interchange at TH 36 and Hilton Trail in Pine Springs, conditional upon any significant changes in the design of the proposed project to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council prior to construction.

Motion passed.

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

2012-78: 2012-2015 TIP Amendment Request to Include SP#092-070-001: Procurement and Installation of 76 Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (TAB Action 2011-60)

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy presented this item. As noted above in the TAB Liaison report, this item had lengthy discussion at the TAB and committees, and passed at TAB by a close margin. She stated that this is the type of project that is proactive in preventing non-attainment status for air quality standards. McCarthy answered a question from Đoàn what the expectations are for the amount of electric vehicles expected in the metro area. The Council is not performing forecasts at this time. Đoàn stated that there are national level estimates, but not state-based at this time.

Motion by Đoàn, seconded by Duinink:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include SP#092-070-001: procurement and installation of 76 electric vehicle charging stations in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Motion passed.

INFORMATION

1. Energy Update for 2011

Metro Transit Asst. Dir Facilities Engineering Pat Jones introduced Principal Engineer Robert Rimstad who presented this item. The Energy Improvement Study with Xcel Energy began about 4 years ago. The study identified about 100 initiatives to improve energy. The presentation included the results of implementing those initiatives; costs to implement, cost savings, energy usage, etc. Elkins stated the results are impressive.

2. Regional Service Improvement Plan Update

Metro Transit Director Service Development John Levin presented this item. The plan is to document and prioritize opportunities to improve the fixed-route transit system in the region. The plan is required under the 2030 TPP and is identified in the funding allocation procedures adopted by the Council, and will help in deciding how to allocate funding for service expansion. The RSIP review committee consists of members from each service provider. There was excellent participation and involvement from all regional providers. The Regional Service Improvement Plan results and recommendations will come before the T.C. and Council in the future.

3. MTS Ridership Report – Year End/4th Quarter 2011

MTS Assistant Director Contracted Transit Services Gerri Sutton presented statistics for the 4th Quarter and year end 2011 Metropolitan Transportation Ridership. There were no questions from committee members. Reynoso suggested correlating increased ridership with increased gasoline prices, if it can be done. Levin noted that employment has a stronger influence on ridership than gas prices.

4. Performance-Based Planning

MTS Manager Technical Planning Support Mark Filipi presented this item. This work is in support of the

Transportation Policy Plan expected to be done in the next 2 years. Performance-Based Transportation Planning is focused toward desired system performance outcomes, rather than corridor or project-level activities. The decision making process is aimed toward goals and objectives with measureable outcomes to look at moving into the future and track progress. He noted there are strong indications that the federal reauthorization will require MPOs to incorporate performance-based planning and programming activities and ongoing monitoring into the long-term plans to continue to receive funding. State statutes require a performance evaluation prior to any TPP update. The performance evaluation looks at the transportation system of the area to see how well it serves the ability to move people and goods throughout the transportation system. In the proposed 2012-2013 work plan there are two activities:

1. Respond to the legislatively required transportation system performance evaluation.
2. Work on a technical preparation to include performance-based programming and planning activities into the upcoming Transportation Policy Plan Update in 2014.

Munt stated she feels there is a need to look at new metrics to measure success, and new measurements for bike & ped. infrastructure. She and Elkins suggested a need to look at connecting workers to jobs. Schreiber asked (regarding freight) what happens when blending the criteria/evaluation with outside the metro area in the ring counties. Filipi responded that this will be discussed when developing the performance evaluation. McCarthy added that Metro Council will be working closely with MnDOT on this study.

OTHER BUSINESS

Doàn stated that the governor has named a Transportation Task Force, and asked how the Transportation Committee will stay abreast of their activities. McCarthy stated that MnDOT is the lead on this task force, Chair Haigh is part of the task force, and McCarthy anticipates that there will be regular updates from staff.

Doàn stated that he attended a celebration at Mai Village on University Ave. to support naming a CCLRT station at the eastern end of University Ave. as “Little Mekong”. He suggested an item for a future Transportation Committee about how to encourage communities to better identify and link the community to this transit investment.

Lamb stated that Metro Transit is going to work community-by-community along the Green Line (following the Regional Guidelines for station naming) to work on enhancing visibility and wayfinding improvements in order to share what is offered in the community near the stations.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Elkins adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 6:05 p.m. February 27, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,
LuAnne Major, Recording Secretary