

Meeting Notes

2050 Transportation Policy Plan Advisory Work Group



Meeting Date: August 26, 2022

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: Virtual

Members Present:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chair, Deb Barber, Met Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Mitra Jalali, TAB, Saint Paul | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lesley Kandaras, alternate for Wes Kooistra, Metro Transit |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Pacheco, Met Council | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Hovland, TAB, Chair/Edina | <input type="checkbox"/> David Dively, MN Council on Disability |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Francisco Gonzalez, Met Council | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Julie Jeppson, TAB, Blaine | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sheila Kauppi, alternate for Michael Barnes, MnDOT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Debbie Goettel, TAB, Hennepin Co. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Amity Foster, TAB, Transit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Craig McDonnell, MPCA |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jon Ulrich, TAB, Scott Co. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peter Dugan, TAB, Dist. H | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Luther Wynder, Suburban Transit Assoc. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stan Karwoski, TAB, Washington Co. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christopher Geisler, TAB, Dist. E | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present |

Opening

Chair Deb Barber opened the meeting at 10:01 AM. Chair Barber introduced a new work group member, Luther Wynder, MVTA CEO representing the Suburban Transit Association, and prompted members and staff to introduce themselves. Jed Hanson, MTS Planning, provided instructions on Webex Webinars controls.

2050 Regional Planning Structure and Terminology

Cole Hiniker, MTS Planning, presented an overview of the draft plan structure and terminology for the 2050 regional development guide and system plans, the definition and phasing of developing TPP policies and actions, and examples of how existing 2040 TPP content map to the new plan structure.

TPP Goals Review, Engagement and Update Study

Cole Hiniker presented the proposed approach to developing transportation goals and objectives, focusing on the research and listening activities that will occur as part of the TPP Goals Review, Engagement and Update study. He provided an outline of study tasks for a consultant, including summary of existing and peer plans, engagement workshops and listening sessions, coordination on equity engagement, and a recommendations and summary report.

Christopher Geisler, TAB – District E, asked how this study will engage with a variety of cities with varying needs. Chair Barber said presentations from the cities of Bloomington and Belle Plaine on their comprehensive plans show a variety of transportation and plan needs by community designation. Cole Hiniker said the Met Council typically uses community designations to identify different communities to engage, Met Council staff may do additional engagement outside the scope of this consultant study, and tools like surveys may help reach more of the many cities the Met Council works with. Christopher Geisler said he wanted to ensure the Met Council is using already established segmenting to get a good cross-section.

Julie Jeppson, TAB – City of Blaine, asked how cities can advocate for their specific involvement in listening sessions. Cole Hiniker said the Met Council often works with Metro

Cities to identify which cities to engage and staff are always available for one-on-one conversations with cities.

Luther Wynder, Suburban Transit Association, asked how partners like the Urban League or transit riders will be included in this study. Cole Hiniker presented on a task directing the consultant to coordinate with targeted equity engagement consultants already under a separate contract.

Julie Jeppson requested that tribal nations be intentionally included in this study. Chair Barber said the Met Council has established a new tribal relations policy in changes to the Transportation Addendum to the Public Engagement Plan, has consulted with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community in the last round of TPP updates, and also needs to work with the Prairie Island Indian Community in this plan update. Stan Karwoski, TAB – Washington County, inquired about inclusive language. Chair Barber responded language is dependent on context. Cole Hiniker said delegating responsibility for engaging tribal nations to a consultant may not be appropriate and these relationships should be built among policymakers and staff.

Regional Values & Goals

Michael Larson, Community Development, presented an overview of recent engagement activities on the regional values, vision, and goals. He provided discussion prompts based on the Advisory Work Group's June discussion of these themes. The themes were:

- Equitable, affordable, and welcoming
- High quality and resilient environment
- Vibrant places and destinations
- Accessible and interconnected
- Prosperous and healthy

A summary of small-group discussions and report-out following the presentation are available in a separate discussion report.

Closing

Chair Barber reminded members to respond to the scheduling poll for the next meeting. The work group closed at 3:00 PM.

Council Contact:

Jed Hanson, Planner, jed.hanson@metc.state.mn.us





Overview

This document summarizes the small group discussions and report-out at the August 26, 2022, meeting of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) Advisory Work Group. The continued and more focused discussions began at their previous meeting on June 29, 2022. A summary is also available for that meeting.

At both the June and August meetings, the TPP Advisory Work Group had an opportunity to discuss the following five regional planning themes, which were the same as those discussed by the Metropolitan Council at its Committee of the Whole meeting on May 18th.

- Theme 1: Equitable, affordable, and welcoming
- Theme 2: High quality and resilient environment
- Theme 3: Vibrant places and destinations
- Theme 4: Accessible and interconnected
- Theme 5: Prosperous and healthy

At the June meeting, three small groups discussed all of themes. This did not provide much time for in depth discussion on any one theme. At the August meeting, members chose a theme for more focused discussion. After a review of the prior meeting input, and given the level of interest in each theme and participation, three small groups formed that centered on the following themes:

- Theme 1: Equitable, affordable, and welcoming
- Theme 2: High quality and resilient environment
- Theme 4: Accessible and interconnected

Theme 1: Equitable, Affordable, and Welcoming

Participants

Amity Foster, Lesley Kandaras, Sheila Kauppi, Luther Wynder

Questions

- What is the possible extent of transit's role in creating a region that is more equitable and affordable?
 - Geographic opportunities and limitations?
 - Complementary or alternative approaches?
- How are we welcoming or not welcoming?
- Other thoughts or ideas?

Discussion Summary

- Room 1 challenged the supposition that there are inherent limitations in the role of transit as a driver of equity, emphasizing two aspects of equity: 1) equity of the transit system; and 2) transit's role in driving equitable outcomes. Geographic opportunities and constraints are more about setting goals, identifying priorities, and recognizing tradeoffs.

- While transit can bring about connectivity and access, the risk of displacement if the presence of improved transit decreases affordability. Planning to prevent displacement is a regional responsibility.
- There are interrelated questions of guiding housing toward existing transit versus investing in new transit to serve existing housing.
- Continuous public engagement with communities and patrons is important as their needs change over time.
- There is a history and experience with racism, segregation, and the presence of some transit “deserts”. Public transit can improve social connectivity.
- Regarding complementary or alternative approaches, public transit can be part of a larger suite of mobility services (e.g., bikeshare and other non-single occupancy vehicle options).

Theme 2: High Quality and Resilient Environment

Participants

Christopher Geisler, Julie Jeppson, Stan Karwoski, Craig McDonnell, John Pacheco Jr.

Questions

- What infrastructure projects are models for:
 - High quality, low-maintenance
 - Accessibility
 - Integrated with land use
 - Context-sensitive re: environment
 - Incorporating inclusive planning
- How does redevelopment/greenfield development restore or preserve the environment?
- Other thoughts or ideas?

Discussion Summary

Inclusivity

- Most successful projects intentionally invest in community outreach at the start of the process.

Specific Project References

- Half interchange at MN 610 and East River Road resulted in limited ROW impacts
- Grade separation projects of Highway 10 at Foley Blvd and Hanson Blvd removed barriers
- Century Ave & MN 120 local coalition for “smart corridor” development (e.g., redevelopment, future transit, solar, EV charging, etc.)
- Coon Rapids Dam and opportunity for project to serve as regional trail connector

Maintenance

- Low maintenance does not necessarily just refer to the use concrete; there are other materials management aspects of a project.
- Some surfaces require less salting.

Habitat, Water Management, and Aesthetics

- There are opportunities to incorporate environmental components with the road or freeway reconstruction projects.
- Groundcovers as opposed to grasses can reduce maintenance and create habitat, especially for pollinators.
- Rain gardens versus retention ponds

- Incorporate hidden ditch to be aesthetically pleasing piece rather than just paved over.
- Managing water runoff can be coordinated with watershed districts. Minnesota is getting warmer and wetter with more extreme weather events; we need to make sure we are building to whether these events.

Transit and Mobility Planning

- Planning for transit should consider the frequency of service, level boarding, and right-of-way for highway BRT.
- There are other forms of mobility beyond transit including pedestrians, bicyclists, park-and-rides, trails. These can address the “last mile problem” of reach transit’s reach.

Other Considerations

- ADA compliance
- Solar arrays and EV charging
- Overestimating and oversupplying parking
- Using underused land and right-of-way for solar, EV charging, etc.

Theme 4: Accessible and Interconnected

Participants

Deb Barber, Peter Dugan, Jon Ulrich

Questions

- Is the experience of the journey as important as the destination?
- What are needs of industry?
- What would a goal be for residents with physical mobility considerations?
- What is the potential role or limits of technology?
- Other thoughts or ideas?

Discussion Summary

- Participants agreed that the journey on transit must be safe, convenient, and pleasant, as it also does for traveling by car or truck on roadways.
- Post-pandemic travel needs to be understood, including long-term impacts on Downtown Minneapolis.
- Technology will not solve all problems; but it can relate to supporting a sense of community. Being accessible and interconnected has to do with people, places, and goods across a variety of modes based on different needs. It needs a wholistic approach to get people and goods where they need to be, and we have the technology to back it up and facilitate all of this. (e.g., Metro Transit app integration with navigation).
- Participants discussed a need to understand the tradeoffs between the location of new industry, worker locations, and transportation needs (e.g., reference to 5% of one MVTA route was riding to an Amazon facility).

Other Issues

- Changing freight patterns and supply chain challenges
- Changing demand and need for office, warehouse, and storage
- Fiber optic and broadband needs
- Autonomous vehicles and potential value and challenges for people with disabilities