

# Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAAC COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 7, 2021

**Committee Members Present:** Chair David Fenley, Sam Jasmine, Christopher Bates, Patsy Murphy, Ken Rodgers, Jeffry Dains, Vice Chair Darrell Paulsen, Kari Sheldon, John Clark, Heidi Myhre, Claudia Fuglie, Patty Thorsen, Diane Graham-Raff and Erik Henriksen.

**Committee Members Absent:** none.

**Committee Members Excused:** Richard Rowan

**Council Staff Present:** Metropolitan Council Member Phillip Sterner, Sam O'Connell, Andy Streasick, Guthrie Byard, Jason Tintes, Nick Landwer, Sophia Ginis, Doug Cook and Brooke Bordson.

**Public Present:** Jim Gersema, Andrew Gitzlaff and Nikki Villavicencio.

## CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Fenley called the regular meeting of the Council's TAAC Committee to order at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 7, 2021.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Rodgers, seconded by Fuglie to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Rodgers, seconded by Sheldon to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2021 regular meeting of the TAAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

## BUSINESS INFORMATION

### 1. Metro Blue Line Extension Update

Sam O'Connell, Senior Manager, Public Affairs Transit System Dev SWLRT  
Sophia Ginis, Manager TSO Public Involvement Transit System Dev SWLRT  
Nick Landwer, Senior Project Manager

Sam O'Connell spoke to the TAAC committee. Our purpose today is to talk about the Blue Line Extension. We do have Nick Landwer, who is in our office that leads design and Sophia Ginis, who leads our communication and outreach with the project. We want to share where the project is today. We will talk about the transitioning last year. We will share with you some project principles. And we will share with you some alignment. We would like to take the last five minutes to see how is the best way we can stay connected and communicate some of the advances of the Blue Line.

If we could move to slide 4 please. Many of you have probably heard about the Blue Line Extension. So, the Blue Line Extension is the extension of the existing Blue Line that travels from the south side from Bloomington to Downtown Minneapolis. The extension of the Blue Line that would continue to move west out of Minneapolis and then would continue to move northwest through our communities of Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal and then ultimately on the northern end, the City of Brooklyn Park. That is a lot of the work that we have been doing. Part of that original project had the Blue Line alignment in a freight rail corridor. So over half of the line, eight miles, was with the BNSF rail line. Our hope was always to work with the freight railroad to coexist. So they would be on their tracks. We would be on our tracks, but they would operate on the same right-of-way. We tried for many years but that unfortunately did not happen. In the meantime, The need for transportation. The need to connect destinations didn't go away. Even when we were looking to work out an agreement with the railroad, those needs continued to grow. More people moved into the communities. There were more opportunities for education came about in jobs. So we heard from communities that we definitely need to move

to do something different. So in August of 2020, the Metropolitan Council in conjunction with Hennepin County decided we needed to transition and we need to look for other options moving the project forward. That pretty much meant we were not able to negotiate with the BNSF railroad and bringing a little bit of that onus on to the project of figuring out how to connect our communities. It is still very important to do that. But we may have to do that in a different way.

Next slide. Alignment Principles. We reengaged and rebooted starting out with advisory committees again. We started working with our policymakers late last year. And figuring out how we are going to do this because this is unprecedented. It is not very often that to this project and where the previous alignment was at 90 percent design in terms of where we were going to be in terms of alignment. Where the stations were going to be, how would it interact with the community and then had to pivot. So we had to dial it back a little bit to look at what is best in terms of working with community members as we go forward. What is the work that we continue to do in reference to as we go forward? What holds onto in our project?

With the Corridor Management Committee, which is primarily made up of policymakers came up with alignment principles that we engaged on. We need some framework. Going forward, we need to understand that this is a federal project at this point. We have to maintain that status. We know the federal program helps the capital improvements of these projects. So we want to maintain the federal status of our project so that means speaking to the purpose and need. The benefit of this project. Maintaining the mode so that light rail transit minimizing the travel time when we can. However, maximizing ridership so that we look at new areas to serve that we are truly serving our community members. Maximizing the opportunity for both community and economic development. And then maximizing our project. We stay competitive with other projects that are around the country. What also came to mind is when appropriate, make sure we are serving people and their desired destinations. Especially places with lower rates of car ownership and vehicular access and those with mobility challenges. So that is something we had addressed. A higher priority has been set now that we have a different alignment.

Next slide. Alignment Principles. Maintain existing alignment as much as possible. Maintain existing termini. We meet up at the Target Field Station in Minneapolis where we connect the Green Line and the Blue Line. That is north and northwest where we connect the Oak Grove Station in Brooklyn Park. Serve the existing corridor cities of Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Robbinsdale, Golden Valley, Minneapolis and their major destinations. A lot of our communities have put a lot of time and a lot of energy to make this line realization both in their community and working together as multiple communities. To see a major project like this reach fruition.

It is important to mitigate negative impacts with these large scale transportation projects. They come with benefits and sometimes they have impacts. We want to make sure we are complementing existing impacts the Metro Transit way. We want to see the B-Line and the Green Line in the area. Again, to ensure that we are reducing any sort of impacts to the environment for residents. We want to ensure and support safety for all people and make sure whoever is walking, biking and rolling that they feel safe and that and that we are connected and reduce the carbon footprint as well.

Next slide. Engagement Principles. That was talking about the alignment and how it is serving communities. Part of what the corridor management committees also outlined were where principles for engagement. We want to talk about the project with our community members. The principle here is that it has to be both. The corridor committee went on to define what meaningful is. That really is to honor and build on previous robust community engagement work.

We want to talk about the project and community members where they remember going to the first meeting in the late 1980's. So over 40 years of work has really been applied. We don't want to forget that. Part of engaging is extraction. and we don't want to lose that information of that community numbers. We also know, and in particular. During the time of social unrest and during the pandemic we really need to meet the needs of the individual communities over in the corridor. We understand that this is a very hard time for folks to give us additional time of theirs when they are also managing through the pandemic. Also, where they have been impacted by some of the social unrest. We are very mindful when we are asking for information, how we are asking for information to aid in the development of this project. We just wanted to make sure that we are connecting with the TAAC and the representatives here. So we are doing that in ways that make sense.

Next slide. We just want to ensure the corridor communities of all races, ethnicities, incomes and abilities are engaged so all communities and corridor cities share in growth opportunities, with an emphasis on low-income

and cultural communities. We will use community goals, priorities, and criteria for growth to inform decision making and that strategies are appropriate with all of our communities.

Next slide. Project Goals. The number one goal that we are looking forward to with community members. We will select and adopt a community supported alignment by the end of 2021. Evaluate route options for benefits and impacts. Advance conceptual engineering. An alignment that shares their needs and is something that they want and is going to serve them in the future as well. They are not interested in the same old lines. We want to hear from community members and their needs and how we can build the best project.

Next slide. Approach and timeline. The image on this slide is to share that we have developed our project principles late last year. The project management team has developed some initial routes through early this year and basically in the middle of March, we have shared what those possible alignments could be. Any plan where I will walk through those alignments here shortly. I wanted to also share with you that in late spring and summer that we will evaluate those alignments. A lot of with the project principles in mind and being able to share that with the communities. The end of winter this year and even at the end of this year into 2022, where we have identified a route that we can go forward through the engineering and environmental process.

Next slide. 2021 Milestones. This slide demonstrates that we are going to initial screening with these routes. We will develop a draft report. We will take input on that. Through the outreach engagement with different ways and strategies. Working virtually and also working in-person in a very safe way with our community members. We will then bring that input into a final draft report that we will release for final comments. And then again, just begin to hone in on that community support. Draft advance engineering and environmental work that will go into the year 2022.

Next slide. 2021 Activities and Beyond. We need to do some conceptual engineering for new route options, including station locations. We don't have all the answers. So we are just beginning to do that right now. So that really we just have lines on a map. Is that alignment above ground? What does it look like as we go through communities? That is where we need to do additional work. And also identify stations and locations. We need to evaluate the projects benefits and impacts. How does this work for getting folks to their destinations? Are we minimizing the impacts of projects like that? Then naturally the work through the end of this year. Next year into 2022. So beyond 2021. Getting into that environmental analysis and getting into municipal consent.

Next slide. Initial Route Identification. Nick Landwer spoke to the TAAC committee. He will show how we got to our project areas and the potential alignments. It has been a couple of years since I have been to this committee. We have spent a lot of time, the last six years with Ken Rodgers getting feedback and discussions on what is the best way to tackle a lot of the issues and elements regarding accessibility along the project. We have gone out there and looking at the existing things going on. It is very valuable for us to have the input from this group.

As I am going forward here, I just want to reiterate a little bit of what Sam said. The lines on a map that we based on the project principles are viable options moving forward. They really are for discussions. Based on the top. Bringing out into the communities. Input on are we going in the right direction? Do you like this route or would you prefer a different route? If we miss something here, as we are evaluating it. So we were only looking for input. Looking for that discussion as we move forward here.

So as a project team, we have broken down at the entire alignment in the three areas for consideration. Each one of these areas has a little different flavor or factors to it that help us with the route recommendations. Looking at routes to consider.

So at the very north end of the project, primarily in Brooklyn Park. We have identified that as area one. Area one is not really affected by the freight rail corridor. We are at 90 percent plan with our previous work. So we would consider the work and maintaining that. Area two is basically just north of I-94 in Brooklyn Park. It goes down to the south end of Robbinsdale. Next it will intersect that area. This is the cities of Robbinsdale and Crystal location. And what we are doing there is to try and maintain the commitments to use communities that we have been working with the last few years. Look at options that are as close as we can get to the previous line along the freight rail corridor and move from there.

Then it really opens up a little more as we get to the northern part of Minneapolis. That is where we have a few more options to consider. There is probably a little more work to roll up our sleeves on.

All of the options we are rolling on. We base these on the adopted project principles that Sam covered. These are again, conceptual. We are trying to make them applicable to what we have done because we want to maintain. We have done the best we can to build on that. We really want feedback from the community and have a discussion on what do we get right. What do we need to look at and also consider and what are some of the key destinations and connections that we need to be considering in this new destination?

Next slide. Area 1. This is the rollout. Area 1 is not affected by the freight rail corridor. Up in Brooklyn Park. This map shows the previous alignment that runs down West Broadway Avenue from north of 610, where the Target North Campus is. The Oak Grove Station is the identified station up there. On this map is a Blue Line along West Broadway that indicates the stations that have previously been presented. We are recommending to continue those. So, then again, on the north end we have the operations and maintenance facility that is not shown on this map, from the very end of the Blue Line. And then the blue dots that gold in the middle indicates stations location. There is the Oak Grove Station that is north of the 610. Serves a new to be discovered area as well as the existing Target campus on the north.

As we go down at 93<sup>rd</sup>, we have a proposed station at 93<sup>rd</sup> serving more of a commercial, industrial, a lot of more business and jobs destination. As we go down to 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue, more toward the middle of this map, this is a key station right next door to North Hennepin Community College. We see this as a major benefit to the College. The ridership and getting the students and staff to work and home. Also, there is a Hennepin County Library in this location. We are considering a Center for the Arts in this location. It is really an opportunity to get access to a lot of these facilities that are either in place or are compliant. The last station we show here in Area 1 is toward the south end. That is on Brooklyn Boulevard station in keeping a connection to this station and commercial shopping in this area too. Grocery stores and shopping businesses for people to access.

Next slide. Area 2. As we start going South here, moving to Area 2. This is primarily as we leave Area 1 and we still are on the north end in Brooklyn Park and also including Crystal and Robbinsdale to this location. On the map is the previous alignment that is shown in a hatch Gold Line was the BNSF rail line right-of-way. Also on that map it shows three locations for stations that were in the previous design and that 63<sup>rd</sup> Avenue where there is a park-and-ride and an existing park-and-ride now.

The station at Bass Lake Road and we have a station at 42<sup>nd</sup> Street on the 42nd North railroad corridor in Robbinsdale. So on this seeing true to our previous commitments trying to keep the previous commitments that we have. Serve those communities. We looked at what are our opportunities that are through here. There are a lot of geographical barriers not shown on this map. There are Twin Lakes, Crystal Lake, in this location and the Crystal airport. Having barriers for us to get a continuous route. What becomes apparent is that Bottineau Boulevard and County Road 81 is really the route that the staff that is recommending moving forward and we worked with the city a little bit just to see if there are any other opportunities. But what we are really focusing on is Route 81 is a good option through here.

As we start on the north end where we meet the previous alignment, the Blue Line alignment up in Brooklyn Park, we connect in there. The proposal would be to run at grade center running with our tracks to their existing park and ride at 63<sup>rd</sup>. We would recommend keeping the station at 63<sup>rd</sup> and continue that function as a park and ride also. And keep that commitment. In this location at 63<sup>rd</sup> and Bass Lake Road we are still running parallel adjacent to the BNSF Railroad. The right of way to that railroad is right next to County Road 81.

Moving down the map to Bass Lake Road again, we have proposed the station here and a smaller park and ride. We are continuing with that recommendation and keep a station in this location. And this is a main access to the City of Crystal's business district so they can go down Bass Lake Road. There are a lot of businesses there that lead into a lot of businesses along Bass Lake Road. There are a lot of businesses along Broadway Avenue.

As we start getting south of that Bass Lake Road station, the alignment starts to diverge from our previous alignment from the railroad corridor. As we get into Robbinsdale, the right of way on Route 81 starts moving farther to the east from the freight rail corridor by Robbinsdale to four to five blocks away from where that corridor was.

As we are getting down to Robbinsdale, we have a lot more options down there. We have park and rides proposed as well as a station at 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Obviously, that is going to be a few blocks away from where the alignment is going down along Route 81. So we will need to work with the city about how we can get the alignment along Route 81, through the city to be compatible with how we are developing their vision of the city to promote the businesses to make sure that working through the design that we are promoting an activity for

the city that we are not posing as a barrier. So we will work on things like pedestrian access going to there. It helps us through the station crossing the road to this location. We will also work with the city and communities to determine where the best spot is for a station location or locations in this area.

On the south end of the map where Lowery Avenue on the map is in orange. And West Broadway Avenue is in green. The black line converges with those right there. That is where North Memorial Hospital is a great opportunity for us. In the last six years we have gotten a lot of feedback about how can we better serve North Memorial Hospital. A lot of questions. How can we make that work. with the previous alignment? We were starting to get a lot of distance away from that .and the residential area to that. There really wasn't a good opportunity to serve North Memorial. This new option or recommendations would give us an opportunity to focus on that as a destination in that area. There is also quite a bit of commercial starting to develop in that area as well as the North Memorable Campus and some clinical care areas a few blocks away. There is also a HyVee in this location.

Next slide. Area 3 Considerations: Public Right of Way. Area 3 gets down into North Minneapolis. It is a lot more wide-open area. With a lot more opportunities to consider. We weren't quite as constrained on how we get through this area. But the opportunities that also come from this is a better opportunity to serve the crowd, the public. To better serve the destinations to the schools, churches, shopping or businesses. What have you. There would be a lot more opportunities with our new route considerations. So to roll out recommendations is to that we had to take a look at a few things. One of them was what if the continuous routes that would get us through Target Field Station with the existing Blue Line north, to Brooklyn Park. How do we get in and through this area of North Minneapolis on a continuous right-of-way. We like to run fairly straight alignments with the train. And what are those opportunities for alignments? We would start to take a look at what was the available right-of-way? One of our project principles is we want to minimize impacts of the displacements to businesses and residences. So that is another key factor. We wanted to go through an area where there was adequate right-of-way to get the train through there and still continue with the other uses that these corridors may have other than streets and keep bikes and pedestrians safe.

The map here, this is a heat map showing a spectrum from green, meaning there is plenty of right-of-way here. You get a light rail guideway continuing with the road functions. As we get down through the spectrum, green and then light green, yellow, in a space we believe we can work with a light rail guideway and then work in that quarter. As we start getting into the dark orange and then dark. It means that the right-of-way is getting really narrow and trying to get light rail through there would cause some major impacts. So we would recommend to stay away from that area.

This map has one factor there. Next map. Another consideration is whether the existing and proposed land uses that would be compatible with light rail. Then the higher density with commercial and businesses are the better places that we want to locate a light rail through here. So the map here shows some of the density by color. What it shows is the more dense corridors along this area along West Broadway and Lowery Avenue.

Next slide. The recommendation from the staff here to evaluate routes is a in orange is Lowery Avenue and where it intersects with Bottineau Blvd and Broadway on the west side of this map over to Washington Avenue. Cross over to I-94 to Washington Avenue and then Washington Avenue over to south Target Field Station.

The other recommended route. We have the routes handling on this map. So two routes. The second route is West Broadway Avenue. So West Broadway Avenue on this map is shown in green and it continues on to the North Memorial intersection by Lowery and Bottineau Blvd, County Road 81. Those are the two routes that we are recommending going through here because they really need criteria of the project and it is best served the project principles of the corridor densities and have the right-of-way.

The bigger challenge is how do we get to these two routes? So we started to identify a handful of options that we are calling links that get us out of that Target Field Station and either to the Lowery Route and the West Broadway Route. They are showing a navy link, a pink link, a red link, a yellow link and a green link. These are just options. There are an infinite amount of options that they would consider going through here. It would seem to be logical that there would be a right-of-way and continuous and fairly direct routes. As we move forward, a recommendation could be more than what we are showing here or it could be a combination of some of these.

Next slide. We have a better overview of these links. So this slide that is onscreen right now, on the very south right hand side of the screen. That is where Target Field Station is. That is where we are connecting to the existing Blue Line. Showing here is the navy link as we are calling it. It comes off of the Target Field Station

and very similar to the previous project where it came off of Target Field Station and the Blue Line tracks are on either side of the Southwest tracks. Not showing here is the Southwest. It is building a bridge structure or loop off of Target Field Station over to Rolston Avenue. We would come down on either side of those tracks at grade into the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue intersection. Before we were going down Olson Memorial Highway. The navy link continues up 7<sup>th</sup> Street. With all of these options, we need to get across the I-94 through this. So across on either I-94 or an existing structure or an improved structure to handle the loads of light rail and have the capacity. Or maybe a new structure of light rail or maybe we need to do some combination. Maybe we run light rail existing structure and move the traffic to a new structure. Again, there are a lot of options there.

Follow along that navy link over to I-94. On this map it crosses to the I-94 right-of-way. On to the west side and follows that right-of-way up to West Broadway Avenue. Another option to this link would be the navy link over to the green link. And then the green link basically connects to the navy right around Plymouth Avenue and would follow Lyndale Avenue up to West Broadway. We understand that Lyndale Avenue and this location is residential, but most of the residential backs up to the street with very limited. There are really no driveways up this section with a couple of neighborhood access routes that would likely be signalized if there is a light rail through here. We figure we could get down here and have scenarios with minimal impacts for neighbors in this location.

Moving over to our pink alignment. This is a little bit more out of the box. A little bit more work and engineering that goes into it. Actually, this is probably more of a structure. By that I mean probably a bridge coming off of the Target Field Station and it shows on the map it kind of snakes its way through the big building you see as the Metro Transit Heywood Bus Garage and Metro Transit offices at this location. It shows weaving through that over the bus driveway that comes out of the bus garage. Then over to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Street ramps. There is some right-of-way on there on the southwest side of those ramps that we could follow the pink route up to the green route at Plymouth Avenue and Lyndale again. And that pink route would mostly be on a structure or bridge. Pretty much off of Target Field Station over to Plymouth Avenue. Unless we were to connect into the red link that we are showing here. That red link we would likely drop it down to grade MN go up to Plymouth Avenue to Washington Avenue. It could follow Washington Avenue up to West Broadway or continue up 10<sup>th</sup> Washington Avenue all the way to Lowery Avenue on site. Also showing a yellow link along Plymouth Avenue that is between the red and the green. It is just another potential link that could get things connected through that area.

Those are the route options that we are proposing to the community that we are looking for feedback, input and looking for conversation on. Looking forward to input and questions.

O'Connell said I am going to move to the next couple of slides. We definitely want to hear some feedback from the team here today. But we want to provide the tools as to how to connect with us and share your feedback. We have walked through a lot of possibilities. What we would love to hear is what you think about that. What is resonating. Maybe there is a possibility that we are not showing, and we need to know. Working with communities to hear from our members to understand and maybe begin to pencil this out a little better. So we can really design around what meets the needs.

So we also are talking a little bit about goals and what the projects should be doing. So what is the best way that TAAC members can connect with us and folks in your network? People you interact with.

Next slide. We have a few different ways to do that. I am on the project's website [bluelineext.org](http://bluelineext.org). We have an interactive map that you can leave your comments. You can also see where people have commented on potential station locations. Do you like West Broadway or do you like Lowery? Do you have questions about some of these things? We want your ideas. We want to welcome your input. There is also a link to a survey that can also provide some feedback. It goes right to Sophia Ginis ([Sophia.ginis@metrotransit.org](mailto:Sophia.ginis@metrotransit.org)) who is on this media with you. So she is taking that in. She shared with us just yesterday that over 800 responses are coming in through the survey. We want to make sure that your thoughts and your voices are also included in that. So please join us in filling that information out. We also want to come to you. So please invite us to your community events, your network events. We are also happy to come back and provide updates to the TAAC on what we are assessing from the community. What feedback we received, and we want to share that back out to the community members.

Next slide. I just want to talk a little bit about evaluation criteria goals. That is something that we will continue to engage in to make sure that we continue to hear from communities that transit is reliable. That it is frequent. It provides access. That it maximizes the benefits. It is supporting the community development goals. Providing

healthy communities and sound environmental practices including efforts to address climate change. Then more importantly, we know about these projects. How can we address equity and begin to reduce those regional racial disparities?

Next slide. Next steps: Continue to seek solutions. As we look at that, you will be hearing more from us actually in this week on how we begin to talk about community benefits and how to make sure that we are doing equitable development and we are not displacing community members. That we have some tools that we can help address gentrification. As projects come into communities, they do have these impacts and we want to get in front of them. And we also recognize that some of previous alignments also brought investments in communities that are not going to be part of the project that we have right now when you see the routes. We are sharing the route information. How do we continue to address those investments that made roadways safer that connect them better to communities that provided good ways to provide transportation that contribute to communities that sees the benefit? Also, the work that we are doing.

Let's move down to slide 26. Stay connected. It is just a way to share with you our project website where you can have at your fingertips the new maps, surveys, what we are hearing from community members. Also, just like TAAC, our meetings are public. They are presented with meeting materials. You can sign up for GovDelivery project updates. Connect with staff for your questions or schedule a presentation.

You can receive information to your phone or computer. We ask that if you follow social media to add us to your social media as well for the latest and greatest update. You can follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

Chair Fenley said I would encourage TAAC members to view the tools that the Blue Line is providing to give any detailed feedback on the routes. Does anyone have any questions?

You guys have done a great work on SouthWest. Has it ever been considered to move to extend the Blue Line into Anoka County? Since that is a growing part of the metropolitan area. Was there any thought about bringing it into the City of Anoka?

O'Connell said early on community members did express this desire to extend all of the light rail lines a little bit farther into other communities. So right now, our focus is to honor the principles of existing alignment to see how we would do that. I would say that is the continuing question. We have expanded community representation on our corridor management committee. Maybe we are not expanding the rail line. We are thinking of our transit system as a network. That can bring community members to the line and then build up that ridership and then when we do get to that point, we can understand how folks are using the system and begin to think about it that way. But I appreciate that question. Thank you.

## **2. Rush Line Update**

Andrew Gitzlaff, Senior Transportation Planner  
Jim Gersema, Principal SRF

Gitzlaff spoke to the TAAC committee. We are here today to give a high-level update on the project and increase the awareness of TAAC members. We have been very fortunate that Darrell Paulsen has been involved in our advisory committee for the project throughout the process that has been very helpful to build up our community.

This project still is early in the process we are going to be having an environmental document released in another month. We have done preliminary design, but we haven't done any final design. So we expect this is the first time in front of the TAAC but not the last time. We have been working pretty closely with Ramsey County as the lead, Metro Transit and Met Council. Charles Carlson is our primary representative on this project to make sure that what we ultimately designed and developed fits into the Metro Transit brand and has featured our amenities.

Next slide. What this slide is showing is the overall Rush Line Corridor map. So this is the selected route from back in 2017. It travels from downtown Saint Paul to downtown White Bear Lake. It is 15 miles total. There are 21 stations apart. When you view the map you see a highlighted line in the background. This is where we are sharing the space with a former rail right-of-way that is now the regional trail remaining that right-of-way as well.

We are also using periods of different county roads and MnDOT right-of-way for this project. In my next couple of slides, I will walk through this alignment in more detail. And then one final note. I know the last time we talked about expansion.

We are focused on White Bear Lake today, but looking to the future with route barriers with Ramsey County, down the line.

Next slide. A couple quick facts about the project. It would be consistent with the other BRT's and light rail where it runs seven days a week, from early in the morning to late at night. It runs every 10 minutes during rush hours and every 15 minutes other times.

Travel time of approximately 30 minutes from Saint Paul Central Business District to Maplewood Mall. 14 minutes from Maplewood Mall to downtown White Bear Lake. Looking at some of the key destinations. It serves approximately 50 hospitals and clinics. It connects to 106,000 jobs within a 10-minute walk of the 20 planned stations. You can transfer to/from the Metro Green Line at the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Station, so you don't have to go all the way downtown to transfer.

Next slide. The next four slides are going to walk through the corridor in a little bit more detail. There are a couple of different colors that are used in our maps. Yellow being where we are running the bus in mixed traffic. Then purple being where we are running the bus within a Dedicated Guideway. For us that could mean whether a separate roadway or simply lanes that would be dedicated to transit only as part of the project. So as I walk through I will highlight the different areas.

Starting downtown we would serve both the front of the Union Depot and the back of the Union Depot. And the project would travel on Waukuta and Sibley as paired streets and 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets as paired streets. There would also be a station at 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. One thing you need as far as that station. TAAC members may be familiar with that from the Gold Line because that would essentially be serving the same station for that project. We are also proposing another new station on 10<sup>th</sup> Street. We would use a dedicated lane on 10<sup>th</sup> Street. Then our next station would be 14<sup>th</sup> Street as is mentioned before. It is right in the middle between the Green Line and the Capitol Complex and Regions Hospital, the Gillette Children's Specialty Care Facility and Selby. From there we will travel north and serve the Mount Airy Public Housing Complex on Jackson Street. After that the corridor goes east on Pennsylvania Avenue which becomes Phalen Boulevard. For a lot of that corridor is a public area where we would be converting the outside lane or adding an additional lane that would be just for transit that would allow transit to allow that travel time for liability especially in those congested periods. Along Phalen there are stops along Olive Street and on to Cayuga with our medical clinics and Health Partners nearby. Phalen Avenue with a north/south corridor through Saint Paul. And then Arcade Street where we upgraded on Arcade Street level, providing some north/south bus connections and service and development.

Continuing to the east, our next station would be at Cook Avenue. There is a Hmong Village shopping center at Maryland Avenue near the Phalen Village Shopping Center. This area is also where the project would start to share space with rail. The right-of-way is 70 to 100 feet which is adequate to fit the other two lanes for the bus and the lane for the BRT.

Next slide. As we continue north this is where we are in that former rail right-of-way a station proposed at Larpenteur Avenue. A station that was proposed on Frost Avenue which would be at the City of Maplewood. There has been a lot of recent redevelopment activities that have happened in that area up in the Gladstone area. North of that is Highway 36. We are proposing this to be a station that includes a park-and-ride facilities. This will be the first park-and-ride of three as part of the project.

Next slide. The next slide shows we leave the rail right-of-way. What will occur is the bus will leave the rail right-of-way, travel down on Bean with a dedicated lane in the center of the road, serve the existing Maplewood Mall Transit Center then come back on Bean and use Hazelwood where it is a local street to get us north to County Road D. Then at County Road D, the route would then follow the rail right-of-way again to Buerkle Road. That is currently where county ownership of that road ends and north of there is where it is still in the existing use of the BNFS railroad. Much like the Blue Line earlier for example, we needed to find another route to get us north. This case to get BRT traveling over a quarter mile to Highway 61 area, would be a good solution. So we have a station at Buerkle Road and a station at County Road E and at Cedar Avenue.

Next slide. Then after Cedar Avenue, we show this as purple. We are basically getting a dedicated lane by converting the shoulder into a transit only lane. Then as we get into White Bear Lake, there would be downtown White Bear Lake. There would be two stations. There would be one at Whitaker Street, which is the



Bermuda triangle development area. And then in downtown White Bear Lake between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets and Washington where the buses would lay over as well as turn around and head back.

Next slide. Future Rapid Transit Network. This map is the graphical technical depiction of the future rapid transit network in our region. Existing in future lines. This represents that all day frequent service. You can see by the purple line indicating the Rush Line. This really fills a gap within the northeast metro region.

Next slide. What is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)? I mentioned that this corridor is Bus Rapid Transit. A couple of the unique characteristics. I mentioned it would be operating in its own space. That is approximately 70 percent of the corridor. It would be operating in its own lane. With that reliability and speed of service. The buses themselves, we are looking at low floor buses, articulated 60 foot. So Jim will talk about the boarding process later. We are trying to line up those entry points with the platform to minimize and make that boarding process as easy as possible. The stations themselves, they are a little bit bigger than an arterial BRT station. But not as big as a light rail station. They will have ticket vending machines, fare card validators and a pylon outside. All of the typical features of a Metro Transit Station. That prepayment of fares is what allows you to get the Bus Rapid Transit

Next slide. I mentioned earlier that we are still early in the process. We are in this environmental analysis phase. Ramsey County is leading that in that phase. Once we complete that, which will be this fall, we will transition the project to the Met Council to lead and then we will become a partner. Then that will take us through the project development phase, final engineering construction and then ultimately, operations. In order to get to where we are, we have done preliminary engineering. We have done stationary planning. We have completed a pretty extensive public engagement plan leading up to this environmental assessment. If things go according to plan, this would be construction beginning 2024, with an opening in 2026.

Next slide. Platform Height. I mentioned we were going to be talking about a little more detail about the boarding process. I know that the TAAC had put in some feedback about the Gold Line a little bit earlier. I will have Jim speak to how we incorporated that into our Rush Line today.

Jim Gersema spoke to the TAAC committee. For the Rush Line project, we will be utilizing a 10-inch platform height. That is consistent with what is being used on the Gold Line so there is going to be consistency with the two projects and that standpoint. It also allows for the entire Metro Transit fleet to utilize these platforms. All the buses can board and dock at a 10-inch platform. One of the advantages of the 10-inch height is it still does allow the rapid transit bus to allow docking at these platforms and have the front of the bus to lower down through their suspension system. We call that kneeling. And provide a level entry at that front door. When the bus is able to pull up within two-inches of that platform edge. But still having the flexibility that if there are situations out there that are snow and ice and the bus can't get that close to the platform, still have that space available for the deployment of the ramp that we still have the flexibility to apply that accessible boarding experience at the front of the bus in all conditions.

Next slide. So what the rest of the platform, we are anticipating the amenities consistent with the other Bus Rapid Transit Systems in the region. On the screen there is an image of an Orange Line plan, a BRT station that shows the different elements there, shelter, ticket vending machine, information kiosk, fare card validators, a pylon and seating. That is consistent with what is planned for the Rush Line. The Rush Line project is not at a stage of design where all of those elements design so we can't show you specific examples of what will be there for Rush Line. That design is yet to come in the next phase of the project.

Next slide. As we plan for that next phase of projects, we can tell you that the shelters on that platform are anticipated to include a canopy, windscreens, heating elements, seating and informational signage included within the BRT system. In order to contain that consistency of what we are used to experiencing and the rest of the BRT system. And provide that customer experience that we have grown to expect as part of our Bus Rapid Transit projects and system.

Next slide. Environmental Assessment. Gitzlaff said we are getting close to publishing this environmental assessment document. This document is going to examine the environmental impacts of the project including land use, community cohesion, traffic, pedestrian and bike access, parks and recreation uses, historic and cultural resources. We are firming up that engagement plan right now but we will have online meetings that people can participate in. We are also looking at because the timing of these meetings would be in June, if we can do safely an in person meeting event for people who do not have access to online features. More of those details we will share with the TAAC when they become available.

Next slide. Public Engagement. We have done extensive public engagement. We always are doing engagement. If there are other groups you would like us to reach out to. We would love to take those suggestions or ideas that you have here today. Since we started this phase in March 2008, we have had roughly 200 events. Many have been focused in areas where there are low income populations or people of color that typically have not been represented well in planning processes. We spoke to approximately 3,400 people as part of this. Our online engagements have been pretty robust as well with a project website with interactive maps and surveys. As part of our public record we have over 2,600 comments recorded through this phase. The input that we got really has informed decision making with the design of the stations, design of the BRT and the trail. The track with the rail right-of-way. We actually reconfigured some of the stations and added a few as part of the input that we received as part of this process.

Next slide. Upcoming Activities. These are the dates of the anticipated public engagement period. May 11 through May 25. After the public comment period, the last step is that we would be seeking the environmental decision from the Federal Transit Administration. In this case it would be finding of the environmental impact. What all of the projects do is move on to the next phase.

Next slide. This slide shows ways you can get in touch with us with the project email and phone number.

Rushline.org     [info@rushline.org](mailto:info@rushline.org)     651-266-2760     facebook.com/rushline

Twitter   @rushlinetransit

We would be willing to answer any questions.

Fuglie said just a question about the ramps. Do you have ways in case the ramp doesn't work? is there a way to use them manually? What if they get stuck with snow or rain or not work at all? Are there options if they don't work?

Gersema said there are standards for procedures for the bus to dock tightly to the platform edge and just to kneel down to that spot till it gets a level boarding experience at the front door. The deployment of the ramps on the bus is only in those cases that specific docking procedure would be able to get to that tolerance needed for level boarding at that front door. We are up to the mechanical standards of the bus. How that ramp wants to deploy. Those BRT buses will be maintained at a high level. We anticipate that the instances of any mechanical error with that ramp deployment is very low. Once that is known, the bus will be returned to the garage for maintenance.

Myhre said how low is the bus going to get? Because the bus drivers don't always lower it and sometimes there is a thump when I get off the bus. I have actually had to use the ramp on a 68 that was malfunctioning. The bus driver saw it too and everything. How often are you maintaining buses? I actually saw a lift that needed some serious medical help in being fixed. But he was able to get it out.

Chair Fenley said this is an ongoing thing for the TAAC. With just bus and ramp issues and more specifically with BRT. How close they pull to the curb, given weather. And also, kneeling to curb level. According to the presentation, you will kneel the bus when possible. If more access is needed, then the ramp will be deployed. Is that correct?

Gitzlaff said that is correct. I have some input here from Charles Carlson. If the board can't happen where it docks and the ramp is deployed and it is broken, bus drivers can still manually deploy that ramp so there is the third level of backup.

Vice Chair Paulsen said Andy, I'm not sure if you brought this up, but you mentioned that you added additional stops to the Rush Line. This came as a direct result of the community involvement and community output. How do you see that happening and what route that you added because of added community output?

Gitzlaff said we added those fortunately early in the process. It would still make our balance of stations access and travel time work. So I don't anticipate additional stations to be added. The two that we added was the one serving the Hmong Village. It is a number of different vendors and it provides a more direct access to that and then across to the rec centers as well. That was through some early engagement and access involvement. Station was more at the Buerkle Road. We are always turning there. But that is a pretty high employment area with a number of businesses near the area. So that was a desire of the business community to see if we could make a station work there and be able to do that.

Sheldon said this Rush Line is going to be affecting Maryland Avenue only? Or is it going to run down Rice Street? Are we going to be eliminating different bus routes like the 3 and 62?

Gitzlaff said we are actually more to the east of Rice Street. We do cross Maryland, but we are crossing at perpendicular. So we are traveling at a certain railway right-of-way. So that limits the amount of interactions we have with no running and existing right-of-way there. As far as the existing bus network goes, at this point we haven't proposed eliminating anything as part of the service. As we get closer to an opening. Usually about two years out. That is when we will work with the Council to see not looking at reduction to service, but areas where we might want to tweak something on a different line to have the entire line up to the Rush Line, but not removing routes today.

Sheldon said which council are you going to be representing?

Chair Fenley said Kari, that was a fantastic question. It seems like you are a little bit ahead of the game here. We will definitely have Andy and Jim or whomever from this Rush Line come back and engage with us before any final decisions are made on the eliminations of bus routes. There are a few members here now who probably use those bus routes.

### **3. Legislative Update**

Brooke Bordson, Senior Project Coordinator Intergovernmental Relations, spoke to the TAAC committee. First of all, thanks for having me back. Legislators just got back from their Easter/Passover break yesterday. There are about six weeks remaining in the legislative session. They are required to adjourn by May 17, which is coming up soon. Between Monday and yesterday there were dozens of omnibus bills that were in the House and Finance committees. All those omnibus budget bills have to be passed by those committees by Friday, April 9, which is two days from now. This is a pretty chaotic week for committee work. Reviewing those bills, taking public testimony, working through amendments and then needing to get those bills out of committee today and tomorrow. For sure by Friday.

So it is a lot of really quick work. For our part, at the Council, we are still reading through those omnibus bills. Trying to understand them. The Council isn't just transportation. We are looking at provisions that impact park and our water activities and public safety, judiciary and there are a lot of things in these bills to go through.

Just to remind you from my comments, last time the state is working with the budget surplus of about \$1.6 billion, which was a huge swing from the previous budget forecast that projected a \$1.4 billion deficit. So that change sort of impacted how the committees were thinking about doing their work previous to that update.

Again, this is something we touched on last time the governor's budget proposal would use some of the federal relief funds that congress has approved to basically help us fill a structural budget deficit for this biennium and the next biennium.

Just to put some numbers to that. The transportation structural position for the state fiscal years 2020 and 2021 would be a negative \$243.6 million. In fiscal year 2022 and 2023 the deficit would be \$160 million. So that is where the federal funds are being used to backfill those deficits. And those federal funds obviously are a great relief in not having to figure out a way to address those structural deficits in this biennium and the next.

Also, included in the governor's budget and our initiative is a new authorization for regional transit capital bonds. This is for replacements. This is legislative station for the Council to issue bonds. The numbers are for 2021, \$48.4 million. And for 2022, \$50 million. That would let the Council issue those bonds, And those bonds are critical in providing a local match for federal funds for fleet replacement. In that fleet replacement, applies to Metro Transit, but also Metro Mobility, the suburban transit providers, and Transit Link as well.

So that is really small in that it is only one paragraph in the budget bill. But it is really important for us to try to secure that authority. As I mentioned, the House and Senate Transportation committees released their bills. We walked through those yesterday. They are pretty substantial bills, We are still working through those, but even a quick analysis shows that the House and Senate are going to be taking very different approaches on their budget bills this year. The House is proposing some new revenue for transportation. Including a metro area sales tax for transit. They are also making some adjustments to the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax, which is one of the major sources of transit funding. So that is something that we are trying to understand how that would play out and what that would look like.

The Senate bill is about as far away from that as you can get. The Senate bill would actually reduce most of our general funds based on transportation and have us rely almost solely on the federal relief funds for this biennium and the next.

Between where the House and the Senate are at, there is going to be a lot of work that needs to be done in the next less than six weeks at the end of the legislative session. As you can tell from my comments so far, the budget is sort of the big focus right now. I will just remind the committee that if you have a policy initiative that we are really hoping to get some traction with. That is allowing the Council to establish an administrative program for fare enforcement. That would allow civilian personnel to issue an administrative citation for fare evasion instead of having four police officers issuing criminal citations for fare evasion, which pushes that into the court system. Those are not generally. It is very rare for prosecutors to consider that worthy of the time and resources it takes to bring a criminal action for not paid a \$2.00 transit fare. We think we could create a more fair system so that the administrative citation would be even more commensurate of it being easier of not getting a ticket before you board a train or a BRT bus. That would allow us to have more official personnel on trains and on buses to help with this.

People feeling secure that their eyes and ears on the train that are from Metro Transit. This is a week where everything is really in flux. Everyone is scrambling to figure out what is in all these dozens of hundreds of pages of bills that the House and Senate committees are putting out.

On Friday, all the committees will have passed all of the bills and then the next step is for the full House and Senate to pass their bills and come up with their budget proposals as a whole. And after that it is time for conference committees where the House and Senate sort of fight it out with the administration to come up with the state's next two-year budget before the constitutional deadline of May 17.

Everything is pretty much up in the air right now. But I am happy to answer questions.

Fenley said is it fair to say that in regards to both the budgetary points that you mentioned, The federal funds and the bonding requests. Is it fair to say that any citizen reaching out to their legislator to support that would be appreciated by the Met Council?

Bordson said yes. Legislators are very responsive to when their constituents reach out. It is always helpful to especially in smaller issues, or something like RTE bonds. It is not the most attention-grabbing initiative that they are dealing with. So just getting it on their radar to be aware of the Council so it is not forgotten or seen as not as important as it is.

Chair Fenley said we have some policy wonk folks here on our committee. We also have some folks who have some pretty good relationships with legislators. I realize you all are poring over many pages of omnibus bills. But if you come across things that you would like us to address. The timeframe is short. So members wouldn't necessarily be able to speak on behalf of the committee to legislators since we didn't vote as a group. But that doesn't mean they can't as individual citizens do that. So as you are pouring over this as you do have time if you want, to send me or our staff at the Met Council just reminding us of things that would be beneficial to the disability community. That essentially narrows it down to anything that the Met Council does involving transit, budget, lines. Anything that would benefit that ultimately in my opinion, benefit the disability community. So just a reminder to you to feel free to shoot us emails on updates of things that is a time crunch. I know you might not have that luxury, but I will pass it to John. Do you have something to say?

Clark said I have built solid relationships with people formally. They are doing wonderful public disability issues unlike the other stations. And if I could be in touch with you either by phone or email, that would be wonderful. Since we have such a tight agenda.

Paulson said I think that the detail that you had this time was informative. More importantly I am going to ask you a more particular question. The MVST dollars that you are looking at. You were saying that you were looking at them and the sales tax of the MVST dollars. When that program was created, we were only looking at a half cent sales tax. Then I think you went in and it changed to a full cent sales tax. Are there additional proposals to increase that one cent sales tax? Many of us on this committee may have lobbied in an individual capacity. I am also really intrigued by looking at the master program where it does take the master transit program where it does take the fares out of the criminal element and makes it a civil citation. I think you will get a lot of folks that will understand the value of public transit once they decide to take cops off of our buses and put them in places that they need to be. And we put in people that are trained to teach navigation and to detect fare evasion. So if there are rules that you can give us that is actually where it is addressed in the omnibus bill

or if you could give us statute language that says “This is where the MVST dollars are on this page...” Where that transit master program exists. This is where the transit master program exists. Maybe this can be done offline.

Bordson said thank you for reminding me. The last time I joined your meeting, the issue was of the collateral consequences of fare evasion being a criminal offense. It is an offense on your record that might have impacts on housing, and other things. It is something that should be looked at for fairness and unintentional consequences. I will mention that that proposal which was moving as a stand alone bill is House File 1306. In the Senate it is Senate File 1513. That proposal in the House is on the general register now. it passed the Transportation Committee and the public facing committees. In the Senate, the bill passed the Transportation Committee. It was amended but it is still reviewed that the authority to let the Council create the program.

So the proposal is moving through the legislature. It hasn't received a hearing in the Senate Judiciary committee at this point.

For policy bills it doesn't need to make the second deadline because it passed the policy committees in the Senate. It is in the Transportation Omnibus bill. There is the authorization in that bill. So to that extent, it is still in play. It could be included in the final omnibus bill. There are a month of negotiations that are going to be kicked off next week. So we will hope for the best there.

Murphy said what were those file numbers again?

This is the bill that would allow the administrative program. The House File number is 1306. Representative Elkins is the chief author of that bill. The Senate File number is 1513. Senator Dibble is the chief author of that bill.

Murphy said one of the ladies, some years back, was on the bus. She had a walker. As she was leaving the bus, there was snow and her front wheels got caught and she went head over heels. One thing led to another. We were talking six or seven years later. Have you heard the bills about that? Something like driver training on disabled.

Bordson said I think I heard about that bill that was introduced. But I don't recall a hearing in the House or Senate about that bill.

Murphy said there was a House File 529 and a Senate file 1963 that was started by the Brain Injury Alliance. It was to try to get better education for the drivers. Just that simple reason that a lot of people in our group would be very interested in that. Making sure that the sidewalk in front of where the bus stops is clear. Like I was telling Brooke. This lady got off of the ramp and it was snow that was built up because of something to do with the gas station shoveling their snow and the embankment came down. She got caught between the ramp and the snow, fell forward. Many years later she is still dealing with the results from this fall. The bills made it through the first deadline of one body. They did not make it through the second body. But they still will be active next year. The bill did not die. I promised Joy and Jeff that I would say something today at this meeting so that other people could do just what we are talking about. Talk to the representatives and let them know these two file numbers. Especially because a lot of it is going to affect you guys when you can or can't get off the bus especially with walkers and scooters.

Rodgers said I heard yesterday that there was a hearing on fund reduction and Metro Mobility's budget. What is the scoop on that?

Bordson said I am guessing I would be referencing the Senate Transportation Committee's hearing on their Omnibus Budget Bill. That bill does reduce the Council's general fund base appropriation down to \$5 million each year until fiscal year 2025. That is a reduction in state funds for Metro Mobility and the rationale for this offer. The reason for doing this is because funding can be backfilled by the federal fund. So they are essentially bringing back funding for Metro Mobility with the assumption that we will be able to use federal funds to cover those costs. We are obviously very concerned about that because we have a pretty substantial structural deficit as I mentioned earlier. In the hundreds of millions of dollars. The Chair testified yesterday about that concern.

Rodgers said I'm not quite understanding this because I thought that Metro Mobility funding had its own line item and it was not any longer the general funds. So can you clarify that?

Bordson said yes, you are correct that Metro Mobility, in the last budget that was passed, for the first time, Metro Mobility got its own separate line item. That line item appropriated general fund dollars. Which still need

to be appropriated by the legislature in law. It is good that it has its own line item. It really draws attention to Metro Mobility and that the legislature has to make sure that it is funded. But they do still have the authority to, for lack of a better term, change that number and what we are seeing in the Senate bill.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Blue Line**

This item was not presented.

### **2. Green Line**

Bates said you can check on the SWLRT website for information.

### **3. Gold Line**

This item was not presented.

### **4. Rush Line**

This item was not presented.

## **CHAIRS REPORT**

Chair Fenley said the first thing is there is an idea that I have been batting around in my head. This is less of a question and more of a seed planting for the committee members. I would like to possibly start having a short presentations or meet and greets in our meeting with different departments at the Council so they would get a feel for who we are and vice versa so we could understand different departments at the Met Council. Just a thought. You all can bring ideas at a later meeting.

I also want to update you on a program that got started pretty quickly, actually. Within the last month, it is a collaboration between Metro Transit and the Department of Health. What the Department of Health wants to do is do a mobile vaccine bus tour around the entire state. Metro Transit, from what I understand, is providing in kind, the buses, the drivers. Then MDH is going to staff it. They will be going all over the state. Focusing on communities that might have missed or might not have the same access to vaccines at vaccine locations. There is a group that is working with MDH specifically on accessibility. Not on this topic exactly. But in general. Then this topic was brought to that group. I am part of that group. We did tour the buses because they did have to be retrofitted. They have to be used for something that was different than what they were designed for. The standards for fixed route buses are different than say the standards for vaccine sites. So they had to be retrofitting the buses and addressing concerns that was raised. But that is something that was moving pretty fast over the last month, I would say. And I wanted to update you all. But I hope to have that be an agenda item in May. Those are my updates for you all.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Nikki Villavicencio spoke to the TAAC committee. I want to talk briefly about something personally. I wear a lot of hats. I have been concerned about the transportation issue. The issue that I feel that hasn't been addressed in the disability world. I have personally brought it up multiple times in multiple situations and I have not gotten any responses from people. All I hear is "Oh that is a good idea" but nobody has moved on it. What I want to say is in the legislature we have a House File 2113. Section 2, Subdivision 4, Community assistance. It says that the bill states that a community person will help arrange for and prepare to obtain a Covid19 vaccine and transport limited members of the communities with transportation. I feel that legislation is very generic and general. My thoughts and concerns around it and what I shared with the legislature, if you are someone who takes Metro Mobility, there are going to be a lot of problems. There are already has and already is obviously with taking Metro Mobility to take your vaccine.

My thoughts are to have Metro Mobility at the table speaking about these issues because I have not heard them, and I think that we need to look at this as a broad issue and understand that some policy changes need to happen under Metro Mobility for folks with disabilities to be able to take Metro Mobility to get their vaccination. There needs to be some better coordination with timing, etc. I could discuss this further if anyone would like to. I wanted to bring this to all of you because you guys are concerned and engaged in transportation. And I think this is something that really hasn't been addressed enough in my opinion. I have tried to discuss this in my other hats and haven't gotten as far as I want to. I am coming to you as a regular disability advocate. Let's get together and figure this out. I have tried to call multiple people and haven't heard anything from the Metro Council on what their stance is. It is an equity bill. Disability needs to be included and equity at all levels. Let's do that together.

## **MEMBER COMMENT**

Myhre said Nikki is right. I took Metro Mobility to get my vaccination. I will work with Nikki.

Clark said the TAAC board needs to as soon as possible to establish a media oversight. I will be meeting next week with media representatives to discuss transportation issues and hold media accountable. If anybody wants to talk with me, feel free.

Rodgers said the one thing I wanted to mention to people. I think it is really important. There was mentioned earlier today about that someone that uses a walker and was dropped off in a snowy location and ended up falling. It is really all of our responsibility. When we encounter stuff like that, we have to report that because Metro Transit has a process in place that when that gets reported, they send somebody to clear it up. If nobody says anything, nobody knows to clean it up. So, legislation is great, but we oftentimes don't need to do that. We just need to start reporting things to Metro Transit so they can address it. They can't address it if they don't know about it. It is not just good enough that we put responsibility on the driver. You would think that the driver training would include information so that driver could report that kind of stuff. But they don't. So it's our responsibility when we encounter stuff that is not working or there is a barrier. We have to report that. Otherwise, we want Metro Transit to know there is something that needs to be fixed.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Alison Coleman  
Recording Secretary