

# Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAAC COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 4, 2017

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Kjensmo Walker, Vice Chair Patty Thorsen, Kari Sheldon, Heidi Myhre, Pamela Zimmerman and David Fenley.

**Committee Members Absent:** Julianne Bina.

**Committee Members Excused:** Christopher Bates, Ken Rodgers, John Clark, Dona Harris, Robert Platz and Margot Imdieke Cross,

**Council Staff Present:** Pam Steffen, Barret Clausen, Paul Lamb, Caitlin Schwartz, Berry Farrington and Charles Carlson from Metro Transit; Mary Bogie, Leslie Kandaras, Andy Streasick, Andrew Krueger, Dana Rude and Alison Coleman.

**Public Present:** none.

## CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Walker called the regular meeting of the Council's TAAC Committee to order at 12:37 p.m. on Wednesday, January 04, 2017.

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Myhre, seconded by Zimmerman to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Thorsen, seconded by Zimmerman to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2016 regular meeting of the TAAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

## BUSINESS & INFORMATION

### 1. Transit Review Forecast for 2018 – 2019 Biennium

Mary Bogie spoke to the TAAC committee. She is the Chief Financial Officer at the Metropolitan Council. The state forecast predicted a \$1.4 billion surplus for the state in the next biennium. But it also showed slower economic growth and lower revenue projections on a state-wide level. The lower revenue projections were offset by some reduced spending estimates. For the Council, what was interesting was the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax forecast, which was further reduced from the February forecast. When they do the Council budget they used the November forecast to project and to budget their expenses into the next year. They also use the February forecast as they are developing the preliminary budget. It is the November one that sets the basis for the budget. When they develop the budget, they use the February forecast for the preliminary budget and the comment draft. The November forecast comes out and they update to the November forecast and updating that budget in December.

Here is what happened in the forecast. The November 2015 forecast which was for last year's budget, actually went down between November and the February forecast by \$19 million. When they did the 2017 preliminary budget they took that \$19 million into account and it causes them to adjust their spending. But they were able to put together a budget in the public comment draft that addressed that first \$19 million. Then the November forecast came along and it more than doubled that. So in addition to the \$19 million, now it is up to \$43 million. The November forecast is different from the last November forecast.

How does that play through? They budget on a calendar year basis. But they have to use the state forecast where they take part of one forecast and part of another forecast and bring it down into a calendar year. So for calendar year 2016 they were \$11 million short of the forecast. In 2017 they are predicting \$14 million less than what they predicted in the previous forecast. For calendar year 2018 they are predicting \$13 million less than the last forecast. So this is a pretty big deal. The Motor Vehicle Sales Tax is 44 to 45 percent of the budget. They budget 95 percent of the forecast and then anything from the previous year was above 95 percent, they will budget that as well. So in good years they are budgeting 100 percent. In bad years like the one they just had, they don't have the five percent to move forward to the next year. So they are at a 95 percent forecast. Every one percent difference in the forecast is worth about \$3 million in the budget. So for a pretty significant shortfall for them both in the calendar year they just finished and then going into the 2017 budget.

On the calendar year 2017 budget the impact from the forecast difference alone was \$8.9 million in operating revenues. Because of the experience in 2015 it was lower than expected. It cost \$2.7 million that normally they would have put into reserves and brought into the budget that they were short and were not able to bring forward into the budget. The result of that is a draw on the original transit reserves. In fact, they are drawing on their Metro Transit reserves down below the minimum reserve target. Each of the operating funds they set a reserve target in the fund of 8.3 percent. That is about one month worth of expenses. They are drawing down below that reserve target.

They will have to address that as they come through the budget but given the timing of the forecast that receiving in December and adopting the budget by December 20 from a timing perspective it was better to use reserves to resolve the problem with the budget and address it as they move into the calendar year of 2017. That's the calendar year budget but she also wanted to talk about what does it look like going into the legislative session they have now. The landscape has changed dramatically as they go into this legislative session in terms of who is in control of the legislature and what their appetite for transit is.

What are we looking at in terms of the next biennium state fiscal years of 2018 to 2019, which starts at July 1, 2017? The Motor Vehicle Sales Tax downturn is \$43 million. Then you look at the Metro Mobility growth, which is another cost driving factor. They are growing at eight percent in terms of service demand for Metro Mobility. That is the inflationary cost of \$24 million. Certificates of Participation. The state had a share of the Southwest LRT. The state did not fund that in the last legislative session. They proposed issuing Certificates of Participation as a way of covering that state's share. So \$9 million over the biennium is the financing cost of the state's share of funding the Certificates of Participation. That is additional pressure of not funding it in the past. The rest is other inflationary pressures of \$13 million. That is about one percent of our transportation budget over the biennial.

It represents the growth and expenditures that is not being covered by growth in revenue. MVST being down. There hasn't been a fare increase since 2008 so they are not covering as much of the cost with those revenues as they were in previous budgets. All that adds up to going into the legislative session with a projected deficit of \$89 million. That is for the two-year biennium. This is just the transportation side of the budget.

This isn't a new issue they are just recognizing. This is the reason that the governor has proposed a transit sales tax over the last several years. They have recognized the instability in MVST revenues for quite some time. MVST is really susceptible to economic conditions. When the economy is bad, consumers make a decision to put off buying that car. That reflects in the MVST. Knowing that is the case the governor over several sessions has proposed a transit sales tax. That sales tax would create stable, long-term funding that allows them to effectively plan and budget transit investments. It eliminates the entire deficit. It funds needed transit growth to accommodate job growth and workforce demands. It enhances equity and geographic balance throughout the region.

Immediate administrative actions taken to prepare for the deficit. Targeted, temporary hiring freeze. They are still hiring mechanics and drivers. Reductions in administrative costs and a review of planned 2017 projects. They are looking at putting the start dates off a little. Can they delay a project for another year?

Other things under consideration. Absent the governor's sales tax proposal some options are under consideration in order to balance the Council's transportation budget. Fare increases, service reductions and medical assistance revenues for eligible Metro Mobility services. They are working with the Department of Human Services to access that funding. These are things that need to be talked about. They may take six to nine months to implement.

A portion of the Metro Mobility fare is eligible for medical assistance. They would have to work with the Department of Human Services to get the federal dollars. None of these things will solve the whole problem.

They do need to start a public engagement process soon. Early 2017 Council discussion of proposals needed prior to public comment and engagement. Making sure that they get the support needed.

This is the presentation she gave to the Council. The overall Council's budget is over \$1 billion. The funding is statutorily separate. So she can't spend the dollars for wastewater to do transit. Just like she can't do fares to do wastewater things. They have their transportation department which is Metropolitan Transportation Services and Metropolitan Transit. they have Community Development and Regional Administration and then there is the Wastewater division.

MVST is increasing about five percent a year. But the forecast is \$43 million less from the November 2015 to the November 2016 forecast. Fares are 24 percent of the budget. It has been flat since 2008. They are at a 23 percent of recovery. They are naturally going to have some revenue issues. They were at a deficit before the MVST news. That just made the deficit more.

## 2. Legislative Update

Leslie Kandaras spoke to the TAAC committee. She works in the Government Affairs department of the Metropolitan Council. The legislature just opened up it's 2017 session yesterday. The election is bringing a lot of changes in the legislature. The Republicans are in control in the House and the Senate. The last session they were in control of the House but the Democrats were in control of the Senate. The Republicans in the House widened their majority in the last election. The Governor was not up for reelection so there is a Democratic Governor. There is the expectation that this will be a very challenging session in terms of coming to some agreement on some of the major policy issues. They expect transportation to continue to be an issue that both parties are going to be interested in. For the last several years the Governor has supported a comprehensive Transportation Funding and Financing bill which would include a metro area sales tax. The Governor's budget isn't required to be released until January 24. They will probably know more later in the month. At this point they anticipate he will continue to support a comprehensive transportation financing package. They don't know for sure yet what it is going to look like but as of now they are expecting that he will continue to support a metro area sales tax which would be important to us because of the transportation budget decreasing.

Due to the election, the party control shifted in the Senate. There are a lot of new members and new leaders. The Transportation leaders have three new chairs. On the House side for the Transportation Policy Committee Representative Linda Runbeck is the new Chair. They also changed the name of the Transportation Policy Committee to the Transportation and Regional Governance committee. So they anticipate that in addition to talking about transportation policy, they will be talking about the Metropolitan Council Governance in that committee as well. They expect that conversation will continue this session.

In the House they have a separate Transportation Finance Committee that is chaired by Representative Paul Torkelson. Torkelson was previously the Chair of the Capital Investment Committee.

On the Senate side Senator Newman from Hutchinson is the new Senate Transportation Committee Chair taking over for Scott Dibble since the DFL is now in the minority. Those aren't the only leadership changes but those are the ones that are particularly pertinent to our work as it relates to transportation and policy heading into this session.

It is a budget year. The Legislature is going to form their 2018 - 2019 biennial budget this session. Even though the overall state budget projects a surplus it is smaller than it was going to be at the end of the 2016 session. They are already hearing continuing priorities headed into the session. The Governor remains strong in his support for large initiatives such as early childhood education. The Republicans are strong in their support for a tax cut in this session. In addition to any transportation issues they expect to hear a lot about MNsure in the coming weeks. They are expecting to hear about taxes, In particular, at the beginning of session, the legislature often takes up the tax conformity bill to ensure that Minnesotans filing their federal tax returns are able to take advantage of any tax changes that have occurred at the federal level. The tax bill was ultimately vetoed by Governor Dayton due to an error in the bill that would have ended up costing the state. That impacted us in that our Regional Transit Capital Bonding Authority was part of that tax bill. Even though we wouldn't have received money directly from the bill, it included the language that would allow us to take bonds of about \$80 million over two years to be part of our Regional Transit Capital Program.

If they do start moving on a tax bill again it is certainly an area the Council staff are going to look at to ensure they would be able to get that bonding authority. In the final minutes of the 2016 session the bonding bill failed to return to the House for a vote. There was no bonding bill last session even though it was a bonding year. Just this morning Governor Dayton released his updated bonding proposal. It is about \$1.5 billion. It includes many of the same priorities he had in his 2016 bill. For the Metropolitan Council, he doesn't have any transit projects in there because he remains committed to the comprehensive financing solution that would be delivered through the sales tax. In the proposal he released today he did include \$3 million for the Gateway project.

The bill that failed in the final minutes of the session last year included a few more items for Orange Line funding and funding for the transit station at the Mall of America. We will see if a bonding bill gets moving. We will be looking to see how they handle transportation or transitway projects.

Our policy proposals are the Governor's proposals.

Leslie will report back if she hears anything about the future of infrastructure in roads and private partnerships. Once Trump is in office and he puts out his budget she will know more. She will keep her eyes out for anything that would be an interest of this committee.

### **3. Better Bus Stops Update**

Barrett Clausen, Transit Information Services Coordinator, Paul Lamb, Senior Project Coordinator, Caitlin Schwartz, Community Outreach Coordinator and Berry Farrington, Senior Planner at Metro Transit, spoke to the TAAC committee. Better Bus Stops is partially funded by a Federal Ladders of Opportunity grant. This program is an effort to bring Thrive's Equity commitment to our everyday work to improve bus stops. The goals of better bus stops are to improve bus stops for better access to employment, education and opportunity. The program is really a capital project. So physical improvements at bus stops as well as a yearlong effort of community engagement work.

On the capital project side the goal is to add up to 150 new shelters at bus stops that have not previously had them and to improve 75 existing shelters with light and in some cases heat. The community engagement work is looking to hear more from transit riders and community members who have not participated in making transit decisions and who are effected by those decisions. They are using this community engagement work to look at how we prioritize investments in bus stops and engage in communities around specific bus stops in the neighborhoods.

The geographic focus area includes parts of Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Center, Minneapolis, Saint Paul and Richfield. She showed the concentrated poverty areas where the majority of residents are people of color. Then she showed the city recognized neighborhood boundaries that contain those areas of concentrated poverty. They just wanted to have a project area that had boundaries that people were familiar with and could recognize easily.

The bus stops within this project area is their focus for making those improvements as well as an intense level of community engagement in this geography. There is an interactive map on metrotransit.org and it has some lists of some bus stops that they are working on improving. Part of the project is working to be more transparent in what they are doing and what is being planned. Here you can track the project.

In terms of setting the stage in what they were doing in 2016. In the last couple of years they have been working towards the goal previously mentioned of 150 new bus shelters and making improvements to existing shelters. In 2014 and 2015 they put in 48 new shelters at bus stops that didn't have any. Then last year they added 26. Part of the reason for that is in previous years they were able to find places that already had pavement in place so that they could just put a shelter down. In 2016 they needed to do more work to do actual construction for the shelter and a level foundation to place a shelter there. So 2016 was a lot more construction oriented and making electrical connections, they added heat at 14 locations and light at nine existing shelters. As they were putting in new shelters they were adding light and heat to those were they were able to do the construction and make that work. They were able to put in 74 new shelters under this program. They are half way to the goal of 150. With that addition they will be at 1,100 shelters in the metro system. For existing shelters they have been able to add light to 41 and add heat to 14. They are halfway to their goal of improving 75.

Another piece of this is replacing advertising shelters. A couple of years ago, a third party advertising firm had commitments or contracts with a lot of major cities in the areas. Their franchises were not renewed. So the maintenance and ownership of the shelters will switch over to Metro Transit. A lot of those shelters are 20 or 30 years old and not maintained as well. They are in the process of removing those shelters and replacing them with newer shelters. They are maintaining those shelters and adding light as well.

In terms of what they were able to do in 2016. Because of the geographic constraints and the funding, they had to work with a lot of those improvements that were focused in North Minneapolis, Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center. That funding was the Ladders of Opportunity funding. They will be getting a large portion of that this year that will allow them to spend that money in the areas and neighborhoods of concentrated poverty.

Last year they gave a presentation and asked input from this committee about the newer design of shelters. The standard shelters are six feet deep by 12 feet long. They provide a good amount of protection but they also restrict them in where they are able to put shelters. With this newer and smaller design that is two feet deep and either eight or 12 feet long. The roof is about 4½ feet deep. They don't provide as much protection but it does allow them to put shelters in areas where they were previously not able to.

With this they were able to put in an order last year for more of them. They were able to put in 16 shelters in at bus stops that previously wouldn't have been able to accommodate the standard size shelters.

The improvements that they have been making this year and will be making the next couple of years. As they are going out to the sites they are looking at what the sidewalk looks like. Is there a boarding pad? Does anything need to be replaced? If it is close enough to an intersection. Are the pedestrian ramps at the intersections up to code? Does it need to be replaced? That is something they will be looking at for all 150 bus stops where they are adding shelters and the ones they are looking at upgrading.

With the bus shelters, they are putting in, Metro Transit is assuming responsibility for doing snow maintenance around the shelter itself and to the bus stop. That would be 10 to 20 feet of sidewalk they will clear for access. They won't clear a sidewalk in a public area all the way if it goes in front of multiple property owners. They will only clear the bus stop and shelter area.

The new bus stop signs with route information are another type of improvement they are making at the bus stops. These signs will be installed at all bus stops. Currently installation is half way complete. They began in 2015 installing signs in the northwest metro. In 2016 they installed them in the highest ridership routes. By the end of the year all of the prioritized bus stops had these improvements. At the end of 2016 there were 7,400 signs installed and 1,900 stops with additional route information signs that have maps, information about destinations and direction.

The feedback has been positive. Next Trip is a new feature on the signs. Each sign has instructions for that location on how to send a text message and get real time information back to their phone. It doesn't require data or a smart phone. As more signs have been installed there has been an increase in the service. Especially between July and October in installation as there was significant growth. In October, there were 73,000 per bus. In 2017 we are going to start to look into ways to evaluate if this information is meeting customer's needs.

They have been looking toward the end of the year for active engagement. They started the process last March and go through this March. One of the unique elements of this process is the partnership with the region's community engagement team. That is comprised of community partners, the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. They have partnered to lead a subcontracting process that has allowed them to resource 11 community organizations. They focus in different neighborhoods of the focus areas that were mentioned earlier. This has allowed them to leverage and work with trusted community partners to know their communities and neighborhoods a lot better than Council staff does and they are able to dig deep within their constituencies. When they think about that kind of mode of engagement that has allowed them to. There are about 40 focus neighborhoods within the project focus area. That has allowed them to cover about 22 neighborhoods. That has allowed them to think of a broader public engagement plan. To really get at the rest of the focus area and to think about a more region wide voice as well.

They have done a variety of strategies to do that. One has been a survey that they closed in November. That was posted on the website for about six months. They both had it accessible on line and Community Partners were able to use that as a tool in their own engagement that allowed them 1,963 respondents. Some of the demographic data showed that 21 percent of respondents identified as having a disability. The core of this community engagement is to make sure that they are hearing the voices of folks that have been historically marginalized from the processes. They continue to do presentations to neighborhood organizations that are in the focus areas. They have been doing popup engagements going to the transit centers and busy bus stops in the focus areas to make sure they are centering on transit riders' voices. They have also done a variety of property owner outreach and communication to folks that are seeing improvements on their corners or in front of their houses to ensure that they are keeping them updated with what is coming. And then continued outreach and coordination with city, county and other agency partners.

Currently Metro Transit's practice of prioritizing which bus stops get shelters involves looking at the averaging of how many people get on buses every day. They look for 40 or more people getting on in a day in Minneapolis and Saint Paul and 25 or more people getting on in suburban stops to even be considered for a

shelter. However, there are hundreds of stops that meet that minimum criteria and don't have shelters. They just don't have the resources. With this push to add more shelters to meet the demand there. They also don't have a way to understand that these minimum guidelines where is it most important to have a shelter. Where should they absolutely prioritize even when resources are tight. They need to figure that out. They are hearing back from community organizations.

They have also been criticized for why there are two standards. That goes back to trying to spread resources around the region and also as a way to put shelters in places where maybe there is less service like at a suburban bus stop. They think there are other ways they can come up with criteria people can easily understand and will help them better prioritize. They are wrapping up this year long of active engagement. Getting information back from the community organizations and the survey. They will be using this information to update the guidelines and come up with an ability to prioritize where shelters go using more than just boardings.

Looking forward in 2017 they will continue on the capital project of adding shelters and improving shelters. Part of that is adding solar panels to the roof of shelters and bringing interior lighting. An advancement has been made in terms of all of the bus stop signs having new designs. In community engagement, wrapping up this partnership and getting those guidelines drafted for public review and comment with the goal to finalize new guidelines by the end of the year.

A bus stop needs to have at least 10 boardings to get a bus stop information sign. Maintaining the signs has been a big priority.

#### **4. Rapid Bus Program Update**

Charles Carlson, Senior Manager, Transitway Development, spoke to the TAAC committee. He manages the BRT program for Metro Transit. On June 11 they opened the A-Line. There has been a very strong performance with it this year. In the corridor, the bottom line is that they are up 35 percent over 2015 since they introduced the A-Line. They are seeing the strongest growth in the corridor at the rail connection. The connections with the Blue Line and the Green Line and also at the transit center and regional shopping center at Rosedale. In those three locations they are seeing the biggest boost and also a lot of people getting on at other stations to get to those locations as well. The other thing they are observing is that Fridays is actually the highest ridership days, unique to the A-Line. Typically, on bus corridors, Friday is a soft day. With the A-Line it is the busiest day. People are using this for shopping and social trips. It is more than just the weekday commute.

They have also been able to deliver a faster and more reliable service. That was one of the principal goals and they have accomplished that with eight or nine minutes savings per bus trip, which is 20 percent faster than the previous local bus service. They are right on target with the speed increase. Through October they actually have accomplished a 92 percent on time performance, which is better than the bus and light rail systems. There is very strong on time performance through the year to date.

Feedback from customers is that they like the on-time performance, the shelters, the stations, the service and the buses. There is good feedback and good suggestions in terms they could make on future lines. This is the first of many of these lines and they want to continuously improve as they progress.

They also looked at over a while the potential to extend the A-Line further north. You may know that Ramsey County and the City of Arden Hills and other cities in the area north of Rosedale have interest in development and redevelopment. Particularly around the former ammunition plant in Arden Hills. They asked Metro Transit to look at extending the A-Line up to this location. So they took a look at that over the last couple of years as they were implementing the A-Line. They concluded that evaluation and posted it back in September. This is just a quick overview of the estimated cost evaluation. It would be about \$16 million for the 8½ miles additional. The operating cost of that would be quite a bit more than the actual operating costs of implementing the A-Line itself. The reason is because with the opening of the A-Line they replaced a lot of local service in the corridor. Extending it further north, there is not a bunch of local service to replace north of Rosedale. It would be all new costs associated with extending the A-Line north. That has significant ramifications in terms of timeline that they would actually do this extension. It would need to have very strong ridership from the beginning to support that cost increase on the order of 2,000 to 4,000 rides a day. When they are looking at the A-Line itself, it carries 4,000 to 5,000 rides a day. The bottom line conclusion of this evaluation is that there are steps toward extending the A-Line itself. They should begin with local service as funding allows. This may be a near term

step while continuing to plan for eventually extending it as other road projects occur. It would be very easy and very inexpensive to plan for a nicer bus stop as part of a regular route project but very costly to go back and retrofit it if we didn't do that in advance. That is the recommendation regarding that extension.

More near term they are advancing other lines. So they are currently in the engineering process for the C-Line. That should be the next rapid bus line. Back in October they completed the environmental review. So that is a major federal milestone that they have accomplished. They have also been looking at this route and what the best long term routing might be. If you are familiar with this area, the C-Line runs on Penn Avenue in Brooklyn Center to Downtown Minneapolis. The east/west section of that currently Route 19 one of the regular top 10 bus routes runs on Olson Highway. Olson Highway is also where the Blue Line extension, the light rail line is planned. The question came up of do we want to stack LRT, BRT and local bus service all on top of each other on the same street?

They looked at that and came up with a recommendation. When the Blue Line Extension opens. This is forecast to be 2021. When that occurs that they would realign the C-Line to Glenwood Avenue. What that means in the near term is they are not going to develop and construct permanent stations on Olson Highway. They would be developing temporary station conditions and then moving them and building stations on Glenwood when the certainty is there around the Blue Line Extension. Back in November the Council approved that the long-term alignment and then they would move to Glenwood in that 2021 era timeframe.

However, they are advancing the C-Line outside of that east/west segment in full right now. They just received the 30 percent plans. They will be reviewing those and presenting the project next month to this body. Past 2017 they will be completing the final design then. Then they will be working to get the project ready for construction in 2018. They have an application in through the Regional Solicitation right now to secure \$7 million more for the project. There would still be a gap after that that they will be working to fill this year of an additional \$8 million to \$13 million. They are working to fill that funding gap so they can advance the construction in 2018 and then operations in 2019.

The next line up would be the D-Line. They are just beginning the planning on this one. There are some traffic studies related to this. There is the initial station plan development that they are beginning to work on. Early conversations within the community with the riders around what this line could be. The D-Line would substantially replace Route 5, which is Metro Transit's number one ridership bus route extending from the Mall of America up to Brooklyn Center. Ongoing local service in the corridor, like with A-Line, most of the service along this route would be the rapid bus service. They have submitted funding applications. They are waiting for the results for those. The expectation is that in the middle of this year they will be bringing station plans forward for Council approval that effectively determines which intersections the rapid bus stations would be located at. Later in the year they would be initiating engineering for the plan. That would progress the full design across 2018 in preparation for construction.

The improvements are designed in part to serve the concentrated areas of poverty that are fundamentally underserved in some ways including the capital investment side. Many of the efforts they are doing with the Better Bus Stops side are putting investment into these areas but these rapid bus lines will pull all those pieces together and develop a corridor level service and facility improvement.

Also coming up is some early opportunities on the next lines. They have actually identified the line after the D-Line. That would be the B-Line. That would be on Lake Street and Marshall Avenue from the Green Line to the Green Line. From the West Lake Station crossing Lake Street under Marshall Avenue and then connecting up to the Green Line at Snelling and University. Right now there are a couple of efforts underway. If you go to Lake and Hiawatha today you will see the form work of one of these stations coming out of the ground in conjunction with a service development project that Hennepin County is pursuing at that corner. They will be instructing one of these stations in anticipation of the B-Line in the future.

They are also designing stations for this line as part of the I-35W transit access project that you may be familiar with from previous Orange Line briefings. A couple of these stations they will actually construct as part of the effort.

The line after that then would be the E-Line on Hennepin Avenue. This is in part because there is a downtown reconstruction plan for Hennepin that Metro Transit is able to partner with and advance now. They also have a highly ranked application for funding for a portion of that money. They are beginning some of the early planning steps on these future lines as they are developing and deploying the more near time funds.

There was a slide that shows what the funding needs are and what the ridership served would be. The A-Line was a \$27 million project. The C-Line is the next one. There is \$13 million yet to find this year so they can construct it next year. Then there are the future needs after that. This is pointing to the need of a reliable long term source of revenue to construct these projects. Even though they need \$133 million to get these all built. These corridors already serve and will continue to serve a huge portion of Metro Transit's ridership. About 75,000 riders a day just on these lines. That is 80,000 when you include the A-Line. That translates to 25 million plus riders annually for a fairly modest investment of capital then creating a better opportunity for a faster more efficient and more comfortable trip along these key corridors. They are hoping to advance these corridors at a pace of one per year.

The stop spacing is not every block. It is every three to four blocks. By having a station platform, they can more easily board and alight customers from all doors of the bus. To do that they also have off board fare payment. Instead of lining up one at a time to pay at the front door everybody can get on and off any door of the bus. That makes it faster. Wheelchairs would still board at the front of the bus. There is signal priority which gives you shorter stops at traffic lights. Combine that with increased service frequency it all adds up to a faster trip than regular route buses.

There is a similar layout of each of the stations. The placement between where the transit information sign and the shelter and where the fare revenue equipment is located is consistent corridor-wide. There are tactile warning strips on the full length of the station platform so you can more easily identify where the platform edge is than of a standard curb. The real-time information that is at every bus stop is also there. There are push button enunciators. There is a different wheelchair securement device on the vehicle itself. So even though the process of getting onto the vehicle if you are a wheelchair user is similar. There is a ramp. The securement process is more efficient with the upgraded securement device. They are looking to improve on that with the new lines with a passive securement device like a pulldown arm.

If they don't secure the money for the C-Line and the other projects in time, they could lose the funding for those projects.

The A-Line is on track as far as ridership growth within the corridor. What has surprised them is the extent to which ridership has shifted to the A-Line. People are choosing to get to an A-Line station and take that service more than they would have expected based on the frequencies of each line.

Full platform snow removal is one of their goals.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1. Blue Line**

This item was not presented.

### **2. Green Line**

This item was not presented.

### **3. Orange Line**

This item was not presented.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **MEMBER COMMENT**

Patty Thorsen spoke to the TAAC committee. She has been serving on a Citizens League committee doing a transit study to prepare a report to give to the legislature about transit funding. Her role is to be the face of somebody who uses transit. they completed their meetings in December. They met from September 22 to December 22. They will be doing two drafts in January, sending a report to the legislature in the first of February. She will report back in February.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Alison Coleman  
Recording Secretary