

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAAC COMMITTEE

Wednesday, September 4, 2019

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

Committee Members Absent: None

Committee Members Excused: Christopher Bates, John Clark and Richard Rowan.

Council Staff Present: Council Member Chai Lee; Charles Carlson, Kyle Burrows, Karyssa Jackson, Liz Jones, Jan Dietrich, Rachel McCaffery and Doug Cook from Metro Transit; Sara Maaske, Christine Kuennen, Andy Streasick and Alison Coleman.

Public Present: Chris Beckwith, Gold Line Project Manager, Charlene Doll, Chelsa Johnson, Jan Lucke, Brian Isaacson, Andy Gitzlaff, Mike Roers and Sara Allen

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Fenley called the regular meeting of the Council's TAAC Committee to order at 12:32 p.m. on Wednesday, September 4, 2019.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

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

It was moved by Thorsen, seconded by Fuglie to approve the minutes of the August 7, 2019 regular meeting of the TAAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

BUSINESS & INFORMATION

1. Gold Line Input

Charles Carlson, Director of BRT Projects at Metro Transit, and Chris Beckwith, Gold Line Senior Project Manager, spoke to the TAAC committee.

Beckwith said I will begin with an overview of the project. We are at 15 percent design right now. We are working towards 30 percent. So it is still early on. There are still a lot of decisions to be made. It is the perfect time for us to come before you and get some feedback that we can implement into our designs. That is why we are here today.

She showed a Gold Line project map. The Gold Line is a ten-mile long route. It is a Bus Rapid Transit route. It is primarily a dedicated bus lane. This makes it different from any other BRT we have on our system here locally. There are some highway BRT's that we have implemented. We have the Orange Line that is being constructed and the Red Line. We have some arterial BRT's. The Gold Line is really different from those in that it is on its own roadway. It is similar to light rail in that respect. It is on that dedicated roadway as we call it. It allows for fewer impacts with traffic. We can move through more quickly and more predictably on this type of service.

It is between Saint Paul and Woodbury. It also serves the communities of Maplewood, Landfall and Oakdale. It is fast, frequent service. It is in those bus only lanes. It is all day, both direction, seven days a week. Ten to 15-minute frequency. You won't even need a schedule. You just show up at the station much like you would a Green Line or a Blue Line. And just wait for the bus to come.

There are 21 stations with full features like light rail. You pay before you board. They have raised platforms and fewer stops. There is signal priority, meaning the bus can contact the signal system ahead of time to get priority to get through the signal systems more quickly. It will have real time signage at the station so you will know when your bus is coming.

There are four park-and-rides located at Sun Ray, Helmo Station, the Woodbury Theater and the Woodbury I-494 Park and Ride, which is a new park-and ride.

As I said, we are at 15 percent and working toward 30 percent. There is plenty of time to implement your feedback. Make this the best project we can for all users.

A couple of other things I wanted to mention. This terminates at the Smith Avenue Ramp by the Xcel Energy Center downtown Saint Paul. It travels along 5th and 6th Streets downtown. It stops in front of the Union Depot. We are also stopping at the back of the Union Depot in our environmental assessment. Then we will go over the Kellogg Bridge. We will turn at Mound on to Hudson. We are replacing the Maple Pet Bridge between Mounds and Earl. We are replacing that to make it ADA compliant.

We have stops at Earl and Etna. We have a bridge at Etna, which will bring it over to a short, mixed traffic section on Old Hudson Road. We are then going under White Bear Avenue. We will have a stop at Hazel. Then we will go under Ruth Street. We have a stop at Sun Ray at the park-and-ride. There are interconnecting routes there. We will be going on a bridge over McKnight, which will have a pedestrian and bike facility on it. We will then stop in Maplewood at the 3-M Campus. We will be going on a bridge over Century. Then mixed traffic along Tanners Lake. We will have a stop at Greenway, which is right near Landfall. We will turn north on Hadley then east on 4th Street in Oakdale. We will go south and stop on Helmo. There will be a new bridge over I-94 at Helmo Avenue connecting to Bielenberg in Woodbury on the other side. There is a Home Furniture in that vicinity. We are touching down at Home Furniture parking lot with a brand new crossing of I-94. We will have a stop at Tamarack and two stops at the Woodbury Theater and the i-494 park-and-ride.

Moving ahead to the next slide. Slide number five. We show a slide with four types of dedicated guideway (BRT only lanes). The first one is mixed traffic. It is just like a local bus service and will be operating right in mixed traffic with vehicular traffic. To the right is a dedicated curb side running. That means the BRT lanes are on the outside of the vehicular lanes. One in each direction. They are typically separated by pavement markings. So not a raised median.

The next one is Dedicated side runnings. Both of the BRT lanes (both directions) are on one side of the vehicular lanes. They are separated by a raised median. The final one is dedicated center runnings. Both BRT lanes in both directions are in between the vehicular lanes. We have all four of these types of dedicated guideway in this one project.

A couple of demographics along the Gold Line corridor. We have 17 percent of our households within a quarter mile of the Gold Line who do not have access to a car. This is a pretty big deal. The Gold Line will mean quite a bit to those homes who do not have access to a car. This will be that fast, frequent, predictable all-day service. You don't even need a schedule. There are fourteen percent of people who report having a disability along our alignment. There is 47 percent people of color. And the highest concentration of zero car households and people who report having a disability is in Saint Paul. Saint Paul and Landfill have the highest concentrations of people of color.

We have been doing quite a bit of outreach in 2018 and 2019. Darrell has been to quite a few of our open houses. He serves on our Community and Advisory Committee. We had quite a few open houses last summer. There were over 120 outreach and engagement events, meetings and activities. There were over 2,500 individual connections. There were mailings to over 2,100 residents. There were nearly 800 survey respondents. We had contact with nearly 200 residents while door-knocking.

Briefly, on our schedule, the BRT projects that are receiving the same type of funding that the LRT projects receive the same kind of funding. It takes seven to eight years to get through these projects. We are on that same timeline. We are in the project development phase. It is two-years long. We are completing environment assessments. That will be published in October. We will have some open houses. We would encourage everybody to come and check those out or provide your comments online on our environmental assessment. The environmental decision comes from the FTA. It will hopefully come in January. It will be followed by an engineering phase of one to two years. Then construction of two to three years. And revenue service in 2024.

Charles Carlson said in terms of the discussion around the platform. We have been before the TAAC committee with other projects in the past. We do have a number of input points that we can build from. But that is not to say that experiences don't inform new input and new approaches. One of the things that we want to do in bringing an introduction of this project to the committee today is to really set the stage for additional input, both today and in the future so that we can develop the best project possible.

As we walk through some of the stations, features that we will show on the subsequent slides. One of the things we would like the committee to consider is what are the priorities of these different station elements? What are examples of that you see in today's work or your own experience on the transit system here or across the country that work well? Make it easy to board the system and use the system. What would help make our platforms even better? Not just the input that we have received in past projects, but what are your ideas, what innovations that you could help us implement on the Gold Line?

Feedback today will help inform some of our initial concept development. We would like to then come back to the TAAC with concept designs for further input. We would like your input on vehicle development as well.

When we think about the Bus Rapid Transit station and the thing that the Gold Line has different from the rest of our BRT system is the dedicated guideway. The stations have more in common than not. So a lot of the features of the station are features that we have implemented on the A-Line and the C-Line and that we are moving forward with the Orange Line and other projects that are in development.

This is a picture of a concept station. This is a developed design for the Gold Line. At this point it is an illustrative concept of the types of features you might see at a station platform. One of the big points of input that we have received in our light rail project partners have received including from the TAAC in the past, is the importance of having a consistent station layout. So the elements and the design of the station being arranged consistently between platforms so that people are more easily able to navigate where you need to get to pay a fare or board a vehicle. Things like that.

What is shown here is more of a concept at this point. Our intent would be to arrange the station elements in a consistent manner across the project so that it is easy to find the ticket validator, or it is easy to find the real time information and other features associated with the project. One piece that you see on the edge of the platform is a tactile warning edge. So this would be consistent with our other projects where there is a two-foot wide truncated dome strip along the entire platform face to delineate the edge of the platform across the line.

We also see a pylon marker. So a visible station marker. That also houses the real time information enunciator button. So there is a push button that would read the time on the visual real time arrival sign. The ticket vending equipment would be somewhat consistent across our systems. So the same light rail ticket machines and ticket validators that we have on our other system would be present in the Gold Line.

There is also a shelter. So each station stop would have a shelter. For a robust protection from the elements while customers are waiting. The intent is to provide a ticket vending machine and have this be a proof of payment to the fare collection systems. The fare payment would be happening offboard. With periodic inspection from Metro Transit Police onboard the vehicle. We intend to have waste and recycling receptacles on the platform maintained by Metro Transit staff. A point of information we have heard from the committee in the past has been the importance of having seating both inside the sheltered area as well as on the platforms. Depending on the weather conditions. There is seating available in proximity to the heated area in the shelter as well as a priority for that.

These station platforms would be well lit. They have their own lighting system both inside the shelter and on the platform itself. It would also have security features. So an emergency telephone with a push button to connect to the control center as well as security cameras that would be monitored potentially upon demand from the control center. There would also be an arrival enunciator button with real time information as it occurs.

Those are some of the platform features. There are other platform design aspects that we are going to seek some input on as well. This is one of the things that we will continue to explore. I will turn it back to Chris to describe the different platform height approaches that we are considering.

Beckwith said our platform height is still under evaluation. We have a raised platform. As part of a premium BRT service there will be a raised platform higher than the standard six-inch curb. Regardless of the height we end up with, it will be raised. So the two options or categories we are considering right now are 14 inches or higher or a nine to 11 inch near level boarding platform.

So I will start with the 14 inch platform. So some of the limitations we have for light rail is it is on rail. The operator does not have to line up that train with the platform. They don't have to get close to that platform edge. It is fixed in height every single time. We obviously don't have that with the BRT. It is one of the disadvantages of BRT in that you can't line up perfectly every single time. That is one thing that we are considering right now or one issue. But really down to the two options. The 14 inch or higher platform would give you a minimal vertical gap. So you would be able to roll right on and it would be level most times. Maybe with some fine-tuning adjustments by the driver. It would be level. However, it is a little more challenging to get close when you are docking a bus to the stations. You could have a three to five-inch horizontal gap that you have to traverse in that situation. Maybe even more in the rear doors. That is one of the things we are trying to design for right now. In that option.

The bus ramp would usually be deployed. Maybe there are some cases where you wouldn't need the bus ramp to be deployed if it was close enough. But it would only be able to serve a BRT bus only. So you couldn't have a local bus stopping at this height of a platform. Separate local bus stop location.

The second option shown on here that we are evaluating is a nine to 11-inch platform. The horizontal gap is minimal because the driver can get it a little closer. There will be that three to five-inch vertical gap. The bus ramp will have to be deployed in that situation. This will serve BRT and other bus modes as well. So you can have local buses stop here as well. Those are the two we are evaluating. We are not considering a standard curb height. That is not part of the premium BRT service.

The last item we wanted to touch on is winter maintenance. The photo on the left side is the Red Line BRT. In January of 2019 I personally went out and rode the Red Line on a snow event to see how it was working for them. They do have a level boarding platform. This was one of very few platforms that actually still had snow on it. They did a really good job of clearing snow off the platforms that day. This was one of those school closing kind of events. So my kids were at home during this snow event.

They did deploy the ramp. Showed me how they worked that. It went right over the top of that snow. They were having success with the navigating elements on that day.

In the upper right it just shows a light rail platform. There was a dusting of snow there. But really to remove snow and ice from the stations it requires a lot of hand work, specialized equipment that needs to be trailered and brought from station to station. It is hard to keep up with the snow in Minnesota. They start at a station and move down the line and start over again. You are just trying to catch up with it all day.

You probably have seen examples on the Green Line and bus stops. Just trying to keep up with those snow events. That remains a challenge.

The lower right picture shows one of our maintenance workers spreading salt on an iced platform. From a snow event in the last year or two. This is also another issue. An issue for trains, buses, vehicles, wheelchairs and walkers to try to get around in winter events like that. We recognize that those are also concerns as well.

We would like to turn it back over to you for discussion. What design choices can make the Gold Line a premium service for all users? What other ideas or innovations do you have that you would like us to take a look at?

Paulsen said whenever we can do level boarding or near level boarding, we should do that. Because even if they did deploy the ramp, if you use it when it is not needed, you are going to drive up maintenance costs. One thing I would encourage is whenever we can do near level boarding, or minimize the ramp being deployed, let's do that.

Carlson said the Gold Line will connect with a lot of other transit services both in downtown as well as along the corridor. In each case we would be looking at the proximity of the connection and then would coordinate in terms of both the ridership and the ridership standards for when we place different infrastructure on those connecting services. But also, within the knowing of what the construction limits of the Gold Line will be. Where it is feasible, we would be providing a connecting bus stop upgrade in connection with the Gold Line project. They vary on a case by case basis.

Jasmine said if you don't know where the bus stops will be as far as the shell of the bus stop. I was curious as to the path of the bus stop to the vehicle. Will it cross anything besides the sidewalk? You start downtown, right?

Beckwith said yes. We terminate at the ramp near the Xcel Energy Center. The Smith Avenue Ramp. Each station is a little bit different. So some of them you would have to cross a roadway to get to the station. There would be a crosswalk there. Some are signalized. It really varies station to station as to how you would access the station itself.

Jasmine said we had a discussion about how downtown was going to be set up with where there might be bike paths running along the sidewalk, etc. I was concerned about the path between the bus stop and the vehicle. The other question is can you talk about the signage? Is there going to be anything audible? Have you already done that? How are you doing that?

Carlson said within the station design itself. As the design progresses, we will get into more of the system's development. But consistent with past BRT projects, the real time arrival information sign would say the routes that are arriving as well as the minutes until the next bus. I think it is a decision that is ahead of us yet and whether that will be automatically announced at the station like it is on light rail. Or if it would be more of a push button feature that would then read the times as we have on the bus system.

Jasmine said I hope it would be automatically announced because if you are going to depend on a push button, where is that button? You have to find it. If we don't know where it is, there is another trouble part there.

Imdieke Cross said I wanted to follow up on what our Vice Chair was talking about because in part, if we can minimize deployment of the ramp, the equipment is going to last longer. It would be a lot quicker and a lot more efficient. But the fact that there is a three to five-inch horizontal gap, it concerns me greatly. I know when we were working on the LRT systems. We brought that down to under three inches, if you look at the standard wheelchair, you are going to find that their caster is anywhere from one inch. Even some are less than an inch in width. To the wider powerchairs which are about three inches. But if you have a three to five-inch opening, you are going to have some serious problems with the casters falling into the opening. In fact, I have witnessed it. The casters are the two small wheels that are at the end of the chair. In those instances where you cannot get that horizontal opening less than three inches, I would say that option two, the nine to 11-inch platform is going to be more safe. That would involve a three to five-inch vertical gap. But I would rather have the deployment of the lift than somebody potentially trying to jump the five-inch opening. If the gap is there, you would go with the lower platform. If there is no way to minimize that gap. The particular elements that come into play that create a larger gap in some instances. And a smaller gap in other instances. I am talking horizontal gap not vertical.

Carlson said one of the things that is unique in this case is that we are looking at the longer, 60-foot articulated buses. When those vehicles move away from the platform, the front end of the bus swings inward from the platform when the bus is pulling away. As the bus pulls away it overswings the platform a bit. That is what brings in that horizontal gap with the 60-foot bus. It needs that clearance without hitting the platform as the bus is moving away.

Imdieke Cross said in a typical situation there is going to be some entrances that are closer to the platform, the station, than other. It seems like there is a little bit of variance there.

Carlson said the aim would be for consistency in that gap. That the vehicle requires that gap. Because of the nature of how that operates.

Imdieke Cross said but there is no guarantee that it is going to be less than five inches on any given day.

Carlson said that would be correct.

Beckwith said when you have a longer, straighter section coming into the platform and exiting. It helps a little bit with that swing that Charles was talking about. You could give a longer stretch to pull away from the platform. That could be mitigated a little bit.

Paulsen said that bumper rail that we talked about. That is similar to what we saw in San Diego. Is that doable? Can we put that bumper rail on?

Carlson said that is something we are evaluating. I think that the intent is that it would have the bumper rail on the platform. That is to hold the bus off of the curbs when it is pulling out. It is more about consistency than closer. Essentially what the operator can do is use this plastic rail to push the bus against the rail and the curb. It enables a very consistent gap between the bus and the platform. Provided we have the approach angle and the departure angle that sets that up.

Paulsen said how does that work with snow and other elements that we have to fight with?

Carlson said in our other BRT lines we do deal with snow and ice. On the A-Line Corridor until the snow event has totally cleared. Our forces going out and then the roadway. Everybody is pushing it back and forth for awhile. Eventually it all gets cleared out. Until then, on the A-Line it typically is a gap until the snow is cleared. On the Red-Line it can vary as well. Initially there may be a gap across to the platform. But then eventually the snow gets cleared out.

We are exploring different parts to that. That is something that committee input would be welcome on. That could involve up to a snow melt system that would actually heat the platform so that the snow could melt away.

Imdieke Cross said for the record I wanted to restate my concern. If that horizontal gap, there is a possibility that it is going to be between three to five inches in width. Then I think it is more important that we have a lower platform with a lift that can be deployed.

Chair Fenley said whatever it takes to minimize that gap essentially is what we are looking at.

Rodgers said could you help me understand a little bit. You identified four different kinds of guideways. I suppose that each of those has its own station design. My question is related to what Sam asked about the placement of the stations. Are there going to have to be streets to cross to get to the platform? Is it just sidewalk? Is it around bike paths? Are those all going to be different depending on the guideway?

Beckwith said I have the plans in front of me. As I mentioned, each station is a little bit different. So some of them have platforms on the outside of those lanes. So if they are center running they would have the platforms on the outside of each of those lanes. Some of them are what we call split platform. So you might have one stop before an intersection and then the opposing lane is in the opposite direction on the other side of the intersection. We have that in a few cases. There is only one example of a center platform. Which is at Sun Ray because we didn't have enough space between TJ Max and I-94. So we are going to do a center platform with the crossover configuration. Buses will cross over and pick you up on a side you are not used to being picked up on. Because of the space constraints there, we needed to go with that design for now.

If Sun Ray redevelops, we would seek to turn that into a more traditional platform configuration. I know that at the Greenway Station you have to cross Hudson Road, which we have heard some concerns about. Greenway Station is right by Landfall. We have heard some concerns about crossing over Hudson Road to get to the eastbound station. However, we are constrained with space there between properties that are existing at I-94. That is a concern that we have heard.

Rodgers said we should be learning from our experiences that we have already developed. One of the biggest issues that I hear from people who are blind or visually impaired is the inconsistency of stations. Number one is the split station where one station is on one side of the intersection and the other one is on the other side. It is a horrendous wayfinding nightmare for blind and visually impaired people. If we don't have to use those, we are not going to use those. Because they are too dangerous.

If we are talking about safety, there is nothing safe about those types of stations for blind and visually impaired travelers. The inconsistency of the platform design is our enemy. We can't just look around and make modifications while we are traveling. So the consistency becomes crucial for wayfinding for the blind and visually impaired. That is an emphasis that I want you to hear. I know you have some constraints in terms of spacing. But that doesn't take the concern away. And the safety issue. Anytime we have to cross streets to reach a station, that is going to be a problem.

I heard you mention, that stuck out loud and clear in my mind, that some of those crossings are going to be signalized. Indicating to me that some will not be. That adds to the complexity of a safety issue. I point you to existing transit. The Green Line has many examples of unsafe crossings. Unsignalized crossings to get to the platforms. Downtown Minneapolis has the same thing. We need to be learning from this as we develop. What works and what doesn't work. We can't be just building more and more of what doesn't work. That does not make sense to me. If you are really asking for our advice and our guidance. I think we need to see some changes in the way things are designed or laid out. Or priorities made so that we are all safe to use these services.

The other thing I will add is regarding the enunciator. I would never use the enunciator because number one, I don't know where it is. In getting to a bus stop. I can't go searching for something just to find out that the bus is coming. We mentioned that before that that was going to be an issue, but you went ahead and built it with a

button that someone has to push. If you don't push the button, then you don't get the information. That's not equal access. The ADA requires equal access. The more enunciation, or announcements that could be made without someone having to push a button. Or putting in a locator tone on that platform is another approach. That was also suggested for the enunciators in the current BRT system. Those were not adopted.

I understand you reaching out to us and ask for guidance. We provide guidance. We provide recommendations. We provide suggestions. And then they are not done. It makes it hard to think about this seriously to provide the kind of feedback that you need. I would hope that the kind of guidance we are providing is really considered. It is not considered because it would be nice if you did this. It is a safety issue. It is an equal access issue. That is what ADA is all about. If we are going to implement systems that serve all citizens. You need to make sure that all citizens can utilize that to the maximum capacity.

The last thing I will add is has there been consideration about putting a roof over the stations? That would eliminate the need to move ice and snow from the platforms, give greater shelter for people who are waiting for buses or trains. There could be solar panels on the tops of those to help create some electricity for the needs of the platform. Right now, we have limited shelter on these very large stations where many people wait for transportation. In inclement weather, we are just stuck. Has there been any thought of putting a roofs or shelters over the entire platform? Or at least three quarters of the platform?

Beckwith said I think it really comes down to cost effectiveness. And being able to have a project that will compete for federal funding. While a roof would provide the shelter you are talking about, it really comes down to cost. And being able to access this federal funding to make these projects a reality. Also, you do run into some constraints that you don't want the mirrors and the things that stick out of the bus to make contact with the roof. So there is some issues there as well. You can't take the roof past the edge, necessarily because you have conflicts with the buses.

Carlson said the buses are typically 11-feet.

Doug Cook said are there going to be door indicator tiles on the platforms to let people know where the front of the bus is? Like we do on light rail.

Carlson said it was not determined yet.

Cook said is there going to be some kind of guide to help visually impaired and blind individuals cross over the intersection like a four inch dugout that you can run your canes across the intersection to make sure they are not going into traffic or anywhere else?

Carlson said not specifically part of our design, but it is something that we are interested in on a number of projects. There is some pilot work underway, but we are also experiencing a little bit of a skills gap in terms of the expertise in implementing that in a way to be both accessible and implementable from engineering and roadway standards standpoint. It is a great idea.

Cook said I was just with a lady from Burnsville. Burnsville City Department worked with the DOT on something similar to that.

Carlson said I would like to know about that.

Cook said you mentioned that there are going to be heaters in the shelters. Are we going to be using the same tech as we did on Hennepin? Those seem to be evanished and they don't seem to get heat. I was wondering if you had something else that you will be using.

Carlson said it hasn't been specified yet but there have been some vandalizing issues with existing heaters that have been out there. There is a variety of mitigations to that that are in progress. Our aim will be to select a product that has reliable heat for our customers.

Cook said since we have 17 percent of people in the area who have disabilities, are we going to have a different kind of bus with four disability areas to accommodate that need? Like they do in Vegas.

Carlson said so the fleet would be shared across different lines. I think that share of customers with disabilities doesn't necessarily specify what different needs different users would have. However, I think a vehicle conversation is something that we are interested in having specific to this line and the others.

2. Network Next

Kyle Burrows, Senior Planner at Metro Transit, and Karyssa Jackson, Community Outreach Coordinator at Metro Transit, spoke to the TAAC committee.

Burrows said our agenda for this afternoon is to give an overview of Network Next and talk about what this effort is. And then talk about one of the primary pieces of this project that we are working on right now is the guiding framework for Network Next. How we are planning to develop that. Then turn it over to Karyssa to talk about the planned ongoing outreach engagement that we have set for how to develop that guiding framework. And then a little discussion asking what we would really like to ask this group particularly with the focus on our outreach engagement efforts. Are there any gaps that you can identify here for us today in terms of our efforts? What we are doing for outreach and engagement that we can fill going forward over the next several months here?

Starting out at the most basic level. What is Network Next? What are we talking about here? Network Next will be Metro Transit's vision for the bus network for 2040. It will be the plan for the improvements that we would like to make in our bus network. It is also the process that we are undertaking to get there. Essentially it will help us answer the question's what will our bus network look like in the next 20 years? And from now until that point, what are the steps that we need to take to make those improvements?

Included in Network Next will be planned improvements to Metro Transit's bus network. That is the local and express buses that are operated by Metro Transit. So within Metro Transit's service area, as well as identifying potentially new arterial BRT corridors. Like the A-Line and the C-Line. It will also identify the very high-level planned improvements to service quality. So that is a little bit about how you might experience waiting for the bus in terms of availability of shelters and transit information.

Finally, it will help us with internal planning to provide input for facilities planning that we are doing. So, this will help us identify, for example, how many new vehicles we might need to purchase and if we need to build new bus garages to store them. Help us identify workforce needs, etc.

The core of Network Next will focus on identifying service improvements to Metro Transit's bus network. That will include potentially new and local express bus routes. It will include improvements in the hours of service to existing routes. It will improve frequency improvements on existing routes. Potentially expanded days of service as well. Buses that operate on weekdays will also operate on Saturdays and Sundays as well.

You will also identify new corridors for arterial Bus Rapid Transit like the A-Line and C-Line. It won't do the planning work of what you just heard of the more transitway oriented corridors like the Gold Line, for example, or the Orange Line. It will focus on Metro Transit's more bread and butter style services of arterial BRTs.

Also, again, at a higher level it will talk about at some capacity, shared mobility options. So this is potentially identifying how many resources might be needed for things like expanded availability. Shared mobility services like on demand shuttles, eventually contracting doing mobility as a service. Providing where folks can access transit using an app or some other means. It will pick you up with point-to-point style service.

The level that we are doing the planning work at Network Next. We won't be necessarily identifying the specific locations of those types of services. So much as we will be hopefully identifying at high-level types of the amount of resources that might be needed for those type of services in the future.

We also plan to identify a high level of improvements to the customer experience at the stop and onboard the bus. This might include identifying locations for rules to apply liability improvements such as transit signal priority, where the bus extends the length of the green light. So it can move through traffic a little bit faster. Or potentially other improvements. We will also include at a planning level, the possibility of added and expanded bus shelters. To not identifying specific locations of bus shelters. But saying we need this amount of money to implement this many new bus shelters over the next 20 years. Then expanded availability of transit information. This is another component of Network Next that will be included.

Not necessarily saying where exactly they will be applied. But more, this is the amount of resources that we, at a planning level, would need to implement the services.

The project timeline for the remainder of 2019 and potentially into the early part of 2020 will be defining the Network Next guiding framework. That will include doing a lot of data analysis about how our existing network is performed. It will be putting together our existing policy guidance from the Transportation Policy Plan and

Thrive 2040 as well as a significant engagement effort that Karyssa will talk to around understanding transit tradeoffs and priorities in more detail.

From January until June of 2020. So the first half of 2020 we will be working on and developing and evaluating the bus network improvements themselves. So this will be where we are starting to put lines on a map and identifying which routes at a high level will be set for improvements and what that improvement might look like in terms of the frequency increases and improvements, etc. And then identifying what the cost implications and the benefits of those improvements might be. Once we have established and identified the bus network improvements from that we will identify from the core bus network as identified in that first portion. Identify the potential corridors for arterial BRT improvements. What are the new corridors that we might be implementing? Service like the A-Line or the C-Line. We are working right now from a transitway corridor study, which was completed in 2012. It is ready for an update. So, this will be part of that as well.

Finally, in the first quarter of 2021, we will have a draft plan for public comment and then ultimately adoption by the Metropolitan Council. At the end of each of these major deliverables, we will have a public comment and public outreach period as well. Folks will be able to comment on the bus network improvements as well as the arterial BRT corridor improvements before that final plan.

The next piece I want to talk about is how specifically we are going to be developing the guiding framework. This is the first step in the Network Next process we are doing right now. This document will articulate the overall direction and goals that we have for the bus network. It will essentially help us answer the question: What it is that we are trying to do with our bus network and what are the improvements that we need to be made to get to that point?

It will help us translate the policy guidance we have right now from the Transportation Policy Plan and other documents into more on the ground guidance that will then allow us to help draw the specific lines on a map while we are making improvements. It will also help us identify which evaluation criteria we should be using. That will be a key component of this. The major inputs into the guiding framework are the existing policy guidance like Thrive MSP 2040, the Transportation Policy Plan. Some significant data and analysis work on our network is performing. Then guidance on tradeoffs and priorities from our riders in the community. And our local government partners as well.

Thinking about how existing policy guidance might contribute to the guiding framework. It will be the starting point. It will give us the overall direction for our Thrive outcomes that are identified. There are five outcomes identified in Thrive that we will use as a starting point. The TPP articulates some more there. Specifically, with the guiding data and analysis. So, the questions that we are asking here are how is our network performing today? What are the bright spots? Where is ridership high? Where is ridership declining? What are some other challenges associated with our bus network? Which are the specific populations that are experiencing those challenges? What are some of the patterns involved in those challenges that need to be addressed? What are the markets we are missing right now?

How might some of the feedback on these network design tradeoffs contribute to the guiding framework? We are going out right now. We are starting an outreach and engagement process. We will be asking: "What types of improvements should we be emphasizing from our riders?" Should we be prioritizing for example, emphasizing increased frequency on the corridor routes and then saying: "There should be more transfers?" Or should we be saying we should be really emphasizing one seat ride. Or we might not have the resources available to provide that high level of frequency at all these places. Hoping to get at some of these tradeoffs.

I will turn it over to Karyssa to talk about how we might be answering to those specific questions.

Karyssa Jackson said we have a pretty robust engagement plan that includes a lot of different, a variety of ways for us to get input from both our customers and our community stakeholders. Our overall approach to looking at gathering input for the Guiding Framework is to draw on some of the past engagement efforts that have happened in the past. Looking at some projects that chose better bus stops that you may be familiar with. There are some efforts to partner with our community organizations and groups that we work with fairly regularly. But also, to reach into communities where we don't often hear those voices.

So, doing that through collaboration with our community partners with the effort to both educate customers and communities on how this planning process works. And some of the factors that go into determining a plan like this one. And then generating some overall enthusiasm for a project that is about two years. When you think about 2040. That will take a while to build on and create all those improvements over time. Really encouraging

folks to participate over the course of this process. As Kyle spoke about, a key question that we are going to be bringing to community members is what types of improvements should we be emphasizing? There are a variety of ways that we are going to be looking at connecting. I will speak a little bit about a lot of these. The first one that we recently had a request for proposals to community organizations and groups who would be interested in hosting a conversation with the communities that they are connected to. We did offer a \$2,500 grant. We just closed out the RFP on August 24. We are in the process right now of viewing those proposals. We had 26 proposals that were submitted. They came from a variety of different organizations. Neighborhood organizations, community groups, there are some individuals that are either artists, community leaders that submitted proposals. They come from a wide range of geographic communities that also represent organizations and groups that work with several demographic communities. We did make it a focus with emphasis on ensuring that equity populations and those that are under-represented show up.

From those proposals you could say that, as we are looking through the selection process. Many of them represent communities of color, LGBTQ communities, and also persons with disabilities, seniors and youth.

Another way that we are going to be reaching out to our customers specifically is to do some pop-up events throughout our bus network. We will be at transit centers, some of the park-and-rides, and some of those major transfer points and high boarding locations where we know customers will be. Where we can both distribute and collect surveys, which I will talk about a little bit as well. But also, just have some conversations with folks where they are actually taking transit about how the current network is working for them. And what types of improvements they may want to see in the future.

Additionally, we will have some opportunities for our Council Members to host Community Conversations. So these might be similar to the community hosted conversations. But these are ones that may be led by or hosted by our Council Members. Those are in progress. We also have an option for Metro Transit staff led workshops. We know that we only had a fixed amount of funding to grant awards to those community hosted conversations. We also know that there are going to be community groups and organizations that don't have the capacity to lead their own conversation. But may have an opportunity for us to participate with them and their clients and customers and folks they are working with. So we would like to be able to offer an opportunity for staff to help them collect feedback from those community conversations.

Lastly, I was talking a little bit about this throughout this. But we are going to have a survey that will look at some of those tradeoffs that Kyle mentioned earlier. So a survey that will ask our customers and community members to think through questions around frequency or span of service or some of those other factors. What are our priorities? Do I prioritize frequency, or do I want to see maybe some other improvements? Elevated within the network plan.

The final part of the community outreach effort for Network Next is a summary of our previous feedback. So of course, beyond the current feedback that we are going to gather. We always hear from customers and community members when we are out in the community. We have a customer relations group that takes in comments all the time about our services and looking at some of the former surveys, some of those former engagements and some of that customer feedback that has come in. And summarizing that information so that it could also be included in the guiding framework.

Chair Fenley said before we start to ask questions, I want to preface that with let's keep our questions to what your jurisdiction is and what we can bring you in terms of feedback. I would like for you to come back at a later date so we can give you the full breadth of the feedback, which I think we have a lot for you.

So my question to you is so this is a birds eye view of the entire Metro Transit system. Is there anything that is outside of this project jurisdiction like policies or any data points that you won't be taking into consideration?

Burrows said that is a good question. The project Network Next is specifically designed to identify service improvements to Metro Transit's local and express bus network. And to the set of arterial BRT corridors. I try to identify those new ones. So it won't necessarily get into planning for the major transitway investments for example, the Gold Line. That is a separate process that happens on a more regional scale. It won't necessarily get into the specifics of shelter design or bus stop design or anything like that. Essentially where the service will run and how often it will run. The core focus of Network Next.

Jackson said in addition to just the bus network improvement that we are going to be talking about. One of the things that Network Next is going to be responding to is this will also integrate some of the questions around service quality improvement. Those are some of the things like our bus stops and the resources that are

available that will make those bus stops accessible. So while it doesn't directly speak to some of the issues that are existing within our network, it will address some way that we can create the opportunities and the resources for those improvements in the future. Because this is looking at a longer stretch of time than some of these projects that are more individual. This will be looking more comprehensively about how we connect both our network and where we are going and what is available to our customers.

Graham-Raff said I think that those of us around the table are aware that 20 years from now, most of us will be in our 70's and our 80's. The one population group that is going to double between now and then is the 65 plus. My question to you is: Are you already engaged with the different communities for lifetime and age friendly community groups from around the region or do you need introduction to those folks?

Jackson said I think it is both. So we have some community organizations and groups that we had already submitted proposals to or were connected to that do have those relationships. But we also are hoping that while we are here you might be able to share with us groups and organizations that we should be connecting to that we are not currently.

Graham Raff said I will send you an email and we can continue the conversation.

Paulsen talked about collecting fare revenues and some folks not paying the bus fare across the region and how unfair that is across the system.

Henricksen said for the inputs of the Guiding Framework. I believe the Met Council is working on their draft ADA Transition Plan, which, if you utilize some of the policies and ideas under that plan as well, it will implement them into what I consider it as a city's comprehensive plan. You wouldn't have duplicate efforts in that regard. So upgrading some of the deficiencies that are in the system now, in the 2040 plan. Which the ADA transition plan will do. If that can be part of the framework.

Thorsen said I just moved into a senior living community. It has made me aware of that that is a solid network to tie into. It would be the activities director that is there to coordinate transit. It would be just the overall. The Executive Director is there. It would be any of the staff there. There are a lot in the Twin Cities.

Councilmember Chai Lee said a good way to look at the difference between these two presentations is that the first presentation is about the details. This presentation is about going forward with what is our philosophy, what are our values? Are we going to prioritize having more buses going to more places? Or less places? How fast do we believe in having a single seat ride from Plymouth to Woodbury? It is more about that.

Rodgers said could someone please tell us what is the difference between routes that have letters verses ones that have colors?

Carlson said I am responsible for both. A lot of this relates to marketing and communications and how we are framing the investments that we put into the color line systems. The primary difference between them is that the color lines primarily run in a dedicated roadway of some sort. The letter lines run in mixed traffic. Whether it is a color line or a letter line, they all have more in common than not. They all have a dedicated fleet that is different from the regular fleet. They all have improved stations. The big difference is whether they are in a dedicated guideway, like the Gold Line, or they run in mixed traffic, like the A-Line.

Chair Fenley said a quick reminder to committee members. A little bit of homework. Diane's suggestion was fantastic. A list of organizations. So who should your engagement team be reaching out to? And then my point. The other issues we want them to look at. Things like snow removal. Things like the stroller policy. Things like leave behinds. Stuff like that. This is an opportunity to incorporate that into their plan. We are not going to talk about that now, but we will at a later date. So you all are invited to come back. Sooner than later so we can go tandem with your general public engagement. It will be an agenda item in the next couple of months. It will be less of a presentation and more of a dialogue.

We are going to hold on to the stats until after Rachel goes. Rachel has a quick announcement.

3. Signage & Wayfinding Workshop Announcement

Rachel McCaffery, an intern in Transit Information at Metro Transit, spoke to the TAAC committee. I am here to briefly introduce you to an opportunity for engagement. Some of you may be familiar with Metro Transit's Better Bus Stops initiative, which aims to create accessible and community centered improvements at our bus stops. One sub project of this initiative is referred to as the Accessible Maps and Wayfinding Project. So currently, Metro Transit has a contract with Alta, which is a wayfinding and planning agency. They aim to create

accessible signage at some of our high-volume transfer points. Which can be confusing to navigate for customers who are blind or who have low vision.

We intend to have two different opportunities for engagement for these customers. The first of these would be a Preference Survey Meeting, in which people who may benefit from these wayfinding designs will be able to get feedback about what type of information will be most beneficial to them at these transfer points. And following this there will be a second opportunity for feedback. With a usability testing workshop where further feedback on these designs is welcomed.

The tentative timeline for this project is to engage opportunities that would be around mid-October to mid-November of this year. That feedback will then be used for the implementation of these designs, which is currently planned for January of 2020.

Not only would TAAC members be welcome to give feedback on this project. Any contacts they have, especially other Metro Transit customers who are blind or have low vision would be welcome. The best way to express your interest in this project would be to contact Mr. Fenley and he will then put me in contact with you as we solidify plans for this wayfinding project. We are currently planning to have 10 to 15 participants involved in this project. There could be more if there is an interest.

It is focusing on blind and low vision folks specifically however, if there are other people who feel they may benefit from these designs, their feedback would also be welcome.

Myhre said it could help people with learning disabilities and can't read very well. Whatever we come up with between the people like me and folks who are blind and low vision can get the help too. There is a section of us who are being left out. Now we have it in our heads that only blind people can use it. Only wheelchair people can use it. Realistically, more people like me can use it or my friend down the street can use it. But we don't know this because of the way you are advertising it.

Chair Fenley said anytime that we have increased accessibility, it doesn't just benefit that particular disability but other folks with disabilities and the general public, too.

Paulsen said to Myhre that if she wants to work with Rachel and him, she could do that.

Chair Fenley said shoot me your name or anybody who is interested, and I will forward that information on to Rachel.

4. Metro Mobility Stats

Andy Streasick, Customer Service Manager at Metro Mobility, spoke to the TAAC committee. Did everyone get my email? Unless I hear otherwise, until we get something put together with all the bells and whistles, I will send out the information to you about a week ahead of time. You can look at it if you choose to do so. Then I will just present verbally, for people who process things verbally.

Chair Fenley said what was sent out was essentially the on-time performance, appointment performance and the onboard performance throughout time. But also broken down by agency. We have a percentage. We also have numbers in there to represent the people that are on the other side of that statistic. I will put this to the committee and also to Andy. Rather to have him run through what is five pages of numbers. Folks who received it, do you want him to talk about any specific numbers? Otherwise, maybe he can just pick and choose a couple throughout the thing.

We have 20 minutes. So we probably could go over it. But I know that the discussion usually ends up pushing us over.

Rodgers said maybe we could have more of a discussion about the numbers. So, reading through the numbers, there is an obvious increase in the number of late to appointments. I believe there is also a less significant number of late pickup times. But they are still, in my mind, pretty significant. You look at the percentages, and the percentages in the mid 90's range, that is a pretty good percentage. But there is still a number of people that are affected by that is huge. In the thousands.

One thing that struck me is the financial implication of not making your appointment time. I understand, by policy, that if somebody has an appointment time, and they are late for their appointment, they have the opportunity to receive their fare back. If I understand that correctly. But how many people actually do? What

effect does it really cost the agency to be late to an appointment? Because really, there is no financial kick to it. Am I off base?

Streasick said you are right that the customer has the right to the fare back. Drivers can't initiate that though. It has to come through the Metro Mobility Service Center. So while the provider doesn't get 100 percent of the financial hit of the lost fare revenue, like they do when they show up late and never collect the fare in the first place. They do still have the financial bite of the damage we apply. There is still a damage both in terms of financial penalty and lost bonuses associated with those appointment time failures. They don't miss out on 100 percent of the lost fare collection. But that does not mean that they get off scot free financially.

Rodgers said is there any systemwide reason why there seems to be such a significant drop? Some of them dropped into the 80's percent range. That is kind of a little bit alarming to me. We haven't seen that in quiet awhile.

Streasick said there are a couple of things. One of the reasons we separate year to date information and more recent information. With the year to date stuff, certainly, February in particular, and some of January was bad enough this year that it significantly pressed our year wide stats. We are looking at that a little bit that way.

The second part is that we are still in a rather unique situation in terms of what the financial market is like here. While it is always a stress here to have enough drivers. The economy being what it is here regionally has really added to that. While everybody is perpetually hiring almost everybody that they can get through the door. Certainly, driver shortages combined with how bad some of that ice and sleet was, for the length of time that was, combined with the fact that we have told providers to pretty much stop doing non-ADA denials whenever possible to do it. We have made that a point of focus. Some of that productivity is going to slip someplace. There has been a bit of a connection there where we said: "You really have to stop denying people's rides even if they are outside the ADA service area."

Those three are the biggest factors that I can think of as to why that would be. I would point out too that we still are on a track forward, at least with appointment times. Like a year and a half ago we were in the 70's. Before that, in the 60's. It was a tremendously neglected fact. Some of you might remember me coming here and saying repeatedly how much it frustrated me because if I am a customer going to the doctor, I don't care whether I get picked up on the half hour window. I care whether or not I get to the doctor on time. So measuring on-time performance, still with the 30-minute window, when someone has an appointment time is not federally required and is not something that makes sense as a focus. It is something that we have already changed when our agency contract came up.

When the next demand contract comes up, we will define on-time performance as a combined stat. That is: "Did you show up within the 30-minute window or did you drop somebody off on time if they had an appointment?" This should help providers understand that really what we are talking about is one stat. Did you get people there on time?

Chair Fenley said you brought up non-ADA rides that are dropped. Are those included in these percentages? If a ride is dropped, does that negatively impact the non-ADA statistic for any of these or does that not get considered in these numbers?

Streasick said no, the stats here are total number of rides, not bookings. If a ride is cancelled for any reason, either because the customer no-shows or the customer calls and cancels it, or it got denied. It wouldn't be reflected here in any of it.

Jasmine said can you tell me, you said the bite for the providers is not as bad as if they don't show up on time and you don't have to pay, that is a worse hit than if they get to their appointment late.

Streasick said that is true right now.

Jasmine said so how much of a difference is that?

Streasick said the difference is that because you should never be collecting a fare when you show up past the half an hour window. You almost never are. You have a small handful of drivers that might screw up and accidentally collect somebody's fare. Even though they arrived outside the half an hour window. But looking at complaints about that and what we find when we investigate it and pull a video, for audit purposes, we are looking at south of one percent where a driver shows outside of the half an hour window and still collects a fare.

When a person arrives at an appointment time late, they already paid when they got on the bus. So the impetus is on the customer at that point, to contact the Service Center for fare reimbursement. My staff does a lot of those. It sometimes takes two days to load on the GoTo card.

Jasmine said what is the difference of the hit to Transit Team or First Transit? What do they lose from you missing your appointment time? As opposed to you not getting picked up on time.

Streasick said contractually, they don't forfeit the fare when they blow an appointment time right now. So there are the financial damages associated with the trip for the bonus and damage language in the contract. Those bonus and damage incentives are also applied to on-time performance. So basically, they are out the additional fare loss on top of the bonus and damage for when they arrive. So in terms of just the bite to the contractor. Just damage to the contractor, it is an additional \$3.50 to \$4.50 per ride when they show up late.

Myhre said my question is we have very vulnerable people who ride Metro Mobility. They know they get on and they know they get off. Some of them don't understand that after an hour. They just know they have to pay the person. How would the person with the disability get reimbursed for those incidents?

Mine is paid through the County. The County puts the money onto the card. They deal with all of that. So if it happens to me, how do I get reimbursed directly? Because I know I haven't in the past because we never cleared up the issue of the County part. I don't do anything with my money. The County puts it on my card. The only thing they tell me is if I don't use it enough, I lose it. I just have to show that I am using it.

When the GoTo machine is down, it counts against me because it looks like I am not using it.

Streasick said there are a few different questions there. The first one, how does someone know if they arrive late? We have public meetings where we can certainly touch on that. We send out materials when people get certified. We are certainly not trying to hide the fact that people are entitled to get reimbursed if we show up late someplace. I would be open to suggestions.

Navigating public transit can be tricky. We want to make sure people get what they are entitled to get.

Chair Fenley said why is the reimbursement on an appointment time have to be manually done? The system knows that it is not on time. Can't they just kick that money back to the person's GoTo card automatically?

Streasick said Trapeze doesn't have a billing functionality in it right now. So even though we can look at Trapeze or Trapeze can see who is late, they don't know how the person paid. And even if they did use a GoTo card, there is no way to auto generate that onto their card right now. I believe that in an updated version of Trapeze, as we look at advancements to Trapeze, I believe we are looking at the possibility of having an intersection there with an electronic purse. So we could potentially look at that.

Kuennen said we are scoping a project for looking at account-based faring. The possible solution for some of this. There is currently no connection between the Trapeze arrival and the faring. It is possible that we could come up with a process where we could identify all of the late appointment times and then cross reference that against fare paid and be reimbursed. And not put the obligation of the customer to reach us. We would be more proactive with that. It would be several months, if not longer, before we could implement something that is more of a technology system solution.

Streasick said even if we were able to run something quarterly through finance, where we are sending out a check or something.

Kuennen said I think the comments about how would we know? A lot of our customers would not necessarily know. And they also don't know if they are a minute late, two minutes late. A minute early. Two minutes early. We do want to hold our contractors accountable somehow. So, putting the responsibility on the customer seems like the wrong approach. It is how we have always done it. But we can certainly look at another way to do it.

Streasick said so your second key point about how do we refund on cards that are not technically yours? The County has been vehement with us that they own those cards. Particularly when it comes time to replace them because somebody lost theirs or something. I get that. If your county's cards are tied to your caddy waiver and they operationally have no way to load it. When we replace somebody's card with one that is not at all linked to their caddy. While we can still replace those cards, my staff has finally gotten to a point with County staff where for every county in the metro, we can at least put money back on the cards now. That has been true for several months. That was not always the case.

It is not necessarily going to be the same month. If we find out after the fact about a shortage, we will just go in and apply that. Whether or not it is on the right month's bill. We don't have a good way to automate indicating that you did attempt to use a card and couldn't. We will get a report from the provider that will show a failure. But with regard to something where I could go to the county and say: "Look, Heidi has been riding and attempted to pay." There is not an automated process to allow for that. If anybody on an individual basis, is having struggles with their county case workers with regard to their funds on their waiver, my staff and I would be happy to talk to them. If somebody from Metro Mobility needs to say: "Yes, these people are riding. They are using those funds. We are not able to collect because of a failure on our end." That is something that I can do for folks.

Chair Fenley said I want to pause this discussion to give the public time to comment if they want to. We are at that time in the meeting. I don't want to forego the Public Comment. So if there is a public comment, please make the comment now.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Charlene Doll spoke to the TAAC committee. I was one of the 15,000 people that got the letter that said that some of my information was breached between June 13 and August 14. I am just wondering how the investigation will be handled through Metro Mobility. I think we deserve answers. This could potentially damage a lot of people if the information goes in the wrong direction. Is this an internal investigation or are they bringing somebody in from the Council to do the investigation? This is pretty serious.

Paulsen said I also got that letter. But then I read the details in that letter. That information does not give them any financial data. It does give them locations of pickup and drop off. Some things that you may or may not want out there. But as far as financial and our real core of our information that we want to keep. That part is protected.

Doll said my response to that is my pickup address, my phone number and my name was available to whatever happened here. I think that is enough information to be concerned about.

Chair Fenley said any breach of information is inappropriate and an investigation should ensue. Thank you very much for your comment.

Let's go back to our Metro Mobility Stats presentation.

Murphy said I am one of the non-ADA who is outside the zone. There are a couple of questions that I have. It has been interesting that for the longest time, if there was a denial, we had one of two companies that would fill in. Unfortunately, when that came about, I was getting phone calls at 5:00 or 6:00 at night. Those two companies were either closed or filled up for the morning. This is when I was used to going to the capitol every Tuesday morning. I ended up just taking a break and not use Metro because it was too much of a hassle.

Then when the percentage came out that said a certain percentage of people were not using it so they were not going to renew that contract, that left me in the position of asking somebody to bring me from my home to literally within the zone. So that I could get my ride. A couple of days ago when I scheduled a ride, I was told: "You are on standby. You are outside of the zone." Now I just heard that they are supposed to not be following that.

Streasick said everybody outside the ADA zones still goes on standby now. Probably close to 100 percent of the time. The only difference now is that virtually, I think we had three denials over the last couple of months. So even though a trip goes on standby, virtually all the trips get done. So rather than being called the night before and saying: "Sorry. We have no way of getting you to the capitol." You are getting the call that says: "We will pick you up at this time and drop you off at this time." So, it still goes on standby. You are still getting the call the night before. But they are not denying any rides.

Murphy said are we still getting picked up, like I was initially scheduled to be picked up at 7:00 to be there at 9:00, is it that I am being picked up in time because they are trying to work me in?

Streasick said yes, they may have to drop you off at 8:00 right now. But they are going to get you there on time. The three denials were 60 plus mile trips.

Murphy said with that late pickup, it has happened to me, but I have also seen on the vehicle. When a rider comes on and says: "Isn't my ride late?" And they will say: "No, I was here on time." But in actuality, I saw them pull up at 2:25, and 2:30 was the window. Because they stopped and looked at this and then that, by the time they got there it was 2:35. They say: "No, I was here on time."

Streasick said this has been consistent since I started here, at least. I can speak for 13 years. It is not when the vehicle arrives. Nor is it when the driver gets to the door or has any contact with the customer. A driver arrives when they are at the right destination. Then they move to get out of the vehicle. As soon as they open the door and get out. That is when they have arrived. If a driver gets there and picks up his manifest. He looks at that for a few minutes. Stretches a little bit. Has some small talk with a passenger on the bus. And then it is after the 30-minute window. And then moves to get out of the bus. Then the driver is late. Although they have physically stopped within the 30-minute window.

When we get a complaint like that, we pull the video to take a look. Because I see when the bus quit moving. But if we are talking about something that close, that may not tell the whole story. So in those cases when there is a complaint that close, I will pull the video and take a look at it.

Rodgers said I wanted to talk about the onboard time. Because there are a number of people that are on the buses longer than they need to be. I personally don't like that onboard time maximum. I think it is too long. The formula is not right anyway. Some people exceed that limit. That concerns me. That means people are on the bus longer than they need to be. How is that being addressed?

Streasick said public transit is not quick. We do link all of our rides to how long it takes it to get there on the city bus with that formula. It is a long one. Partially because there is 15 minutes of walk time back and forth from a bus stop. It gets factored in. That is why there is the 30 minutes. The feds tell us that is 15 minutes of reasonable walk time on either end of a city bus trip. That is part of the trip. We have vetted this thoroughly because the feds had questions about why we came up with what we did. I can tell you that compared to bus trips, we are extremely competitive with regards to that onboard formula.

Now that said, so just like with our other key performance matrix, the reason you guys got these. These are our big ones that we hit the provider over the head with over and over again. It is also one of the few where it is probably a bigger deal for agency service than it is for our demand service. If you think of that agency as something more akin to a school bus ride. If you are picked up in the same order every day, and you end up with a crappy situation with the routing with the onboard time, that is just going to keep on happening until it gets caught and fixed.

So we do keep an eye on that. We have some reports now that allow us to take a look at most egregious offenders or most egregiously offended, I should say in terms of customers who have been repeatedly on the bus too long. Certainly, if it is a standing order, that is low-hanging fruit. We can say this standing order needs to be tweaked. Because someone was on the bus too long on 60 percent of the trips this month. When it is not a standing order, it is a little more challenging. Each of the providers has a list of customers who, for whatever reason, had a particularly challenging trip operationally. They can manually look at those every morning and say: "What do we need to do to make sure this stays compliant?" That is a key performance indicator, just like onboard times and deployment times. There are damages in the contract. That is something we hammer the provider on regularly. Dispatch is certainly a key element in that. That is part of what we look at for sure.

A couple of things I want to mention. I got state fare rider information today. It wasn't included in the stats I sent out. We did 2,161 rides into the state fair this year. This is a 13 percent increase over 2018. 2018 was unusually low for us. We are back with our norm with the increase.

Regarding our public comment. Most folks are aware of a data breach that happened related to a hacked email account at the Metro Mobility Service Center. It is ride manifests that is the data in question here. If you did not receive a letter, then your data was not jeopardized. If you did not receive a letter and you are trying to call into the Metro Mobility Service Center right now, good luck and god speed. Because my staff are getting hammered up and down here with calls. We have got roughly double the calls that we are usually getting. I have been logging on myself since the letters dropped. And helping that way. We have our paratransit evaluators who are logging in when they can. The letter came out from our legal department, not from us. We have a list of everybody on the manifest. That is who got the letter.

Councilmember Chai Lee said we have an outside organization who is doing a forensic investigation on this.

MEMBER COMMENT

Chair Fenley said some things that I have heard about the new Mall of America drop off. That it is not ideal. This is not a discussion. It is a comment that I am making.

Myhre said the Mall of America is not using the correct symbol for wheelchairs.

Lee said he is looking at the Mall of America issue and he will see that it is taken care of.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Blue line

This item was not presented.

2. Green Line

This item was not presented.

3. Gold Line

4. Paulsen said the Gold Line will have two open houses soon. Contact him if you want to attend.

5. Rush Line

This item was not presented.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Alison Coleman
Recording Secretary