

Minutes

TAC Planning Committee



Meeting date: March 13, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anoka Co – Jorge Bernal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FHWA – Josh Pearson (ex officio) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Paul – Anton Jerve |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brooklyn Park – Dan Ruiz | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin Co – Dan Patterson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Co – Terri Dill |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver Co – Drew Pflaumer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro Transit – Patrick Haney | <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban Transit Assoc – Vacant |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chanhassen – Charlie Howley | <input type="checkbox"/> MAC – Bridget Rief | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TAB Coordinator – Elaine Koutsoukos |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Community Development – Patrick Boylan | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis – Bria Fast | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington Co – Sara Allen |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council MTS – Joe Barbeau (Alternate for David Burns) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT – Jessica Hyink | E Woodbury – Chris Hartzell |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dakota Co – Gina Mitteco (Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPCA – Innocent Eyoh | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present, E = excused |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ramsey Co – Kevin Roggenbuck | |

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Mitteco called the regular meeting of the TAC Planning Committee to order at 2:01 p.m. on roll call.

Agenda approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Charlie Howley, Chanhassen, and seconded by Kevin Roggenbuck, Ramsey County, to approve the minutes of February 13th, 2025, regular meeting of the TAC Planning Committee. **Motion carried.**

Public comment on committee business

There were no public comments.

Business

There were no business items.

Information

1. Introduction to the Highway System Harms, Impacts, and Mitigation Priorities Study (Bethany Brandt-Sargent and Amy Vennewitz, MTS Planning)

Bethany Brandt-Sargent, MTS Planning, presented a summary of the project purpose, objectives, scope, schedule, and engagement approach. She prompted committee members to provide feedback on categories of harms to consider and community-based organizations to engage.

Dan Patterson, Hennepin County, asked if study of the “connectivity and access” harm includes lack of social connectivity due to issues like white flight, changed school enrollment patterns, and

lack of casual interactions due to time spent driving. Brandt-Sargent said the study would consider these topics as issues of social connectivity, accessibility (for people of all abilities), and access to destinations like jobs. She said there are existing frameworks to study reconnecting communities, like from the previous federal administration's discretionary grant programs and Reconnecting Rondo's work, that will be considered. She said broader societal changes, like how the impersonal nature of cars can reduce incidental interactions, are harder to address but will likely be raised through engagement with community partners.

Innocent Eyoh, MPCA, said there were several minority-owned businesses in the Rondo and Prospect Park neighborhoods destroyed with the construction of I-94, and he asked if the study will address how roadway reconstruction affects businesses owned by people who live in those neighborhoods. Brandt-Sargent said the study will include an analysis of highway economic impacts, including those on small businesses and wealth building. She said they will look at the effects on people who were displaced, but it can be difficult to reach people who were displaced. She said the study will also refer to existing work on this topic, like reports from Reconnecting Rondo.

Patterson asked if the opportunity cost of investing in highways over other community investments will be studied. Brandt-Sargent said this study would likely be the first step and identify areas needing further research. She said opportunity cost could be explored more in the future, and she referred to some related work by Ramsey County on wealth building and business startups.

Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning, asked if the impacts of the cost of vehicle ownership and maintenance on low-income households would be studied. Brandt-Sargent said this would likely be addressed in the study's Housing & Economy category and mentioned an existing related measure that will likely be included in the economic analysis.

Charlie Howley, Chanhassen, if the removal or lack of choice in transportation options, like biking, walking, or taking a train, would be considered a highway harm. Brandt-Sargent said that, particularly outside urban areas well served by transit or bicycle facilities, people often lack choice and will come up in many places. She provided an example of accessibility of pedestrian infrastructure and how some elements, like corkscrew ramps for pedestrian overpasses, can remain physically challenging.

Patterson said the highway system has impacted where economic activity happens, having shifted activity towards big-box stores and drained activity away from pedestrian- and bicycle-scaled areas. Brandt-Sargent said land use form is a key part of the study's Placemaking & Sense of Place category. She said that the Met Council often hears from youth engagement that young people who cannot drive often feel stuck. Amy Vennewitz, MTS Planning, said the study is focused on harms to communities adjacent to highways. She continued that the questions raised today show interest in system-level harms, like how the highway system has effected land use and development patterns, that has not yet been explored with the consultant and could be addressed in a follow-up. She also said the study will need to consider mitigation measures and how to pay for them, particularly considering the restrictions on transportation funding sources.

Ethan Buss, Minnesota Valley Transit Authority, said the study's health category should include mental health and stress. Brandt-Sargent agreed this should be considered.

Drew Pflaumer, Carver County, continued on the topic of opportunity cost and said this should not only include what was not done but also what was lost, such as the removal of historical streetcar systems.

Chair Mitteco asked if there is a list of community-based organizations already set to be engaged in this study or committees. Brandt-Sargent said there is not a vetted list yet, but they do have a brainstorm list for starting these conversations. She said that exurban and smaller communities tend to be less connected to these processes, and it would be helpful to hear suggestions for these areas.

Charlie Howley asked if Chambers of Commerce are included in these lists. Brandt-Sargent said there are some smaller chambers included in the list, but not all are.



Eyoh suggested engaging with neighborhood organizations, like Rondo, Phillips, and Prospect Park, and organizations with missions specific to effected racial and ethnic group needs.

Bria Fast, City of Minneapolis, suggested engaging with the Cultural Wellness Center, which has helped the City of Minneapolis with transportation equity work.

Vennewitz said the study needs to include a balance of community organizations that focus on areas effected by highways and groups with system-level interests including familiarity with transportation issues.

Chair Mitteco asked if the study is focused on freeways or if non-freeway principal arterials are also included. Brandt-Sargent said the study includes all principal arterials across the region.

Kevin Roggenbuck, Ramsey County, asked how the study would test the mitigation toolbox on pilot corridors. Brandt-Sargent said that part of the research plan is not yet well defined, but the work would likely evaluate a subset of primary harms in a corridor, identify strategies to mitigate those harms, and then screen those mitigations with community and technical groups for consistency with their vision. These mitigations would likely be quick-build solutions. Vennewitz spoke about different types of highway facilities, categorizing harms by facility type, considering how mitigations differ by category, and identifying what broad conclusions and unique issues can be identified. Roggenbuck continued and mentioned specific mitigations like noise walls and vegetation.

Vennewitz raised the idea of thinking beyond specific corridor harms and considering system-level impacts, like changes in land use and opportunity costs. She also highlighted the challenge of understanding how different highways, with different histories and impacts, might require different mitigation approaches. Brandt-Sargent noted that this study is unique in its comprehensive approach. While there are studies that focus on individual issues like air quality or noise, this study aims to look at the entire system and how mitigation investments can be made effectively.

Chair Mitteco asked if this study was based on work done in other regions, or if this work is a new approach. Brandt-Sargent said that this appears to be a first-of-its kind study in its comprehensive approach, though she said there have been many individual studies on specific issues like noise and air quality that this study can build on. Vennewitz said the desire is not to have a theoretical, research effort; rather, this study is directed at identifying mitigation investments. She said

2. Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) and Regional Bicycle Barriers (RBB) Update Processes (Steve Elmer, MTS Planning)

Steve Elmer, MTS Planning, presented that there would be an opportunity to propose updates to the RBTN and RBB later this spring ahead of the 2026 Regional Solicitation.

Kevin Roggenbuck asked if these update requests require coordination between county and city governments to address conflicting choices. Elmer said if there are consistency or continuity issues between adjacent jurisdictions' plans, Met Council staff would contact those agencies to discuss any that arises. Elmer suggested having a prior discussion about these issues between adjacent jurisdictions.

Chair Mitteco asked if the timeline was expanded compared to the previous update opportunity. Elmer said it's about 60 days this time, which is longer than the approximately 5 weeks last time. Chair Mitteco said she appreciated the extra time and agencies should consider how to time board actions.

Other business

Joe Barbeau solicited members' interest in participating in Regional Solicitation special interest working groups to provide technical recommendations to policymakers on eligibility and application criteria and measures. Each group will have four meetings, two virtual and two in-person; the in-person meetings are scheduled for April 25 and May 30. Barbeau said most working groups are near the 12 members needed, but there is particular need for people with expertise in

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) or equity, as these working groups were short on volunteers.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

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