

Meeting Notes

2050 TPP Technical Working Group



Meeting Date: November 10, 2022

Time: 1:35 PM

Location: Virtual

Members Present:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7W - Andrew Whitter | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council, Research - Todd Graham | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Move Minneapolis - Karl Hedlund, alternate for Tiffany Orth |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anoka Co - Jack Forslund | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metropolitan Airports Commission - Bridget Rief | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ramsey Co - Scott Mareck (Chair) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burnsville - Regina Dean | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro Transit - Steve Mahowald | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Paul - Bill Dermody |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver Co - Angie Stenson (Vice Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis - Jasna Hadzic-Stanek | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stillwater - Tim Gladhill |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Centerville - Mark Statz | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DEED - Ed Hodder | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Co - Nathan Abney |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chanhassen - Charlie Howley | <input type="checkbox"/> MDH - Ellen Pillsbury | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban Transit Assoc - Ben Picone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coon Rapids - Tim Himmer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNR - Nancy Spooner-Walsh | <input type="checkbox"/> TAB Coordinator - Elaine Koutsoukos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dakota Co - Gina Mitteco | <input type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Freight - Andrew Andrusko | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TAC Chair - Jon Solberg |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FHWA - Vacant | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Metro District - Michael Corbett | <input type="checkbox"/> TC Shared Mobility Collaborative – Will Schroeer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin Co - KC Atkins | <input type="checkbox"/> MnDOT OTSM - Hally Turner | <input type="checkbox"/> UMN CTS - Kyle Shelton |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Community Development - Michael Larson | <input type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Sustainability - Nissa Tupper | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Washington Co - Lyssa Leitner |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council MTS - Dave Burns | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Traffic Safety - Derek Leuer | <input type="checkbox"/> West Saint Paul - Ross Beckwith |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council, MTS Planning Director - Amy Vennewitz | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPCA - Innocent Eyoh | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Council, Parks - Emmett Mullin | | |

Opening

Chair Scott Mareck, Ramsey County, opened the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Scenario Planning

Baris Gumus-Dawes, Met Council Community Development – Research, presented on land use scenario planning in the 2050 regional development guide. The presentation covered the purpose of scenario planning, the scenarios considered, and their relationship to regional models. Cole Hiniker, MTS Planning, described how scenario planning may inform the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan and prompted conversation on potential scenario metrics useful for regional partners.

Chair Mareck said he appreciated acknowledgement of an uncertain future. He said it is unknown if the short-term travel related behaviors due to COVID-19 are long-term changes or if travel will return. He said people working from home may reduce auto and transit commutes and it may increase growth in the suburbs. He stated interest in an aspirational scenario with optimum transit-oriented development around transitways, and how that would affect performance of transitways and the roadway network.

Steve Mahowald, Metro Transit, said housing affordability and displacement may be useful metrics. He also asked about the Slide 10 transportation modelling results. Baris Gumus-Dawes clarified these are illustrative without data behind them, but are color coded by transit market area. Steve Mahowald asked if someone could clarify transit market areas for the group. Cole Hiniker said transit market areas describe potential ridership generation in the region and that they resemble community designations. He said suggestions on non-transportation metrics are also welcome.

Cole Hiniker responded to Chair Mareck's earlier statement on transit-oriented development that the scenario does consider station area locations.

Lyssa Leitner said that COVID-19 has changed travel behavior and it is unknown how that change will be sustained or how that will influence metrics. She referenced unknowns on express buses; continued or more importance of travel for everyday, non-work or education needs; and the role of microtransit. Jonathan Ehrlich, MTS Planning, said the Met Council is aware of these issues, is tracking them closely, and are trying to figure out how that changes the approach to evaluating transit service. These changes have not made their way into the base behavioral forecast, but the scenarios are trying to get at some of these impacts in a roundabout way. The dispersed growth scenarios do reflect a world where COVID-19 may have changed residential patterns, and thereby transportation. The Met Council cannot yet assess the related behavior. While not presently modellable, they can be considered in analyses of these scenarios. Dennis Farmer, MTS Planning, said some of the aspects of telecommuting are embedded in the land use scenario through travel to job sites and reduction in job sites.

Steve Mahowald said the region has done a good job encouraging housing near high frequency transit, but there has been little or no focus encouraging job density around these stations. He referenced related University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies literature. He asked if these scenarios expect the usual for job concentration or forecast increase in job density. Dennis Farmer notes difficulty in this area, as there are clearer assumptions with planned land use and housing density. He said job density is harder as there is not a clear connection between land development patterns and job density, because different employment sectors have different job densities.

Derek Leuer, MnDOT Traffic Safety, asked via chat how mixed-use zoning impacts these examples. Baris Gumus-Dawes notes zoning is not within the Met Council's control, so the scenarios look at allowable densities in communities' comprehensive plans. Cole Hiniker said that mixed use generally has higher allowed density and would be more heavily represented in compact scenarios, though not all mixed use zoned land is planned for high density as these zones are often set to maintain flexibility for undeveloped land.

Angie Stenson, Carver County, said they have a county-specific model to consider different areas of growth. She asked if compact and dispersed scenarios are focused on density type or locations. Baris Gumus-Dawes answered that it is linked to community designations. Angie Stenson asked if it is location specific and not looking at different densities within locations. Baris Gumus-Dawes answered it is looking at types of communities rather than individual communities. Angie Stenson said that within county-specific models they notice shifts in patterns when job density catches up with housing in suburban or rural areas. She said Carver County sees less commuting, more internal trips, and less vehicle miles travelled when jobs are available closer to where people live. Staff will follow-up for a conversation about this model.

Jon Solberg, Technical Advisory Committee, said he does not see a measure for health and asked if greenhouse gas emissions are being used as a proxy for health. He had interest in electrification and PM 2.5 (fine particulate matter). Baris Gumus-Dawes said they are trying to connect the Urban Footprint model with the land use model, which is capable of giving public health measures, and welcomed suggestion of related metrics.

Todd Graham, Met Council Community Development – Research, agreed with Angie Stenson's comments and said that employment density can bring a city or district to a next level of activity and behavior. He said the Met Council does not have many land use planning policies to make that happen. Cole Hiniker clarifies that compactness and dispersion are not split by housing and employment across scenarios.

Innocent Eyoh, MPCA, asked if one of the scenarios has more investment in transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities. Cole Hiniker said that transportation investment is held constant in the scenarios, though the compact scenarios are more likely to have demand for those investments.



Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) Reduction Mode Shift Study

Jonathan Ehrlich provided an update on the VMT Reduction Mode Shift study. He presented the study's goals, research questions, and tasks.

Jon Solberg asked via chat if this study would have the ability to estimate how much VMT could be reduced through probable mode shift. Jonathan Ehrlich answered yes. Chair Mareck if existing barriers are held constant. Jonathan Ehrlich answered that the study will estimate how much VMT can shift based on existing barriers and also what could the region accomplish if barriers removed.

Adam Harrington, Metro Transit, asked if there is an identified change in barriers for pedestrians and bicyclists, and if it is focused on suburban cities or is there some possibility in urban cities today. Jonathan Ehrlich said this may be explored in the study; there is some degree of testing on willingness for people to have their trip take longer. He does not want to rule out potential improvement to walkability in urban center cities, and they will look at ways of measuring walkability. He noted poor or no region-wide data on sidewalk characteristics. Adam Harrington asks what kind of change there could be in Minneapolis or Saint Paul. Jonathan Ehrlich noted capacity and feasibility to make change may vary by land use. Cole Hiniker said an update on the travel demand management study will come in December. He said sometimes the barrier is people just need a little nudge.

KC Atkins, Hennepin County, said they had recently done VMT reduction scenario planning. She said they looked at what impact mode shift versus other possible changes can have on VMT reduction. She stated thanks for including e-bikes in the analysis. She asked if the analysis will consider energy needed for trips (e.g., uphill walking or biking trips). Jonathan Ehrlich said they will be including elevation changes in biking and walking analyses, but they will not consider increased greenhouse gas emissions of additional food consumption.

Michael Larson, Met Council Community Development – Local Planning Assistance, asked if there is a point of diminishing returns on reducing greenhouse gasses through VMT reduction, and how varying strategies provide returns on investment. Jonathan Ehrlich said return on investment is not being evaluated this study and may be a potential next step. He said this study is looking to understand the maximum reduction the region could get. This helps the Met Council understand what sort of target is realistic and how to reach people who are least likely to switch modes.

In the meeting chat, David Vessel, MTS Planning, notes importance of safe infrastructure for vulnerable modes and Adam Harrington, Metro Transit, notes importance of pavement quality for bikes.

Closing

Chair Mareck closed the meeting at 2:46 p.m.

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