

Minutes of the MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Committee Members Present: Kramer, Wulff, Rummel, Cunningham, Van Eyll, Brimeyer, Rodriguez, Schreiber, Elkins, Munt, Haigh

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Haigh called the meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 3:00PM on Wednesday, July 17, 2013. Prior to calling the meeting to order, Chair Haigh administered the Oath of Office to the Council members in attendance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Elkins, seconded by Schreiber to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Rummel, seconded by Elkins to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2013 special meeting of the Committee of the Whole. **Motion carried.**

THRIVE MSP 2040

Overview of Transportation Policy: Bicycle and Pedestrian—Libby Starling and Dan Marckel

The 2010 Transportation Policy Plan mentions increasing the modes of bicycling and walking, maintaining safety, efficiency, and appeal. One of the major activities going on right now is the regional bicycle system master study. It is expected to be completed in late 2013. It is a collaborative effort with cities and agencies throughout the region. The study will put together all the information we know about bicycles (where they are and what the policies should be) and identify from a regional perspective what corridors serve a strong transportation function (basically the bicycle equivalent of the principal arterials). The study will provide useful information for funding.

Discussion: Direction for Transportation Policy: Bicycle and Pedestrian for Thrive MSP 2040

Typically, local communities have implemented and maintained bicycle networks. Staff recommendations for the Council's role in bike transportation include collecting and sharing information, indentifying gaps, barriers, and links across jurisdictional borders, providing technical assistance (such as mapping) to communities, identifying regionally significant bicycle corridors across the region, and directing funding to bike facilities with regional significance. Council members agreed with the recommendations. There seems to be broad support for creating a map for the major bikeways and making them a priority for funding. The Council coordinates with MnDOT on an ongoing basis as this is one of our many shared multi-modal types of transportation. Most of the discussion regarding pedestrian infrastructure takes place at the local level. The group agreed that if the Council wants to have a successful transit system, there must be a safe, efficient way for people to get there. Investments in pedestrian access to transit station areas must be a priority.

Overview of key themes on Transit and Land Use from Thrive MSP 2040 Phase II Outreach and Engagement—Denise Engen

The comment cards regarding land use and transit from the Thrive MSP 2040 Phase II roundtable meetings were compiled into a document and distributed to the group. The comments were transcribed and organized into seven themes: more transit, making connections, roles and collaboration, funding and cost concerns, planning considerations, land use and density, transit and economic development, and advocating for specific facilities or solutions.

The group also received comments on Thrive MSP 2040 from the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). TAB offered their general support for Thrive MSP 2040.

Overview of Transportation Policy: Transit Investment—Dan Marckel and Libby Starling

Transit is one of the Council's statutory systems that is named in law. The Council has made a great deal of investment in new transit (CCLRT, Metro Red Line, etc.) recently. The Itasca Project did a study that showed transit can have a huge return on investment if it is done properly. Transit is no longer seen as a "bonus" but rather a necessity for economic competitiveness. The land use strategy must be explicit so we ensure our transit investment pays off. There are some areas of the region that are transit intensive (downtowns, high residential density, good connections to surroundings, etc.) and have a high return on investment. There are other areas that have moderate transit service and have moderate transit efficiency, and then there are areas that are transit hopeful. The transit hopeful areas have disconnected development patterns and low job/residential density. They need some work to become more transit-friendly, but it is possible for them to have great potential.

Discussion: Direction for Transportation Policy—Transit Investment for Thrive MSP 2040

The current approach to transit investment strategy as stated in the Regional Development Framework is to plan and invest in multimodal transportation choices, based on the full range of costs and benefits, to slow the growth of congestion and serve the region's economic needs. Cost effectiveness and congestion relief will always be high priorities. The group discussed transportation investment regarding the placement of housing and the overlap of RCAPs and transit intensive areas. The group also discussed transit oriented development. TOD should be concentrated where it can offer the most return on investment and not spread so thin that the success is compromised. The group discussed the Dallas and Los Angeles transit systems which have dedicated sales tax for transit. Regional, geographic balance needs to be included in the investment criteria. Currently the Regional Development Framework states that the Council will work with communities to accommodate growth in a flexible, connected and sufficient manner, and support connected land use patterns, build within sewer areas, and encourage redevelopment.

Review of Proposed Policy Direction for Water Resources in Thrive MSP 2040—Gary Van Eyll on behalf of the Thrive Working Group

The group agreed that the policy direction for water resources was good. No objections were expressed.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:46PM.

Emily Getty, Recording Secretary