

Meeting Notes

2050 TPP Technical Working Group



Meeting Date: July 13, 2023

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members Present:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7W - Andrew Witter | <input 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 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 - Patrick Haney | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Francis - Kate Thunstrom |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver Co - Angie Stenson (Vice Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis - Kelsey Fogt | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Paul - Bill Dermody |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chanhassen - Charlie Howley | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DEED - Ed Hodder | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stillwater - Tim Gladhill |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coon Rapids - Tim Himmer | <input type="checkbox"/> MDH - Ellen Pillsbury | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Co - Nathan Abney |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dakota Co - Gina Mitteco | <input type="checkbox"/> DNR - Nancy Spooner-Walsh | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban Transit Assoc – Matt Fyten, alternate for Grace Almeida |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FHWA - Josh Pearson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Freight - Andrew Andrusko | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TAB Coordinator - Elaine Koutsoukos |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin Co – Ashley Morello, alternate for KC Atkins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Metro District - Michael Corbett | <input type="checkbox"/> TAC Chair - Jenifer Hager |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council Community Development - Michael Larson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT OTSM - Nicole Westadt | <input type="checkbox"/> TC Shared Mobility Collaborative – Will Schroeer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council MTS - Dave Burns | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Sustainability - Nissa Tupper | <input type="checkbox"/> UMN CTS - Kyle Shelton |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Council, MTS Planning Director - Amy Vennewitz | <input type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Traffic Safety - Derek Leuer | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington Co - Sara Allen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Council, Parks - Emmett Mullin | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPCA - Innocent Eyoh | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> West Saint Paul - Ross Beckwith |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present |

Opening

Chair Scott Mareck, Ramsey County, opened the meeting at 2:02 p.m. and reminded members of virtual meeting norms.

Standing Briefing on TPP Advisory Work Group

Cole Hiniker, MTS Planning, said the upcoming TPP Advisory Work Group meeting will cover the same items presented to the TPP Technical Working Group today.

Goals & Objectives Update

Cole Hiniker, MTS Planning, presented an update on Goals and Objectives development, including:

- the division of existing 2050 Regional Development Guide working vision statements into a vision narrative and goal statements shared by all system plans,
- the addition of a fifth goal statement, Our Region is Dynamic and Resilient, addressing resilience and economic topics,
- the approach to objective development and preceding engagement themes,
- first drafts of objective statements organized by goal areas,
- rationale for not advancing objectives primarily about economic competitiveness, land use and growth, and infrastructure preservation and describing how these topics are addressed through other objectives or the Land Use Policy Plan, and
- description of upcoming steps in 2050 TPP development and chapter review.

Patrick Haney, Metro Transit, said he saw conflict between two draft objectives (“People can better meet their daily needs using affordable travel options beyond driving alone with fewer barriers,” and “[p]eople have timelier and more predictable travel times to reach their destinations when driving, taking transit, walking, rolling, and biking.”), because improving travel time for driving often means expanding capacity which can be in conflict with improving access for other modes. Cole Hiniker restated the comment to confirm understanding. Chair Mareck interprets the objectives to mean the region is investing to make sure there is not any certain mode of travel that has a competitive disadvantage in terms of investment considerations.

Bill Dermody, City of Saint Paul, also spoke about the objective “[p]eople have timelier and more predictable travel times to reach their destinations when driving, taking transit, walking, rolling, and biking.” Dermody said he was struggling with this point but was comforted that it mentions travel times rather than travel speeds, and that he hopes it is implemented in a way that looks at end-to-end travel time rather than how fast one can get through a corridor. Dermody commented this often means bringing points A and B closer together in compact development. Chair Mareck spoke about the inherent difference in travel times for walking, driving, and taking transit, and said the key word is predictable and stated support for investments that improve travel time consistency. Ashley Morello, Hennepin County, asked if the word “timelier” could be removed from the objective. Cole Hiniker says there may be an issue with the wording, and that a back-and-forth on the language may occur as policies are developed.

Ashley Morello asked if other objectives beyond greenhouse gas reduction would be considered. Cole Hiniker said Met Council is open to suggestions. Jed Hanson, MTS Planning, said that the objectives underneath the Climate Change goal statement are focused on climate mitigation, while resilience and adaptation activities are included in broader objective statements under the Dynamic & Resilient goal. Michael Corbett, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) – Metro District, said there could be some resilience overlaps and reference to non-motorized travel opportunity, and there could be a value in adding a bullet to make avoid interpretation it isn’t specific enough. Hiniker said that other regional system plans, like Parks and Water Resources, are also producing objectives and there may be need to reconcile differences in language and organization that may occur later; the TPP is further along in objectives development.

Michael Larson, Met Council Community Development, asked if vehicle miles travelled (VMT) reduction is an action associated with this objective. Cole Hiniker answered yes pending determination from this goals’ respective policy development team, and that he expects electrification would also be a major component of this. Chair Mareck said that research he has done as part of the Ramsey County Transportation Plan has found VMT per capita relatively flat, and that metro counties have been slightly reducing VMT over the last 10-20 years. Chair Mareck said he would encourage the region to set a VMT per capita reduction goal.

Innocent Eyoh, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), said he supports Ashley Morello’s comment to strengthen the climate change objectives and add more. Eyoh referenced work with the Minnesota Climate Action Framework and Minnesota Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan relative to climate and VMT reduction targets. Eyoh referenced state or federal regulatory actions about clean fuels and reducing fossil fuel dependency, and he said it would be reasonable to strengthen plan language about transportation contributions to climate change.

Ashley Morello said she also supports the conversation about reducing VMT per capita, and it is worth further exploring if VMT reduction is worthy of a specific objective, policy, or action. Cole Hiniker said staff could explore having two specific objectives about VMT reduction and electrification. Chair Mareck agreed with that statement and referenced recent state legislation on climate change needing acknowledgement.

Andrew Andrusko, MnDOT Freight, said the Minnesota Freight Advisory Committee (MFAC) would prefer that VMT reduction goals not include freight. Andrusko suggested adding a statement about sustainable supply chains.

Cole Hiniker wrapped the climate discussion and mentioned that the current 2040 Transportation Policy Plan does not have specific goals or objectives on this topic.



Chair Mareck said maintaining infrastructure in a state of good repair is the cornerstone of MnDOT plans, and that he will have to give more thought about the difference in direction on repairing, replacing, and modernizing infrastructure.

Adam Harrington, Metro Transit, said they have an interest in maintaining their system in a state of good repair per federal guidelines and would support future-looking language on repair and replacing infrastructure. Cole Hiniker said the intent is not to say repairing and replacing infrastructure is not important, but the intent is to say repair and replacing itself is not the result we are looking for, rather it's the system being safe, reliable, and accessible. Hiniker said an issue with putting repair and replace as a top priority raises the question if every asset deserves the same schedule of repair prioritization; placing this at top priority can eat up funding quickly and trump other objectives. Hiniker said the intent is to say these objectives are important when repairing and replacing. Chair Mareck said he does not think anyone would disagree with the need to maintain the system in a state of good repair, but it raises a rhetorical question if that should be a regional focus for federal funding or a local priority.

Bill Dermody said this was initially alarming but after hearing the explanation it is less alarming. Dermody suggested providing examples when presenting to policymakers to describe how the policy would apply to scenarios like a bridge falling apart or buses in bad repair. Cole Hiniker says staff has prepared a list describing how repair and replace project types connect to the objectives, and that will be brought into the presentation to policymakers.

Josh Pearson, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), said that wording will be important because preserving the existing transportation system is one of the federal planning factors that must be considered in metropolitan transportation plans. Cole Hiniker this conversation should be continued at next month's meeting alongside examples.

Andrew Andrusko said that competitive economy was a good objective area, and in reference to the proposal to not advance these objectives, he thinks it reflects the theme and approach of the Metropolitan Council that investing in a competitive economy is not necessarily one of their values. Andrusko said other states and regions do invest in this area, it is a desire in certain stakeholder groups like Greater MSP and the Chamber of Commerce, to invest in optimization, bottlenecks, and supply chain. Andrusko stated support for including competitive economy in the TPP and Met Council plans beyond transportation.

Policies & Actions Update

Bethany Brandt-Sargent, MTS Planning, presented the third phase of Policies & Actions development. Brandt-Sargent described the eight policy development teams, their responsibilities and effort, and the ask for nominations by July 19.

Closing

Chair Mareck left the meeting at 3:00. Cole Hiniker closed the meeting at 3:02 p.m.

Council Contact:

Jed Hanson, Planner
jed.hanson@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1716