

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAAC COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 5, 2014

Committee Members Present: Chair Ron Biss, John Schatzlein, Kjensmo Walker, Margot Imdieke-Cross, James Williams, Bob Anderson, Heidi Myhre, Darrell Paulsen, Mark Hoisser, John Lund, Chad McGuire, Colin Stemper, Nichole Villavicencio and Patty Thorsen.

Committee Members Absent: none

Committee Members Excused: none

Council Staff Present: Andy Streasick, Dave Russell, Christine Gabriel, Mary Karlsson, Libby Starling, Alison Coleman and Clare Schleichert from the Office of Equal Opportunity.

Public Present: Claudia Fugile.

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Biss called the regular meeting of the Council's TAAC Committee to order at 12:35 p.m. on Wednesday, March 5, 2014.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Anderson, seconded by Imdieke-Cross to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Lund, seconded by Stemper to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2014 regular meeting of the TAAC Committee. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION & BUSINESS

a. Legislative Update – Judd Schetnan. This item was not presented.

b. MSP 2040 Update

Libby Starling spoke to the TAAC committee. One of her roles at the Met Council is Manager of the Thrive MSP 2040 Planning Work. Last week the Council released a DRAFT version for public comment. They are looking at the future from a series of opportunities and challenges and changes they are seeing for the region as a whole. There is continued population growth and constrained fiscal resources. There are new demands stemming from demographic shifts with the aging population. The senior citizen population is rising from one in nine right now to over one in five people in our region being age 65 or older by the year 2040. Think of what that means for housing and transportation. There are emerging environmental challenges particularly around the water supply. The new importance of what it means to have light rail transit in our region is something new. Since the Council last did this type of large scale planning. Thinking about economic cooperation as being one of the key drivers of ongoing economic prosperity.

As a regional entity, the Metropolitan Council is interested in the value and opportunity of looking at issues from a regional perspective that cross community borders. Benefit from opportunities to address best practices and require resources that are most effectively used at a regional scale. They are not taking on city specific challenges. With Thrive and all of the Council's regional planning work they are really trying to take on a regional perspective and add value where that regional scale makes sense.

Thrive is the Council's statutory role for doing a comprehensive development plan and it is replacing a document known as the Regional Development Framework that was adopted in the year 2004. They are moving into the next generation with this one.

She discussed the overall structure of Thrive. The last time she spoke at the TAAC she discussed the outcomes and principles, which is the first part of the Thrive document. Since then they have added two additional pieces. One of which is a geographically-specific area that takes the overall outcomes and principles and thinks about them in terms of geographically-specific features. Some of which cross community borders and others which are groupings of communities that are similar in different ways. They are moving from common outcomes and principles to what that means in recognizing that one size does not fit all. They are geographical differences within our region. Whether economic, topographical, service, infrastructural or geographically specific.

Then the final section of Thrive MSP 2040 is the land use policy that takes the outcomes and principles, separates them out into different community designations. It recognizes the geographically specific features and lays out land use policy to influence local comprehensive planning.

Thrive has laid out a series of five outcomes: stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability and sustainability. The idea is to look for policies, programs and initiatives that advance all of the outcomes because all of the outcomes are interdependent and interconnected. They want them to work together as a region.

Thrive then lays out three principles: integration, collaboration and accountability.

The next pieces to Thrive that are new are getting into the geographically specific pieces. The first is a grouping that they are calling "special features". These are the attributes of the regions that are big ideas. These are the ones that don't follow community borders. They are either neighborhoods inside city borders or they are larger groupings of multiple communities that share a specific attribute.

These are the special features that we have laid out:

Racially concentrated areas of poverty and areas of concentrated poverty. These are areas that have more than 50 percent of their population being people of color and at least 40 percent of the population living below 185 percent of the federal poverty line. These are neighborhoods that have seen significant private disinvestment and are areas of special concern because once these areas become racially concentrated areas of poverty they don't stop being racially concentrated areas of poverty. We want to help these areas to not be racially concentrated areas of poverty and not grow over the future.

Station areas along transitways. In the areas where there is a significant investment of capital resources for a light rail transit line. Some of the more significant bus rapid transit lines. We want to treat the areas around the stations areas differently. And think about what the expectations are of the development in those areas to help maximize the value of that fixed transit investment.

Water supply considerations. Being deliberate about the areas in our region that are ground water recharge areas. Thinking differently about what development occurs in those areas. Thinking differently as well about the areas that currently use a mix of groundwater and surface water and the areas that have the opportunity to use more surface water in their water supply.

Job and activity centers. Over half of our region's employment are in a small number of job and activity centers. These are the areas that are best served by enhanced transit connections and are opportunities whereas there is ongoing intensification of job and activity opportunities. There it has spiraling benefits around transit in particular.

Wastewater service areas. These are the areas that are currently served by the regional wastewater treatment system. The areas that are planned to be served by the regional wastewater treatment system over the next 30 years or over the long term. Looking at the land in our region that is unlikely to ever be served by wastewater treatment or if it is it would be beyond a 100 year planning horizon.

Regionally significant natural resources. These are the core ideas seen as policy overlays. Different places in the region have different connections to these special features. Because of their key connection to the policy these are the ones that they are identifying in Thrive.

They have laid out a series of community designations. The community designations are groupings of communities that share similar opportunities and challenges. By grouping communities together it allows the Council to communicate and implement its policies to inform the local comprehensive planning process. The Council has done community designations in multiple iterations of its regional planning. Sometimes we call it the geographic planning areas. Now we call it community designation. These are the characteristics that generally apply to an entire city as a whole.

In the Thrive MSP 2040 we are laying out a series of nine designations:

Urban Center: Growing vitality in the region's core (Minneapolis, St. Paul, St. Louis Park & Fridley)

Urban: Redeveloping to meet the needs of new generations (Maplewood, Roseville, Bloomington)

Suburban: Cultivating places where people can gather (Eagan, Minnetonka, Coon Rapids)

Suburban Edge: Managing rapid growth and change

Emerging Suburban Edge: Transitioning from rural to developed (Maple Grove, Woodbury, Savage)

Rural Centers: Serving the rural area as small town centers of commerce

Diversified Rural: Protecting land for rural lifestyles and long-term urbanization

Rural Residential: Limiting unsustainable growth patterns

Agricultural: Preserving large swaths of farmland

The Council has laid out seven land use policies:

Orderly and efficient land use – align land use, development patterns and infrastructure to make the best use of public and private investment

Natural Resources Protection- conserve, restore and protect the region's natural resources to ensure availability, to support public health and to maintain a high quality of life.

Water sustainability- conserve, restore and protect the quality and quantity of the region's water resources to ensure ongoing availability, to support public health and maintain a high quality of life

Housing Affordability/Choice- promote housing options to give people in all life stages and of all economic means viable choices for safe, stable and affordable homes

Access, Mobility, Transportation Choice – sustain and improve a multi-modal transportation system to support regional growth, maintain regional economic competitiveness and provide choices and reliability for the system's users.

Economic Competitiveness – foster connected land use options to provide businesses and industries with access to materials, markets and talent

Building in Resilience – promote sensitive land use and development patterns to achieve Minnesota's adopted greenhouse gas emissions goals at the regional scale, and to develop local resiliency to the impacts of climate change.

Accompanying these seven land use policies are some community role designations that affect all communities. Roles that all communities across the region are expected to fulfill. There are other pieces inside the land use policies where the policy varies by the nine community designations. Recognizing the differences across the region and recognizing the different land use challenges. The systems and policy plans also will have requirements for cities to fulfill in the local comprehensive planning process. The Transportation Policy Plan will also impact cities.

One of the land use policies that does vary by the community designation is the expectation of residential density for new development. In the urban center the Council is expecting new residential density. New development overall density of the Urban Center is 20 units per acre, Urban 10 units an acre, Suburban 5 units per acre, Suburban Edge 3-5 units per acre, Emerging Suburban Edge 3-5 units per acre, Rural Center 3-5 units per acre, Diversified Rural 4 units in 40 acres, Rural Residential 1-2.5 acre lots, Agricultural 1 unit in 40 acres max.

So what is different? There are new challenges facing the region. The impact of an aging region. The ongoing impact of racial and ethnic diversities. The realities of fiscal constraint. They need to spend more energy on maintenance preserving and filling out the infrastructure that we have. The next key piece is the outcomes orientation: stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability and sustainability. Inside the policy there are four new concepts: water supply and water sustainability; economic competitiveness and prosperity, equity and racially-concentrated areas of poverty; climate change resilience.

There is a stronger focus on land use and transit connections. Laying out a clearer role for the Council as a convener. This includes conversations where the Council has no official statutory role. But where there is a regional issue or regional problem that can benefit from regional conversation, discussion and dialogue.

The next steps: Adopting policy plans: Housing Policy Plan (fall 2014), Water Resources Policy Plan (late 2014), Transportation Policy Plan (late 2014) and the Regional Parks Policy Plan (early 2015).

They are accepting public comments through April 28. There are two public hearings: April 10 at F.T. Heywood Building Chambers in Minneapolis and April 16 at the Metropolitan Council Chambers in St. Paul. The overall plan is adopting Thrive in May.

c. 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Update

Mary Karlsson and Christine Gabriel spoke to the TAAC committee. The Transportation Policy Plan is one of the four system plans. One of the areas that is addressed is housing. They will mostly go through the policy part of the plan. They are looking at having the plan out for public comment from July through September 2014 and final adoption in December 2014.

The plan is broken out to three important parts:

Part 1 discusses issues, challenges, demographics and how we travel (TBI), Thrive summary and relationship to transportation, transportation system goals and objectives and summary of investments. It talks about what is the TPP and why is it important? The transportation challenges we are facing. It gives a brief description of the Metropolitan Council and the TAB and TPP civic engagement. It identifies the transportation issues and challenges that are going to be discussed in part one of the plan.

They are an increase in travel. We are expecting that our population and our number of jobs in the region are going to continue to grow. So we are expecting that travel is also going to continue to grow. There will be continued roadway congestion. There is a demand for transportation options. That transportation has impacts on communities and we need to acknowledge that. There are disparities in access to jobs and opportunities. We have limited fiscal resources. We have intense economic competition that our region needs to stay economic competitive.

They will be supplemented with technical appendices.

There are six transportation goals and objectives: safety and security, access to destinations, transportation system stewardship, align transportation and land use, creating a healthy environment and competitive economy.

Part 2 discusses strategies (actions), finance, transportation and land use and modal system descriptions and investment plans, which will go into highways, transit, bike/ped, freight and aviation. Strategies identify one or more specific actors and an intended course of action that demonstrates priorities and how we will actually do those things. Strategies are generally aimed at giving direction to entities implementing the transportation system plan and to local governments for comprehensive planning. From the implementing agency perspective it is giving direction to people like MnDOT to the Counties and the County Highway Departments to the Cities, to Metro Transit and Metro Mobility and also to the city parks folks, our city sidewalk people and public works people.

We are also speaking with the local governments as far as their comprehensive plans go. There are 60 strategies going forward organized under the six proposed transportation system goals. This is reduced from the 124 strategies in the current Transportation Policy Plan. The focus has been on creating multi-modal strategies and communicating that we want to have a multi-modal transportation system.

That is up to you to decide if we have achieved it or not. It should be more than multi-modal. It should also be talking about accessibility.

We are going to have a chapter that is dedicated to these strategies in this plan that will include supporting text. It will discuss what these strategies mean in more detail. It will discuss who it applies to and how it applies to them. Right now we have four strategies under Transportation System Stewardship. They focus on prioritizing preservation, maintenance and operations of the existing system. Making sure the system is maintained throughout the year. We also want to explore combining planned preservation with cost effective opportunities to expand and modernize the system.

In terms of safety and security we have seven proposed strategies. We are emphasizing incorporating safety considerations into all planning, construction, operating and funding processes. We want to support the state's vision of Toward Zero Deaths from traffic accidents. We want to emphasize the coordination between transportation and public safety agencies like with emergency response. We want to improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists.

The third goal area is Access to Destinations. There are 22 proposed strategies. Most of these strategies are in the current Transportation Policy Plan. This is where there are modal specific strategies. There is one specific to highways and one specific to transit. They prioritize highway capacity investments based on a project's contribution to regional goals and objectives. It talks about investing in an expanded network of transitways and prioritizing them based on a project's contribution to regional goals and objectives. Focus bicycle system investments on regional bicycle transportation corridors and removing barriers and gaps in the system. That is based on the bicycle system master study that is being completed right now by the Council.

Under Competitive Economy we proposed eight strategies. The Council and its partners will identify and pursue the level of funding needed to address priority unmet needs in the plan. We want to ensure that we invest in projects that improve connections to job and activity centers, promote economic development and attract and retain businesses and workers. We want to identify and invest in projects that reduce the impacts of highway congestion on freight movement. We also want to emphasize that we maintain a strong regional airport system with MSP as a major national and international hub.

In terms of healthy environment we have seven proposed strategies. We want to continue to promote reductions in transportation related emissions when prioritizing investments. We want to plan and implement a transportation system considering the needs of all potential users. We want to continue to protect and enhance natural resources and the cultural and built environments. We want to foster public engagement and involvement, focusing on underrepresented populations and avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts to low income and minority populations.

There are 12 proposed strategies under Transportation and Land Use. They are drafted in consultation with Land Use Advisory Committee. It focuses on giving direction to local governments in preparing comprehensive plans that are due in 2018. We want to plan for projected growth and stage local transportation infrastructure investments to accommodate growth. We are working with our local partners to adopt land use policies that support growth around transit stations and high frequency transit. These strategies include bicycle and pedestrian elements in local plans. Talking about compatibility of land uses near airports.

State legislation requires a comprehensive land use plan. The Transportation Policy Plan is part of that. It is also required by the federal government to provide a long range transportation plan. This plan meets both of those purposes.

Indieke-Cross said that the Goals and Objectives did not include accessibility in the Thrive MSP 2040 document. She asked that it be added.

d. TAAC Advise

Andy Streasick spoke to the TAAC committee. He received some feedback for the TAAC from a member of the disability committee. He asked if printed materials could be available at the meetings for the public as well as the committee members. He asked the committee who would like the paper copies at the meeting. The TAAC members still want everything sent via email and a few handouts at the meeting. He also discussed keeping the meeting at a more professional level.

Pam Steffen asked that Streasick make a few announcements. There was a handout about Metro Transit snow removal. There is a list of Metro Transit route changes that go into effect Saturday, March 8.

MEMBER COMMENT

Indieke Cross handed out a copy of a bill for an act relating to Metropolitan Transit; expanding scope of jurisdiction of Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee; amending Minnesota Statutes 2012, sections 473.375, by adding a subdivision; 473.386, subdivision 2 to be enacted by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota. It was a bill that Senator Dibble took upon himself to initiate. She asked for a list of people who would like to testify when it comes to committee.

Chair Biss mentioned what was added to the bill.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paulsen invited everyone to attend the Greater Twin Cities Second Transportation Forum. It is going to be in Scott and Carver County on March 10. The mayor will be there. He has been active in transportation issues at both the state and local levels. There will also be members of the Metropolitan Council there. It is at the Shakopee Library from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Walker said that the Federal Transit Administration came out with something that they call a circular. It is an updated ADA DRAFT chapters for public comment on how to bring paratransit to traditional transit. They are seeking public comment. She will be bringing this to the TAAC in April with some recommendations that the TAAC can recommend to the FTA.

Stemper said that this Friday at 11:00 a.m. at the State Office building in room 181 the State Council on Disability is going to be having a press conference about the importance of removing snow and ice from sidewalks and how that plays out in the Twin Cities and what you can do about it if you see a sidewalk or a curb ramp or a transit stop that is less than ideal condition. If you have any pictures of any sidewalks or any stories please share them with him. The Star Tribune had a story today on the same subject.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Alison Coleman

Recording Secretary