Meeting Notes

2050 Transportation Policy Plan Advisory Work Group

Meeting Date: June 29, 2022   **Time**: 9:00 AM   **Location:** Virtual

Members Present:

- ☒ Chair, Deb Barber, Met Council
- ☒ John Pacheco, Met Council
- ☒ Francisco Gonzalez, Met Council
- ☒ Debbie Goettel, TAB, Hennepin Co.
- ☒ Jon Ulrich, TAB, Scott Co.
- ☒ Stan Karwoski, TAB, Washington Co.

- ☒ Mitra Jalali, TAB, Saint Paul
- ☒ Jim Hovland, TAB, Chair/Edina
- ☒ Julie Jeppson, TAB, Blaine
- ☒ Amity Foster, TAB, Transit
- ☒ Peter Dugan, TAB, Dist. H
- ☒ Christopher Geisler, TAB, Dist. E

- ☒ Wes Kooistra, Metro Transit
- ☒ David Fenley, alternate for David Dively, MN Council on Disability
- ☒ Sheila Kauppi, alternate for Michael Barnes, MnDOT
- ☐ Craig McDonnell, MPCA
- ☐ Vacant, Suburban Transit Assoc.

☒ = present

Opening

Work Group Chair Deb Barber opened the meeting at 9:01 a.m. Chair Barber opened the meeting, providing an overview of the work group purpose, membership, and meeting details.

Members gave brief self-introductions.

Charles Carlson, MTS Director, described the significance of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) and the importance of this work group in plan development.

Member Dugan inquired if minutes are being taken for this meeting. Chair Barber answered confirmed minutes would be taken. Charles Carlson answered meetings are being recorded.

2050 TPP Development and Work Program Highlights

Cole Hiniker, MTS Multimodal Planning, introduced himself as 2050 TPP project manager and presented on:

- plan development and schedule,
- the TPP's relationship to the 2050 Regional Development Guide,
- the TPP's role in regional transportation planning,
- committee engagement and work group responsibilities,
- potential topics to address in the 2050 TPP, and
- major studies and work program items.

Member Debbie Goettel states importance of study work related to traffic management and to equity. Member Goettel asks for information about study schedules; Cole Hiniker responds the studies are staggered with results coming in through next summer and during plan drafting, with presentations to this group and the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) as study results become available.

Member Jon Ulrich states benefits of fiber optics and asks if it should be studied as a system. Member Ulrich comments on the speed of change and asks how the plan will address seen or unforeseen changing circumstances. Chair Barber responds that the TPP is updated more frequently than the Regional Development Guide and can adapt to change. Cole Hiniker responds

some emerging areas, like autonomous vehicles, have been studied and scenario planning is part of the 2050 planning efforts.

Member Sheila Kauppi asked if a study will address reducing roadway network lane miles. Cole Hiniker mentions this is not part of a planned study, though there is potential to identify new study areas in the 2050 TPP. Steve Peterson, MTS Highway Planning, mentions this topic's relationship to local efforts and asks for clarification about which roadway networks to study. Member Kauppi indicates interest in a regional conversation.

Member Stan Karwoski raised the topic of responsiveness to changing circumstances, noting the topics of fiber optics and vehicle electrification, charging, size, and weight. Member Karwoski stated interest in updating the plan annually. Chair Barber responds stating nimbleness of the TPP relative to other system plans, providing the example of amending the U.S. Highway 212 project into the plan as the result of a freight study. Cole Hiniker responds stating need to distinguish between changing technology and strategies versus changing values; consistent values help adapt the plan to new ideas, technologies, and strategies.

Member Kauppi states there are many priorities and asks if they will be weighted. Cole Hiniker responds stating the TPP Goals & Objectives study will address this.

2050 Regional Development Guide: Vision, Values, and Outcomes

Michael Larson, Community Development, introduced himself as managing the values, vision, and goals process for the 2050 Regional Development Guide. Michael Larson presented on:

- the foundational role of values, vision, and goals for system policy plans,
- engagement process,
- emerging themes to-date, and
- a preview of the small group discussion exercise.

Small Group Discussion

Members were broken into three group discussions and prompted to think about the following:

Questions

- What values come to mind for this theme?
- How do you envision the transportation system supporting this theme?
- What stories or positive examples come to mind?

Themes

- Equitable, affordable, and welcoming
- High quality and resilient environment
- Vibrant places and destinations
- Accessible and interconnected
- Prosperous and healthy

Discussion Results

Group facilitators reported out the following major discussion results to the larger group. An overview of the themes are provided in an attachment.

Closing

The work group closed at 11:06 a.m.

Council Contact:

Jed Hanson, Planner, jed.hanson@metc.state.mn.us

Overview

This document includes a summary of the small group discussions and large group report out at the initial meeting of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Advisory Work Group on June 29, 2022. After a staff presentation, three small groups met to discuss the following questions around each of five themes summarized in the sections below:

- What values come to mind?
- How do you envision the transportation system supporting this theme?
- What stories or positive examples come to mind?

Small group participants included the following:

- Room 1: Deb Barber, David Fenley, Chris Geisler, Julie Jeppson
- Room 2: Amity Foster, Debbie Goettel, Jim Hovland, Mitra Jalali, John Pacheco
- Room 3: Francisco Gonzalez, Stan Karwoski, Peter Dugan, Wes Kooistra, Sheila Kauppi

Theme 1: Equitable, affordable, and welcoming

Room 1 noted that the five themes blended and that values should center around people and their needs. We should consider how people experience the entire transportation system, especially in consultation with people with disabilities, tribal nations, and BIPOC communities. The system should serve as many individuals as possible with consideration of measures of accessibility. Among the different modes, we should consider if the system feels welcoming and equitable rather than just utilitarian.

Room 2 noted that equitable, affordable, and welcoming are values in and of themselves. Transit should serve all needs through the stages of a person's life; and not just commuting to downtown, other work destinations, and schools. They noted that public safety and public health were not words that were included in the themes. They also mentioned the need to engage workers and suppliers.

Room 3 expressed a desire for the terms in the theme to be further defined. Nevertheless, they expressed a desire to focus on people and the impacts on people, the needs of different communities, and whether the system is sustainable and remains usable over time.

Theme 2: High quality and resilient environment

Room 1 addressed the need for high-quality, low-maintenance infrastructure that considers the needs of the future rather than those of the past.

Room 2 discussed system preservation as well as promoting longevity, efficient investments, and improved accessibility. They discussed the need for long-term planning that fosters inclusivity for those with economic challenges and BIPOC communities. They discussed features of the transportation system and urban landscape that could change or adapt, such as repurposing parking lots or introducing new transportation services or elements (e.g., bus lanes, bike lanes).

Room 3 focused on integrating roads and transit with other land uses, to create a more resilient transportation system. This would include high quality transit to help people shift out of single-occupancy vehicles to improve climate and air quality.

Theme 3: Vibrant places and destinations

Room 1 discussed "broken window syndrome" where if the system looks damaged or in disrepair, it can fall into circular disrepair. Infrastructure does not need to be utilitarian. It can be visible and part of our world. If there is a positive experience to use the system, there will more likely be support investment and maintenance.

Room 2 discussed placemaking and the importance of storytelling, citing several examples: a festival that interfaces with public art and murals; transforming industrial space to residential; pocket parks that create an urban [tree] canopy; and planning for the E Line BRT station at 50th & France.

Room 3 did not specifically cover this theme.

Theme 4: Accessible and interconnected

Room 1 discussed ease in which people can access the transportation system, whether or not it meets transportation needs, and whether or not destinations can be reached in a reasonable amount of time and effort. Other issues mentioned include access to various destinations by various modes, the interconnection of different modes, and the sharing of rights-of-way by different modes. The quality of the experience and right-of-way was mentioned again, such as the use of the right-of-way for natural functions such as stormwater or pollinator habitat.

Room 2 discussed the problem of limited or no connectivity between Metro Mobility and the rest of system. The needs of seniors and people with disabilities are not being met, with winter maintenance and ice posting additional accessibility challenges for these users. For those using the transit system, having enough time to board or exit the vehicle can be a problem. Some of the solutions could be in technology.

Room 3 addressed accessibility of the system, including connecting people to transit through investments such as trails and park-and-rides. Accessibility to different destinations may become a more important consideration than efficiency.

Theme 5: Prosperous and healthy

Room 1 discussed the need to identify or define potential targets for prosperity and health (e.g., communities as a whole, "underserved" communities, businesses, or individuals). Housing, food access, and job access are fundamental pieces related to prosperity and transportation is the glue that connects all of those. Accessibility between Richfield and Bloomington along I-494 between was discussed.

Room 2 discussed transportation as an economic driver. Prosperity likely means different things to different people. Aspects of prosperity might include wage growth, mobility, and housing choice. A more accessible transit system might not be as fast as a car, but it might be safer and more efficient.

Room 3 addressed the mismatches in transportation and development can create inequal prosperity and accessibility across the region. We should focus on end-users and let them shape priorities. Attracting people and jobs to the region will require investments across all sectors.