

Minutes

Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee



Meeting date: November 01, 2023

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: 390 Robert Street

Members present:

- Chair, David Fenley, at large
- Vice Chair, Darrell Vice Chair, Paulsen, Precinct F
- Sam Jasmine, Precinct A
- Christopher Bates, Precinct B
- Patsy Murphy, Precinct C
- Ken Rodgers, Precinct D
- Jeffrey Dains, Precinct E
- Kari Sheldon, Precinct G
- Rachel Garaghty, Precinct H

Attending from Home

Sam Jasmine, Christopher Bates, Ken Rodgers

- Trevor Turner, MCD
- Erik Henriksen, MCD
- Diane Graham-Raff, MAAA
- Patty Thorsen, MAAA
- Heidi Myhre, MCCD
- Claudia Fuglie, MCCD
- Richard Rowen, AARP MN

Excused

Jeffrey Dains, Diane Graham-Raff, Trevor Turner

Other Council Employees

Kimberly Malone
Christine Kuennen, Sophia Ginis

Ex-officio:

- Phillip Sterner, Council Member Liaison
 - Andy Streasick, Metro Mobility
 - Douglas Cook, Metro Transit Customer Advocate
 - Guthrie Byard, ADA & Title VI Administrator
- = present, E = excused

Public

Britanny Hoff, Dakota County

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Fenley called the regular meeting of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee to order at 12:32 p.m.

Agenda approved

Chair Fenley motioned to amend the agenda moving business and information items three and four to precede business and information item number two. It was moved by Murphy and seconded by Myhre. **Motion carried.**

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Vice Chair, Paulsen, seconded by Jasmine to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2023, regular meeting of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.**

Business and information items

Network Now Phase Updates - Sophia Ginis, Director, Community Affairs, Metro Transit

Ginis prefaced the presentation with a brief recap of the presentation provided to TAAC in 2022 highlighting that the main purpose was to get feedback on approach and input to the Network Now program to ensure diversity. The Network Now: Building the Foundation PowerPoint presentation was displayed and reviewed.

Network Now was defined as Metro Transit's way of determining what service will be going forward noting that the impacts of the pandemic, sales tax increases, and operator hiring have been driving how resources are prioritized and decisions are made. The Network Now program

is a Metro Transit-only, short-term plan focused on the immediate.

The project steps and timeline highlighted when the committee received the first project update and where today's update falls on the timeline. The list of transit areas being addressed as part of the Network Now program was reviewed. The first step of the program was to develop the five program principles needed to form the program foundation termed the 'three-legged stool' and comprised of: policy, the policies governing Metro Transit, network performance and ridership – what is seen in the system, and public engagement – performance. The five principles were collectively defined as principles developed to evaluate how networks are doing today in comparison to what will be determined through the development of metrics that will provide this information. The principles were developed through methods and results including surveys, group and individual meetings, Customer Relations feedback, planning data, and policy acquired over 5,000 points of contact with over 6,000 unique comments. The five principles were defined:

Principle

- 1 Adapt service to changes in transit markets and travel patterns.
- 2 Prepare for new METRO and high-frequency routes.
- 3 Maintain the reliability of our scheduled service consistently over time.
- 4 Build on success to grow ridership, adding service where people use transit the most.
- 5 Provide access to opportunities and services with a focus on advancing equity and reducing regional disparities.

Principle

Of Note

- 1 People are traveling differently than days prior to COVID.
- 2 Metro Transit supports significant investments.
- 3 Resources for on-time performance
- 4 Care and plan for ridership
- 5 What the whole network needs to do

Ginis emphasized that surveys were done to gauge regional priorities – where they are. Tracking demographics of ridership, area, gender, race/ethnicity, disability, and household income enabled them to observe different needs. The values of ridership, equity, coverage, and geographic evenness and the importance of defining coverage and equity were highlighted. It was noted that ridership received the most points, and people of color allocated more points to other values such as equity. The survey revealed what riders valued as well as the needs of individual groups.

The committee was invited to provide any thoughts about the first step and five principles as well as what else should be considered as values and the framework into adapting Metro Transit's network and prioritizing resources. Myhre opened the discussion questioning whether hidden disabilities were part of the survey. Ginis responded that different types of disabilities were queried versus the former way of asking if disabled, yes or no. Chair Fenley requested clarification on the overreaching goal of Network Now. Ginis referred to the principles slide (page 7) to explain how the "bottom-up" approach in engaging the public was used to drive changes and the five principles, the goals of Network Now, noting they conflict so metrics are being developed. The committee was provided examples of how access and opportunities were surveyed. It was noted that the Network Now program includes all Metro Transit services.

Committee members had questions pertaining to how the survey was conducted and the types of data collected. Co-Chair Paulsen questioned if survey responses reflected varying times of day. Ginis emphasized that a lot of time and effort was put in over a period of three months within various bus routes during different times of the day, but not during late-night hours. Safety issues were identified. All five principles were reviewed with a "safety lens" as safety has been one of the top issues the Network Now team hears about from customers. Chair Fenley echoed Co-Chair Paulsen's concern stating that people ride at different times, and every rider



has different experiences. Thoreson asked if staff hours affected the survey times and feedback obtained. Ginis reiterated that surveys were conducted at various times throughout the day and explained that demographic questions were included in the survey to ensure enough numbers were obtained within each category. Myhre requested verification that surveys were conducted in suburban areas. Ginis verified that the surveys were tracked by zip codes which included suburban areas adding that some outside organizations included the survey on their websites which broadened access to it.

Thoreson echoed Myhre’s concern as to whether customers with hidden disabilities were represented in the surveys. Ginis clarified that hidden disabilities were not included in the initial survey but assured the next survey will include hidden disabilities. Co-Chair Paulsen inquired about an advisory committee or representation from TAAC within the Network Now program. Ginis explained how their work includes feedback from the public but there is no advisory committee. Chair Fenley reminded the committee that they are doing this work now by being present at this project update and pointed out that twenty percent of the survey respondents had a disability. Chair Fenley questioned if there were any significant findings in terms of race and disability and socio-economic and disability. Ginis explained how race, income, and disability status often followed similar patterns, and crosstabs reflected similar results or same order but differing magnitudes.

In response to discussions on rider safety concerns, Ginis inquired as to when TAAC last received a safety and security plan update emphasizing that safety comes up in surveys and is taken very seriously. Chair Fenley stated that TAAC usually receives an update twice a year.

Ginis concluded the presentation thanking the committee for their help in shaping the Network Now program and announcing that she would like to report back on all the work that has been done, where things are at the time of the next update, and for further feedback from the committee.

Metro Mobility Operating Statistics - Andy Streasick, Manager, Metro Mobility Customer Service

Streasick opened the update asking the committee to consider questions pertaining to how they might prefer to provide quarterly updates to TAC Business Planning and for future updates at TAAC committee meetings:

- What stats should be included compared to what is presented today?
- How should stats be presented?
- Timing of numbers - ahead of time?
- How should stats be broken out (e.g., by month)?
- Should the stats encompass system updates (e.g., hardware shifts)?

Validated Complaints by Zones – July 1, 2023 – October 30, 2023

Zone	# Complaints	Complaint Type/s
East	155	Lates, no show disputes, non-ADA trip denials
West	287	ADA trip denials
South	92	No show disputes and non-ADA trip denials
Agency (standing order)	6	No pattern

Vice Chair, Paulsen questioned whether the difference in complaint totals was closely related to trip denials and numbers had been broken down. Streasick informed the committee that the West zone is historically the highest performer but has fallen and is, by far, the largest zone by ridership. It was noted that there is no differentiation between vocational versus senior programs and an adequate clientele base is required. Chair Fenley requested clarification on



the role of agency service. Streasick explained that agency service is not geographically zoned and compared it to a school bus run to a day program versus what is zoned in on-demand service.

3rd quarter and YTD Stats by Service Type

Systemwide On Time Performance

Systemwide – 89.3% (90% - federal standard) Driver and vehicle shortages noted.

On-Time (when we show up) - 96.5% (95% federal standard)

On-Time by Appointment Time – 86.9% (90% federal standard)

ADA Only

On-Time – 89.6% Reflects prioritization of federally-mandated rides.

On-Time by Appointment Time – 87.2%

Max On Board Time (versus taking a city bus) – 96.1% Slight drop noted. Even though federally mandated, this stat dropped because rides tend to be longer.

Jasmine questioned if the difference was closely related to trip denials and if the overall number was counted or by individual providers. Streasick stated that the West zone is historically the highest performer but has fallen; it is by far the largest zone by ridership systemwide. The federal government looks at the entire performance. They look at days of the week and service hours to identify potential capacity constraints. Myhre asked if the implementation of Google Maps might help the numbers. Streasick explained that how things are analyzed will remain the same; however, this resource might allow drivers to be more productive with existing resources.

Noted:

- Formula: Mileage times four plus thirty equals comparable time in minutes
- For riders in ADA, the main concern is whether the ADA user experience is close to federal standards, the key performance indicators (KPI's).

No Shows – Sept. & Oct.

Zone	# No Shows	Reason/s
YTD	6,970	Denials
East	None	No capacity issues, including non-ADA rides.
South	830 – Sept. 161 – Oct.	All denials occurred within the last two months. Federally mandated rides were prioritized; the October number reflects progress.
West	5,579 - Total 3,462 – Sept. 2,507 – Oct.	Ten are likely false due to “a denial due to a denial”; they were input errors.

Noted:

- Metro Mobility is aggressively targeting denials which are an impediment to independent living.
- Numbers dropped significantly over the last month in the south zone.

Trip Counts

Streasick prefaced the trip count update asking the committee if they preferred provider or systemwide January through September 2023 numbers. It was noted that October numbers were not available due to edited trip counts and some numbers that were not available on 9/30.

Systemwide – January through September 2023:

Jan. - 147,612	April - 169,485	July - 161,752
Feb - 151,449	May – 179,841	Aug. - 181,943
March - 185,055	June - 172,464	Sept. - 162,209

Provider Size – largest to smallest: 1st - West, 2nd - East, 3rd - South, and 4th - Agency



In closing, Streasick announced that over two million rides will be achieved in 2023 which will position Metro Mobility as the largest para transit provider in the country. The committee was asked to decide on two main data reporting preferences while keeping in mind the questions Streasick presented at the beginning of the update:

- What would be most beneficial, a readable document that would be one month behind or an up-to-date verbal report that would not include some of the previous month's data.
- What data points - including new data – should the committee look at.

Chair Fenley urged committee members to think about how the data could be used to inform Metro Mobility staff of what impact it could have, why TAAC is hearing about it, and what TAAC might bring to the discussion for riders who use Metro Mobility. Streasick welcomed any suggestions on data points not previously presented. Chair Fenley proposed forming a smaller group to work offline and report back to the committee. Chair Fenley and Streasick recommended adding this discussion as an agenda item on the TAAC 01-03-24 agenda.

Vice Chair Paulsen asked Rodgers if there were any data items not mentioned in this update. Rodgers voiced agreement to an offline discussion and recommended reporting the numbers represented by the percentages because the numbers represent individuals encountering situations. Streasick responded, the numbers can be added to the data reporting. Jasmine concurred and requested breaking down the numbers by zone and month. Streasick added that the numbers can be broken down by providers. Myhre questioned whether operating data can be presented to legislators. Chair Fenley informed the committee that speaking to legislators on behalf of TAAC would require committee approval; however, committee members may share their personal experiences and perspectives with their legislators. Jasmine requested clarification on whether the meeting minutes would reflect all numbers presented at committee meetings. Streasick responded that he would check with administrative support and then provide an answer.

Community Conversations Feedback - Andy Streasick, Manager, Metro Mobility Customer Service

Streasick announced that there were about thirty-five Metro Mobility customers at each of the two Community Conversations meeting: in-person on 10/17, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. and virtually on 10/25, 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Key takeaways:

- Most comments regarding driver appreciation and service overall were positive even though systemwide performance has been lower than in the last ten years.
- There was recognition that we are still coming out of a difficult time.
- New software for drivers, Driver Made will allow Google mapping (versus just Trapeze mapping) for real time tracking and weather.
- There was interest in the Pass APP and having a public meeting to provide education to riders.
- More specific data will be provided later by Sand, the event organizer.

There will be one in-person and one virtual meeting in 2024; the in-person meeting will be scheduled during midday hours and the virtual meeting during evening hours.

Reports

Subcommittee

1. Blue Line – Ken Rodgers
No report.
2. Green Line – Christopher Bates
No report.

3. Gold Line – Darrell Paulsen
No report.
4. Purple Line – Darrell Paulsen
No report.

Bus Priority Seating TAAC Work Group

No report.

Chair

No report.

Public invitation

No questions or comments were presented to the committee.

Member comment

None.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of November 01, 2023.

Approved this 29th day of November 2023.

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