

Minutes

Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee



Meeting date: November 06, 2024

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: 390 Robert Street

Members present:

- Chair, David Fenley, at large
- Vice Chair, Darrell 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

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

Ex-officio:

- Andy Streasick, Metro Mobility
- Cheryl Schmidt, Metro Mobility Service Center (interim)
- Douglas Cook, Metro Transit Customer Advocate
- Anjuli Cameron, Metropolitan Council

= present, E = excused

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Fenley called the regular meeting of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee to order at 12:30 p.m.

Agenda approved

It was moved by Member Fuglie, seconded by Member Dains to approve the agenda. Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. **Motion carried.**

Approval of minutes

Member Hendricks asked for some more detail to be added to the item three in the September 2024 meeting minutes. A motion to table the minutes was moved. **Motion carried.**

Business and information items

1. A presentation of **Priority Seating Now and Tomorrow** from Anj Olsen and Alice Johnson from Metro Transit. Objectives for the session included what does TAAC want all passengers to know about priority seating, come to a consensus on who should utilize priority seating, and brainstorm some concepts for further development for the priority seating campaign.

Currently a lot of imagery used from last year's campaign. A switch from cloth to plastic seats allowed the images to be placed on stickers directly on seats. This is helpful for customers without English literacy skills.

A suggestion from last year's campaign was to move away from the word "senior" in future campaigns to a more mobility focused message. Another idea was to put imagery on the floor like a parking spot.

Member discussion included if pregnant people and people with small children should be marketed to use these seats. Member Rodges indicated that recent legislation indicates that those people should be included. He also spoke around the needs of blind people.

Consensus that focus should be on those that need those seats and respecting other people and what they might need.

Member Thorsen commented that people with non-visible disabilities like thought processing issues should also be included.

Chair Fenley asked how it is enforced. Olson states that in other regions drivers are asked to enforce it, however drivers are uncomfortable doing that due to safety concerns. Member Fuglie told a story about a customer using a scooter and a driver had to intervene with other customers. Anj Olson stated that drivers are reluctant to confront customers due to threats of assault.

Member Jasmine suggested that automatic announcements might be helpful such as other systems do. Member Thorsen stated that the recording takes out the confrontation.

Member Hendricksen asked if taking up priority seating is like parking spots, is it required or just a courtesy. Presenters answered it is just a courtesy.

Member Hendricksen asked about the timeline for this project and the budget. Presenters answered that research is being done right now; a new campaign will be needed next year. The budget is ten thousand dollars, but as things become permanent, implementation costs get put into part of the bus purchasing process.

2. A presentation of the **Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Coordinated Plan** from Anika Whittington and Bradley Bobbitt, Metropolitan Transportation Services, Metropolitan Council. The coordinated transportation plan is a federally required plan updated every five years. The plan aims to document regional transportation coordination efforts, identify gaps, and strategize improvements, particularly for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and low-income populations.

The plan ensures proper coordination of transportation services and supports the distribution of federal 5310 funding for transit services assisting seniors and individuals with disabilities. A review of current transit services and their effectiveness in addressing community needs will be conducted. Identifying and addressing barriers to transportation access is a major goal. Reviewing peer regions' coordinated plans will also be done.

Engagement and stakeholder involvement will involve representatives from transit providers, elected officials, and community organizations. Expanded stakeholder engagement will include more workshops and focus groups.

Member suggestions on community outreach included Member Hendricksen suggesting that AARP be reached out to as well as ride a-longs with transit users. Member Thorsen suggested reaching out to staff at assisted living centers as they are aware of feedback from their residents on transportation options and hurdles.

Member Hendricksen asked if the plan includes bikes and active transportation. Answer from Bobbitt was he doesn't believe so.

Reports

Chair

Blue Line extension tour. James Mockovciak from Metro Transit invited the committee to a bus tour along the Blue Line extension alignment.

Public invitation

No public comments.

Member comment



Member Rodgers commented that there has been some issues with Metro Mobility premium same day on demand services. He and some other people have been denied service due to having a service dog. In the past they have been told to contact the Metro Mobility Service Center with service denials such as that. In two cases of other people, the Metro Mobility Service Center refused to take the information and referred the customer to call the transportation company. He wants to clarify the role that the service center representatives have. Cheryl Schmidt stated that she will clarify with staff what the role is.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:15 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 06, 2024.

Approved this 5th day of February 2025.

Council contact:

Kevin Petrie, TAAC Recording Secretary
kevin.petrie@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1767

David Fenley, TAAC Chair
david.fenley@state.mn.us
651-361-7809

Darrell Paulsen, TAAC Vice Chair
darrellpaulsen@yahoo.com
651-455-3013

