

**METROPOLITAN COUNCIL**  
**390 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101**

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

4:00PM

Members Present: Chair Susan Haigh, Steven Chávez, Roxanne Smith, Lona Schreiber, Steve Elkins, Rich Kramer, Wendy Wulff, Adam Duininck, Jennifer Munt, Sandra Rummel, James Brimeyer, Gary Van Eyll, Gary Cunningham, Harry Melander, Edward Reynoso, Jon Commers

Members Absent: John Đoàn

**CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being present, Chair Haigh called the Committee of the Whole to order at 4:05PM on Wednesday, December 5, 2012.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by Van Eyll, seconded by Kramer to approve the agenda.

**Motion carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Smith, seconded by Elkins to approve the minutes of the November 21, 2012 meeting of the Committee of the Whole.

**THRIVE MSP 2040**

*A. Discussion of Revised Proposed Goals for Thrive MSP 2040, led by the Thrive Working Group*

Cunningham asked about the qualifier "they can afford" in the definition of the Equity principle; he specifically wanted to know what the purpose was when it was written by the Working Group. He felt it was not consistent with the other principles. Libby stated that the intention of the wording was to replace the term "affordable housing" which has one set of implications, with a phrase that would refer to the household. Cunningham stated he felt it stuck out as something totally different from the other definitions. Brimeyer suggested taking some of the wording from the goal portion to replace it. Brimeyer also said he liked the wording used in the Communities goal, and wanted that concept transferred to the Equity principle.

Commers explained that the Working Group's intent was for the Council to instruct and agree on the working Principles, which would lead them to the Goals. He stated that it was most important to him that the Goals are as clearly shaped and as specific as they need to be. He said the most significant premise of having the Principles was to lead them to the Goals.

Rummel said the definition for Equity suggested by the Corridors of Opportunity was Equity: Just and fair inclusion of communities across the region and economic opportunities. She stated that she found that very appealing. Cunningham said he felt confident his thoughts were heard. The Working Group will revise the language used in the Equity principle.

*B. Thrive MSP 2040: Next Steps—Libby Starling, Thrive MSP 2040 Project Manager*

Now that the Council has given overall direction for the Principles and Goals, at the December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting staff will offer proposals in terms of what indicators to monitor and use both as preliminary and long term ways to track progress.

The next conversation will ask how do we quantify and make solid the overall direction that has been laid out in the goals and to a lesser degree in the some of the principles that can be quantified.

Staff will present some options drawn from what other regional and policy organizations have been doing and the indicators they have been using. This will include ways to quantify, track and evaluate progress and scenarios.

The December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting will also include looking at the FHEA work, the first piece is in terms of what indicators should be considered looking at the distribution of opportunity throughout the region.

The January meeting will focus explicitly on the FHEA and how Thrive can be used to influence the distribution of opportunity in the future.

*C. Council's Investments: What roles does the Council play in controlling and influencing investment decisions? How are investment decisions made? Who makes which decision?*

*i. Introductory Comments—Beth Reetz*

Beth gave a brief overview of what would be discussed (see questions above).

*ii. Livable Communities Act Grants and the Housing and Redevelopment Authority—Beth Reetz*

Beth presented a PowerPoint on the LCA investment decisions. The Livable Communities Act gives the Council direct authority over the three accounts within the act. The funds are used to make grants to cities that voluntarily choose to participate in the LCA program; they agree to adopt affordable housing and life cycle goals for their communities, and to adopt a housing action plan that outlines the steps they will take to reach their goals.

The anticipated size of the accounts is \$11 million in the Livable Communities Demonstration account, \$5 million in the Tax Base Revitalization account, and \$1.5 million in the Local Housing Incentives account (\$1 million from the Council General Fund and \$.5 from LCDA). The distribution of these funds is in statute 473.25. The LCA investment decisions are made by Council-established criteria. The LCA provides additional account-specific guidance within each of the accounts. The Council gets to decide how this

money is spent, which they do when they adopt the Fund Distribution Plan annually. The TOD Grant category is new and the Council will be able to weigh in on what changes they feel are necessary.

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher is administered by the Metropolitan Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA) and it is their largest program. It is the most cost effective way to provide affordable housing. We are providing \$53 million annually in direct rent subsidies, paid directly to landlords on behalf of over 6,000 extremely low income households. Most of the Section 8 rules are determined by federal regulation. Opportunities for change include educating renters, and advocacy for federal program reform and stable or increased funding.

*iii. Transportation and Transit—Amy Vennewitz, Arlene McCarthy, John Levin, Connie Kozlak*

John Levin began the presentation. The Council owns, designs, and funds the transit system. There are 12 cities in the region that have opted out of the regional transit system; the suburban transit authorities have retained autonomy, but there is still significant coordination with the suburban transit authorities.

The Council is very involved in many other modes of transportation in the region, mostly in terms of influencing the decisions of others, such as MnDOT when it comes to highways, and MAC in regard to the airports.

Transit funding sources include capital funding (federal formula, Regional Transit Capital, state and federal grants) and operating funding (fares, general fund, MCST, and grants). The Council ensures consistency of funding decisions with regional policy (CMAQ and CTIB grants). The Council is also responsible for coordinating transit decisions with other transportation, land use, and development decisions.

Arlene McCarthy spoke to the Metro Mobility portion of the presentation. The investment decisions are guided by the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the State statute governing larger service area. Funding for Metro Mobility comes from the State, MVST, and fares. Opportunities for change include evaluating the service delivery and improving the technology used to serve customers.

Amy Vennewitz addressed the Transitway piece of the presentation. The investment decisions are guided by the Regional Development Framework (Thrive MSP 2040), the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP), the Regional Service Improvement Plan (RSIP), the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and the Regional Transitway Guidelines. Transitway funding sources include capital funding (federal dollars, CTIB sales tax, state bonds, local RRA property tax) and operating funding (fares, general fund, CTIB sales tax, and

federal CMAQ for start-up). The Federal law (MAP 21), current sales tax, and state laws and appropriations influence transitway investments. One of the opportunities for change is greater coordination of local land use decisions and transitway investments. Some Council members were in agreement that it would be wise to explore using a park-and-ride parking ramp for parking at an affordable housing complex. Arlene stated this is a difficult thing to accomplish due to overlapping needs.

Connie Kozlak quickly covered the Bike and Pedestrian part of the presentation. Funding sources include STP and TA, state aid, local taxes, and park funds. Funding decisions vary by source, but some decisions are made by a variety of ownership agencies. MAP 21 also influences these investments. The Council concurs with TAB on federal funds.

MAC is responsible for investment in the 7 metro airports. St. Paul and Forest Lake also own/operate airports. The FAA is responsible for air space operation.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:13PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Getty  
Recording Secretary