

Metropolitan Council

Metropolitan Council Chambers, 390 No. Robert St., St. Paul, Mn. 55101

**Meeting of the Transportation Committee
Monday, March 9, 2009**

Members Present	Bob McFarlin, Vice Chair Georgie Hilker	Kirstin Sersland Beach Natalie Haas Steffen	Richard Aguilar Craig Peterson
Members Absent	Annette Meeks, Chair	Roger Scherer	Peggy Leppik
Staff Presiding	Vince Pellegrin, Asst. GM, Metro Transit	Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS	
TAB Liaison	David Gepner		

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Vice Chair McFarlin called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 pm on March 9, 2009 at Metropolitan Council Chambers, St. Paul.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

McFarlin announced a change to the agenda: Information Item #1 Non-Motorized Access to Transit Planning Study will be moved to a later meeting and an update on the status of the CCLRT Operations and Maintenance Facility will take its place on the agenda. It was moved by Aguilar, seconded by Beach to adopt the amended agenda for the March 9, 2009 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Hilker seconded by Aguilar to approve the minutes from the February 23, 2009 regular Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES REPORT and METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services, clarified an article in the newspaper that stated that Minnesota will receive \$94 M for transit, the number being different from other numbers heard elsewhere. The \$94 M is formula funds for the all of Minnesota: \$6 M for urban areas of St. Cloud, Duluth & Rochester; \$19 M for 5311 Rural Formula Funds; \$69 M to the Metropolitan Area for Transit.

McCarthy also stated that there will be a special Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) work session this Thursday March 12 at 10:30. No action will be taken; the meeting is to prepare for the regular TAB meeting on March 18, at which the TAB will need to make significant decisions about ARRA funds.

McCarthy also gave an update on Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) activities. The 2009 grant process is behind CTIB, the focus is shifting to long-term investment framework, looking at the forecasting of revenues. A consultant is working on "what if" scenarios and will present to CTIB next week. The long-term investment framework will provide guidance for future decisions on which projects to fund. Committee member Steffen requested a future report on corridors in the Metro Council Plan that CTIB is working on.

Vince Pellegrin, Asst. General Manager Metro Transit, reported **MILLER/COORS FREE RIDES** will be given again this year on St. Patrick's day March 17.

URBAN PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT – UPA CONSTRUCTION FOR PARK AND RIDES.

Construction work begins this month on the three park-and-ride ramps that are part of the Urban Partnership

Agreement.

Lakeville. In Lakeville, Adolphson & Peterson Construction was on site last Thursday to begin building the 750-space, three-level facility located on the east side of I-35 at Kenrick Avenue. Work on the \$6.6 million contract will be substantially completed by the end of September 2009. Express buses from the Kenrick Avenue park-and-ride ramp will serve commuters destined for downtown Minneapolis. The service will be competitively bid by the Council.

Blaine. Later this week crews from Knutson Construction Services will begin work at the 95th Avenue Park & Ride in Blaine on the land we purchased north of the existing surface lot. The project is a 470-space \$6.5 million ramp that will be completed at the end of this year.

Roseville. Adolphson & Peterson will begin work this week in Roseville to build a 460-space, four-level parking ramp on a 1.27-acre parcel the Council purchased at 2750 Cleveland Avenue North – near the intersection of Cleveland and County Road C. The \$6.6 facility will be completed by the end of the year at which time Metro Transit will launch express bus service to downtown Minneapolis.

OPERATORS RECOGNITION BRUNCH

On March 25 we will be honoring our very best bus operators. Some 46 bus operators have been invited to our annual Masters Brunch so that they can be recognized for their outstanding service to our customers and to our region. The individuals are honored in two categories – those who have amassed 25 years of driving without causing an accident, and those who earned our annual outstanding operator award in increments of 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years. To earn the annual recognition an operator must exceed our standards for safe driving, customer service and attendance. The Masters Brunch on March 25 caps a series of events at each of our garages at which we honor all bus operators, especially the 326 who earned outstanding operator awards in 2008.

EXPRESS BUS SERVICE ON DETOUR DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS

Most express bus service in the region will be on detour beginning March 16 as the City of Minneapolis begins the second and final year of the reconstruction of Second Avenue South and Marquette Avenue in downtown Minneapolis. When the project is completed at the end of this year, transit customers will enjoy faster and more reliable service downtown thanks to the addition of double-width bus lanes, real-time transit information and enhanced customer waiting facilities. The average express bus trip through downtown will be reduced by up to five minutes because buses will pass one another and routes will stop every other block rather than at every corner. The project – part of the Access Minneapolis transportation plan, which the Council supported – is funded by the Urban Partnership Agreement.

PRESENTATION – MnDOT Statewide and Metro District Transportation Plans

Connie Kozlak, MTS Manager Technical Planning Support, stated that Metro Council is given the opportunity to review MnDOT Statewide and Metro District Transportation Plans; MnDOT plans follow closely with Metro Council Transportation Policy Plan and a staff letter will be sent to MnDOT thanking them for the chance to review. Committee members are invited to give comments, if any, to Kozlak. Kozlak introduced Paul Czech, MnDOT Metro District Planning Office, who gave a presentation about the MnDOT Statewide and Metro District Transportation Plans. He presented a schedule for the public hearings; they will be “virtual” public hearings. Comments are due by March 31. In addition to the hearing schedule, Czech also provided copies of the draft Metro District Plan, summary of Statewide Transportation Plan, and a powerpoint presentation for the Statewide Plan. Following the presentation, Czech answered questions from committee members regarding the prioritized lists, projected revenues, gap analysis. Carl Ohrn, Metropolitan Transportation Services, came forward to answer questions specific to Highway 610, and also regarding projects proposed for ARRA funding that will be considered by the TAB.

BUSINESS – Non-Consent Items

2009-18 SW Installation of Transit Signal Priority, Project 63740

Tom Thorstenson, Metro Transit Dir. of Engineering & Facilities, presented this item. There were no questions or comments from committee members.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Peterson:

To authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a contract with the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, Egan Company, for the installation of Transit Signal Priority (TSP) at a cost of \$3,089,095.

Motion passed.

2009-23 **SW** Installation of Real Time Display Bus Information on Marquette and Second Avenues in Minneapolis, Project 63740

Tom Thorstenson, Metro Transit Dir. of Engineering & Facilities, presented this item and replied to questions from committee members that the Metro Council Legal Department has reviewed these documents, and that there has been no indication of a bid protest to date.

Motion by Steffen, seconded by Peterson:

To authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a contract with Egan Company for the installation of Real Time Displays (RTD) at a cost of \$3,110,000, and to waive the immaterial variance in Egan Company's bid and deem Egan Company the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.

Motion passed.

2009-57 2009 Unified Operating Budget Amendment

Amendments to Metro Transit (MT) and Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) operating budgets were presented to the Committee by Ed Petrie - Metro Transit and Sean Pfeiffer – MTS; staff answered questions from Committee members clarifying JARC projects.

Motion by Hilker, seconded by Beach:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator Amend the 2009 Unified Operating Budget in accordance with the table attached to the business item.

Motion passed.

2009-58 2009-2014 Capital Improvement Program and Capital Program and Budget Amendment

Amendments to Metro Transit (MT) and Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) capital improvement program and capital program budgets were presented to the Committee by Ed Petrie - Metro Transit and Sean Pfeiffer – MTS; there was no further discussion or questions.

Motion by Hilker, seconded by Beach:

That the Council:

Amend the 2009 Authorized Capital Program (multi-year authorization) by adding and removing spending authority as follows in the Transportation Division:

Metropolitan Transportation Services	(\$ 3,596,697)
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Metro Transit	\$ 40,836,715
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- Amend the 2009 Capital Budget (annual appropriation) by adding or reducing appropriation as follows in the Transportation Division:

Metropolitan Transportation Services	\$ 43,160
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Metro Transit	\$ 32,541,509
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- Approve transfers between capital projects as detailed in the attachment to the business item.

Motion passed.

INFORMATION

1. CCLRT Operations and Maintenance Facility Status Update.

Mark Fuhrmann, Deputy GM Metro Transit, gave an update on the CCLRT Operation and Maintenance Facility. An amended Municipal Consent from Ramsey County and City of St. Paul is needed for the

location of the maintenance on the north side of Kellogg (Diamond Products Building). Ramsey County is scheduled to act on March 17, and the City of St. Paul on March 18. Following the presentation and committee member questions, Fuhrmann clarified the effects that the Municipal Consent approval has on the FEIS timing, and addressed comments from committee members regarding mitigation to the Farmer's Market and the need for addressing the impact to the many residential units in Lowertown near the proposed O&M Facility.

2. Urban Partnership Agreement

Craig Lamothe, Manager Metro Transit Facilities Planning, gave the quarterly update on the Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA) projects. He stated that Nick Thompson from MnDOT will be giving a comprehensive report on the project including the roadway and technology and telecommuting to the full Council on 3/25. Lamothe reported on the transit projects. Marquette & 2nd Avenue construction will be back underway beginning Monday March 16, anticipated completion in early fall. Park and Ride construction for most of the sites on 35W has begun. Half of the buses have arrived, coaches are scheduled to arrive mid-August. Other project land issues and approvals are being worked on. Equipment purchases are underway for the Lane Guidance Systems and other Transit Technologies. There will be a legislative briefing Monday 3/16, a stakeholder workshop will be held later in March. The National Planners Conference will be held in Minneapolis in April with sessions including tours of the UPA sites. Metro Transit will also present at the CTS Annual Conference in May.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Aguilar, seconded by Beach, and passed to adjourn the Transportation Committee meeting at 6:00 p.m. March 9, 2009.

Respectfully submitted, LuAnne Major, Recording Secretary