


Regional Transitway Guidelines: Public Comment Summary


Transportation Committee
January 23, 2012



Outreach Efforts

- Public comment period Sept 24 - Nov 18
- Presented at 15+ meetings
 - County Board/Regional Railroad Authorities
 - Metro Cities
 - Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB)
 - Technical Staff Workshop and Open House
 - Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and Committees

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Summary of Comments

- Comments from 14 organizations
 - 5 Counties, 4 Cities
 - CTIB
 - Rush Line Task Force
 - Transit for Livable Communities
 - MnDOT staff
- About 80 unique comments

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 Metropolitan Council

Supportive Comments

- Support for working together and strengthening partnerships, comments reflect feeling that Guidelines are important
- “Integral part”
- “Build on”
- Transit system that is seamless, consistent, equitable, predictable...

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 Metropolitan Council

Comment: Guidelines should not be adopted as part of the Transportation Policy Plan

- Response: Guidelines have been proposed for adoption as a stand alone document separate from the TPP.
- **Recommendation: No change.**

Comment: Guidelines should address streetcar and fixed-guideway BRT

- Response: Section 1: Introduction states Guidelines for additional modes may be developed during a future update of the Guidelines. Best practices in the region have not yet been established for these modes.
- **Recommendation: No change.**

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Comment: Clarify the process for amending the Transitway Guidelines

- Response: Council Regional Administrator will periodically amend the Transitway Guidelines as new “best practices” are established. Stakeholders will be involved.
- **Recommendation: Add text to Section 1: Introduction, “Council will periodically amend the Transitway Guidelines as best practices evolve over time. Stakeholder agencies will be notified when an update is planned and will be involved in the amendment process. Stakeholder agencies are encouraged to share information about new best practices with Council staff.”**

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Comment: When does a transitway become a transitway? If a corridor is planned to transition from express bus to Highway BRT, at what point do these Guidelines apply?

- Response: Guidelines apply when investments are being considered in the transitway corridors identified in the TPP. Refer to Table 10-1 that outlines minimum elements for a transitway.
- Recommendation: Add text supporting Section 1.3 and 10.10 (Deviations) stating, "The Transitway Guidelines should apply whenever investments are being studied, planned, and made in a transitway corridor identified as such in the TPP."

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Comment: Arterial BRT may be branded separately from Highway BRT and LRT, but should be branded with equal importance

- Response: Guideline 9.1 encourages integrating and reflecting the LRT-Highway BRT brand on all LRT-Highway BRT system components. It is the intent of this Guideline that Arterial BRT be given a different, but equally important brand as the Arterial BRT concept is more fully developed.
- Recommendation: Add text supporting Guideline 9.1 that states, "While Arterial BRT may be branded separately from Highway BRT and LRT, it should be branded with equal importance and distinction. Many proposed Arterial BRT corridors are the strongest existing transit markets and will continue to have high potential for increased ridership and increased high density development."

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Comment: Discussion of deviations from Guidelines needs to include all stakeholders, not just funding partners.

- Response: Involvement of stakeholders is encouraged in Guideline 10.2. Intent of the deviations Guideline is to ensure that funding partners are involved in any decisions affecting the capital and/or operating and maintenance costs of a transitway.
- Recommendation: Add text supporting Guidelines 10.2 (Coordination) and 10.10 (Deviations) that emphasizes the important role of local land use authorities and need to actively involve local land use authorities throughout transitway project development. Add text supporting Guideline 10.10 (Deviations) recognizing transit operators may also need to be involved.

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Comment: Greater emphasis should be placed on collaborative decision-making including robust public engagement in all stages of transitway development, not just environmental review

- Response: Guideline 10.2 emphasizes an inclusive process for transitway decision-making and states there should be effective outreach to, and involvement of, external stakeholders and the general public throughout the project development process.
- Recommendation: Add text supporting Guideline 10.2 that emphasizes the important role of local land use authorities and need to actively involve local land use authorities throughout transitway project development.

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Comment: Develop a standard feedback process for operating transitways that evaluates and communicates effectiveness and captures and shares lessons learned

- Response: Guideline 10.8 encourages evaluation of all transitway investment projects using a consistent set of capital investment criteria.
- Recommendation: Add text supporting Guideline 10.8 that states, "These criteria should also be used to evaluate the performance of transitways after construction to assess their effectiveness and provide input to future projects."

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Comment: Station siting too focused on existing conditions, needs more emphasis on redevelopment or future development plans

- Response: Section 3: Station Spacing and Siting states throughout that both existing and future conditions are important and both should be considered in transitway development. But since future conditions are speculative and depend on factors in addition to infrastructure improvements, priority for implementation should be given to stations serving existing land uses. Guideline 3.8 discusses the staged development of stations where planned land uses have not yet been realized.
- Recommendation: Revise text in Section 3 to (a) clarify the guidelines give priority for implementation to those stations serving existing land uses and to (b) encourage land use authorities to complete and adopt station area land use plans.

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Comments Not Directly Related to the Transitway Guidelines

Transitway Branding

- Light rail transit (LRT) and highway bus rapid transit (BRT) should be treated more alike if they are branded together

Transitway Information

- Met Council should develop and maintain up-to-date, user friendly Web site for region's transitways to help stakeholders track decisions related to transitway and land use planning and implementation

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Comments Not Directly Related to the Transitway Guidelines

Transit Goals & Performance

- The statement “double transit ridership by 2030” should be revised so it is better explained and states explicit goals (e.g., deliver 145 million rides by 2030)
- Consider accelerating the transit ridership goal to 2020

Transit Fares

- Fare structures should be revised to cover higher shares of operating costs

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Comments Not Directly Related to the Transitway Guidelines

Transit-Oriented Development

- Update and expand the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Guide as a companion to the Guidelines
- Region should work together to develop clear benchmarks for progress in creating greater residential and employment density near transit stations

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Transitway Guidelines Next Steps

- Week of Jan 30 – Email final documents to Council Members for review (or print and mail, by request)
- Feb 13 – Adoption proposed for Transportation Committee
 - Met Council would adopt on Feb 22

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