

Metropolitan Council

Metro Transit F.T. Heywood Chambers, 560 Sixth Avenue North, Minneapolis MN 55411

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**Meeting of the Transportation Committee  
Monday, September 14, 2009**

Members Present	Annette Meeks, Chair Robert McFarlin, Vice Chair Craig Peterson	Roger Scherer Georgie Hilker Kirstin Sersland Beach	Richard Aguilar Peggy Leppik
Members Absent	Natalie Haas Steffen		
Others Present	David Gepner, TAB Liaison		
Staff Presiding	Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services	Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit	

**CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being present, Chair Meeks called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 pm September 14, 2009, at Metro Transit Heywood Chambers in Minneapolis.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Motion by Peterson seconded by Hilker to adopt the agenda for the September 14, 2009, Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Hilker seconded by Scherer to approve the minutes from the August 24, 2009, regular Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

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

Brian Lamb, General Manager Metro Transit, reported the following:

For the fourth time this year, TIC representatives have set a record for the highest number of calls handled in a month. In August the Center served customers 106,757 times, beating the record they set in July by more than 2,000 calls. Based on past surveys, over 90 percent of individuals who call the TIC ultimately take rides on Metro Transit.

Two Metro Transit Customer Advocates attended seven public hearings last week to talk with potential transit customers who may convert to regular-route buses due to a restructuring of dial-a-ride services being proposed by the Met Council. The Council is attempting to make dial-a-ride service more available to citizens without regular-route service and thus propose to not offer dial-a-ride service to those close to bus lines.

The Central Corridor light-rail project office hosted a technical forum of 35 delegates from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) who have been addressing noise, vibration and track issues affecting rail systems. Attendees rode the Hiawatha Line, toured the Northstar/Hiawatha station near the new Twins ballpark and drove the Central Corridor alignment to witness first hand areas of concern at the University of Minnesota and near Minnesota Public Radio.

A Request For Proposal (RFP) will be issued this month for Light Rail Vehicles for Central Corridor, Hiawatha and, potentially, Southwest Corridor. A number of firms have contacted and in some cases visited us and reviewed design specifications, including Kinkisharyo International and Kawasaki of Japan, Siemens of Germany and Bombardier of Canada.

Minnesota legislators from the House and Senate bonding committees had a day-long tour of regional transit facilities last Wednesday, September 9, as they prepare for the coming session. They traveled by Metro Transit coach bus from the capitol to Big Lake, rode the Northstar Line and the Hiawatha Line to the 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue light-rail station before continuing on the coach bus down 35W and up Cedar Avenue, where they observed transit initiatives funded through the Urban Partnership Agreement. Their lunchtime briefings were regarding transit capital funding needs.

The Bus Rodeo, our annual safety and skills event for bus operators, is coming up later this month. Committee members are invited to attend and even try their hand behind the wheel. Anyone interested is asked to contact GM Lamb to make arrangements.

Arlene McCarthy, Director MTS, reported that staff is coordinating with Hennepin County to arrange a tour of the Southwest corridor for Councilmembers. The proposed date is October 7; invitations will be sent out when details are finalized. A tour of the new Twins ballpark and the transit station is also being arranged for October.

McCarthy distributed an informational handout describing proposed changes to Transit Link dial-a-ride service and fare structure. She highlighted key changes and noted that the newly structured service would not affect current Metro Mobility and county ADA service. There is a period for public comment until September 28.

**INFORMATION – Bottineau Boulevard Alternatives Analysis Presentation**

Commissioner Mark Stenglein and Joe Gladke of Hennepin County presented an overview of the results of the Alternatives Analysis performed for the development of the Bottineau Transitway. They outlined the goals and the process used and showed scoring results of the alternatives examined. They also listed next steps in the process, including a series of public open houses to be held in partner communities and subsequent review and required approvals.

**BUSINESS – Non-Consent Items**

2009-308 Authorization to Execute Grant Agreements – MVTA, SouthWest Transit and the University of Minnesota

Cole Hiniker, MTS Financial Planner, presented the business item. There were no questions from the committee.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute grants with MVTA, SouthWest Transit, and the University of Minnesota for the following amounts:

Agency	Project	Existing Amount	Initial or Amended Amount
MVTA	Garage Debt – 2009 COP Principal	--	\$400,000
SouthWest Transit	Station Debt – 2009 COP Principal	--	\$400,000
SouthWest Transit	Station Debt – Principal and Interest	--	\$379,515
University of MN	Bus Purchase	\$676,859	\$849,421

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Meeks stated that this item could move to the full Council as a consent item.

2009-310 Authorization to Execute Agreements for the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute and New Freedom FFY 2008-2009 Program Funding

Cole Hiniker presented the business item and answered general questions about the programs from committee members.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Beach:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute subrecipient agreements with the specified agencies and for the specified amounts of federal Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) or New Freedom program funding identified in Attachment A of the business item.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Meeks stated that this item could move to the full Council as a consent item.

2009-313 Authorization to Execute Agreement with MVTA for the Cedar Avenue Lakeville BRT Express Service

Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services, presented this item. She explained that the most cost effective and efficient service plan for the new Cedar Avenue BRT park-and-ride in Lakeville would be to extend Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) trips that serve the Apple Valley Transit Station. MVTA concurs.

Ms. McCarthy explained that a temporary location may need to be used for the first few weeks in the event the permanent park-and-ride facility is not ready for use by September 28. Staff is working with Lakeville on securing a nearby temporary location.

In response to Councilmember questions, Ms. McCarthy clarified that the two coach buses being provided to MVTA were the same as the new buses being used on the Lakeville 35W BRT service and that the Council would own the vehicles. The buses for the future station-to-station service for the two BRT corridors will not be coach buses.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by McFarlin:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a sole source agreement with Minnesota Valley Transit Authority to provide Cedar Avenue Lakeville BRT express service in an amount not to exceed \$650,000.

Motion passed.

2009-314 \$21 million 2009 Transit Capital Improvement State G.O Bonds Allocation

Arlene McCarthy, Director Metropolitan Transportation Services, presented this item. She explained that this recommended allocation provided \$400,000 less to the Rush Line Corridor than initially proposed after consultation with the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB). The amount of funds to Cedar Avenue was increased by \$400,000 along with a guarantee for that project to receive a minimum \$5 million in combined 2009 state G.O. bonds and returned CTIB funds from its existing grant to the Apple Valley Transit Station construction. Cedar Avenue could receive up to \$5.7 million if the maximum amount of estimated CTIB returned funds for the Apple Valley Transit Station is realized.

Motion by McFarlin, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council allocate the \$21 million in 2009 Transit Capital Improvement Program state G.O. bonds per Attachment A of the business item.

Motion passed.

2009-307 Subordinate Funding Agreement #4 with the Minnesota Department of Transportation for the Central Corridor Light Rail Project

The item was presented by Mark Fuhrmann, Metro Transit Deputy General Manager. There was a question regarding planned demolition, to which Mark Fuhrmann responded that the only demolition currently planned is along the diagonal section in downtown St. Paul. No sites along University Avenue have been identified for demolition.

Discussion was held on the 131 parcels to be impacted. Mark Fuhrmann explained that Mn/DOT has a process in place, which is being followed, for notifying owners if their property is being impacted temporarily

or needs to be acquired. CCPO outreach staff have also been talking with individual property owners in the affected areas.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute Subordinate Funding Agreement (SFA) #4 to the Master Funding Agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MN/DOT) in the not to exceed amount of \$25,000,000 for property acquisition for the Central Corridor Light Rail Project.

Motion passed.

#### 2009-309 Authorization to Extend Contract for Operator Uniforms

Chris Gran, Metro Transit Director of Purchasing, presented the business item. Committee members discussed several issues related to the new state law and how it will affect future uniform and safety equipment purchases, including how the law will affect other Council contracts and how the new requirements will be administered.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to extend the contract with Uniforms Unlimited, Inc., to supply Metro Transit operator uniforms for twelve months at the current contract prices.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair Meeks stated that this item could move to the full Council as a consent item.

## **INFORMATION**

### 1. Northstar Commuter Rail Update: Construction, Vehicles, Operations, Maintenance

Chris Weyer, Manager of Transitways Engineering, and John Paul Zanaska, Deputy Project Director for Northstar, reported on the progress of the Northstar Commuter Rail line. Included in the presentation were status updates on station and facility construction, vehicle acquisition, staffing, training, maintenance, testing and funding.

### 2. 2010 – 2015 Capital Improvement Program Budget Presentation

Brian Lamb and Arlene McCarthy outlined the six-year Transit CIP and the 2010 Capital Budget, including overall priorities, revenue sources, expenses and unmet needs.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Beach to adjourn the Transportation Committee meeting at 6:10 p.m. September 14, 2009. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Liz Maday, Recording Secretary