

Metropolitan Council

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

**Meeting of the Transportation Committee
Monday, October 25, 2010**

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

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair McFarlin called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:00 pm on October 25, 2010 at Metro Transit Heywood Chambers, Minneapolis.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Scherer and seconded by Leppik to adopt the agenda for the October 25, 2010 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Hilker, seconded by Leppik to approve the minutes from October 11, 2010 Transportation Committee meeting. Motion carried.

METRO TRANSIT GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

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

Ridership for September 2010 was 5.2 percent above the same month in 2009. Customers boarded 7.2 million times last month. Also, four Twin Cities employers signed Metropass contracts to cover their 6,547 employees; there are now 243 companies signed up, making Metropass available to 183,660 commuters.

This week marks the launch of Metro Transit's Ride to Rewards loyalty program, believed to be the first points-based loyalty program in the public transit industry. Riders who join the free program will earn reward points based on their riding frequency and can also earn points by shopping at participating merchants. Riders redeem their points for stored value added to their Go-To Cards or for cash gift cards. A full report on the launch of the program will be provided at the next Transportation Committee meeting.

Security cameras will be installed at three park-and-ride facilities beginning next week – Maplewood, Oakdale, and Bloomington. This installation is funded through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration. Data from the camera systems can be downloaded onsite and used for gathering evidence for crime investigations.

A new marketing strategy to build ridership on six urban transit corridors is yielding positive early results. Residents received a mailing with two free-ride coupons and an invitation to visit a website to claim a limited number of Go-To Cards with \$10 of value by answering survey questions about their rides taken with the free ride coupons. Thus far, the site has had more than 500 hits. The transit corridors are served by routes 6/17, 14, 10/59, 21, 54 and 74.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT

Arlene McCarthy, Director, MTS, reported the following:

Ridership levels on Metro Mobility were up approximately 10 percent in September over September 2009 levels.

McCarthy noted that while ridership growth has slowed from previous years, net ridership numbers for Metro Mobility are up.

BUSINESS

2010-366 Presentation of 2030 Transportation Policy Plan Update

Chair McFarlin outlined the procedure for review and public testimony, noting that the committee would not be voting on this item today. MTS Director Arlene McCarthy then presented an overview of the plan update and outlined the development process and discussed the proposed modifications and the issues they addressed. McCarthy also reported on the public comment received so far and the Council's proposed responses. Scott McBride, Metro District Engineer for the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), addressed the committee to express support for the framework and philosophy of the proposed TPP on behalf of Mn/DOT Commissioner Tom Sorel. He distributed a letter which contained specific comments on the plan from Mn/DOT and highlighted several components that addressed specific planning priorities of the department. Mr. McBride responded to questions from committee members. Chair McFarlin then asked for any members of the public to come forward who wished to address the committee. There was no public testimony offered on the proposed TPP. Discussion continued among committee members, with staff responding to questions. Chair McFarlin then closed the discussion, noting that other concerns could be addressed on October 27 when the draft TPP and public comments were presented to the full Council for consideration of a vote by the Transportation Committee on November 8.

2010-370 SW Rail Support Facility, Change Order Allowance

Tom Thorstenson, Metro Transit Director of Engineering and Facilities, presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Beach, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to increase the Contract Price for contract number 09P025, for the construction of the Rail Support Facility, a cumulative amount of up to 10% of the original Contract Price.

Motion passed.

2010-362 2011-2014 TIP Amendment: Include Savage SP#211-010-07: TH 13/Quentin Avenue Improvements (TAB Action 2010-59)

MTS Planning Analyst Carl Ohrn presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Leppik, seconded by Hilker:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include Savage SP#211-010-07: TH13/Quentin Avenue Improvements. Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-363 2011-2014 TIP Amendment: Include Mn/DOT SP#0280-66: I-35W North Mitigation and Design Feasibility Study from Downtown Minneapolis to I-35E Intersection (TAB Action 2010-60)

MTS Planning Analyst Carl Ohrn presented this item. Councilmember Haas Steffen asked how long the study would be valid and noted that this study is another opportunity to identify projects that are needed but not in the fiscally constrained plan. Ohrn answered that this study would not "sunset" as environmental studies do and that the managed lane vision in the plan allows for some planning and analysis on future projects. Arlene McCarthy added that the plan includes a list of projects to study in case new funding becomes available, and that past UPA funding may not have been realized if those projects had not been planned and ready. Councilmember Haas Steffen reminded the committee that there are MOUs with Mn/DOT, counties and cities now with studies, and new studies continue to be added, while a new administration may direct staff to go in a different direction. She noted that \$15 million has been spent in Anoka County to buy right-of-way for general purpose lanes as instructed in the past.

Motion by Hilker, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to amend the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include Mn/DOT SP#0280-66: I-35W North Mitigation and Design Feasibility Study from downtown Minneapolis to I-35E intersection.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-367 Procurement of Metro Mobility Vehicles

Metro Mobility Senior Manager Paul Colton presented this item. Councilmember Peterson asked how many hybrid vehicles would be included. Colton responded that this procurement included no hybrid vehicles but that there were currently 22 in the fleet.

Motion by Beach, seconded by Peterson:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a purchase agreement with Hoglund Bus Company Inc. (State of MN Contract 442667) for up to thirty-nine (39) buses in an amount not to exceed \$2,742,205.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-365 Authorization to Execute a Grant Agreement with MVTA

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Scherer, seconded by Leppik:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a grant with Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) for up to \$832,266 for the purchase of two (2) forty-foot replacement buses.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

2010-364 Authorization to Execute Subrecipient Grant Agreement with Hennepin County

MTS Director Arlene McCarthy presented this item. There were no questions from committee members and no further discussion.

Motion by Peterson, seconded by Beach:

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to execute a sub-recipient grant agreement with the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority for \$250,000 in federal funds to conduct alternatives analysis and initiate environmental analysis (Draft Environmental Impact Statement) for the Bottineau Transitway.

Motion passed.

Hearing no objection, Chair McFarlin stated that this item could proceed to the Council as a Consent Item.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Chair McFarlin adjourned the Transportation Committee meeting at 5:32 p.m. October 25, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Maday, Recording Secretary