

# Minutes

Transportation Committee



**Meeting Date:** September 11, 2023

**Time:** 4:00 PM

**Location:** Heywood Chambers

## Members Present:

Chair, Deb Barber, D4

Vice Chair, Reva Chamblis, D2

Tyronne Carter, District 3

Anjuli Cameron, District 5

John Pacheco Jr., District 6

Diego Morales, District 9

Susan Vento, District 11

Toni Carter, District 14

Tenzin Dolkar, District 15

= present

## Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Barber called the regular meeting of the Transportation Committee to order at 4:02 p.m.

## Agenda Approved

Council Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

## Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Vento, seconded by Carter, Toni to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2023 regular meeting of the Transportation Committee. **Motion carried.**

## Reports

### 1. Metropolitan Transportation Services Director

#### Rethinking I-94

The Council continues work with MnDOT on Rethinking I-94 Project. Rethinking I-94 is a long-term process to engage communities that live, work, commute, and play along the corridor to promote effective movement of people and goods and a high quality of life for neighboring communities. Focused on the section of I-94 between DT Mpls and DT St. Paul. This summer, alternatives were released to the public. Alternatives at this stage are a combination of highway and transit ideas that reflect the basic design and number of lanes of the roadway, the type of transit service provided, and potential transit stop locations. The alternatives are high-level, meaning that more details will be developed as feedback is received and additional technical information is gathered. Upcoming meetings In-person continuing from virtual meetings August 23 and in person meetings in Minneapolis at the Elliot Part Rec Center.

### 2. Metro Transit General Manager

Metro Transit Deputy GM/Chief Operating Officer Brian Funk reported on behalf of General Manager Lesley Kandaras.

#### State Fair

Metro Transit completed the State Fair last Monday with more than 241,000 express rides at four sites. Minnetonka was the first followed by Blaine, Bloomington, and Cottage Grove. A Line also had increased ridership of about 50% more than 2022. Planning is underway for

2024, starting with debrief sessions last week.

Vento asked about what security services are provided during the fair. Funk stated that MTPD has a security detail at the State Fair bus turnaround and that they do checks at the sites but that this year, there were no note worry incidents.

#### Event Service

This past weekend was busy but successful. Crews completed rail repairs along the Blue Line. The Twins had games on Saturday/Sunday, with the Gophers playing Saturday as well and the Vikings kicked off the 2023 regular season with a home game on Sunday.

#### Northstar

There will be a Northstar commuter rail exercise on Saturday 9/16 at the Big Lake facility. These drills are to familiarize staff and emergency response personnel with the facilities and vehicles. Service on Northstar will see increased weekday trips starting Monday 10/2. The new schedule reflects feedback heard from current and prospective riders. There will also be Northstar service for home Vikings games starting Sunday 10/8. Several staff members will be riding Northstar for the reverse trip on Monday 10/2; Council members are welcome to join.

3. Transportation Accessibility Advisory Board (TAAC)  
No report.

### Consent Business

1. There were no consent items on the agenda.

### Non-Consent Business

1. **2023-174 JT SW Amended:** 2023 Budget Amendment – 3rd Quarter (Motion to Amend a Previously Approved Action)

It was moved by Chamblis, seconded by Carter, Toni, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the 2023 Unified Budget amendment as indicated, and in accordance with, the attached revised tables.

Metropolitan Transportation Services Executive Director Charles Carlson presented this item. Vento asked what the impacts would be to projects if there is a government shutdown. Carlson stated that two of these projects in the amendment are already fully awarded and that we do expect the third to be executed before the end of September. Carlson continued that with any project, there is a risk of will the funds be there when we need them but many of the grants for upcoming projects have already been fully executed; but there are things we can do in the interim for other projects should a shutdown occur.

#### **Motion carried.**

2. **2023-189:** Metro Transit Cleaning and Repair Standards

It was moved by Carter, Toni, seconded by Vento, that the Metropolitan Council authorize Metro Transit staff to develop cleaning and repair standards for stations and vehicles as required by Minnesota Statutes section 473.412, including procedures for cleaning at defined minimum intervals, procedures for inspections at defined minimum intervals, methods for timely removal of graffiti and vandalism, methods for timely repair of damages most impactful to the customer experience, and methods to measure and report on cleaning and repair activities.

Metro Transit Planning & Urban Design Manager Anna Flintoff presented this item. Chamblis asked if the reporting to the Council will be more frequent than the two year legislative requirement and suggested that to make a positive impact, the work might have to go beyond the minimum intervals/standards. Flintoff responded that the intention is to deliver a higher

level of cleaning care than what has been provided but do expect that the standards and deployment of staff will be constantly evaluated and that how we are reporting back to the Council will be discussed and determined. Metro Transit Deputy GM/Chief Operating Officer Brian Funk added that this work is not something that is being done in isolation but in conjunction with the safety and security plan to help achieve a better system and experience overall. Carter, Toni asked what the plan was to address customer feedback on issues and how the business process improvements will help solicit regular feedback on cleanliness. Flintoff answered that there are two parts: the first is responding to issues that are reported by customers and employees and the second is the customers' perception of cleanliness overall. Flintoff continued that staff are working with the Strategic Initiatives department to think about how to measure customer perception over time and how that impacts their overall experience. Chair Barber stated that the annual onboard survey could be one of the tools used to collect this feedback. Vento expressed appreciation for the employees that do the daily work to keep the system clean and asked if bus or rail mode is in more need of maintenance overall. Flintoff stated the LRT stations are more infrastructure with more ridership, which equates to a lot of maintenance requirements. Funk added that it depends on foot traffic and is more location based. Chair Barber asked if there will be additional training for the employees who are doing some of the issue reporting and if staff are working with HR on the resource piece. Flintoff stated that the more the processes are streamlined, and staff are trained to easily report issues, the more quickly we can react. Flintoff added that there is collaboration with HR on hiring resources and working on the attractiveness of the positions, some of which already have hiring bonuses.

**Motion carried.**

3. **2023-202 SW:** Blue Line Enhancements Phase IIB, Contract 23P039

It was moved by Pacheco, seconded by Chamblis, that the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute contract 23P039 with Railworks Track Systems, for replacement track, rail, upgrades, and replacement of signal components on the Metro Blue Line in an amount not to exceed \$18,640,000.

Metro Transit Senior Project Coordinator Ryan Heath presented this item. Vento asked if Metro Transit has done work with Railworks Track Systems before. Heath stated that we have worked with this vendor before, and that the vendor has a local office in Lakeville. Heath continued that we have a good relationship with the vendor and high confidence in their work.

**Motion carried.**

**Information**

1. Title (name) Proposed Metropolitan Council Triennial FTA DBE Goal

Metropolitan Council OEEA Assistant Director Ashanti Payne presented this item. Carter, Toni asked for clarification on the larger projects and how that affects the goal. Payne stated that what's included in the mythology is our projected expenditures over the next three years and that one of the reasons it's lower than previous is 61% of those expenditures are those in categories where there are no DBEs in Minnesota. Carter, Toni asked for more detailed information about the DBE projects, etc. Chair Barber stated that the Management Committee receives quarterly procurement reports that include deeper analysis of DBE and MCUB use.

2. Transportation Needs Assessment

Metropolitan Transportation Service Senior Manager Jonathan Ehrlich, Planning Analyst Heidi Schallberg and Senior Data Scientist Charles Gorugantula presented this item. Vento stated age was missing as a demographic and stressed the importance of hearing from our younger and older customers. Ehrlich responded that staff didn't collect specific demographics but rather inferred demographics from the identity groups that the session was focused around and there were focus groups with young and senior citizens customers. Chamblis asked how these findings intersect with how we implement our transit demand policy criteria. Metropolitan



Transportation Services Director Charles Carlson stated that the data certainly influences service design, and helps staff understand a lot of the story behind the data. Carlson added this was not the only source of data where transportations safety and security emerged as a high area of focus. Chair Barber added that this information has been presented to the TPP workgroup. Pacheco stated it be good to see more information on a family response on the family role, not just going to work and back.

## Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

## Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Transportation Committee meeting of September 11, 2023.

Approved this 25 day of September 2023.

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