



Transportation Policy Plan

—Adopted December 15, 2004—

 **Metropolitan Council**



Mission

The mission of the Metropolitan Council is to develop, in cooperation with local communities, a comprehensive regional planning framework, focusing on transportation, wastewater, parks and aviation systems, that guides the efficient growth of the metropolitan area. The Council operates transit and wastewater services and administers housing and other grant programs.

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Publication no. 35-04-055

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Preface

The Metropolitan Council is directed by Minn. Stat. sec. 473.145 to prepare a comprehensive development guide for the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area. The development guide, as currently implemented, consists of the *2030 Regional Development Framework* and four “chapters,” dealing with transportation, aviation, water resources and regional parks. Minn. Stat. sec. 473.146, provides direction to the Council to adopt these comprehensive policy plans for transportation, airports and water resources as chapters of the metropolitan development guide.

This is the first time the system plan for surface transportation also includes a reference to the aviation system. The *Transportation Policy Plan* incorporates the transportation policies and plans that support the Metropolitan Council’s *Regional Development Framework* and describes the Council’s approach to investments between now and 2030. This is the tenth update of the regional transportation plan first adopted by the Council in 1971 and represents the fifth decade of coordinated efforts in planning and implementing this region’s metropolitan urban transportation system. It replaces the 2001 Transportation Policy Plan.

The *Transportation Policy Plan* has been prepared pursuant to the federal Transportation Equity Act for the 21st century (TEA-21) requirements and to Minn. Stat. sec. 473.145 and 146. Minnesota Statutes require the Council to review and revise the transportation guide at least every five years; TEA-21 requires an update every three years. However, the Council may amend the plan more frequently if necessary due to changing conditions. The Council is designated by state legislation as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Twin Cities metropolitan area (Minn. Stat. sec. 473.146). This requires the Council to assure administration and coordination of transportation planning with appropriate state, regional and other agencies, counties and municipalities. The administration and coordination is carried out through the established transportation 3C (comprehensive, coordinated and continuing) planning process. The plan preparation process includes the involvement of local elected officials through the Council’s Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and participation of citizens. The roles and responsibilities of all participants in the regional transportation planning process are fully described in the TAB’s *Prospectus*.

The *Transportation Policy Plan* conforms to the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) as required by TEA-21. The conformity of regional transportation plans and programs to CAAA requirements is determined by the air quality analysis methods as discussed in Appendix K.

Uses of This Plan

The Council will use this *Transportation Policy Plan* to fulfill its state and federal statutory responsibilities, including:

- To provide direction for criteria used to solicit and select transportation projects for federal funding;
- To review applications for federal and state financial assistance;
- To review and approve controlled-access highway plans;
- To review environmental assessments and impact statements;
- To guide policy implementation strategies;
- To provide direction to local planning;

- To serve as the basis for system monitoring and evaluation;
- To provide direction for coordination and implementation activities;
- To serve as a basis for identifying issues and developing policy input;
- To provide a forum for informing the public and ensuring citizen participation;

Public Participation Process

The Council provided a variety of methods for interested parties and the public to participate in the formulation of the region's *Transportation Policy Plan*. Described below are the specific activities undertaken to encourage public participation to the development of this regional transportation plan. These activities are consistent with the council's proposed Citizen Participation Plan, found in Appendix D of this plan.

- Preliminary draft presented and discussed with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
- Three public outreach meetings were held to present issues and schedule for system plan preparation: May 18, 20 and 24, 2004.

Public notice of participation process and key dates:

- August 25, 2004 – Council will adopt the draft plan for purpose of public hearing
- September 27, 2004 – Public hearing on draft plan
- October 22, 2004 – Record closes on public comments
- Six public open houses were held throughout the region to present the draft plan during September.
- Copies of the draft plan and background material were provided free upon request. The draft plan was sent to area libraries for public access and was posted on the Council's Web site.
- The draft policy plan was be presented to the TAB Policy Committee and TAB, the TAC Planning and Funding and Programming Committees and TAC.
- Comments were accepted at the public hearing, open houses via comment cards, mail, facsimile, a comment telephone line and Web site postings.
- Copies of all comments received were available for review at the Council's Data Center.
- The Council's Transportation Committee considered the public hearing report and revised plan at its November and December meetings.
- The Council accepted the public hearing report at its December 15, 2004 meeting and adopted the plan with recommended changes.



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

August 24, 2004

Mr. Natalio Diaz
Director
Metropolitan Transportation Services
Metropolitan Council
230 East 5th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

RE: Metropolitan Council's Final Draft Update to the Twin Cities 2030 Transportation Policy Plan

Dear Mr. Diaz:

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) staff has completed its review of the proposed update to the Twin Cities Transportation Policy Plan (plan). The plan was reviewed in two ways. First, we reviewed it for transportation conformity purposes. Secondly, we reviewed it in terms of policy concerns that are important to the MPCA. The MPCA will address the policy concerns in our comments during the official comment period. However, the following contains our comments about the transportation conformity review.

Appendix K of the plan is the Council's documentation of its conformity review as required by the U.S. EPA Transportation Conformity Rule, while Appendix D is the Council's Citizen Participation Plan. The regional emissions modeling analysis as documented in Appendix K of the plan, shows that future carbon monoxide emissions in tons/day in the analysis years 2010, 2020, and 2030 will remain below the regional emissions budget established by the MPCA's emissions inventory, even if all the regionally significant projects listed in the plan are built. With regards to the Council's Citizen Participation Plan (Appendix D), the MPCA staff would like to note that we appreciate the efforts you made in revising the public participation section to meet the revised federal requirements. After reviewing these two appendices for policy criteria established under the federal transportation conformity rule, we believe the proposed plan fully meets the transportation conformity criteria.

The MPCA appreciates the opportunity given to review the plan, and look forward to working with your staff to address any policy concerns we may raise during the public comments period. Please contact me at (651) 296-7739 or by e-mail at innocent.eyoh@pca.state.mn.us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Innocent E. Eyoh
Principal Transportation Planner
Regional Environmental Management Division

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