



PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE (PSC) MEETING Meeting Minutes

Date: March 9, 2006
Time: 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Location: Room 221, City Hall
Attendees: See attached roster

Agenda

1. Housekeeping
 - a. Approval of minutes from last meeting
 - b. Status of Action Items
2. Summary of Council Study Session
3. Downtown Transit Operations
4. Streetcar Study
5. Public Workshops

Summary of Items Discussed

Housekeeping

Minutes of the February 2, 2006 meeting were approved by the PSC with the following change:

- Comments on the downtown two-way options will be amended to reflect the concern that showing a two-way transit street on Marquette Avenue doesn't adequately reflect a two-way traffic pattern for downtown.

Action Items from the last meeting were reviewed. The Park Board task to provide a GIS layer for trees will remain on the list.

Summary of Council Study Session

Charleen Zimmer summarized the City Council Study Session held on March 3, 2006. The session was felt to be positive overall. Questions were raised about whether the session used the full two-hour time allotted, if it was broadcast/webcast and if all Councilmembers were in attendance? The session, while starting late, did run a full two hours. As is typical with study sessions, this one was not recorded, but the presentation materials are available on the project website. Four Council members indicated they had prior commitments, one other Council member did not attend, and the others were in attendance during most or all of the Study Session. There was good discussion of the Action Plan and many good questions asked.

Downtown Transit Operations

The current status of the transit operations analysis and Downtown transit scenarios was presented to the PSC using the slides prepared for the Council Study Session. Maps of the PTN and the two Downtown scenarios were distributed and noted as being similar to the sets previously provided. It was emphasized that double-width transit lanes are needed both now and in future for the north-south spine. This is true even with peak interception because the extent of peak interception is limited by the capacity of the downtown shuttle system. In addition to the double-width lanes, either peak interception or an additional north-south spine will be needed to accommodate future downtown transit demand. Comments from the committee were the following:

Primary Transit Network

- The PTN map should show the Chicago/Lake transit hub as existing rather than proposed.
- The PTN map should be amended to make the LRT colors consistent with the PTN status of the route (it's shown as blue when it is a red PTN route).
- Planned BRT and other LRT routes should be added to all the maps (NorthStar commuter rail, Central LRT, Southwest LRT, Bottineau BRT, I-35W BRT).
- Map titles and legends should be updated to reflect the current scenario descriptions.

Downtown Transit Scenarios

- Special event-based visitors (to the Metrodome, Target Center and for Mall events) should be included in the consumer/visitor market segment in the Downtown scenarios.
- The near-Downtown market was noted as including more than just residential neighborhoods. There are destinations in these areas that attract people from outside the Downtown area. Churches, theaters, the riverfront, restaurants and museums were noted as being present in these neighborhoods and create intra- and near Downtown trips.
- The methods by which seniors are being accounted for in the transit analyses should be documented.
- Does the "Southwest" market segment refer to Southwest Transit routes? No, it refers to all-day transit service on Hennepin Avenue and other streets serving southwest Minneapolis and immediately adjacent suburbs.
- Was I-35W BRT service included in the north-south spine numbers? Was Cedar Avenue? I-35W BRT buses were included. *Staff will check on whether the Cedar Avenue buses were included and will report back on this at the next meeting.*
- How was growth in transit use in Downtown determined and did it take into account projected growth in downtown residents and employment? The regional model was used to project future transit ridership. CPED provided population and employment forecasts for the downtown area and these were incorporated into the regional model. The number of buses was calculated based on the projected future ridership demand. Since the projection was based on the assumption that buses would run "full" in the peaks, the actual service pattern could result in more buses being used if routes in the future operate with lower load factors.

- Which agency sets the speed limit on the Nicollet Mall? Normally, the city would set the speed limit. Staff will research this *and report back at the next meeting.*
- Why is the two-way transit spine on Marquette still being considered despite objections from the Downtown business community representatives at previous meetings?
Concerns were expressed that access to major downtown parking and building support locations would be unduly restricted. *The study continues to look at a two-way spine on Marquette in the context of providing access lanes to service existing buildings along the street. Detailed studies of the curbfront and building access on both Second and Marquette Avenues have been conducted and are being used to guide the analysis. If a two-way spine on either street is found to be technically infeasible, this result will be noted and the concept removed from further consideration.*
- It was also noted that it is important to not send conflicting messages that transit is fine for workers, but that Downtown retailers and other businesses need unrestricted auto access. *The study is working to find a balance among the market segments in Downtown.*
- Can skip-stop spacing be redefined to mean two-stops per block rather than every other block because of the length of blocks in Downtown (which are about 50% longer than Portland blocks)? Concerns were expressed about increased walking distance and increased complexity, particularly for seniors, the physically or cognitively impaired and non-English speakers. Keeping the system easy to understand is key to making it useful.
- Were reversible lane operations considered for the transit spines in Downtown? *This concept has not been considered.*
- For the Peak Intercept scenario, the use of the 11th/Grant freeway ramp from the I-94 Commons area for buses from I-35W north and I-94 east was noted as being unworkable because of congestion in the Commons area and the lack of space for shoulder-running. *This study is developing input for the I-94 Commons study that is proceeding in parallel by Mn/DOT. Regardless, the Access Minneapolis study will reflect the 10-year reality of the transportation system. The assumptions about this routing need to be revised.*
- Weren't multiple south terminals previously identified for analysis? *The peak intercept analysis is still in process, but it is focusing on the Leamington Ramp as the primary southern terminal. Other staging areas will be needed and alternative locations will be identified for each alternative.*
- The peak intercept scenario was noted as requiring a two-bus trip for many peak express commuters (one to the terminal with a transfer to the shuttle and vice versa) where they have a one-bus trip now. This was noted as potentially reducing ridership and needs to be addressed.
- Some peak express service through routes to the U of M via Downtown is needed. How is this service treated in the peak intercept scenario? *Not all peak express routes are intercepted in the scenario. The analysis is currently considering how best to match shuttle capacity to interception of service and which routes shouldn't be intercepted.*
- Was Central Corridor LRT included in the analysis? *Central Corridor LRT is included in the analysis of future bus volumes. Mapping will be updated to reflect proposed LRT.*

Two-Way Street Operations in Downtown

- How is transit assumed to operate on Hennepin in the two-way street operations analysis? The analysis is considering both mixed traffic operations and with-flow transit lanes adjacent to the curb. Recommendations for time management of curb use will be included with the transit lane scenario.
- What are the reasons for considering two-way operation on Hennepin? Desire for a two-way Hennepin by the downtown business community predates the current planning study and is based on a desire to provide better access to the retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses along Hennepin. There are many curb uses for taxis, valet parking, drop-off, buses, etc.
- Hennepin Avenue intersection congestion and the resulting air quality impacts were noted as being the main reason that contra-flow transit operations were introduced to that street. *The status of these air quality issues are being considered by the study. The potential to affect the State Implementation Plan is being addressed as part of the analysis of transit and two-way traffic operations. Intersection congestion is being used as a surrogate measure for air quality impacts, which are not being directly calculated.*
- Who makes decisions about recommendations? *Ultimately the funding bodies – City Council, Metro Transit and the Metropolitan Council. Hennepin County and Mn/DOT are also involved in the street system decisions. Advice from the PSC is an integral component of the decision-making process.*

Streetcar Study

A brief synopsis of the status of the streetcar study was provided. The Transportation and Public Works committee of the Council approved amending the Access Minneapolis contract to add the streetcar study. Full Council approval is pending. A detailed scope of services is in review by the partner agencies and will be provided once that review is complete. The intent is to use the PSC and outreach aspects of the Access Minneapolis project for the streetcar study. The study will consider 14 corridors for streetcar feasibility. The 14 corridors are taken from the PTN and will include the Midtown Greenway as part of the Lake Street corridor. Initial screening will result in a shortlist that will be further evaluated in more detail. The result of the study will be a listing of priority corridors with consideration of strategies for funding and ownership along with hurdles that will need to be overcome. At present the study is only considering routes within Minneapolis because streetcar service is intended to be frequent stop service for shorter trips. It may be appropriate to include criteria that address the ability to extend a corridor outside Minneapolis.

Public Workshops

Dates and locations for the workshops are being established for the last week of April and first week of May to avoid Passover and Easter holiday periods. Charleen Zimmer will email the workshop information within a week.

A handout was provided on methods that will be used for getting information out about the public meetings. Charleen Zimmer is working with the City's Communications Coordinator on these matters. Ideas for additional outreach were requested from the PSC.

Suggestions offered included the following:

- Use the NRP organizations email lists. *NRP is on the email list already.*
- Use local access cable to publicize the meetings.
- Use any fixed outdoor message signs that might exist at the meeting locations to advertise the meetings.

Additional suggestions are to be sent to Charleen Zimmer.

The next PSC meeting will be rescheduled due to a conflict with Passover. Charleen Zimmer will notify members once a date is selected.

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 P.M.

Action Items

Tim Brown	Provide Tree GIS layer
MMA	Verify state statute concerning not allowing sidewalks adjacent to cemeteries
NN	Make changes to PTN and Downtown scenarios maps as per PSC's comments
Metro Transit	Verify whether Cedar Avenue buses are included
CZ	Verify which agency sets the speed limits on Nicollet Mall

**PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE
RECORD OF ATTENDANCE**

Meeting Date/Time: March 9, 2006, 4:00-6:00 pm

Location: Room 319, City Hall

OFFICIAL MEMBER	NAME	ORGANIZATION	PRESENT
X	Akre, John	Northeast Sub-Area	X
X	Anderson, Richard	Mpls Bicycle Advisory Committee	X
X	Brown, Tim	Mpls Parks	
X	Dewar, Caren	Southwest Sub-Area	
X	DeWitt, John	East Sub-Area	X
X	Eikaas, Gary	Minnesota Freight Advisory Comm	
X	Fabry, Klara	Minneapolis Public Works	X
X	Gerber, Darrell	Southwest Sub-Area	X
X	Greenberg, Bob	Downtown Sub-Area Business Rep	X
X	Grube, Jim	Hennepin County Alternate	
X	Imdieke Cross, Margot	Mpls Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities	X
X	Johnson, William	Transit Rider Representative	X
X	Keysser, Janet	Transit Rider Representative	
X	Kjonaas, Rick	Mn/DOT – SALT	
X	Kozlak, Connie	Metropolitan Council	X
X	Larson, Mike	Minneapolis CPED	X
X	McLaughlin, Mike	Downtown Council	X
X	Moe, Susan	FHWA	
X	O'Keefe, Tom	Mn/DOT – Metro	
X	Pearce Ruch, Kerri	Northwest Sub-Area	
X	Scallen, Maureen	Mpls Convention & Visitors Assoc	X
X	Schuster, Lea	Southeast Sub-Area	
X	Scott, Pat	Mpls TMO	X
X	Qvale, Pat	Opt-Out Provider Representative	X
X	VanHeel, John	Downtown Sub-Area Resident Rep	X
X	Walter, Doug	Southeast Sub-Area	X
X	Miner, Pam	Minneapolis CPED e	
Alternate	Olson, Glenn	Mpls TMO Alternate	
Alternate	Opatz, Mike	Op-Out Provider Alternate	
Project Mgr	Zimmer, Charleen	Mpls Public Works	X
PMT	Gieseke, Mark	Mn/DOT – Metro State Aid	
PMT	Griffith, John	Mn/DOT – Metro	

