

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 25, 2016

Members Present

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Julie Belisle, Minnesota Department of Education
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association (via phone)
Thant Pearson, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (via phone)
Diogo Reis, Minnesota Department of Human Services (via phone)
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council
Harlan Tardy, Minnesota Board on Aging

Members Absent

Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability
Keith Bogut, Minnesota Management and Budget
Tim Held, Minnesota Department of Health
Ron Quade, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs

Others Present

Heidi Corcoran, Dakota County
Frank Douma, Univ. of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Nicole George, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Rolf Hage, Minnesota Department of Human Services
Steve Kelley, Univ. of Minnesota Humphrey School of Public Affairs (via phone)
Kaydee Kirk, Univ. of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies
Arlene Mathison, Univ. of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies
Mike Schadauer, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Noel Shughart, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Sue Siemers, Minnesota Department of Transportation (via phone)
Leah Hegg, American Cancer Society (via phone)

Call to order

Chair, Tim Henkel, called to order the August meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:08 PM on August 25, 2016 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN.

Review and approval of agenda

Tardy made a motion to approve the agenda; the motion was seconded by Sutton and then was unanimously **approved**.

Review and approval of minutes from 6/29/2016 meeting

Sutton moved to approve the 6/29/2016 MCOTA meeting minutes; the motion was seconded by Tardy and was then unanimously **approved**.

Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan

Shughart provided an overview of the Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan. The plan is updated every five years. Shughart reviewed greater Minnesota transit, the results of community input, transit need and demand, strategic investments, financial outlook, and the action timeline for the investment plan.

Regional Transportation Coordination Council (RTCC) Workshops process and feedback

Shughart shared the background on the RTCC process that began in 2005 with the start of the MCOTA work. More local coordination councils began across various states around that time. In Minnesota, there was no entity to implement the strategies being discussed by MCOTA. The Olmstead Plan decision spurred implementation. There was a need for a more flexible and adaptable system to address transportation needs. MCOTA serves as an oversight group to recommend change to the legislature.

Given the transit gaps that exist across the state, the concept of the RTCCs began to be adopted as a way to fill those gaps. The University of Minnesota was engaged to help with development and implementation. Defining the RTCCs has been a bottom up approach from the local level and it began with a series of workshops in 2015 and a second series of workshops in 2016. Per workshop feedback, there will be a maximum of 10 RTCCs (this number does not include the 5-6 metro area one- or two-county groups who are or will do their own county coordination).

The plan for RTCCs was presented in August 2016 to the advisory committee of the coordinating councils. The committee was in agreement with the plan and approach. There will first be an application for the RTCC planning phase. There will also be an implementation phase and this will be underway by early 2017.

There is a need to set statewide objectives for the RTCCs; MCOTA will provide these objectives per statute. The group also discussed what MCOTA's role/work should be with the RTCCs. Members recommended having a small committee formulate a plan for this and present it at the September meeting. Those who were suggested or who volunteered to be in this small group include Noel Shughart, Sue Simers, Diogo Reis, Thant Pearson, Mike Schadauer, Tiffany Collins, Julie Belisle and Kristie Billiar. It was also suggested to have a representative from the Independent Living Council. Shughart said the group will aim to meet in early to mid September.

Olmstead requires by the end of this year a concept for work plan, including defining the RTCCs. It was shared that it is anticipated that 3-5 RTCC applicants in the non-Metro will be ready for implementation right away.

The group discussed the need to ensure a comprehensive application process across RTCCs statewide. Applying to be an RTCC is voluntary and not mandatory; it is anticipated there will be good engagement since much outreach has been done and feedback solicited throughout the planning process. But will the voluntary approach to RTCCs be enough to meet Olmstead Plan requirements? The group felt that a directive is preferred if parties are not participating. MCOTA would reserve the right to assign a county or a region to an RTCC if they do not first choose to participate.

Also, Olmstead requires counties to comply with this legislation in order to meet their clients' needs. Though MnDOT is currently responsible for ensuring Olmstead's mandate, this needs to be a partnership between agencies (MnDOT, DHS, etc.) to carry out; the work plan should reflect this.

Mathison provided an overview of the second round of workshop highlights and feedback, proposed regions, potential actions for the PMT, and next steps which included a conceptual timeline. Members asked if there should be a legislative request for RTCCs for operational funding. This would serve as a pool of flexible funds for operations and paying for actual rides. The group agreed that this money on the table would help with buy-in and would be valuable in incentivizing groups to participate. Members also posed the question if the State can support RTCCs with technology.

The next step is for the subcommittee to continue on the work plan formation.

Douma provided a PowerPoint handout with an overview of the Volunteer Driver Program Survey and Study. Topics included the project purpose, method, respondents, results, obstacles/barriers, and next steps. Members noted that the brochure from the Department of Commerce should be updated. It was suggested that the RTCCs could potentially serve as a clearinghouse in this effort.

FY17 MCOTA budget update

Shughart shared that there have been no adjustments to the budget since the last meeting. This agenda item will remain as a standing agenda item for meetings going forward.

Agency updates

- Olmstead Plan: It was shared that the work plan will be updated within the next couple weeks and will be submitted to the courts by the end of September. This agenda item will continue to be a standing agenda item for future meetings.
- Schadauer noted that the comments on the draft Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan are being received via the web, among other ways. [Click here](#) to submit comments online. Members are encouraged to send this link out to their networks. George will be working on local coordination plans.

Public comments

There were no public comments.

Other

The September meeting is the annual meeting which includes the election of officers. The election of officers will be added to the agenda.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Sutton; the motion was seconded by Hardy and then **approved** unanimously. The meeting ended at 3:19 p.m.

Future meetings: Thursday, September 29; Wednesday, October 19; Tuesday, November 22; Tuesday, December 20

Future agenda items: September:

- Annual meeting with election of officers
- Volunteer driver insurance
- Detailed scope of Medicaid Program (Managed Care and Fee For Service) policies and their impact on volunteer programs
- MCOTA budget update