

Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) Meeting Minutes September 22, 2021, 1:00–3:00 PM

Meeting held via Zoom.

Members present:

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Vice Chair – Diogo Reis, Minnesota Department of Human Services
At-Large Representative – Victoria Nill, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Susan Bishop, Minnesota Department of Health
Peter Brickwedde, Minnesota Department of Commerce
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association
Rachel Dame, Office of the Governor
John Doan, Minnesota Board on Aging
Kelly Garvey, Minnesota Department of Education
David Fenley, Minnesota State Council on Disability
Nick Lardinois, Minnesota Management and Budget
Rolando Sotolongo, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council

Members absent:

Jodi Yanda, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Others present:

- Minnesota Department of Transportation:
 - Office of Transit & Active Transportation: Kristie Billiar, Tom Gottfried, Michelle Lichtig, Alexandra O'Reilly, Jake Rueter, Sue Siemers
- Center for Transportation Studies: Kaydee Kirk, Arlene Mathison, Michael McCarthy
- Robyn Bernardy, Dakota County
- Tammy Buttweiler
- Guthrie Byard
- Emily Castaneda
- Heidi Corcoran, Milligan Partners
- Eric Day, MMRDC
- Ashley Eckdahl, ECRDC
- Mike Greenbaum, Newtrax
- Alan Hermann, Scott County
- Sheila Holbrook-White, Washington County
- Matt Kallroos
- Kristen O'Toole, Alta Planning + Design, Inc.
- Shelley Madore, Olmstead Office
- Scott Olson, Newtrax
- Karen Onan, East Central Regional Transportation Coordinating Council
- Lynnell Popowski
- Mark Schermerhorn, Anoka County Transit
- Terry Smith, MMRTCC
- Beverly Sidlo-Tolliver, Arrowhead RTCC
- Brian Strub, Department of Commerce

- Courtney Whited, Board on Aging
- Joan Willshire, Willshire Consulting

Call to Order + Member Roll Call

Henkel called to order the September meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:01 PM on September 22, 2021. There was a quorum of MCOTA members.

New members Dame from the Governor’s Office and Lardinois from the Minnesota Management and Budget Office were welcomed by Henkel. Each new member introduced themselves.

Review and Approve Agenda

Reis moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Nill. The agenda was unanimously **approved**.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

July Meeting Minutes

Bishop moved to approve the July minutes, seconded by Sutton. The minutes were unanimously **approved**.

Agency Senior Leadership Team Meeting

Gottfried shared that the Senior Leadership Meeting is an annual meeting where the commissioners and/or commissioner designees attend. He provided an overview of the draft meeting agenda and confirmed that all senior leaders and agency representatives on MCOTA are eligible to vote in the voting exercise at the meeting. Prior to the meeting Gottfried is talking to each agency to get a list of their top agency transportation challenges – this will be part of the voting exercise.

Statewide Pedestrian Plan MnDOT and “Walking Audit” MDH

Rueter presented on the Statewide Pedestrian System Plan including an overview, how the Ped Plan interacts with MnDOT’s ADA work, and implementation. MnDOT uses the term ‘walking’ to include all the ways that people move themselves through the world, including with mobility devices such as walkers, strollers, and wheelchairs. He also walked through plan timeline and history and engagement with the disability community.

O’Toole presented about planning inclusive walk audits. Topics included more inclusive engagement and discussing the Inclusive walk Audit Facilitator’s Guide (available on the MDH website) and how it was developed. She provided an overview, purpose, recommendations, resources, and next steps. The purpose of the Guide is to improve pedestrian planning processes by making them more inclusive to persons with disabilities.

MCOTA Work Teams

- **Volunteer Driver Work Team:** This team is aiming to bring a fact sheet for review at the next MCOTA meeting. The group would also like to discuss how the brochure product will be a piece of this effort. The team will be meeting again in November for a few more planned events for the spring around the topic of volunteer drivers. A plan for the events would be brought forward at the January MCOTA meeting.
- **Communications Work Team:** Lichtig provided a review of the annual legislative report which is on the web for member review. The report also highlights the key messages that were drafted from member input. A couple more additional sections to the report will be added after the 10/1 Senior Leadership

meeting based on their input for FY22 priorities. Other report highlights include partnerships through the pandemic, collaborations to create innovation, GIS mapping, Covid-19 positive client transportation, and volunteer driver forums and legislation. It is requested that members provide their feedback to Lichtig or Mathison by 10/11. The revised draft will be sent to members mid-October. It will then be reviewed by MnDOT Government Relations and then the final version by MCOTA leadership in late November. The final draft is due by 12/1 for submission to the Governor's Office and then it will be posted online in January.

Nill made a motion to approve the process for the legislative report and timeline, seconded by Collins. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

Greater MN Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils (RTCCs) & Twin Cities Transit Coordination Assistance Projects (TCAPs) Program/Grants Update

Lichtig shared that the TCAP applications were reviewed recently. They are also in process of reviewing budgets and questions submitted. The TCAP 2-year grant period and work plan is from 1/1/22 to 12/31/23.

She also shared that the Southwest RTCC is moving into phase three. A number of other RTCCs under contract are moving into phase four as of this past summer. RTCCs have been submitting their work plans that include the logic model which give an opportunity to look at performance measures.

Day introduced Smith who presented their work on the Mid-Minnesota Transportation Coordinating Councils (MMRTCC) effort on volunteer driver promotion. A big part of this was the partnering with Central Community Transit (CCT). Part of this was a multi-media awareness campaign that included a human-interest story that was published in the local newspaper, a featurette on the local public TV station, online social media ads, radio ads, community presentations, and the development of a flyer focused on the volunteer driver opportunity and its benefits. Going forward there is opportunity to collaborate with other RTCCs for a statewide campaign, budget permitting.

Agency Updates – All

Olmstead Plan

- Billiar shared that Olmstead has completed their reporting for this calendar year. The committee is getting into their new work form and style.
- The work groups are starting to get underway – one group is on the topic of data (addressing what data needs are and how to best address) and another is on accessible housing (this group is getting ready for public engagement to identify what the needs are).

Member Round Robin

- Bishop shared that Metro Transit is continuing the ongoing partnership with MDH regarding the mobile Covid-19 vaccine units. They have provided three buses for this effort and Bishop expressed appreciation for this important partnership.

Review Draft Agenda for November Meeting

Henkel provided an overview of the November meeting. Members did not have any changes or questions.

Adjourn

Doan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Sutton. The motion was unanimously **approved**. The meeting adjourned at 2:22 PM.