

## **DRAFT-** MCOTA One Pager – Policy and Legislative Development Process

The Minnesota Council on Transportation Access (MCOTA) was established by the Minnesota Legislature in 2010 ([Minn. Statute 2010 174.285](#)) to "study, evaluate, oversee, and make recommendations to improve the coordination, availability, accessibility, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and safety of transportation services provided to the transit public."

### **Background – Timeline: Transportation Access Issues:**

- October 2021: Per the 2020-2024 MCOTA Strategic Plan, Senior Leadership held a workshop meeting to identify each agency's top transportation access issues.
- November 2021: MCOTA those issues were assigned to two new and one existing MCOTA work teams: Removing Barriers (new), Accessibility/Olmstead(new) and Volunteer Drivers (existing).
- January 2022: MCOTA meeting these teams were formed and reconfigured to narrow the focus and draft Work Plans to address these issues.
- July and September 2022: The Work Teams' work plans were reviewed and approved by MCOTA to move forward (attached).

### **Work Team Overview:**

The MCOTA Work Teams are focused on addressing the priority issues with intent to provide recommendations of state agency policy changes, recommendations for potential new programs (the associated funding/resources), and/or recommendations of changes to existing programs to improve effectiveness and efficiency of transportation access. These recommendations may include in-depth studies and research (and the associated funding/resources).

### **Upcoming:**

June 2023: At the MCOTA Senior Leadership Meeting, we will seek guidance for developing recommendations for the next state fiscal year.

July 2023: MCOTA will prioritize issues and assign them to appropriate work teams. Work teams will draft work plans addressing the respective Transportation Access issues beginning in August, which will then be approved at the September and November MCOTA meetings.

October 2023 – February 2024: Work teams will develop potential transportation access for MCOTA recommendations.

March – May 2024: The recommendations will be reviewed and approved during the March and May meetings in preparation for the June MCOTA Senior Leadership meeting.

June 2024: At June Senior Leadership meeting appropriate (significant policy changes and/or legislation) recommendations will be reviewed and modified or approved. Per the MCOTA June Senior Leadership's approval, the affected state agencies and MCOTA staff craft the recommendations into potential legislation and/or policy/rule changes and work with the impacted stakeholders, state agencies and the Governor's office.

**The following illustrates the timeline and workflow of MCOTA Work Teams:**

**MCOTA Work Teams Timeline and Workflow**

- July MCOTA Meeting
  - Review June MCOTA Senior Leadership Transportation Access priority issues
  - Assign the issues to appropriate Work Team
- August – October Work Teams draft work plans
- September/November MCOTA Meetings
  - Review and approve Work Teams draft work plans to address the respective Transportation Access issues
- October-February Work Teams vet out the issues and development transportation solution(s) and craft the MCOTA recommendations
- March/May MCOTA Meetings
  - Review and approve Work Teams transportation access recommendations
  - Prep for June MCOTA Senior Leadership Meeting
- June MCOTA Senior Leadership Meeting
  - Review and Approve MCOTA transportation access solution recommendations
  - Workshop the next trending transportation access issues and establish priority for MCOTA to vet out for the next year.
  - Update on previous year recommendations and outcomes

**Needed resources for these efforts are as follows:**

- Commitment from each MCOTA member agency of professional staff time to work on and with the MCOTA Work Teams.
  - Estimated time (Staff) commitment includes about 14 hours of 7 MCOTA meetings, 18 hours of 12 MCOTA Work Team meetings, and between 20-30 hours of prep time for all MCOTA meetings, or 52-62 hours per year total per member. This could vary depending on needs and circumstances.
- Commitment of potential funding sources for studies, research and/or consultant services as needed for the various transportation access issues. These needs may be agency-dependent per the study, research and/or consultant services and may need unique funding sources.
  - Previous studies (2011-2019) and research “white papers” costs ranged from \$10,000 to \$75,000 each. We could expect at least one or two per year into the future.

- We will be seeking assistance from our federal partner agencies, and specifically Coordinating Council Access and Mobility (CCAM). CCAM is MCOTA federally equivalent and our federal partner on research, studies and planning funding.
- Unique funding sources may also include state agencies beyond MCOTA members or seeking funding capacity under MCOTA legislation (Mn Statute 174.285).
  - Upon the inception of MCOTA in 2010, General Funds were appropriated ~\$80,000 per year for 2011 and 2012. These funds sunset in 2012, MnDOT Office of Transit and Active Transportation has been funding MCOTA since 2012. The current annual cost is about \$200,000 per year.