Minutes

Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee

Meeting date: June 3, 2026 **Time**: 12:30 PM **Location:** 390 Robert Street

Members present:

- ☒ Chair, David Fenley, at large
- ☒ Vice Chair, Patty Thorsen
- ☒ Sam Jasmine, Precinct A
- ☒ Patsy Murphy, Precinct C
- ☒ Ken Rodgers, Precinct D
- ☐ Jeffrey Dains, Precinct E
- ☒ Darrell Paulsen, Precinct F
- ☐ Kari Sheldon, Precinct G
- ☐ Michele Severson, MCD
- ☐ Erik Henricksen, MCD
- ☐ Heidi Myhre, MCCD
- ☒ Claudia Fuglie, MCCD
- ☒ Chris Leifeld, AARP MN

Ex-officio:

- ☒ Scottie Carter, OEEO
- ☒ Julie Sellner, Metro Mobility Service Center
- ☐ Douglas Cook, Metro Transit Customer Advocate
- ☐ Anjuli Cameron, Metropolitan Council

☒ = present, E = excused

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Metropolitan Council acknowledges that the land we currently call Minnesota and specifically the seven-county region is the ancestral homeland of the Dakota Oyate who are present and active contributors to our thriving region. As part of the Metropolitan Council's commitment to address the unresolved legacy of genocide, dispossession, and settler colonialism and the fact that government institutions, including the Metropolitan Council, benefitted economically, politically, and institutionally after the forceable removal of the Dakota Oyate, the Metropolitan Council is dedicated to instilling Land, Water, and People Commitments in regional policy. These commitments support the Dakota Oyate, the eleven federally recognized Tribes in Minnesota, Ho-Chunk Nation, and the American Indian Communities representing over 150 diverse Tribal Nations that call the seven-county region home.

Call to order

A quorum not being being present, Committee Chair Fenley called the regular meeting of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee to order at 12:34 p.m.

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment was read by Vice-Chair Rhorsen.

Business and information items

1. The committee received an update on Metro Transit's **Better Bus Routes** program, which was launched in 2018 to improve the speed, reliability, and accessibility of local bus service by applying selected bus rapid transit concepts to high-ridership local routes through lower-cost improvements. Staff explained that the program has evolved from a pilot into an ongoing initiative that now evaluates two routes each year. Projects are selected using criteria that emphasize competitive travel times, accessibility, legibility, and equity, while coordinating closely with local cities and counties to support implementation. Common improvements include consolidating bus stops to approximately quarter-mile spacing, installing ADA-compliant boarding pads, evaluating locations for additional shelters, improving bus stop

zones to allow buses to safely pull to the curb, and simplifying route alignments to reduce delays and make service easier for riders to understand. Outreach remains a key part of each project through surveys, multilingual materials, rider engagement at bus stops, and public feedback, which has resulted in revisions to proposed changes when warranted.

asked how Metro Transit balances ADA compliance with rider amenities such as benches and shelters, particularly when stop consolidation results in longer walking distances. Staff explained that ADA compliance focuses on providing accessible boarding pads with appropriate slopes and surfaces, while benches are generally managed by a third-party advertising contractor. Metro Transit works with that contractor to relocate benches when possible and noted that accessibility sometimes requires moving benches that obstruct boarding areas. Committee members also raised concerns about situations where accessible bus stops lack accessible sidewalks or pathways leading to them. Staff acknowledged that sidewalk connectivity is often outside Metro Transit's direct authority but said Better Bus Routes projects coordinate with local jurisdictions whenever possible, adding curb ramps and other infrastructure that can support future sidewalk construction. Staff emphasized that new stop locations are evaluated for accessibility and highlighted recent Route 14 improvements in Richfield that relocate service closer to retail destinations while also providing improved pedestrian access.

Staff reviewed the current year's projects for Routes 14 and 74, explaining that both incorporate recommendations from the Network Now initiative by simplifying confusing branch patterns, improving reliability, and concentrating service where ridership is strongest. Route 14 will eliminate several branches, introduce a new Route 48 to maintain service in selected areas, improve weekday frequency, and relocate portions of the route to better serve major destinations including Target and Home Depot while adding accessible pedestrian infrastructure. Route 74 will similarly streamline its alignment, improve service frequency, add ADA improvements and new shelters, and introduce Route 215 to maintain coverage in areas where Route 74 service is removed. Staff also shared results from last year's Route 7 project, reporting a 16 percent increase in northbound ridership and a 15 to 20 percent reduction in travel time following route simplification.

Committee members also discussed the importance of considering bicycle infrastructure when redesigning bus stops, particularly where bike lanes pass behind bus boarding islands. Members encouraged Metro Transit to promote the use of appropriate tactile surfaces to distinguish pedestrian and bicycle areas for riders who are blind or have low vision. Additional recommendations included making the ADA reasonable modification process more visible on Better Bus Routes project webpages so riders whose stops are removed understand how to request accommodations. Metro Transit staff welcomed the feedback, agreed to share the recommendations with internal teams, and indicated they would explore incorporating the suggestions into future outreach and project websites.

Reports

Subcommittee

Blue Line – Ken Rodgers

Member Rodgers gave an update from a site visit done for the blue line extension. The green line extension has a lot of nontraditional stops that can cause accessibility issues. He has been asking for changes to the blue line extension. There is also no audio or tactile feedback to the user with flashing yellow lights indicating it is safe to cross. The chair stated that the committee will have to take a position as a body.

Public invitation

No public comment

Member comment

Member Jasmine requested statistics about same day premium-on-demand service and job refusals in the future.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 1:43 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee meeting of June 3, 2026.

Approved this 5th day of August 2026.

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