

Minutes

Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee



Meeting date: September 2, 2026

Time: 12:30 PM

Location: 390 Robert Street

Members present:

- ☐ Chair, David Fenley, at large
- ☒ Vice Chair, Patty Thorsen, MAAA
- ☐ 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 Henriksen, MCD
- ☒ Heidi Myhre, MCD
- ☒ Claudia Fuglie, MCD
- ☒ Chris Leifeld, AARP MN

Ex-officio:

- ☒ Scottie Carter, OEEA
- ☒ Julie Sellner, Metro Mobility Service Center
- ☒ Douglas Cook, Metro Transit Customer Advocate
- ☐ Anjali 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 being present, Committee Vice-Chair Thorsen called the regular meeting of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee to order at 12:31 p.m.

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

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

Agenda approved

It was moved by member Paulsen seconded by member Sheldon to approve the agenda. Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. **Motion carried.**

Approval of minutes

It was moved by member Paulsen, seconded by member Sheldon to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2026, regular meeting of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.**

Business and information items

1. Ryan Heath and Michaela Ahern, from Metro Transit's Service Development Department, provided an update on the **Network Now** framework and proposed 2026 amendment. The presentation outlined how Metro Transit is continuing to adapt its service network to changing travel patterns, increase all-day and all-week service, grow ridership, and improve connections to employment and other opportunities. The amendment also supports preparation for the Green Line Extension, which is anticipated to open in 2027, and the introduction of new service along Highway 55 between downtown Minneapolis and Plymouth. The original Network Now framework was approved in 2025, and approximately half of its improvements have been implemented. The timeline for completing the remaining improvements has been extended from 2027 to 2028 to align with available bus operator staffing and resources.

The proposed amendment includes several route modifications to improve connections to the Green Line Extension and Highway 55 corridor. For the Green Line Extension, proposed changes include adjustments to routes 9, 36, 46, 615, and 705; increased frequency on routes 38, 46, and 705; the introduction of new route 617; and discontinuation of a segment of route 25 south of downtown Minneapolis. Several changes are intended to simplify routes by eliminating branches, improving frequency, and making service easier for customers to understand. For example, route 9 would operate on a single branch seven days a week, while route 38 would provide 20-minute service throughout the week and serve a single destination in St. Paul. Route 46 would be extended to serve the VA Home, and route 617 would provide new east-west service between Minneapolis and the Glen Lake area of Minnetonka.

For the Highway 55 corridor, the amendment proposes changes to routes 30, 705, 716, and 755, along with the introduction of new limited-stop route 757 and the proposed return of express route 758, which has been suspended since the pandemic. Route 705 would increase to 30-minute service seven days a week, while route 757 would provide all-day service until 10:00 p.m., including weekends and some trips extending to the University of Minnesota. Route 758 would operate three trips in each direction and include reverse-commute service to a business park in Brooklyn Park. Route 755 would be discontinued, with some customers needing to transfer to other routes to access the improved all-day service. Presenters acknowledged that some changes would require customers to move from a one-seat ride to a two-seat ride but noted the benefits of more frequent and consistent service.

The presenters explained that proposed service discontinuations were evaluated using ridership data, with affected stops generally serving between one and three riders per day. Under the amendment, approximately 23 average daily riders would be more than a five-minute walk from alternative service. Metro Transit is conducting targeted outreach to affected riders, including staff riding impacted routes to speak directly with customers. Overall, the amendment is expected to bring approximately 14,000 additional people within access to all-day transit service operating at least every 30 minutes. It would also provide 70% more weekend trips connecting to Green Line Extension stations compared with previous plans.

The presentation also included an update on Metro Micro, which is not part of the Network Now amendment but remains an important part of Metro Transit's service network. A new zone covering most of Brooklyn Park, centered around the Starlight Transit Center, is scheduled to launch October 1, 2026. The existing North Minneapolis zone will be adjusted to connect with the Green Line Extension at Bassett Creek Valley, and a new Minnetonka zone will connect to the Green Line Extension at Opus. A Maplewood Metro Micro zone is also planned, anchored at the Maplewood Mall Transit Center, with connections to routes 64, 215, and 219. Presenters explained that Metro Micro boundaries are developed in coordination with city staff and adjusted after launch based on actual ridership and travel patterns, within the resource constraint of five vehicles per zone.

During the discussion, committee members raised concerns about the accessibility and usability of the proposed changes for people with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with limited resources. One member expressed concern about increased walking distances, learning new route numbers and connections, and the difficulty of understanding significant network changes, particularly for people with cognitive or processing disabilities. The member



emphasized the importance of considering disabilities beyond mobility-related needs and ensuring that people can confidently navigate the system independently. Metro Transit representatives acknowledged these concerns and explained that launch communications would include social media, printed materials, and in-person outreach. Staff emphasized that customers would receive information closer to implementation rather than being expected to remember proposed changes a year in advance. Community Outreach staff also noted that in-person engagement allows staff to communicate at different learning speeds and provide information in multiple languages. Committee members encouraged additional outreach through senior living communities, human services organizations, and social service providers to reach people who may not regularly use the internet.

Members also discussed the importance of ensuring that Metro Micro locations receive the same attention to accessibility, safety, cleanliness, and customer information as larger transit facilities. Member Paulsen raised concerns about the condition of the Maplewood Mall Transit Center parking facility and emphasized the opportunity to better support the area's growing activity and community events through Metro Micro. Another member reinforced that smaller transit locations should receive comparable attention to accessible design, clear signage, and safe waiting areas. Metro Transit staff agreed to follow up with the Metro Micro planning team and public facilities staff regarding the concerns raised.

Additional questions focused on how Metro Transit would manage the implementation of substantial service changes without creating confusion for riders. Staff explained that routine quarterly service changes are communicated through newsletters, website updates, news stories, and rider alerts at affected stops. More significant changes, such as the Green Line Extension, will involve coordinated outreach and communication leading up to launch. Committee members also encouraged Metro Transit to use local media and community events to promote new services, particularly Metro Micro, to reach people who may not regularly access Metro Transit's communication channels. Members specifically asked about outreach to senior living communities, recognizing that residents may lose the ability to drive while continuing to need transportation to access the community.

The committee also raised concerns about whether Metro Transit would have sufficient bus operators to support the planned service expansion without negatively affecting existing routes. Presenters explained that the Service Development Department works quarterly with Operations to understand hiring projections and pace service improvements according to available staffing. They acknowledged a recent downturn in hiring but noted that hiring was improving. The decision to extend the Network Now implementation timeline to 2028 was intended to ensure that improvements could be introduced without requiring significant trip reductions elsewhere in the system. A committee member emphasized the importance of maintaining reliable service on established routes, particularly given the consequences of canceled trips for people who depend on transit.

The public engagement period for the amendment is scheduled to continue through October 4, 2026, with an online survey, in-person outreach, presentations at community events, and outreach aboard affected routes. Four community meetings were planned, including three in-person meetings and one virtual meeting, with one meeting to be recorded and made available afterward. Metro Transit anticipated bringing the amendment to the Metropolitan Council for endorsement in November 2026, with service improvements anticipated to begin in 2027. Presenters encouraged committee members to review the project website at metrotransit.org/network-now and submit feedback through the survey, email, written comments, or in-person engagement.

Public invitation

No public comment

Member comment

Member Paulsen shared an experience he had with the 213 and 219 routes. Paulsen stated that

some additional training might be needed with some operators in regard to wheelchair seating. Member Myhre shared customer experience with the 75. Myhre stated the operator might need some additional training in regard to accessibility seating.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 1:48 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 September 2, 2026.

Approved this 7th day of October 2026.

Council contact:

Kevin Petrie, TAAC Recording Secretary
Kevin.Petrie@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1767

David Fenley, TAAC Chair
david.fenley@state.mn.us
651-361-7809

Patty Thorsen, TAAC Vice Chair
pattyadvocatethorsen@gmail.com
612-597-8114

