

## Arterial Bus Rapid Transit System Policy Oversight Committee

Date/Time: Friday, May 31, 2013, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Location: Metro Transit FTH Chambers (560 6th Avenue N, Minneapolis)

Present: Council Member Adam Duinick (Metropolitan Council) (Committee Chair)  
Council Member John Doan (Metropolitan Council)  
Council Member Pat Backen (City of Robbinsdale)  
Council Member Tim Busse (City of Bloomington)  
Mayor Peter Lindstrom (City of Falcon Heights)  
Commissioner Nancy Schouweiler (Dakota County)  
Pat Bursaw (MnDOT)  
Joe Gladke (Hennepin County)  
Steve Hay (City of Minneapolis)  
Hilary Holmes (City of Saint Paul)  
Steven Jankowski (City of Brooklyn Center)  
Tim Kirchoff (Anoka County)  
Sherrie Le (City of West Saint Paul)  
Kay Qualley (City of Fridley)  
Mike Rogers (Ramsey County)  
Duane Schwartz (City of Roseville)  
Peter Wagenius (City of Minneapolis)  
Charles Carlson (Metro Transit)  
Kate Christopherson (Metro Transit)  
Katie Roth (Metro Transit)

### Agenda and Meeting Notes

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*Chair Duinick called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.*

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Project overview**

*Katie Roth presented background on the arterial BRT mode, the Arterial Transitway Corridors Study completed in 2012, and concept plans for the Snelling/Ford line.*

- Duinick asked about operating cost savings of Snelling BRT. Roth responded that the increase in operating costs from more service and amenities is offset by savings from reduced local service and fewer buses.
- Le asked whether there would be opportunity to coordinate with Robert Street reconstruction. Carlson responded that identifying these corridors is a good step for cities/counties to know where arterial BRT may be built. Metro Transit staff met with West Saint Paul in 2012 to discuss station locations, and the Robert Street alternatives analysis study is currently ongoing; results of that study will determine a potential BRT path.
- Wagenius asked what percent of time depends on the limited stop features as opposed to other features. Roth responded that the half mile stations combined with off-board payment and full-door boarding create the most time savings. Metro Transit will balance stop spacing and service plan for each corridor.

- Busse asked how signal prioritization will balance bus speeds with side street traffic. Carlson clarified that emergency vehicles will have first priority and transit vehicles will place lower-priority calls. Roth added that a study is currently underway to measure network-wide impacts on person wait time related to signal priority to balance impacts with benefits to transit.
- Busse asked whether development density was necessary to build BRT, or whether BRT would be developed expecting density to follow. Roth responded that the majority of corridors are strong transit corridors today; the exception to this is American Boulevard, where BRT may perform strongly in the future but is not planned for near-term implementation. Carlson added that arterial BRT plans focus on areas already planned for redevelopment and infill to create higher density.
- Schwartz stated concerns about traffic and pedestrian crossings at the north end of the Snelling corridor, and concerns about pedestrian safety along Snelling in Roseville.
- Duinick asked how staff will measure ridership and determine whether passengers are walking to the BRT stations instead of choosing local bus. Roth replied that staff will use automatic passenger counter data to see where people board.

### 3. Brand Elements Discussion

*Katie Roth presented development process and staff recommendations for arterial BRT brand elements. Discussion began with the system name.*

- Schouweiler stated Dakota County's appreciation for Metro Transit's work to find a new brand name, having not been supportive of using "Rapid" for arterial BRT.
- Wagenius echoed Schouweiler's comment about "Rapid" name, and asked about the relationship between ABRT and Hi-Frequency Network. Carlson responded that there may be potential to replace hi-frequency with ABRT over time and eventually retire hi-frequency. This would be part of ongoing brand development.
- Duinick asked why "Connect" didn't advance. Roth responded that staff learned from market testing that it doesn't convey speed as well as Rapid, but may test again in future.
- Doan suggested more market research for "Direct" and "Connect".
- Duinick asked how Metro Transit will conduct additional research on brand name. Roth responded that options are open, including small group discussion with volunteers or re-engaging a market research firm. Duinick recommended using transit riders and/or community advisory committee members in a focus group.
- Busse urged Metro Transit to make a decision on branding and advance.
- Wagenius suggested coupling "A Line" with names in brand name research.
- Lindstrom asked about next steps for marketing. Roth responded that staff will incorporate feedback from committees and bring recommendations to the Metropolitan Council. Carlson underscored the importance of making marketing decisions now so they can be applied region-wide.

*The group discussed the lettered line naming approach. Comments included suggestions for non-sequential lettering (e.g. "S" Line for Snelling) and geographic approaches to letter use.*

#### 4. Roundtable – SPOC Interest Issues for Future Review

*Attendees were asked to identify which issues would be most important in the context of decisions to be made for the arterial BRT system.*

- Doan stated interest in exploring the extension of the Snelling line to the TCAAP site and inquired about the process of adding to the system plan. Roth responded that the 12 planned lines are in the TPP and have undergone extensive study.
- Le stated interest in exploring the extension of the Robert line south to 494 and west to the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport.
- Qualley asked about station maintenance, particularly snow removal. Roth responded that snow removal and enhanced maintenance were included in project cost estimates.
- Wagenius noted the need for pedestrian amenities, particularly adequate sidewalks, given the greater walking distance required by ABRT. Carlson responded that thus far in project development, arterial BRT improvements have brought the pedestrian issues to the fore for cities.
- Busse suggested engaging the SPOC in a longer discussion regarding station design and integration into streetscapes to enable opportunities to help future improve station concept and avoid tearing up new infrastructure due to timing. Policy or principles need to be in place for these discussions.

#### 5. Next Meeting / Next Steps

- Next SPOC meeting to be held fall 2013; invitations to be sent in advance.
- Scheduling will depend on status of station & corridor design.
- Snelling design to ramp up this summer
- Open houses July 9, 15, & 17
- Planning on West 7th Street (second line) beginning this summer
- Brand development next steps
  - Staff had targeted June or July time to bring brand elements to Transportation Committee for approval.
  - Given no strong opposition to three of four brand elements (line naming, station naming, vehicle design), staff will recommend these three elements to Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee for approval
  - Staff will review brand name recommendation through additional research of top candidate names and finalize recommendation late summer/early fall 2013 for Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee approval.

*The meeting adjourned at 9:44 am.*