

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY
WASHINGTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA
MARCH 11, 2008

The Washington County Regional Railroad Authority met in regular session at 9:00 a.m. in the Washington County Government Center, County Board Room. Present were Commissioners Peterson, Pulkrabek, Hegberg, Stafford, and Kriesel. Absent none. RRA Chair Peterson presided. Also present were James Schug, County Administrator; Molly O'Rourke, Deputy Administrator; George Kuprian, Assistant County Attorney; Don Theisen, Director of Public Works; Wayne Sandberg, Deputy Public Works Director; Ted Schoenecker, Transportation Planning Manager; Mike Rogers, Associate Planner; John Elholm, Parks Director; Kevin Corbid, Director of Property Records and Taxpayer Services; Steve Gransee, Division Manager, Property Records and Taxpayer Services; Lowell Johnson, Public Health and Environment; Amanda Goebel, Environmental Coordinator; John Freitag, Sr. Environmental Specialist; Sue Hedlund, Deputy Public Health and Environment Director; Dan Papin, Community Services Director; Harley Will, Financial Services Director; Barbara Fritsche, Information Technology Supervisor; Sheriff Bill Hutton; Chief Deputy Sheriff Mike Johnson; Deb McDonald, Management Analyst II; and Dave Brierley, Public Information Coordinator.

FEBRUARY 19, 2008 RRA MINUTES

Commissioner Pulkrabek moved to approve the February 19, 2008 Regional Railroad Authority meeting minutes. Commissioner Hegberg seconded the motion and it was adopted unanimously.

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL – 2030 TRANSIT MASTER STUDY

Arlene McCarthy, Director of Metropolitan Transportation Services at Metropolitan Council, presented the 2030 Transit Master Study. This study began in the summer of 2007 and updates the plan for a strengthened bus system; evaluation of corridors for potential transit investments; and examines land use issues affecting transit. They will update this analysis every four years. The bus plan development focuses on population and employment growth and considered factors that make transit attractive such

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as cost, travel time, and convenience. They looked at new routes and expanded coverage; increased frequency and hours of service; and integration with existing and planned transitways. The plan calls for increased service to existing routes to meet demand; add services to new park and rides; extend service beyond the Transit Taxing District; and use bus shoulders where available. Ms. McCarthy stated that the Forest Lake park and ride was started in early January. The highest ridership in one day was 350 rides and is doing very well. New in this plan is what they call long distance express service which is defined as routes outside the seven-county metro area. It is developed in coordination with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and is limited to routes with the highest potential for ridership outside the seven-county area. There is no commitment to funding, but opens coordination with collar counties. Potential long distance routes include Monticello, Buffalo, Faribault, Hudson, North Branch, and St. Cloud (Northstar).

Ms. McCarthy discussed the transitway corridors. They analyzed corridors in implementation, Northstar, Central, I-35W, and Cedar Avenue. They also used results of studies conducted by Regional Railroad Authorities for Southwest, Red Rock and Robert St. corridors. Local Regional Railroad Authorities, central cities and the Minnesota Department of Transportation helped identify 29 additional corridors for analysis. A commuter rail analysis was also done. Their conclusion was that no commuter rail corridor showed high or medium potential; there is no current regional data for commuter rail demand; Met Council and the Minnesota Department of Transportation will reexamine these corridors in four years, after Northstar is operating, when updated census and travel data is available; and, some corridors have potential for long-distance express bus service.

Ms. McCarthy listed the recommended corridor studies: Continue Implementation Studies on Southwest Corridor and Bottineau Corridor; begin Bus Rapid Transit on Central Avenue, Nicollet Avenue, Robert Street, Snelling Avenue, Chicago Avenue, West 7th Street, Broadway Avenue, East 7th Street, and I-494/American Boulevard; Initiate Corridor Studies for mode and alignment on I-35W North Corridor, TH 36/NE Corridor, I-94 East Corridor, and Rush Line; and Other Studies on Midtown Corridor: Study after SW complete; and Commuter rail: reexamine after Northstar begins. Future items will include: reexamine corridors and bus plan every four years with the Transportation Policy Plan;

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work to expand express bus network now to build demand in corridors in the future; and, if conditions change, accelerate work on affected corridors (i.e. high speed rail moved forward).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Regional Railroad Authority, Commissioner Stafford moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Hegberg and it was adopted unanimously. The Regional Railroad Authority adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Myra Peterson, Chair
Regional Railroad Authority

Attest:

James R. Schug
County Administrator

