

TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY + REGIONAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEES



Friday, December 2, 2022 | 10:00a

Omaha Public Library Milton Abrahams Branch, 5111 N 90th Street, Omaha

Minutes

In attendance:

TTAC Voting Members

Todd Pfitzer (City of Omaha)
Bryan Guy (City of Omaha)
Derek Miller (City of Omaha)
Eric Williams (PMRNRD)
Maurice Hinchey (NDOT District 2)
Ryan Huff (NDOT)
Michael Kleffner (City of Papillion)
Dan Kutilek (Douglas County)
Pat Dowse (City of La Vista)
Jason Kubicek (Sarpy County)
Dave Goedeken (City of Bellevue)

TTAC Non Voting Members

Krista Wassenaar (City of Omaha)
Kevin Carder (City of Omaha)
Matt Selinger (JEO)
Bart Pugh (Schemmer)
Jeremy Williams (HDR)
Damion Stern (NDOT District 2)
Adam Denney (FHU)
Jessica Smith (Benesch)
Ann Grober (City of Council Bluffs, CTC)
Rich McFall (Nebraska VR, CTC)
*Justin Luther (FHWA NE)
Lee Myers (AARP)
Katie Salerno
*Mark Stursma (City of Papillion)
*Scott Suhr (Iowa DOT)
Jolene Hayes

RPAC Voting Members

Meridith Dillon
Leland Jacobson
Ashley Rae Turner
Michaela Valentin
Bruce Fountain
Jeff Beiermann
Lynn Dittmer
Keith Station
Crystal Sierra
Ron Kohn
Chris Shewchuk

Guests

Jared Walker
Eva Roberts

MAPA

Court Barber (MAPA)
Michael Blank (MAPA)
*Jim Boerner (MAPA)
Christina Brownell (MAPA)
Lindsey Button (MAPA)
Josh Corrington (MAPA)
Sue Cutsforth (MAPA)
Isabelle Fleming (MAPA)
*Travis Halm (MAPA)
Laura Heilman (MAPA)
Mike Helgerson (MAPA)
Carlos Morales (MAPA)
Elizabeth Zeller (MAPA)

** Attended virtually. Voting members are not eligible to vote while attending virtually and do not count for quorum.*

Court Barber started the meeting at 10:03 am.

Action Items

For TTAC Approval

A. Approval of the Minutes from the October 21, 2022 meeting

No amendments were made. Maurice Hinchey (NDOT) moved to approve the minutes, Mike Kleffner (Papillion) seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TTAC Recommendations to MAPA's Board of Directors

B. Amendment 3 to the FY2023 Transportation Improvement Program

Court Barber presented the amendment, which includes changes to two NDOT projects and updates to Metro Transit's 5307 and 5339 programs.

MAPA requested a recommendation to approve this amendment to the Board of Directors. Maurice Hinchey moved to recommend approval of the amendment,, Mike Kleffner seconded. Motion carried.

For RPAC Approval

C. Approval of the Minutes from the October 7, 2022 meeting

RPAC did not have a quorum.

TTAC + RPAC Joint Recommendations to MAPA's Board of Directors

D. Formation of a Regional Funding Committee (RFC)

Court Barber presented the proposed makeup of the committee along with its powers and responsibilities.

MAPA sought a recommendation from both committees to the Board of Directors whether to pursue the formation of this committee.

Keith Station (City of Omaha) asked the reason for providing more decision making power to RPAC when their priority is not always transportation.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that it is because RPAC is focused on engagement and equity that MAPA wants to bring those voices to the table. MAPA doesn't see infrastructure funding as only technical transportation, even though that is an important part, but it is also an equity question.

Mike Helgersen (MAPA) added that transportation and land use decisions need to be made together. He said the context of a place is needed to provide transportation funding and that concepts of redevelopment and equity need to be incorporated. He continued that this is explicit in the MAPA Board's equity directive and that a broad group of people should be brought together while also keeping the committee small and effective; the infrastructure bill doesn't just talk about transportation, but also broader questions about equity.

Mike Kleffner (City of Papillion) commented that as transportation professionals he and others take in a broad range of understanding, such as environmental issues, the impact on the population. He asked how the transportation professionals are dropping the ball on this.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that MAPA is not trying to say that transportation professionals are doing a poor job, but that MAPA wants to bring in voices beyond planners and engineers. He said it is not that planners and engineers aren't trying their best, but it would be beneficial if other voices were brought in.

Mike Kleffner (City of Papillion) asked whether taking decision-making power away from professionals makes the process more political.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that everything is a political decision and that the goal is not taking away from technical people, but adding voices. He added that TTAC will have the most voting power.

Mike Kleffner (City of Papillion) stated he counts all non-TTAC members as having more seats on the proposed committee than TTAC members.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that he doesn't know specifically yet who all the at large and RPAC members will be, they could also be technical people.

Todd Pfitzer (City of Omaha) summarized his position on the proposed committee by emphasizing that serving on MAPA's committees is a privilege, that he does not feel it is overly burdensome, and that he wants to ensure TTAC understands that forming such a committee may make it difficult to fix the region's arterial streets. He classified Heartland 2050 as important work, but he is concerned that the effort focuses more on other forms of transportation and that commitments to people in West Omaha will be left out in the proposed process.

Rich McFall (Nebraska VR/CTC) commented about equity and equality and what the difference is, asking why the CTC has such limited voting power in the proposal.

Carlos Morales (MAPA) responded that MAPA is asking the committee representatives to remove the hat of working specifically for a committee, but think about it regionally; that they aren't just a representative member of CTC, but a member of the region, to improve the region. He added that they are inviting technical experts to these committees for a regional viewpoint.

Matt Selinger (JEO) commented that TTAC has been around for a long time and asked what has been MAPA's historical effort and process to bring TTAC around and engage on this topic of the RFC.

Court Barber (MAPA) replied that originally MAPA staff presented an early version of the RFC to TTAC, but did not get much feedback at the time; this is why it was brought to this meeting.

Mike Helgerson (MAPA) added that each time MAPA has done project selection, they have heard from our committees that they would want to see a change to our project selection process. He pointed out having multiple project selection meetings, and that's where the burden occurs. Community members would not want to join in due to the burden. He said MAPA sees this as an opportunity to make MAPA's transportation decision making process better, and this conversation has been going on for years.

Court Barber (MAPA) asked the committee to focus on the concept of the committee itself for today. He said for the structure of the committee, they want to involve everyone and what he is asking from the two committees today is to decide if MAPA should move forward with a combined committee.

Leland Jacobson (Bellevue Planning Commission) asked about a disconnect between the original committee and the board of directors.

Court Barber (MAPA) That's just a mistake.

Leland Jacobson (Bellevue Planning Commission) asked about this finance committee, shouldn't this be tied into this new project selection committee.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that it is a different committee for other MAPA operations.

Leland Jacobson (Bellevue Planning Commission) commented that if you have a well defined process, it really shouldn't matter who the members are.

Bryan Guy (City of Omaha) commented that the current project selection process requires approval by the board of directors and a public committee period on MAPA TIP items, so there are already steps along the way where non-transportation people can provide their input. He asked why add another layer with RPAC when this already exists. He also said one of the goals of the current project selection process is to take some of the subjectivity and politics out of it.

Meredith Dillon (Front Porch Investments) asked what opportunities will be lost by making a change.

Court Barber (MAPA) replied that it's not crystal clear how much more competitive this new change will be, but by including new voices and diversity, this could be seen as positive by the Federal Government, and give MAPA a leg up in some of the selection criteria.

Meredith Dillon (Front Porch Investments) added, as a follow up, bringing in new voices doesn't always mean they aren't adding in other technical and professional voices from RPAC.

Bruce Fountain (City of La Vista) commented that he agrees with the perspective of adding more voices and that the group is focusing too much on how many votes the different committees get; not to mention there are technical people on the RPAC side.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that if the presentation made it confusing, there are technical people on the RPAC committee.

Eric Williams (PMRNRD) asked if the transportation alternative program funding would remain.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded yes.

Eric Williams (PMRNRD) asked about project sponsor eligibility.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that the eligible project sponsor list doesn't change and the various cities in the MAPA region would still submit projects.

Carlos Morales (MAPA) added that federal regulations would still apply.

Court Barber (MAPA) added that TTAC doesn't submit projects; it's made up of jurisdictions that can submit projects. ProSeCom makes a recommendation to TTAC, TTAC makes a recommendation to the board. TTAC would still make recommendations on whether to approve a final TIP program.

Keith Station (City of Omaha) thanked MAPA staff for putting all of this information together. He said he appreciates the discourse, since talking about equity can be difficult, and feels political, but it's important to talk about that. He said equality and equity aren't the same thing; one is about being the same, the other is about fairness. He said he thinks the purpose of the RFC isn't to take power away from TTAC but to unify our voices and bring people in, pointing to the MAPA Board's equity resolution.

Rich McFall (Nebraska VR/CTC) suggested changing the voting structure based on the funding source.

Court Barber (MAPA) said this is the type of comments he likes to hear.

Ann Grober (City of Council Bluffs & CTC) commented that people are professional, they have their knowledge, she is just worried this single committee would be bogged down; she knows this would make things simpler for MAPA, but she just sees this new project selection committee getting bogged down.

Court Barber (MAPA) thanked everyone for the discussion and said since RPAC doesn't have a quorum only TTAC can vote on the item.

Mike Kleffner made a motion to recommend against forming the RFC.

Todd Pfitzer (City of Omaha) asked if the vote could be delayed.

Court Barber (MAPA) replied that is possible, but the committees would have to vote separately as MAPA would not be able to bring everyone together again, but it's up to TTAC if they want to wait for a month.

Eric Williams (PMRNRD) asked if the item can be brought up in the future if TTAC votes against it now.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded yes.

Bruce Fountain (City of La Vista) asked who would make the decision if TTAC votes no and RPAC votes yes.

Court Barber (MAPA) responded that the board of directors has the final say as this is just a recommendation.

Eric Williams (PMRNRD) said he sees no reason to vote a motion not to recommend until the group has more information. He asked that the motion on the table be very clear on what is being asked.

Mike Kleffner (City of Papillion) said he is voting to not recommend the RFC.

Mike Kleffner moved to recommend not forming a Regional Funding Committee, second by Todd Pfitzer. Motion carried, 7-3 vote.

Discussion Items

E. MAPA Certification Review Report

Justin Luther with FHWA Nebraska presented the report from MAPA's review.

Eric Williams (PMRNRD) asked about whether FHWA Nebraska's recommendations would make MAPA more competitive in funding.

Justin Luther (FHWA Nebraska) responded that it would.

F. Regional Housing Affordability

Meridith Dillon and Eva Roberts with Front Porch Investments presented about how their organization is working to support affordable housing options in our region.

Eric Williams (PMRNRD) noted how many of those who voiced descent against changing the project selection process left before hearing the equity recommendations from the presentations by FHWA Nebraska and Front Porch Investments, and that equity should be taken seriously.

Krista Wassenaar (Omaha Public Works) and Meredith Dillon (Front Porch Investments) Discussed the specifics of what Front Porch Investments meant by a home.

G. Traffic Data Presentation

Josh Corrigan from MAPA provided a brief overview of the 2019-2020 Traffic Reports.

Eric Williams (PMRNRD) and Josh Corrigan (MAPA) briefly discussed the specifics of the data behind the 2019-2020 Traffic Reports.

H. Additional Business

Laura Heilman ended the meeting at 12:01 am.

Future Meetings & Events

- **MAPA Board of Directors: Thursday, December 8, 2022**
- **Coordinated Transit Committee: January 18, 2023**
- **Transportation Technical Advisory Committee: January 20, 2023**
- **Regional Planning Advisory Committee: February 3, 2023**

*Meeting Quorum: The presence of ten (10) members of TTAC at an officially called meeting shall constitute a quorum.
The participation of two thirds of the membership of voting members of the Regional Planning Advisory Committee shall constitute a quorum.
The vote of a simple majority plus one of members present shall decide questions brought before the Committee.*