



Issue Brief: Monitoring Report 2.10 External Relations

Meeting: Board of Directors

Date: October 19, 2017

Agenda Item #3b3

Recommended Action(s):

- Each board member: complete survey by Monday, October 9.
- Service Committee: develop recommendation for board to accept/not accept Monitoring Report

Relevant Board Policies: *Policy 4.4: Monitoring CEO Process, Appendices A, B, C.*

Summary: Staff prepared the Monitoring Report for *Policy 2.10: External Relations*, per the draft calendar.

Background:

Monitoring Reports are a key Policy Governance tool to assess organizational/CEO performance in achieving Ends (1.0) within Executive Limitations (2.0). The recommended Monitoring Process is:

1. CEO sends Monitoring Report and survey link to all board members on before due date
2. All board members complete survey on acceptability of Monitoring Report, looking particularly for two things in the Monitoring Report:
 - a. A reasonable interpretation of the policy
 - b. Evidence of compliance with the reasonable interpretation
3. Committee reviews survey results and develops recommendation to accept/not accept Monitoring Report
4. At Board meeting, board accepts Monitoring Report through majority vote (or if not acceptable, determines next steps)

Impacts of Recommended Action(s): Governance: perform key Policy Governance process

Attachments:

- Monitoring Report on 2.10 External Relations
- [Survey Link](#)

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Reviewed by: Matt Carpenter

Approved by: Matt Carpenter

Date: 10/5/2017

TheRide

2.10 External Relations

Monitoring Report

Period: September 1, 2016 – September 1, 2017

Date of Report: October 5, 2017

Service Committee Review: October 11, 2017

Board Meeting: October 19, 2017

TheRide board;

In accordance with the Board's Policy Manual; I present the October Monitoring report on **Executive Limitation Policy 2.10: External Relations**. This report consists of internal report information from staff.

Though these policies were not all in affect during the previous year, I have assembled this report as if they were (where feasible). Please note, this is a work in progress and some interpretations and metrics still need more development as we develop strategic plans and data streams.

I certify that the information is true and complete.

Matt Carpenter,
CEO
Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority

Policy being monitored:

POLICY TITLE: <i>External Relations</i>	Report p.
2.10 In order to facilitate the continued success of AAATA and its achievement of Ends, the CEO shall not operate without creating collaborative, strategic relationships with external stakeholders.	3
Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, the CEO shall not:	
2.10.1 Ignore opportunities for collaboration for the community benefit.	4
2.10.2 Ignore opportunities to promote multi-modal solutions, transit-supportive land development, or first mile/last mile considerations whether internally or to outside decision makers.	5
2.10.3 Fail to develop relationships with community stakeholders, including elected officials, which contribute to community support for the AAATA.	6
2.10.4 Fail to reasonably engage riders, residents, and stakeholders when considering material changes to services, programs, fares, or transit facilities.	7
2.10.5 Fail to operate in a publicly transparent manner.	8

#	<i>Policy Text</i>	CEO Interpretation	Compliance
2.10	In order to facilitate the continued success of AAATA and its achievement of Ends, the CEO shall not operate without creating collaborative, strategic relationships with external stakeholders.	<p>The CEO is required to foster, create and encourage relationships that advance the Ends of the AAATA by working with outside parties to leverage resources, coordinate activities, achieve economies of scale, or realizing other mutual benefits.</p> <p>However, the CEO is also expected to exercise discretion and judgment in choosing which opportunities and relationships to pursue, to what degree, and at what cost. Truly collaborative arrangements should at least provide a reasonable cost/benefit, not harm the AAATA, and help advance the AAATA's Ends.</p> <p>This is more fully elaborated on in the subpolicies.</p>	In Compliance

Evidence and Data:

See subpolicies

#	Policy Text	CEO Interpretation	Compliance
2.10.1	...the CEO shall not... Ignore opportunities for collaboration for the community benefit.	<p>Opportunities to work with partners in the community for the benefit of the AAATA or a broader constituency should be given serious consideration and not arbitrarily dismissed. However, as noted above, the CEO is expected to use discretion and judgement when considering potential opportunities, particularly regarding fit with Ends, needs, and resources; and is not required to agree to any and all potential opportunities. The CEO shall ensure AAATA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is proactively open to opportunities through active membership in key community groups and the scanning of the transportation environments • And provides sincere consideration of reasonable suggestions 	In Compliance

Participation in Key Community Groups: While not evidence of successful collaborations per se, AAATA participation in such groups is often a necessary component of creating. In the monitoring period, participation included, but was not limited to:

- *Transportation:* Project-specific groups, Wash. Area Transportation Study, RTA Provider’s Advisory Council, Transportation Coordinating Council, Ann Arbor’s Transportation Commission
- *Key beneficiary groups:* AAATA’s Local Advisory Council, Barrier Busters, Senior Leader Meetings
- *Pertinent Issues:* Eastern Leaders’ Group, Ann Arbor Ypsilanti Chamber, SPARK, Ann Arbor Public School’s Blue Ribbon Committee, Ann Arbor’s Climate Action Partnership, Ann Arbor Economic Development Forum

Transportation Sector Scanning: In addition to formal groups, AAATA staff actively search for opportunities for potential collaboration/community benefits. Publications/conferences/webinars expose staff to best practices and innovative ideas from other communities.

Genuinely Consider Suggestions from owners, beneficiaries, stakeholders: Staff maintain active and passive means of soliciting suggestions, including seeking input on planning projects and service/program changes, and incorporating them when feasible/appropriate. AAATA has several mechanisms for suggestions (phone call, website, community events) on service, bus stops, programs, etc. Stakeholders often approach staff with suggestions. Ideas are documented and given serious, honest consideration.

Results: Ideas range greatly in size. I would like to highlight a few fruitful collaborations:

- *Social services:* Over 40 organizations partner with AAATA to help their clients with transportation information and applications for AAATA’s ARide, FareDeal, and SeniorRide programs.
- *Adopt a Stop:* AAATA partners with at least 98 [local sponsors](#) (families, land owners, institutions, etc.) to pick up litter around a bus stop and to keep the surrounding areas clean.
- *Transportation Demand Management:* The AAATA and DDA are jointly responsible for the successful GetDowntown program, which comprises about 10% of AAATA fixed route ridership.
- *Transportation Network Improvements:* AAATA and local governments have improved dozens of bus stops and pedestrian networks by incorporating them proactively into upcoming road projects. In select occasions, we assist with funding for road improvements that benefit AAATA customers and operations.
- *Upcoming Projects:* The FY2018 Budget includes two projects suggested by external parties: exploration of bus service on US-23 and assistance with development of a Ypsilanti railroad platform. AAATA is working with partners regarding bike share, including joint funding.

#	Policy Text	CEO Interpretation	Compliance
2.10.2	...the CEO shall not...ignore opportunities to promote multi-modal solutions, transit-supportive land development, or first mile/last mile considerations whether internally or to outside decision makers.	<p>The CEO shall take all reasonable opportunities to publicize, champion, or further the progress of the listed objectives.</p> <p>The CEO is expected to use discretion and judgement when considering potential opportunities, and is not expected to pursue all such opportunities regardless of context.</p>	In compliance. Opportunity to develop further.

Evidence and Data:

For many years AAATA Planning staff have informally and formally promoted many opportunities of this nature (through specific transit projects, project site reviews for local municipalities, and participation in local plans like Ann Arbor’s Transportation Plan, Climate Action Plans, etc.) and I am confident that we have not “ignored” reasonable opportunities.

One current example: AAATA is now leading efforts of a local partnership (City of Ann Arbor, DDA, UM) to maintain the existing bikeshare program.

However, I believe this policy, along with Ends, presents us with an occasion to more confidently and publicly promote these opportunities with decision makers and the public. I will be working with our Planning staff over the next year to develop a strategy.

#	Policy Text	CEO Interpretation	Compliance
2.10.3	...the CEO shall not...Fail to develop relationships with community stakeholders, including elected officials, which contribute to community support for the AAATA.	<p>The CEO shall ensure that the AAATA establishes appropriate relationships that help the AAATA meet policy and program objectives, maintain financial and political support, and cultivate a positive reputation. Depending on the circumstances, such connections may best be accomplished by staff, the CEO themselves, or even Board members.</p> <p>The AAATA must be known; and seen as approachable, trustworthy, effective, and reliable by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elected leaders and administrators, and pertinent staff of member and POSA municipality, county, region, state, and federal governments. • Other major partners (e.g. UM) • Key organizations (e.g. see 2.10.1) • Members of the public we encounter through active and passive means. <p>[Though riders are essential stakeholders, I will cover them in the Monitoring Report for Policy 2.1 Treatment of Riders]</p>	Likely compliant, however data not yet available.

Evidence and Data:

While I believe we have a largely positive reputation and relationships, I will be working on a way to measure this over the next year.

#	Policy Text	CEO Interpretation	Compliance
2.10.4	...the CEO shall not... Fail to reasonably engage riders, residents, and stakeholders when considering material changes to services, programs, fares, or transit facilities.	<p>When changes are planned, the CEO will proactively seek outside involvement by ensuring that reasonable opportunities for engagement exist, particularly among those most likely to be impacted. The efforts will be sincere efforts to enhance agency decisions via feedback, not merely publicizing planned changes. As fitting for an engagement, staff will develop a communication plan, and use a variety of methods including information on buses, in the RideGuide, on the website, public meetings, soliciting suggestions, social media, alerts, and others as appropriate. We regularly scan the communications environment to optimize our techniques as we are highly aware that people use a wide, non-universal, range of communications.</p> <p>Particularly: For service and fare changes, staff will follow the <i>Public Input Policy for Service and Fare Changes</i>, which describes levels/types/timing of engagement needed, scaled with the degree of change being considered: major, minor, adjustment.</p> <p>For transit facilities; staff incorporate community/rider engagement when planning new or changing buildings or major facilities that will be used by the public.</p> <p>Note: the Federal Transit Administration requires that we have these types of procedures. The <i>Public Input Policy for Service and Fare Changes</i> is formally incorporated into our 2014 Title VI plan.</p>	Partial compliance.

Evidence and Data:

Almost all material changes to services, programs, fares, or facilities included reasonable opportunities for engagement in compliance with our *Public Input Policy*. In the monitoring period, staff have developed communication plans and held public engagement efforts for major and minor changes, and transit facilities, including:

- August 2017 Service Changes
- Ypsilanti Transit Center Planning (included City of Ypsilanti planner in RFP process; planned community/rider outreach later in project)
- Vanpool program updates

However, the start-up of the Ypsilanti Township Express service was delayed from October until January after it became apparent that there had been a miscommunication between the AAATA and Ypsilanti Township officials. It seems that there had been an honest misunderstanding regarding fares. Rather than proceed with an October start-up, we deferred the start-up until January to allow time to re-engage with our stakeholders. While the initial engagement may have been incomplete, the agency’s response reaffirmed the commitment to stakeholder engagement. We will also be working to ensure there are no such reoccurrences in the future.

#	Policy Text	CEO Interpretation	Compliance
2.10.5	The CEO shall not... Fail to operate in a publicly transparent manner.	AAATA must be clear and forthright about how it operates and will use the Sunshine Review's "transparency checklist" to measure (and improve).	In compliance.

Evidence and Data:

The Sunshine Review, a non-profit dedicated to state and local government transparency developed a [now-widely-used 10-point checklist](#) to help create a more open government and affirmatively disclosure of key information of interest to the public. We perform reasonably well, but there are areas we could consider improving. I would like to discuss with staff and board about what information would help us be sufficiently transparent.

Parameter	AAATA performance
Budgets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Current budget ✓ Previous budgets
Open meeting laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Notices for public meetings of board ✓ Board Minutes ✓ Current and past Board Packets
Elected officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Names of Board members x Contact information
Administrative officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Names of Executive Staff ✓ Contact information
Applications/Forms/key data available on- line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ADA, FareDeal applications ✓ Lost and Found form ✓ Suggestion/Complaint form ✓ Transit data (GTFS and real-time API)
Audits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Current audit ✓ Previous years' audits
Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Current RFPs posted ✓ Instructions and information site x Awarded contracts
Lobbying	x We belong to MPTA and APTA, and dues are part of the annual budget, but have not posted this information online.
Public records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ FOIA process ✓ Contact information
Taxes	x Though included in budgets and plans, we have not had a webpage on tax rates.