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Collaboration in Fighting Traffic Congestion:
A Study of Minnesota's Urban Partnership Agreement

Final Report

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16. Abstract (Limit: 200 words)

The Twin Cities metropolitan area was selected to participate in a federal transportation initiative called the Urban Partnership program. This required the formation of a multi-agency collaboration of transportation-focused groups in the Twin Cities area. This collaboration – including the external forces affecting it, the internal processes, structures, and competencies that allowed it to operate, and its accountability mechanisms – is the focus of this analysis. Confirming lessons found in the collaboration literature, the Minnesota UPA is a complex assembly of human (individuals and relationships) and non-human (technologies, artifacts, laws, and procedures) elements; therefore, it is not an easy answer to hard problems but a hard answer to hard problems. The research highlights some new findings. Most notably: the role of technology; linkages connecting high-level federal policymaking to local, operational implementation details; emphasis on multiple roles played by sponsors, champions, neutral conveners, process designers, and technical experts; importance of specific competencies; the role of rules and routines as drivers of collaboration; and the importance of spatial and temporal organizational ambidexterity. It is important to note that the work of this collaboration thus far has been virtually invisible to the public, but that will change in the upcoming stages of UPA implementation.

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Executive Summary

In August 2007, the Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul) metro area was selected to participate in a federal transportation initiative called the Urban Partnership program. The process leading up to this selection, along with the planning and implementation work afterward, required the formation of a multi-agency collaboration of transportation-focused groups in the Twin Cities area. This collaboration – including the external forces affecting it, the internal processes, structures, and competencies that allowed it to operate, and its accountability mechanisms – is the focus of this analysis. The research concentrates on the period from late 2006 through June 2008.

After introducing pertinent background information surrounding the federal initiative, we go on to explain the development of an Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA) in the Twin Cities before describing our research methodology. The research for this report is guided by a conceptual framework developed by Bryson, Crosby, and Stone in 2006. The analysis itself unfolds in four main sections: initial conditions, process and structure, leadership and competencies, and outcomes and accountabilities. In each of these sections, we provide insight into the dynamics of the UPA collaboration in its attempt to plan for and implement a major transportation initiative in the Twin Cities.

Our research confirms a number of lessons found in the literature on collaborations, including that a collaboration on the scale of the Minnesota UPA is a very complex assembly of human (individuals and relationships) and non-human (technologies, artifacts, laws and procedures) elements, and that a collaboration is not an easy answer to hard problems but a hard answer to hard problems. Our research also highlights some relatively new findings. Most notable of these are: the important role of technology; linkages connecting high-level federal policymaking to local, operational implementation details; an emphasis on multiple roles played by sponsors, champions, neutral conveners, process designers and technical experts; the importance of specific competencies; the role of rules and routines as drivers of collaboration; and the importance of spatial and temporal organizational ambidexterity.

Finally, it is important to note that the work of this collaboration thus far has been virtually invisible to the public; however, this will change in the upcoming stages of UPA implementation.

Chapter 1
Introduction

In August 2007, five urban regions in the U.S. were selected to participate in a path-breaking federal transportation initiative. Known as the Urban Partnership program, the initiative supplied approximately $1.1 billion for an integrated transit, highway pricing, technology, and telecommuting strategy aimed at reducing traffic congestion in major urban areas.

The initiative was path-breaking because it broke down normal programmatic silos in the federal transportation system, bypassed typical funding procedures, and directed unprecedented levels of funding toward integrated urban transportation strategies. Considerable credit for the Urban Partnership program can be given to a group of policy entrepreneurs at the national, state, and local levels. Additionally, the money for the program became available because of a political shift in the U.S. Congress away from earmarking.

This report will focus on the development of the program at the national level and on one of the regions, the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area of Minnesota [referred to from this point forward as the Twin Cities metro area], which secured an Urban Partnership Agreement (UPA). The report begins with a narrative description of the development of the Urban Partnership program, Minnesota's application process, and the work of the Minnesota UPA partners since the award was received in August 2007 through June 2008. Subsequent sections cover the research team and methodology, findings about key aspects of the UPA collaboration in Minnesota, and conclusions and implications for transportation policy, planning, and implementation, and collaboration more generally.

Chapter 2
Background Information

In this section we cover the development of the Urban Partnership Program and the process of developing the Minnesota proposal.

Development of the Urban Partnership Program

By the 1960s economists were applying their analytic tools to the traffic congestion that was beginning to plague major U.S. urban centers. They viewed the highway system as a classic public good that was being over-consumed in particular locations or at particular times because the roads were seemingly "free" to individual drivers. By pricing clogged highways, the economists reasoned, officials might reduce or better manage demand and even raise more revenue for transportation. The economists argued that some drivers would pay the fee, but others would take alternative, uncongested routes, vary their driving time, take the bus, or stay home. By the 1990s policy entrepreneurs were imagining integrated transportation systems that relied on congestion pricing, transit, a variety of advanced technologies, and telecommuting.

Unfortunately, from the 1960s through the 1990s, the idea of using pricing to manage traffic congestion had difficulty getting off the ground. Feasibility studies and a few pilot projects were tried, but elected officials and citizens generally weren't convinced that the approach would work. Citizens also objected to paying a fee for facilities they felt they had already funded through their taxes. By the late 1990s, however, congestion was getting even worse in many urban areas and a greater number of public officials were realizing they couldn't build their way out of the problem.

Within the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) during the George W. Bush Administration, Tyler Duvall, Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy, began working with a few other top transportation officials to move from researching congestion pricing to mounting larger-scale demonstrations. One of his key allies was Mary Peters, the then-administrator of the Federal Highway Administration, but there were a number of others in the department, including Patrick DeCorlis-Souza, who was a long time advocate of congestion pricing. Duvall tried to convince USDOT Secretary Norm Mineta to make congestion pricing a federal priority. Initially Mineta was skeptical but after a top-level strategy meeting in 2006 agreed to make the shift, and congestion pricing was included in the department's 2006 Strategy Statement. Duvall, Peters, and others then began designing a demonstration project to channel funding to major metropolitan areas that would tackle congestion with a set of complementary strategies called "the four T's": transit, technology, tolling, and telecommuting. The designers thought that integrating the four strategies would provide the biggest payoff in terms of congestion pricing. They were able to secure about $120 million in departmental discretionary funds to put into what became known as the Urban Partnership project. The project was designed specifically to demonstrate whether congestion pricing had a clear positive impact

Soon, however, a much larger amount of money became available when Congress suspended its usual practice of allowing members to earmark transportation funds. As a result, the pot for the project eventually grew to $1.1 billion. In addition, Mary Peters became U.S.

Secretary of Transportation, allowing her to champion the program from the top position in the department.

Minnesota's Proposal Process

Meanwhile, in Minnesota congestion pricing advocates, state and local officials, and transit supporters began discussing participation in the Urban Partnership program, officially announced at the end of 2006. Minnesota, after all, was the site of one of the country's most successful congestion-pricing experiments, in the form of the MnPASS project on I-394 – an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) application of dynamic pricing to a segment of I-394 in the western part of the Twin Cities metropolitan region.

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) officials decided, after some initial reluctance, to submit a proposal for an Urban Partnership grant in collaboration with the Metropolitan Council (MetCouncil), which operates the bus transit system for the Twin Cities region. Soon after, the Citizens League, a nonprofit public policy study group focusing on the Twin Cities, and the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies and Humphrey Institute's State and Local Policy Program featured the Urban Partnership program at their Road Pricing Summit on February 1, 2007. It was here that Rick Arnebeck from MnDOT announced the department would seek a UPA grant. Tyler Duvall also spoke at the summit.

MnDOT project leaders assembled an interagency Steering Committee to oversee the proposal development process. In addition to individuals from MnDOT and the MetCouncil, the committee over time grew to include local officials from highly congested traffic corridors, county officials, and University of Minnesota experts. MnDOT hired SRF Consulting Group to prepare the actual grant proposal. John Doan of SRF played a key role in the drafting process; he was a former MnDOT employee who had worked on congestion pricing while there.

Since the proposal was due at the end of April, 2007, the steering committee members knew that they had to obtain agreement among numerous state and local parties about the main components of the proposal. For example: In which locations would congestion pricing be applied? What form would it take? What would be the implications for bus service and routing? What technological innovations would be emphasized? What role would telecommuting play?

The committee organized a half-day workshop in March, 2007, and several subsequent meetings to help numerous stakeholders consider possible answers to these questions and develop a consensus about what should be included in the proposal. Additionally, project supporters worked behind the scenes to make sure that powerful legislators, the governor, and the lieutenant governor would support the form of tolling that would be included in the Minnesota UPA proposal.

At times, project advocates worried that disagreements about proposal components would sink the effort, but eventually the steering committee and outside advocates obtained enough consensus and compromise to be able to submit a strong proposal, focusing on the I-35W corridor and its connections with downtown Minneapolis. Minnesota's proposal was selected as one of the nine semifinalists announced by USDOT in June, 2007. The semi-finalists then were invited to present their plans to USDOT, and in August, 2007 the nine were winnowed to five

finalists – Twin Cities, Seattle, New York, San Francisco and Miami. (In the spring of 2008 New York would drop out and Los Angeles and Chicago would be added.)

The total UPA grant to Minnesota was $133.3 million to be matched with $55.2 million in funds from the state legislature and MetCouncil. In addition to approving the match, state legislators would also have to approve tolling authority for the I-35W corridor. The UPA partners had approximately one year to complete assembling all components of the implementation plan.

Once Minnesota was chosen as a finalist, the UPA Steering Committee went into implementation mode. It became a smaller, more operations-oriented group and MnDOT put Nick Thompson, operations manager, in charge of day-to-day oversight of the operational aspects of the project. At the same time, the MetCouncil transit officials and local government partners began working on their pieces of the project, while legislators and MnDOT senior officials worked on legislative strategy.

Below, in Table 1, is a summary of principal stakeholders in UPA.

Table 1. Key Organizational Stakeholders in Minnesota's UPA

Organization/Agency	Role in UPA
USDOT	Initiated UPA program and selected grant recipients; awarded $133.3 in funding to Minnesota
MnDOT	Primary partner
Metropolitan Council	Primary partner
Governor's office	Support for proposal and state matching funds
MN State Legislature	Approved $55.2 million match to federal money
University of Minnesota: Center for Transportation Studies and the State and Local Policy Program	Research; neutral conveners
I-35W Solutions Alliance	Organized local government officials along 35W corridor; pushed for 35W to be UPA's focus
Citizens League	Neutral conveners
Transit for Livable Communities	Involved local community group
Minnesota Valley Transit Authority	Involved suburban transit agency

Chapter 3
Research Team and Methodology

Three senior faculty members from the Public and Nonprofit Leadership Center at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs were selected by the Intelligent Transportation Systems Institute to study the Minnesota UPA process. ITS was especially interested in examining how technology and collaborative processes may be combined to achieve important transportation goals, catalyze institutional change, and create public value more generally.

The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework guiding the research is presented in John M. Bryson, Barbara C. Crosby, and Melissa M. Stone, "Designing and Implementing Cross-Sector Collaborations: Propositions from the Literature," *Public Administration Review*, 66, Special Issue, 2006a, pp. 44 – 55. The literature review on which the paper is based covered the fields of cross-sector collaboration, leadership studies, and network governance and resulted in a set of testable propositions. The propositions were operationalized in the form of a survey instrument and interview protocol. This framework was then tested by applying the survey instrument to more than twenty cross-sector collaboration case studies from various policy fields. Virtually all of the propositions were supported, although not all were strongly supported (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2006b). For the UPA study, additional attention was devoted to research and theory in the areas of congestion pricing, public financing of transportation policies, and technology implementation. The conceptual framework was supplemented at the midway point in the interview process by the identification of some tentative themes that appeared to be emerging from the interviews.

Definition of Collaboration. We believe that collaboration occurs in the midrange of how organizations work on public problems (Crosby & Bryson 2005, pp. 17 – 18). At one end of the continuum are organizations that have little to do with each other when it comes to public problems that are beyond their capabilities. At the other end are organizations that have merged into a new entity meant to address the public problem through merged authority and capabilities. In the midrange are organizations that share information, undertake coordinated activities, or develop shared-power arrangements such as collaborations in order to pool their capabilities to address the problem or challenge. We thus define collaboration as *the linking or sharing of information, resources, activities, and capabilities by organizations to achieve jointly an outcome that could not be achieved by the organizations separately* (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006a, p. 44). Note that by this definition the power sharing in a collaboration does not imply equal power, nor does it necessarily imply much in the way of shared interests and goals. Indeed, in our experience collaboration typically involves uneven power and mixed motives.

In contrast, other authors use a more restrictive definition of collaboration that requires extensive sharing of information, resources, and power; broad participation by all stakeholders; joint determination of goals and plans; and decision making by consensus; anything less doesn't count as "real' collaboration (e.g., Bentrup, 2001; Innes, 2004; Innes & Booher, 1999; Margerum, 2002). Based on case study research, these authors also argue arrangements that

have these characteristics demonstrate better performance in terms of outcomes than those that fall short on one or more dimensions. An important difference between their studies and ours is that theirs are focused on what Himmelman (2002) calls "community empowerment" situations; these typically are bottom-up exercises without clear mandates imposed from above and with looser timeframes. The UPA case, on the other hand, fits what Himmelman calls a "community betterment" situation, in which a goal, mandate for collaboration, and often a tight timeframe are imposed from above. We have chosen a looser definition of collaboration in order to encompass both situations.

General Expectations. Based on our conceptual framework, we began this research with a number of general expectations. Midway through our inteviews, the team added explicit attention to a number of interview themes that had emerged by that point. Our general expectations were shaped by our literature review and conceptual framework. That work identified five main categories of inquiry: initial conditions; process; structure; contingencies and constraints; and outcomes and accountabilities.

In terms of *initial conditions*, we expected the Minnesota UPA to have been formed in a somewhat turbulent environment; that sector failure would have preceded it; and that the UPA effort, if it were to succeed, would rely on powerful sponsors, a variety of linking mechanisms, formal and informal networks, and general agreement on the problem. We expected the UPA *process* to involve a variety of initial agreements and that the way those agreements were formulated would have an effect on the outcome of the process. The process would also depend on leadership of many kinds, including having powerful sponsors and champions. Success of the process would also depend on its legitimacy in the eyes of key stakeholders, the creation and maintenance of trust, and effective conflict management and planning.

We thought that the *structure* of the collaboration would depend on the context and system stability, that the structure likely would change over time, and that what had to happen "on the ground" would affect the structure. Governance was also a focus and we assumed that formal and informal governing mechanisms would influence the effectiveness of UPA. In terms of *contingencies and constraints*, we assumed that since the first phase of the UPA involved system-level planning, there would be extensive negotiation; we assumed there would be less negotiation in later phases. While we certainly did not expect equality in power sharing, we did expect that for the UPA process to succeed, there would have to be mechanisms and resources built in to deal with power imbalances and unexpected shocks. Finally, we expected there to be some conflicts in terms of competing institutional logics and that these would affect the process and outcomes of collaboration (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999).

In terms of *outcomes and accountability*, We assumed that the UPA would create public value to the extent that it built on individual organizations' self-interests and characteristic strengths, while minimizing or overcoming the organizations' characteristic weaknesses. Finally, we assumed that the UPA's success would depend in part on its having an accountability system that tracked inputs, processes, and outcomes; used a variety of methods for gathering, interpreting, and using data; and used a system that relied on strong relationships with key political and professional constituencies.

Additional Themes. At the midway point in our interviews, the team met to identify any tentative emerging themes. There were several. First, we were all struck by the relevance of John Kingdon's (1995) work on policymaking at the federal level. Kingdon identifies policy change as occurring when a public problem is linked with a viable solution and supportive politics in a window of opportunity. The fact that Kingdon's model had been used to help explain the success of the MnPASS project reinforced our view of the model's relevance (Hardy, 2007). Second, power was a pervasive theme, although power was of many different sorts and varied throughout the process. Third, we came to see collaboration and hierarchy as both occurring in the shadow of the other; each played a strong role. Fourth, in a related way we started to focus on spatial and temporal organizational ambidexterity. For example, sometimes fluidity and sometimes stability were required of the same organizations; sometimes informality and sometimes formality were required; and so on. To do both required a kind of ambidexterity, meaning doing different things in different places or at different times. Lastly, it was hard not to see the UPA process as a kind of "assembly" of human (people, groups, organizations) and non-human (roads, bridges, technologies, cars, buses) objects (Latour, 2005). The collaboration was obviously not just about people, but about objects and technologies as well.

Action Research. We have employed a form of action research methodology, partnering with key practitioners in the local transportation field to incorporate their unique perspectives into the research design and analysis. This included convening an Advisory Group comprised of leaders from each of the primary UPA partnership organizations. The Advisory Group responded to our questions surrounding the UPA. The Advisory Group also reviewed earlier drafts of this report, and will work with us to suggest and design venues to disseminate our findings to a larger audience of practitioners.

Examining Minnesota's experience with the UPA collaboration required going straight to the sources and interviewing those closely involved in advocacy, conceptualization, and management of the implementation of UPA in our state. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 26 individuals involved in Minnesota's UPA. A note-taker was present at each interview to record the interviewee's comments verbatim. Those interviewed were chosen using a snowball sampling technique. In selecting our sample we paid careful attention to gaining perspectives from individuals at multiple levels of government and with varying levels of responsibility and authority over the UPA implementation, including federal officials, state legislators, MnDOT and Metro Transit staff, policy advocates, and conveners of intermediary organizations and their participants [See Appendix A].

The interview protocol included questions related to the individual's background in the transportation field, the initial conditions leading up to the UPA collaboration, the process of decision-making, and the outcomes and accountability processes involved in this regional policy implementation [See Appendix B]. Verbatim notes from these interviews were imported into the qualitative analysis software program, QSR NVIVO version 7. A thematic coding structure was developed based on the original cross-sector collaboration framework, input from the Advisory Group, modified to reflect the emerging and cross-cutting themes from an initial analysis of interviews. NVIVO coding involves creation of a number of nodes (buckets) and sub-nodes (sub-buckets) that have names tied directly to the categories of search, in our case the categories that came directly from the conceptual framework [See Appendix C]. Researchers then allocated snippets of interview text to whichever node or sub-node most clearly reflected the content. The

software thus allowed us to conduct our qualitative analysis thematically by analyzing the information assigned to each node and sub-node. (We were also able to break down our thematic results into categories based on the characteristics of interview participants, such as their organizational affiliation or position in the hierarchy; but saw little additional explanatory power coming from this analysis.)

In addition, archival research on newspaper articles and other publications formed the basis of a secondary data collection effort; this review focused on capturing the story of UPA development and implementation as reported by local newspapers and publications in the recipient states, with particular emphasis on the legislative and political processes necessary for successful implementation of the UPA policy.

This study constitutes the beginning of a larger research effort. We hope to expand this research to a national scale over the course of the next year by studying two or three of the other UPA recipient sites using similar methodology, although not in as much depth. We will develop comparative case studies of these three to four total cases, allowing for an in-depth analysis of collaborative processes employed by actors involved in UPA across a range of communities.

Chapter 4
Analysis of Minnesota's UPA

Our analysis of the collaboration surrounding the Urban Partnership Agreement in Minnesota will follow four broad categories: initial conditions, structure and processes, leadership and competencies, and outcomes and accountabilities. Each of these broad topics is divided into subcategories, in which collaboration activities and characteristics are discussed in greater detail.

Initial Conditions

We consider the following categories of initial conditions: environmental turbulence and sector failure; driving and constraining forces; and direct antecedents.

Environmental Turbulence and Sector Failure. Analyses of collaborations and interorganizational relationships more generally have found that these are most frequent in turbulent environments – that is, environments that are both complex and dynamic (Emery and Trist, 1965; Thompson, 1967). Developing relationships with other organizations decreases uncertainty and increases stability by promoting exchanges of needed resources, including information, technology, and funding (Emery and Trist, 1965; Powell, 1990). In the case of the UPA, the turbulence in the environment concerned rapidly escalating traffic congestion, especially in the Twin Cities metro area, that defied traditional solutions. Over time, a broad array of constituencies had become alarmed by this public problem. For example, at the state level, transportation cleavages among rural, suburban, and urban constituencies were dissipating. Suburban constituencies (especially in first ring suburbs) were becoming more supportive of transit, thereby making support for something like the UPA more palatable to a Republican governor and transportation commissioner. In 2006 citizens passed a constitutional amendment to provide dedicated funding for roads, bridges, and transit, indicating a growing consensus that all modes were necessary to create needed transportation infrastructure. Business groups were key backers of the amendment, indicating a growing understanding among them of diverse transportation issues and their impact on the business community, as well as increased support for major changes.

There was also growing recognition that many previous attempts to solve this problem had failed. Organizations and groups seem more likely to engage in cross-sector collaboration when single-sector efforts to solve a public problem have failed (Bryson & Crosby, 2008). Several interviewees noted that legislators and government bureaucrats alike only were willing to consider use of a market-based tool (pricing) as a mechanism for combating congestion because all the usual methods (e.g., road construction and regulation of access) had failed.

Driving and Constraining Forces. More specifically, collaborations are fostered by driving forces and delimited by constraining forces external to the group itself (Sharfman, Gray & Yan, 1991). Table 2 presents a summary of major driving and constraining forces in the UPA environment.

Table 2. Driving and Constraining Forces

	Federal Level	**State Level**	**Regional/Local Level**	**Other**
Driving Forces	USDOT creates and funds UPA program. Program design necessitates multi-party collaboration Champions of pricing	MnDOT is powerful institutional player, and has national reputation as a transportation innovator. Powerful DOT Commissioner becomes supportive Powerful governor becomes supportive I-35W bridge collapse (perhaps) in later stages of the process	MetCouncil is powerful institutional player Presence of knowledgeable and credible conveners and researchers Twin Cities viewed as "smart" region nationally in Intelligent Transportation Systems	Key battles already fought and settled through successful MnPASS Project Availability of proven technology
Constraining Forces	Power of USDOT as authorizing and funding entity	MnDOT initially reluctant to pursue UPA Governor, DOT Commissioner, and legislature at times resistant		Short time frame for proposal submission

In the case of Minnesota's Urban Partnership Agreement, several driving forces came from the federal level. Most obvious was the USDOT's creation of the generously funded Urban Partnership initiative. They also insisted that congestion pricing, transit, technology, and telecommuting had to be included in the UPA package, thereby necessitating collaboration among various groups and agencies. Federal analysts also emerged as powerful champions of pricing – using an "economics frame" rather than an "engineering frame." The Democratic ascendance in Congress led to a rethinking of earmarking and ultimately gave USDOT authority for allocating a large sum of money that would previously have been earmarked. Additionally, USDOT champions – including Mary Peters, who had become Secretary of Transportation and thus was a champion turned sponsor – wanted to move quickly to spend the money before a new President took over in January 2009. The result was that powerful USDOT champions and a sponsor were able to develop a very generously funded program that was heavily focused on pricing and transit and forced local applicants to put together and implement proposals in a very short timeframe.

A driving force, however, can also have constraining aspects (Sharfman, Gray, & Yan, 1991) and that is also true with the UPA. The institutional arrangements that make the USDOT a

powerful player (especially because of its funding role) in state and local transportation policies also constrain the activities that transportation agencies can do on their own or collectively. For example, realistically Minnesota didn't have access to the kind of money the feds were putting on the table, and without the federal mandate would have found it quite difficult to develop as integrated a transportation solution as the UPA agreement represented.

Another possible driver was an August 2007 event – the collapse of the I-35W Bridge across the Mississippi in Minneapolis. This occurred just before Minnesota was named a finalist for a UPA. One interviewee said the I-35W disaster may have helped reduce controversy about UPA simply because it diverted media attention from the project, and may have made federal officials more ready to send money to Minnesota. The researchers and some interviewees speculated that the effect was to focus citizens' and policymakers' attention on transportation generally, and specifically on neglected maintenance of roads and bridges. Another effect may have been to increase enthusiasm for a federal project that sent significant new money for transportation, even if it wasn't about improving bridge safety.

Within Minnesota the power of USDOT and its regional offices is complemented (and partially offset) by other major power centers; these include MnDOT, the commissioner of transportation, the MetCouncil, and the governor. In MnDOT, the commissioner is quite powerful compared to similar positions in other state DOTs. The governor is an especially powerful player; he not only appoints the transportation commissioner and the members of the MetCouncil, but also determines their level of power. The MetCouncil experiences less concentrated power because its primary policy-shaping group, the Transportation Advisory Board, includes individuals from MnDOT and local governments in addition to members of the council. This allotment of power is unusual; one interviewee called the concentration of power in the governor's office, MnDOT and the MetCouncil "unbelievable," in comparison with other states.

Other players that hold some level of power are the Minnesota state legislature (and chairs of transportation committees), the Minnesota roads lobby, transportation policy advocacy groups (such as the I-35W Solutions Alliance and Transit for Livable Communities), and transportation researchers and analysts, especially at the University of Minnesota. In the case of Minnesota's UPA, what was called by one researcher "an alignment of the stars" (meaning the convergence of the driving forces, general agreement on the problem, generally supportive politics, and a workable policy solution) prompted almost all of these powerful, inter-linked players to move toward participating in this intensive effort to tackle traffic congestion. As already noted, a complementary alignment also occurred at the federal level within USDOT and in Congress.

One cannot underestimate the importance of the MnPASS project on I-394 as a driver of the UPA collaboration. Through the MnPASS process, many key battles around pricing had already been fought and settled and forums for including a broad range of stakeholder voices were established. For example, MnPASS-related convening activities built support among local officials (through a so-called "grasstops" approach) and educated I-394 users about congestion pricing and its benefits. Workshops, focus groups and other forums helped get across the idea that adding "free" traffic lanes to deal with congestion only attracted more commuters and ultimately resulted in the same or worse levels of congestion. MnDOT set up a communications

task force including local officials, residents in the I-394 corridor and Carol Flynn (former legislator and chair of Transit for Livable Communities). Academic advocates at the Humphrey Institute and Intelligent Transportation Systems program at the University of Minnesota helped organize these activities. Ultimately, Republican and Democratic legislators alike were persuaded to approve the MnPASS project. Even pressure from State Senator Dick Day (R-Owatonna) for an end to the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on I-394, may have helped, since this put pressure on advocates of reducing peak demand to come up with a better solution: a HOT, or high-occupancy toll, lane. The HOT lane was dynamically priced, meaning that the toll varied based on the amount of congestion. MnPASS also helped defuse the argument that congestion pricing was unfair to low-income commuters because studies showed no negative effect.

Several interviewees referred to technology as its own driving force as a solution, motivator, and facilitator. For example, technological advances made "dynamic pricing" possible as a solution to traffic congestion and allowed motorists to use transponders rather than toll booths to pay. This technology has been available for several years now. One said it this way: The technology facilitates "road pricing without significant transaction costs. …it's the pricing of access to a facility at a given time of day." He was among the interviewees who mentioned that technology helps improve transit services. He noted that it allows "buses to travel with shorter headways" and helps eliminate "the stigma that people associate with bus rapid transit." Making transit service more predictable and reliable (by, for example, providing "real-time" traveler information) enhances the attractiveness of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and "thereby creates a virtuous cycle for transit – the more appeal, the more demand for it, the greater the frequency with which it's provided, the better the economies of scale, the lower the cost per traveler [and therefore the more demand for it]."

Minnesota's application may have been helped by the Twin Cities metro area being, in one interviewee's words, "a very smart region in terms of ITS [Intelligent Transportation Systems]." He noted that this type of experience prepares the UPA partners in the state to make wise choices about vendors and the like. (Note that "smart" in the quotation can have two meanings: existing installation of "smart technology" and the ability to make smart choices; both meanings appear apt.)

Another interviewee noted that technological capability is often ahead of policy and that the UPA project is bringing technology and policy together. Technology, in other words, was not the bottleneck in adopting congestion pricing; politics and policy were. Combining technology with policy and supportive politics brings "excitement to the partnership" and "bring[s] people to the table." He speculated that people are attracted by the possibility of being innovators, because "It's exciting to implement new technology." The UPA was therefore a technology-assisted motivating or attractor force. One interviewee said that the clear benefits that would result for the metro area were an incentive for participation. He added that an additional incentive for MnDOT was "another opportunity to be cutting edge."

Communications technology was also important, though less visible, to the success of the project. Telephone conversations obviously were important, but one interviewee also noted that without email and the ability to include attachments, the proposal could not have been done on time. Technology therefore also acted as a facilitator of the collaboration.

The success of MnPASS, along with MnDOT's national reputation for implementing advanced technologies for freeway management and for improving safety (and just perhaps the I-35W bridge collapse) convinced federal officials that Minnesota was a good candidate for UPA. Our interviewees indicated that this confidence in MnDOT's capacity overrode USDOT's expectation that the UPA projects would include pricing of existing lanes, rather than turning shoulders into lanes and then pricing them. In turn, the ability of Minnesota's UPA proposal to avoid pricing existing lanes, and instead to have shoulders become lanes and to price them, made it easier for the governor to support the proposal.

Despite these significant drivers of the UPA collaboration, there were several strong constraining forces. MnDOT's top leadership and the governor were apparently skeptical about congestion pricing and a UPA application. The resistance, however, had been diminished by the success of the MnPASS project, and, as noted, suburban constituencies (especially in first ring suburbs) were becoming more supportive of transit and therefore transit became more acceptable to a Republican governor and transportation commissioner. An interviewee argued that USDOT's creation of the Urban Partnership initiative also helped convince MnDOT that tolling should be part of a comprehensive approach (combined with the other three T's), "especially when making improvements on existing infrastructure." A threat by the Legislature to submit its own UPA proposal if MnDOT did not also prompted MnDOT to act.

Additionally, the trucking association and state and national AAA had in the past opposed pricing highways. They were concerned, said one interviewee, that once "tolling got a foothold it would spread across the state and the country and where would it stop?" The careful work of local value-pricing advocates in including these skeptics in various forums softened their opposition.

Some legislators did not necessarily oppose shoulder pricing or other policy aspects of UPA, but disliked the idea of targeting such a large amount ($55 million) in state funds to one corridor. State Senator Steve Murphy (D – Red Wing), though, said most legislators from other corridors could see benefits to their areas if traffic congestion improved in other parts of the metro. Legislators in other corridors could go along with this project if they were assured their areas would have priority for future transportation funding.

Another major constraining force was the UPA requirements laid out by USDOT: the constrained timelines, the emphasis on the "4 T's," significant required state matching funds, and the competitive application process. This meant that only states that had "their act together" were well-situated to apply successfully for the program. It put a premium on previous success with tolling, transit, and smart technology. Because federal funds were not included for telecommuting, this "T" would necessarily have lower priority because funding would have to come from the state match. On the other hand, the short timeline and the large budget also provided an incentive for state public officials, advocates, and transportation experts to resolve their differences over proposed projects speedily.[1]

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[1] Less frequently mentioned driving factors included the scarcity of government funds for transportation, which made a large pot of new money especially attractive; the concentrated effect of the UPA proposal, which decreased awareness amongst the general public that could undermine support of public officials in unaffected areas; and predictions for even greater growth in the metro areas of the Twin Cities. Less frequently mentioned constraining factors included a solo driving culture and the fragmentation of authority for transportation infrastructure.

Direct Antecedents – Initial Agreement on Problem, Conveners, and Pre-existing Networks. General agreement on the problem to be solved is an essential antecedent condition for collaborations (Gray, 1989; Waddock, 1986). Interviewees unanimously cited traffic congestion as the problem the UPA was designed to solve. One interviewee referred to the "rapid and substantial increase in traffic congestion." Despite general agreement, however, interviewees presented multiple ways of framing the problem to which the UPA was a solution. Different people focused on safety and health concerns; lost economic opportunity; commuter frustration; the lack of adequate transit or other services; inadequate integration and communication among government agencies, units, and levels; hidden costs of transportation; inadequate use of data to shape federal policies; taxpayer resistance to paying higher gas taxes or tolls; low-density development; and unfamiliarity with alternatives to the status quo. The differences in problem framing could have been significant detractors to the UPA collaboration; however, it appears that the influence of sponsors, conveners, and pre-existing relationships permitted the collaboration to move forward, despite these differences. It is also possible that the openness of the problem definition helped build a large and strong coalition, since it allows for many different interests to be accommodated.

Powerful sponsors and neutral respected conveners can provide legitimacy for a collaboration and bring potential partners together (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006a). In this case, the endorsement of top transportation officials gave the Urban Partnership project legitimacy. MnDOT's hesitance about applying for an Urban Partnership grant was overcome by internal champions as well as pressure from outside pricing and transit advocates like the Citizens League and legislators. Furthermore, respected groups like the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies and the State and Local Policy Program at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs had brought many of the participants together in forums and research projects in the past.

Pre-existing networks among organizations are an important predictor of whether they will come together effectively to form a collaboration. Such relationships can supply a good portion of the trust that many observers deem vital to well-functioning collaborations (Hudson, Hardy, Henwood et al, 1999; Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Several of our interviewees cited existing working relationships as a key reason the Minnesota's UPA application process was successful. One interviewee noted, "Ten years ago you couldn't have done [the UPA]; there are established ways of working together now." This does not mean, of course, that the working relationships were completely harmonious. Interviewees did mention occasional interpersonal difficulties, but generally the characterization of the relationships was distinctly positive.

What is important to highlight with the UPA collaboration is that these prior relationships existed vertically, down through levels of government, and horizontally across public and private entities. At the federal level, the formation of the urban congestion working group following the offsite meeting held by the Secretary of Transportation's office was instrumental in developing the Urban Partnership initiative. In turn, Federal transportation officials knew and respected advocates and public agency people in Minnesota, though this project was different than previous arrangements in that the UPA partners worked directly with the USDOT secretary's office during the application process. MnDOT and MetCouncil had formed Team Transit previously in order to coordinate transit-related projects, while the MetCouncil chair Peter Bell has been involved in the MetCouncil/MnDOT cooperation (and he had to sign off on the UPA

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application). Brian Kary of MnDOT, who played a key role in putting the proposal together, had worked with local government professionals on integrated transportation corridor projects, and the regional Federal Highway Administration office had worked with many of the local partners previously. The Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) had always worked with Metro Transit to coordinate bus services and had collaborated with University of Minnesota individuals on bus navigation technology.

At the same time, a number of new people in the agencies were involved. For example, Bernie Arseneau from MnDOT, the State Traffic Engineer and Chair of the UPA Project Steering Committee, was fairly unfamiliar with transit issues prior to his involvement in the UPA. One interviewee noted that while the UPA partners had worked together in the past, they had never worked together "all at the same time, never in this way." Another interviewee mentioned his work with partners who were at higher levels in their organizations, compared with people he had worked with previously.

One interviewee commented that personal relationships, as well as "role" involvement, are important. He believes that relationships among the different Minnesota transportation agencies are in "good shape," compared to elsewhere in the country.

The steering committee put together to oversee the UPA application process built on prior generally positive relationships, and interviewees indicate that the meetings built additional trust through increased shared understanding, shared work, and tangible progress. The contracting relationship between MnDOT and SRF was also significant. The two organizations were already working together, so it was natural for MnDOT to ask SRF to handle much of the application process. As noted previously, John Doan of SRF had previously worked at MnDOT, specifically on the issue of priced shoulder lanes. The strength of the I-35W Solutions Alliance was a factor in selecting that corridor (in addition to the severity of congestion having made it a "Tier 1" corridor). Representatives of MnDOT and the MetCouncil were already familiar with the concerns of citizens along the corridor from attending alliance meetings.

Summary of Initial Conditions. The context within which the Minnesota UPA process began was generally favorable to the effort, although there was no guarantee it would succeed. There was a broad sense that traffic congestion was a serious problem and a realization that previous attempts to solve it had failed, or at least that more of the same wouldn't work. There was also a willingness to consider a market-based tool, dynamic pricing, rather than more traditional methods, such as construction or regulation.

The driving forces leading toward the local UPA effort outweighed the constraining forces. USDOT created a well-funded program that required multi-party collaboration. There were strong sponsors and champions at all levels willing to push the effort. The technology-related solutions appeared to work. And many key battles over congestion pricing had already been fought and won as a result of the I-94 MnPASS Project. Some important constraining forces actually helped the effort. USDOT's requirements, including the short time frame, channeled and focused efforts. And while MnDOT, the Commissioner, and Governor at first were lukewarm to the project, they later got on board.

Process and Structure

Within the literature on formal organizations, structure often dominates the discussion. However, studying collaborations or relationships among multiple organizations demands attention to both structures and flows (Parkhe, Wasserman & Ralston, 2006), because process dimensions of collaborations are critical to our understanding of their functioning and effectiveness. Process dimensions, in particular, bring individuals and their social and political relationships into the mix and interact with, shape, and are shaped by structural arrangements.

In this section, we examine processes and structures used within the UPA within three somewhat overlapping phases: The first is the pre-award period from the UPA program announcement in December of 2006 through the proposal submission in mid-April, 2007. The second is a period that began before the end of the first phase and ran until May 2008. This was the phase that focused on securing state matching funds and needed legislation to move forward with UPA. The third period looks at the post-award phase, from September of 2007 through June 2008. This latter phase encompassed initial UPA implementation work. Within each phase, one can see how elements of process and structure display both network characteristics and more bureaucratic hierarchy, but the emphasis varies between phases. Large networks of stakeholders at the beginning of the process used forums and existing relationships to gain initial agreements and craft the proposal. Following the award and moving into the legislative strategy and implementation stages, more hierarchical structures, such as a Steering Committee and clearly designated subunits, are in place to move the project along.

Phase I. Pre-Award Development

This phase begins with MnDOT's decision to apply for a UPA grant in December of 2006 and concludes with the submission of the application in April of 2007. The phase is characterized by fluid and participatory decision-making processes within an emerging governance structure, the UPA Steering Committee. For many, this phase was exciting and innovative in the ways in which leadership and decision-making took place both within and outside of normal hierarchical channels.

Forging the Initial Agreement to Proceed. While agreement existed that traffic congestion in urban areas was a significant public problem that had to be addressed, there was not initial agreement on whether and how the metro area would respond to the Urban Partnership Agreement opportunity. Controversy over the grant's required pricing component and its potential to substantially shift existing transportation and transit plans both needed to be addressed early in the UPA grant development process.

MnDOT was opposed to pricing existing highway capacity, an important component for USDOT, but was more comfortable pricing added capacity. Knowing this, a nonprofit, citizen-led public policy group, the Citizens League, that had published an earlier report advocating the use of pricing, was helping a legislative group introduce its own UPA proposal. The Citizens League/legislative proposal was taken off the table when MnDOT decided to apply. Still at issue, however, was whether a MnDOT proposal would be innovative and bold enough to win the federal dollars. As one interviewee stated, "We were actually moving faster than MnDOT and we had to tell MnDOT, 'let's go ahead and do it.' We ended up having to push MnDOT."

Another issue that affected the initial agreement to proceed concerned the extent to which UPA, with its very short timeframe, would disrupt existing transportation and transit plans. Both MnDOT and the MetCouncil (a critical primary partner for the transit portion of the proposal) must carefully develop regional plans for priority projects in consultation with their constituencies, including community groups and local political leaders. For the MetCouncil, it was essential that elements of UPA be directly related to the Council's regional plan and not require massive plan alterations. In order to gain MetCouncil approval, those working on the UPA proposal had to work with its existing plan and amendment processes. According to one MnDOT interviewee, "We went to the MetCouncil and asked for permission to put this in the plan. At first we got resistance – they said 'you are going to shift the region's priorities.' We decided to split it up into different amendment processes and took the transit first, worked that through the system…[This] allowed us time to get better data…"

Proposal Development Processes and Structures. After agreeing to move forward with a UPA proposal, many realized that the UPA project was "much bigger than MnDOT," in the words of one interviewee. The consultant hired by MnDOT to manage the grant process first assembled an interagency Steering Committee and charged it with exploring options, gathering feedback, and making major decisions about components of the Twin Cities application. These decisions were significant and included how to use the pricing component, which Metro corridor to target for pricing, the overall role of transit in the project, and how to develop a wide base of support among affected state leaders and local communities for a successful UPA application.

During this phase, the Steering Committee chose to maintain loose, not tight membership boundaries. Thus, the composition of the Steering Committee expanded as time went on, adding local officials from metro-area cities and counties, representatives from the University, and so forth. According to one interviewee from Metro Transit, the composition worked well: "It was, I thought, a really good series of meetings with the Steering Committee. It built a lot of trust and we all recognized we were working on a unique and complex proposal." Another interviewee from MnDOT felt that the fluid design of the Steering Committee was one of the most effective decisions the UPA partnership made:

> I guess what I would say was the recognition that we needed to be very inclusive in putting this partnership together. From early on, we had meetings that included folks from a real broad sector, including a variety of folks from different departments within MnDOT, folks representing Metro Transit and the MetCouncil…Just being inclusive and hearing what everybody had to say was, I think, effective…It was not politically driven, it was from a practical sense. If we can present ourselves and say this is how we think it should be done, then we can take it to the commissioners and give it to a champion for the cause.

As alluded to in this quotation, the processes used by the Steering Committee for proposal development included educating a broad range of stakeholders about critical elements of the proposal and drawing these stakeholders directly in project governance activities. Words like "champion," "coalition," "teams," and "partners" dominate the organizational chart for UPA during this stage.

Early on, the Steering Committee decided to hold "stakeholder workshops," a model used

successfully in the I-394-MnPASS project. The first of these took place at a 2006 Road Pricing Summit organized by the Citizens League and held at the University, a neutral convening location. The timing was fortuitous as educating stakeholders about UPA became the focus at the summit, and a high level USDOT official delivered the keynote address. A second meeting was held in March with over 60 stakeholders and focused on which corridor would be targeted for tolling. Selecting a corridor could have been contentious and competitive. However, the design of the meeting highlighted neutral convening and facilitation and multi-agency collaboration: the event took place at the University with the Center for Transportation Studies in a leadership role, and both the Lieutenant Governor (and then Commissioner of Transportation) and the chair of the MetCouncil signed the invitation. It was through this process and subsequent discussions that the I-35W corridor from downtown Minneapolis south to Lakeville was chosen (L. Munnich, personal communication, August, 2008).

The role of the I-35W Solutions Alliance in the process and the selection of the corridor was critical. The Alliance is a joint-powers organization made up of elected city and county officials along the I-35W corridor from downtown Minneapolis to Lakeville in the south. In the words of a member, the Alliance is "a forum to hash out ideas, come to an agreement on issues. We don't have any power to force anybody to do anything. It is our ability to persuade." As frequent participants in the monthly meetings, MnDOT had established working relationships with the Alliance. According to one MnDOT manager, "Some of those programs – the ones that MnDOT's involved in – we float our ideas or recommendations to [outside groups]. One of those would be the I-35W Solutions Alliance. How we react depends on what the reaction of that group is." Regarding UPA, the Alliance was especially persuasive. In the words of another Alliance member,

> One piece of criteria for USDOT was having the support of jurisdictions in the corridor. In the Twin Cities, there were half a dozen bodies involved…So, the I-35W Solutions Alliance isn't the only one in the region, but we were exceptionally well positioned for it because all the outreach had already been done… We were the only corridor waving our hand saying, "hey, pick us."…Most of the money isn't highway money, it's transit money. So, we were already well along in the planning for the BRT [bus rapid transit] in the corridor. Every single criterion that needed to be met, we were already well-positioned for.

While not a political advocacy group, the I-35W Solutions Alliance nonetheless played useful political roles for the UPA project. First, it gave the UPA the local political support and legitimacy necessary to justify selection of the targeted corridor. Second, and crucial to gaining support from the governor, the corridor in question already had a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane that could be transformed into a High Occupancy Tolling (HOT) lane; therefore, no existing lane would be "taken away" to comply with the tolling requirement. This was especially important to MnDOT and to the governor who strongly opposed taking away any existing highway lanes. For the corridors advocated by other groups, UPA would have to take away an existing lane, something the governor would not support.

Summary of Phase 1 Process and Structure. What is notable about the structures and processes used for the proposal development is how fluid they were in contrast to more typical decision-making in bureaucratic hierarchies. The Steering Committee membership included not

just leaders from the two primary partners but coalitions such as the I-35W Solutions Alliance and others, including the Citizens League, the Center for Transportation Studies, and the Humphrey Institute's State and Local Policy Program, and elected officials from metro cities and counties. These outside members played significant convening, facilitation, and leadership roles throughout Phase 1 and used their political capital to gain bi-partisan support for the proposal.

Phase II – Post-Award Legislative Strategy

In the words of one UPA participant, the proposal development phase was characterized by "let's get all the ideas out there." In contrast, the process for crafting the strategy to gain legislative approval for matching funds required for UPA was far less fluid and participatory. Here, several interviewees concurred that decisions about legislative strategy were made at the top of MnDOT and took place largely outside of the UPA decision-making structures. For one thing, typically state public administrators cannot testify at the legislature without authorization from the top.

Once funded, UPA, its partners and stakeholders had to deal deftly with the political environment. Three aspects of this environment are important. First, just prior to the UPA award announcement in August of 2007, the I-35W bridge over the Mississippi River collapsed. One interviewee said the I-35W disaster may have helped reduce controversy about UPA simply because it diverted media attention from the project, and may have made federal officials more ready to send money to Minnesota. However, the researchers and some interviewees speculated that the effect was to focus citizens' and policymakers' attention on transportation generally, and specifically on neglected infrastructure. Attempts to assign blame for the collapse increased tensions between the Republican administration and the Democratically-controlled state legislature. The collapse placed the governor in the spotlight and not all of that was positive.

Second, the bridge collapse and the attention focused on the governor occurred as speculation mounted about Governor Pawlenty's position as a Vice Presidential candidate in a McCain presidential campaign. Pawlenty's potential candidacy gained momentum as McCain emerged as the Republican front-runner during the winter of 2008.

Third, and most proximate to the UPA project, the state legislature had to approve $55 million in state matching funds and pass legislation that allowed the HOV lane in the I-35W corridor to be turned into a dynamically priced shoulder lane. Despite the attraction of $133 million in federal funds, legislative approval for these key aspects of UPA was far from assured. Some legislators did not necessarily oppose shoulder pricing or other policy aspects of UPA, but disliked the idea of targeting $55 million in state funds to one corridor. According to one State Senator deeply involved in transportation policy, legislators could go along with this project if they were assured that their areas would have priority for future transportation funding. Building on deep divisions over who was responsible for the bridge collapse, a key point of contention between the legislature and the governor and lieutenant governor (who was, at the time, also the Commissioner of Transportation) was transportation policy, funding, and future direction.

Given the high stakes politics involved, the process for crafting the strategy to gain legislative approval for these two aspects of UPA looked quite different from processes in Phase I. Decisions about legislative strategy were made at the top of MnDOT and took place largely

outside of the UPA decision-making structures. According to one high level MnDOT official at the time,

> Well, there is some legislation that's needed that is being introduced today for UPA. It was worked out between key top staff at the MetCouncil and MnDOT outside of the whole [UPA] committee structure because it dealt with revenue distribution that was only being shared by the two agencies…We kept it close to the vest and didn't share with anyone except generally highlighting what the policy components were.

In part, the design of the legislative strategy was driven by the fact that state public administrators cannot testify at the legislature without authorization from the top. However, this process also reflected the fact that MnDOT and its Commissioner, who was also the Lieutenant Governor, were aware of the Governor's status as a potential Vice Presidential candidate for Senator John McCain. MnDOT and the Commissioner/Lieutenant Governance wanted to be sure that any transportation initiative reflected well on the governor and did not violate his no-new-taxes pledge.

Phase III – Project Implementation

The processes and structures for UPA's implementation also differed significantly in the post-award phase; both are much more formal and hierarchical. A UPA organizational chart was developed with a Leadership Team at the top composed of the heads of MnDOT, the MetCouncil, the regional office of the FHWA, and a "project champion," who was Bob Winter, a high-level MnDOT official. Beneath the Leadership Team is the Steering Committee, which according to several interviewees, became more formalized in membership and duties. It is composed of top level managers from MnDOT, the MetCouncil, the Center for Transportation Studies at the University, and representatives from the FHWA, the City of Minneapolis, the four affected counties, and the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority. Beneath the Steering Committee is the Program Coordinator, MnDOT's Nick Thompson, who was also the project manager for the I-394 MnPASS project, and under his supervision, are department-like groupings for highway, tolling, and transit infrastructure, telecommuting, public relations, and so forth. As one key partner stated,

> Oh yes, I think we have a good process set up – we have a steering committee with all the partners and then there's a communications/outreach committee that just got going. Then there are the implementation teams. If you start to look at the structure, there's really a lot of people involved.

> When you are flying by the seat of your pants to put together an application and get it approved and then you win it, you take a step back and say, 'Who do we really want to assign this to for the next two years?' This is a humungous undertaking. I don't think people realize how huge this is.

The operational or technical teams within each of the department-like units are crucial for successful implementation phase and include people like county engineers and public works directors. As one middle manager put it, "[Coordination] has to start at the top and, to deliver

something that's really, truly coordinated, it needs to make it down to the technical level where you have champions."

The stakeholder meetings, so important to the proposal development phase, continued after the award, but changed in tone and substance in the eyes of some. Several interviewees noted that these meetings had become more of an information exchange between the key stakeholders and MnDOT. In the words of one interviewee, "MnDOT does not want a lot of feedback [at this point in the process]." There is now some divergence of opinion concerning whether the Steering Committee as an oversight body is driving UPA or whether, in fact, MnDOT is making most major implementation decisions.

Influence of Power on Process and Structure across the Phases

While we discussed power relationships under Initial Conditions, we return to power here because of the way they evolved over time as UPA developed. Power, particularly at the level of overall design, was initially located at the federal level – both the FHWA and the FTA were involved in developing the project, but FTA was the stronger actor, led by Mary Peters: "She has her fingers all over this project." More broadly, several interviewees felt that the real leadership during the early stages of UPA came from those within these federal agencies and not state transportation officials.[2]

The locus of power then shifted to the collaboration itself as the proposal was crafted. For example, interviewees usually cited MnDOT and Metro Transit as the primary partners in designing and implementing the UPA project. However, the role of secondary partners, such as the I-35W Solutions Alliance, the Humphrey Institute's State and Local Policy Program (SLPP), and Citizens League, was often mentioned as a key reason why the project got off the ground in the first place. As one interviewee explained, "Basically, the SLPP and the Citizens League did the heavy lifting, going to all the cities…asking them to submit a proposal." The City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis City Council were also mentioned frequently as very important partners. Having been convinced that transit – a big priority for City officials – was indeed a major component of UPA, the City became a strong (and needed) advocate for UPA. Counties, such as Hennepin and Dakota, and other local cities along the I-35W corridor were important secondary partners who played key roles.

Once it was decided that the UPA proposal would be submitted, and the I-35W corridor was chosen as the location for the project, the number of partners involved shrunk considerably. MnDOT handled much, though clearly not all, of the legislative strategy in Phase II. Phase III partners representing community organizations or local government were not excluded entirely from the implementation process, as they still attended the quarterly UPA Workshops, but there was a feeling that the workshops were becoming less and less about gaining community input, and more and more about MnDOT running the show. One interviewee echoed the sentiments of several when he/she said, "I don't even think of it as a multi-agency partnership. I just think of it as MnDOT." That view may be a bit extreme, but certainly during the implementation phase,

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[2] Interviewees, when asked who were key champions and sponsors of UPA, named eight different people, all associated with different partner organizations. The range of answers to this question suggests a broad base of power and support.

power appears to reside among implementation teams comprised of operating staff within relevant public bureaucracies.

To summarize, collaboration overall in the UPA process more closely fits Himmelman's (2002) model of more top-down mandated collaboration, rather than the more bottom-up community empowerment. But that generalization masks the differences between the two phases of the effort. The first phase involved a substantial measure of power sharing among the participants, in part because there was simply no way to put together a successful proposal without the contributions and buy-in of a large number of players beyond MnDOT and the MetCouncil. The first phase thus might be termed "collaboration in the shadow of hierarchy" (S.E. Page, unpublished peer review comments to authors, May 23, 2008). In contrast, the second phase more closely resembled coordination among a few major hierarchies, with consultation along the way with other stakeholders. This phase might be termed "hierarchy in the shadow of collaboration."

Effective Collaborative Leadership and Related Competencies

While different processes, structures, and configurations of power have evolved as UPA has evolved, the competencies of actors within the partnership have also developed and contributed significantly to UPA. UPA's success so far is closely tied to the competencies of actors in the network. Following Bryson, Ackermann and Eden (2007, p. 704), we define competencies as a subset of resources that connote "abilities, technologies, or processes that help an organization [or collaboration] perform well against important goals or critical success factors."

Effective collaborative leadership focused on resolving complex public problems requires extensive visionary and political leadership by numerous formal and informal leaders (Crosby & Bryson, 2005). Effective visionary and political leadership were definitely crucial factors affecting the success of the Minnesota UPA application and implementation. We define visionary leadership as the creation and communication of shared meaning in formal and informal forums and political leadership as making and implementing policy decisions in formal and informal arenas (Crosby & Bryson, 2005). Other scholars have highlighted the importance of cross-boundary and multi-level leadership in forging successful cross-sector collaborations (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Maattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001).

Two main types of leaders – sponsors and champions – are usually required for successful complex change efforts. At their best, these "policy entrepreneurs" (Roberts & King, 1996) manifest a deep understanding of the policy change process and are able to take a long view of societal well being. Sponsors have formal authority that they can bring to bear in securing political support and other resources for the effort. Champions, who often lack formal authority, supply ideas, energy, and determination to help stakeholders define public problems, evaluate alternative solutions, and push for the most promising solutions. The most effective champions have considerable facilitation skills but also are able to articulate and frame the policy idea in comprehensible ways to multiple constituencies. In the UPA case, several champions were "monomaniacs with a vision," true believers in a policy change effort, who persistently convened meetings and used other forums to communicate the importance of the change effort and the policy ideas that inspired it.

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An especially important aspect of policy entrepreneurship at the very top of USDOT was tying together the funding sources for different modes of transportation together to fund UPA. The view at the top was that traffic congestion was the country's single biggest transportation problem, that "funding silos" (including via earmarking) had done damage to the transportation network, and that it was therefore important to link the modes. Joining the funding sources together also allows for introducing cost-benefit analysis "at the highest levels of the program, which might facilitate more rational decision making. Interestingly, even though there is evidence from our interviews of support from the White House for the UPA program, we did not pick up any real evidence of national politics being a driving force.

Helping people see pricing as different from tolling took competency in *issue framing*, as well as competency in *persuasion*. Getting people to see pricing as building capacity, rather than as taking it away, is a major rhetorical move with major political consequences (Kingdon, 1995). The struggle over language involved MnDOT, where many didn't see the difference between adding tolling (which involves the same prices regardless of congestion, and was also seen as "taking something away") and dynamic pricing (where the "toll" varies based on congestion and throughput, or vehicles moved per unit time, is increased). Pricing advocates nationally and regionally see linking pricing to capacity building as crucial for building broad public support for the idea and expanding its use.

Like entrepreneurs in other realms, champions need a high tolerance for risk and situational ambiguity. To the extent they are championing untried, unpopular, and truly innovative ideas, they may experience years in the policy wilderness. They risk being associated with "crazy ideas," identified with a "lost cause," and/or considered "policy nags." Champions in this case included Patrick deCorlis-Souza, Tyler Duvall, Lee Munnich, Adeel Lari, Bob Deboer, and other less visible people. deSouza had pushed the idea of road pricing at internal USDOT forums and external forums around the country for years. Munnich studied "value-pricing" as an antidote for traffic congestion and became a determined champion who helped convince state legislators to approve the MnPASS program, and then along with Ken Buckeye developed and circulated highly readable reports on the outcome of MnPASS implementation. Sometimes champions begin as skeptics – for example, Duvall. Leaders have to be convinced they will have followers. Fighting for a policy innovation will almost by definition begin on the margins of acceptability. Leaders want evidence that the battle won't be hopeless, that a defensible plan can be crafted.

Sponsors are people with formal authority and are more likely to provide political leadership. Mary Peters, Tim Pawlenty, Carol Molnau, Steve Murphy, and Peter Bell were all sponsors to a greater or lesser extent. Champions often take on the task of winning over sponsors. For example, Duvall helped win over Peters, and Munnich, DeBoer, and Lari attempted to win over Pawlenty, Molnau, and Bell. The champions in these cases were often walking a delicate line as they occasionally went around positional leaders to get to the sponsors; in doing so the champions ran the risk of alienating both the people they went around and the sponsors.

Getting the UPA grant in the first place was a direct result of the political leadership competency of *building coalitions*. Interviewees noted that various groups had a history of working together, including the MnPASS coalition and the local governments along the I-35W

southern corridor. Actors outside of MnDOT were crucial, including the Citizens League and the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota; their competency in gaining outside and public support was critical. Some interviewees said the corridor coalition did a good job of bringing legislators along, but others argued that the coalition got out ahead of legislators too far, which put legislative funding at risk.

Once the Steering Committee was assembled, it provided collective leadership as a convener of stakeholder workshops, in which a variety of constituencies were helped to develop a shared understanding of the implications of a potential Urban Partnership Agreement and to help it take tangible shape. The committee also connected these forums to key political arenas by inviting elected officials, lobbyists, and implementers whose support would be essential for implementing UPA. John Doan and SRF played an important role in designing and managing this consultation process. Once Minnesota's UPA application was approved and Nick Thompson became the Steering Committee's coordinator, he played a strong organizational leadership role in ensuring that various parts of the project were developing well and were synchronized with each other, and in securing needed amendments to the MetCouncil's regional plan.

Building a coalition and securing the grant is one thing, but having a competency for actual *collaboration* is another – since collaboration involves more thorough and long lasting communication, cooperation, coordination, and highly consultative if not actually shared decision making (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Margerum, 2002). Some interviewees argued that the project was funded because "whatever we [the collaboration] said they (USDOT) know we can deliver." Others, however, argued that, "I don't think we collaborate very well; basically the agencies make the decisions and just move ahead." Where collaboration has developed among stakeholders it has been a time-consuming and meeting-intensive process. As one interviewee said, "We had to learn to work together."

More *technical competencies* complemented the leadership and collaboration competencies. Getting the grant depended on competency in *grant writing and the organization that goes into it*. The University and consultants had this competency. The transportation field has a clear competency in *doing research*. Research on congestion pricing has been going on for years and clearly demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing congestion. This research has resulted in a *technical (or perhaps technological) competency* embedded in the UPA design. As one interviewee said, "The proposal is based on science that works." In a related vein, an interviewee argued, "I always saw technology as the glue that allows you to do the other stuff." MnPASS demonstrated the workability of the concept, as did successes in London and Stockholm. One interviewee said, "The technology thing is not such a big deal because of I-394; it's similar to what they already have in place, so its just ramping that up and being able to do more prominent things like real-time signage; that'll be really cool." It is clear, then, that technology did not hold back the UPA project. Looking back, an interviewee said, "I can't think of any instance where [technology held us back] or where we wanted to do something but couldn't because the technology wasn't where it needed to be."

Also present in the coalition is a technical competency in *knowing how the transportation field works*. Referring to the Steering Committee one interviewee noted, "We also have our members – the board is made up mostly of council members, commissioners, city managers and public works people. The people who know how this stuff [transportation funding, budgets,

programs, all the details] works." USDOT offered its own expertise to bolster local competency: A federal official said, "We were explicit that we would make available to our urban partners the abundance of human capital that resides in the department on issues related to technology, ITS, transit, road pricing. Yes, the urban partners get the special service."

One final competency is important to emphasize, and that is the competency (or technology) *markets have to make rational resource allocations*. Congestion pricing is premised on the technology of market rationality. In other words, the "science that works" that was mentioned as part of technical or technological competency is partly the science that demonstrates that markets work. The Second Bush Administration and the Republican Party are certainly advocates of market-based solutions to public problems in general, and perhaps in that sense national politics played a role; but plenty of Democrats also favor the use of markets, so the Administration and Republicans hardly have a monopoly on market-based policy solutions.

Accountabilities and Outcomes

An essential but difficult element of collaborations concerns accountability -- determining who is ultimately responsible for the collaboration's work and how success will be measured. Accountability can be particularly tricky in collaborations, as the multiplicity of actors and agencies involved often causes ambiguity around the question of "who is responsible for what?" (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006a).

In the UPA collaboration, interviewees were nearly unanimous in identifying MnDOT as the agency ultimately accountable for the success of the project. A few interviewees also mentioned the MetCouncil; these are the only two agencies that were signatories to the UPA, so their accountability is legally mandated.

It was also noted that those elements of the project requiring significant knowledge or expertise – particularly the design of the project, the political process, and implementation (including juggling multiple timelines, requirements, and authorities at multiple levels of government) – are also aspects of accountability. There is a strong relationship between this kind of expertise – discussed previously in terms of competencies – and formal and informal accountability for the project's outcomes.

Interviewees differed on how much UPA required new or different accountability processes. Particular among those tied to the state government, some indicated that there are few, if any, additional accountabilities related to the UPA project. Instead, implementers are utilizing existing accountability processes to evaluate UPA: "We're just implementing the funding and doing all our accountability processes as we always have." Others within government felt that the diffuse nature of the project meant that no one was ultimately accountable, except perhaps the governor: "It is a problem because there is not a single sole responsible party that you can finger point at. People want accountability. The public wants someone to be responsible. There is not a single identifiable individual at the top. I think this will be a wonderful success and people will not have to worry about that. Bottom line: the governor is responsible for the state."

A few interviewees brought up additional aspects of accountability. One of these is accountability to the public for safety and enforcement of road management and behavior.

Additionally, public officials noted UPA is an important vehicle that allows them to be accountable to their constituents and responsive to their needs. Finally, several interviewees noted the role of the state and federal governments as the funders of the project: "The collaboration will be accountable to the state legislature and also the federal DOT. Because it's about the money. Ultimately they're accountable to the public to deliver the product."

Part of accountability is evaluation, as collaborations must seek tangible ways to demonstrate their success. Evaluation of the UPA project will occur on several levels. First, it will be important to measure levels of traffic reduction and bus ridership, as these are essential aspects of the overall project goals. There are also built-in accountability systems at each level of government; for example, MnDOT enforces standard accountability practices, while the federal government requires a formal evaluation process focused on project management as well as outcome-based assessment.

In addition to these kinds of evaluation metrics, a more general and essential outcome of cross-sector collaborations should be the creation of "public value" (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006a; Moore, 1995). In the case of UPA, the public value clearly lies in the increased efficiency of a variety of transportation modes. As stated by one interviewee, "I think we'll want to, and we should be able to, demonstrate increased transit use, demonstrate decreased congestion, demonstrate increased traffic volumes served through much of the corridor, demonstrate increased telecommuting." The response begs the question, of course: responsible to whom? The governor, the legislature, the people as a whole?

Aside from the most direct outcomes, collaborations may also instigate first-, second-, and third-order positive effects (Innes & Booher, 1999). First-order effects are immediately discernible as a direct result of the collaboration process. Second-order effects are likely to occur when collaboration is well under way, while third-order effects may not be evident until some time later. In the UPA partnership, interviewees noted several first-order effects, including the successful development of the UPA proposal and the initial collaboration. Expected second-order effects included further strengthening of working relationships among agencies, especially concerning implementation of specific UPA projects, and the demonstration of a pricing system that works. Additionally, interviewees speculated that a number of third-order effects could eventually come from the collaboration, such as the formation of future collaborative efforts in Minnesota and, by educating the broader public, the development of greater acceptance of pricing as a policy solution along with other innovative transportation strategies. According to one interviewee, "Every time we can show how pricing helps manage demand, we're pushing a little bit more towards a broader policy, a little less fear of this tolling notion. Everybody has this tolling aversion in this country unless you can see the benefits."

Chapter 5
Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Our research confirms a number of lessons found in the literature on collaborations, but some findings are relatively new. We highlight key findings in *italics* and explore some of the practical and theoretical implications of each. The study confirms that collaboration on the scale of the Minnesota UPA is a very complex assembly of human (individuals and relationships) and non-human (technologies, artifacts, laws and procedures) elements (Latour, 2005). As has been amply documented in the literature, *collaboration is not an easy answer to hard problems but a hard answer to hard problems*.

As the literature documents, the difficulty of crafting an effective collaboration arises because of the complicated array of factors that need to be in place for a collaboration to succeed (Bryson, Crosby, & Stone, 2006a). For example, this collaboration was facilitated by pre-existing, supportive networks; powerful sponsors and champions; a variety of competencies; an alignment of policy ideas, favorable politics, and general agreement on the nature of a significant problem to be addressed (Kingdon, 1995); and strong incentives. In short, the Minnesota UPA represents a successful-enough "alignment of the stars" so far.

More generally, this finding implies that advocates of cross-sector collaboration as a solution to public problems must be ready for, and work at, "aligning the stars." Perhaps this requires advocates to think like playwrights, orchestrators, and choreographers – without being in charge of the actors, musicians, or dancers, who are all working to their own text, score, or choreography. Developing a toolkit to assist would-be collaborators would appear to be a useful exercise. The toolkit would pull together many existing tools, but fit them within a useful framework for thinking about collaborations. Tools might include, for example, storyboarding, strategy mapping, and role playing, among many others. Theoretically the challenge is to figure out in general what the "stars" are that need to be aligned for a cross-sector collaboration to succeed.

People, processes, politics, and structures all played significant roles in aligning the stars in the UPA case. People included a vast array of actors, including persons acting in *the apparently crucial roles of neutral conveners and policy entrepreneurs*. Interviewees consistently described the significant neutral convening role played by the Citizens League, the University's Center for Transportation Studies and the Humphrey Institute's State and Local Policy Program. (Note that when we say neutral, we mean neutrality regarding specific details of the proposal, not neutrality about the virtue of congestion pricing.) In practical terms, this means that advocates of cross-sector collaboration should carefully attend to the possible need for neutral conveners, who they might be, and what skills and attributes they will need to have. Theoretically, further exploration of the role, skills, and attributes required of neutral conveners is merited.

Also critical was the fact that *policy entrepreneurs existed at multiple levels*, particularly at the Federal and local levels. These policy entrepreneurs made the structures and processes work and helped nudge a reluctant MnDOT along during the early discussions. Absent these

entrepreneurs, it is unlikely the collaborative could have been assembled; indeed, success in creating any cross-sector collaboration would appear to depend on effective policy entrepreneurship. More detailed research on the policy entrepreneur role also appears to be merited. The sheer number of actors implies that *stakeholder analysis should be a standard part of designing and organizing collaboration efforts*; otherwise, it is hard to see how the differing interests and mixed-motives of the many actors might be accommodated, if not actually reconciled (Bryson, 2004).

Key components of process included an ongoing practice of regular meetings among major subgroups of key stakeholders and included the use of longstanding forums that existed outside of the UPA project. Practitioners and academics often discount the importance of meetings and forums, not seeing them as real work. In contrast, it would appear that regular meetings and forums are important components of building the cross-sector, cross-boundary understandings, appreciations, and commitment necessary to fashion an effective cross-sector collaboration. In other words, when it comes to cross-sector collaboration, meeting and forum-ing *are* real work. More careful study of the processes, structures, and functions of meetings in support of cross-sector collaboration appears to be justified.

Process elements also included *an important political dimension*. For example, project proponents and implementers started to get ahead of the Minnesota Legislature and high-level people within the Governor's administration. Some legislators and other politicians who played important roles leading up to the grant proposal felt left out. In the end, the legislature and administration provided what was needed, but that was not a foregone conclusion. Said differently, an important part of "aligning the stars" involves coordinating with key political leaders so that necessary elected-official support is available when needed. Even as legislative politics were settled, the technical staffers were toiling over the implementation details on a mainly separate parallel track.

A particularly important aspect of the process was *the effort key actors put into framing the UPA in such a way that support was increased and opposition was decreased*. Getting people to accept a market-based solution and to see it as capacity building was a major political achievement. *Strong monetary incentives clearly helped, but the framing mattered, too, as it helped make an unusual policy solution more palatable politically*. Practitioners clearly would be well advised to attend to what is known about issue framing and put that knowledge to use when developing cross-sector collaborations (Crosby & Bryson, 2005). Further research into the types of framing that are likely to work when bridging sectors also would be useful.

Another key aspect of the process that also involves politics was *the opening of a window of opportunity* (Kingdon, 1995). Had earmarking in Congress not been curtailed for a year, the UPA program would have been very small at about $120 million for the whole nation. The window got a whole lot bigger when USDOT was able to put $1.1 billion on the table. The tight timelines dictated how long the window would be open, but also heavily favored those, such as Minnesota, who were close to ready to go, regardless. Practitioners should spend time discussing what kinds of windows of opportunity they need and how they might create them, to the extent that is possible, and be ready for them whenever they do occur. Theoretically, the idea of a window of opportunity is a metaphor. Further research into exactly what windows of opportunity entail, how they open, and how they close would be very useful.

Structural components included a complex intergovernmental system with various concentrations of power (USDOT, Governor, MN DOT, MetCouncil). *Within this intergovernmental system, some elements fostered innovation to the benefit of UPA.* For example, several interviewees stated that the tight timeline mandated by the USDOT and the direct role played by the Secretary's office made possible, and even required, going around normal channels and various organizational, functional, and budgetary boundaries. During implementation planning, however, some of those boundaries re-emerged and needed to be managed well, including going through channels to get needed approvals and paying attention to repairing damaged relationships. Practically, in other words, cross-sector collaboration also requires cross-boundary management, which doesn't appear to be easy in all cases. Theoretically, the challenge appears to be finding those structural configurations that are most conducive to successful cross-sector collaboration.

While the alignment of stars (people, processes, politics, and structures) was critical to this partnership, *many of the people "stars" seemed to think they were the "center of the universe."* Many people thought that they or their group of stakeholders represented the crucial element in the firmament. *At least some people had to be able to connect (however tenuously) the stars into a constellation, and the work of several actors at the federal and state level was critically important.* This was the work of the policy entrepreneurs mentioned above. *The sense of efficacy and commitment on the part of others was nonetheless crucial and gave diverse people a sense of ownership.* Theoretically, it would appear useful to draw into the work on cross-sector collaboration the literatures on personal and group efficacy and commitment.

Relatively new to the collaboration literature are the following themes from this research: the important role of technology; linkages connecting high level federal policy making to local, operational implementation details; an emphasis on multiple roles played by sponsors, champions, neutral conveners, process designers and technical experts; the importance of specific competencies; the role of rules and routines as drivers of collaboration; and the importance of ambidexterity both spatially and temporally. Further exploration is called for concerning the practical and theoretical implications of these findings

First, *technology served as a solution, motivator, facilitator, and positive political factor.* Technical advances enabled dynamic pricing and other elements of the UPA package to be pragmatic, practical solutions to the problems of congestion; in other words, the technology works as a congestion reducer. Technology also attracted and excited people about being involved in cutting-edge work locally, nationally, and even internationally. Communications technology enabled people to work together and in sequence on a complex project on very tight timelines. Finally, dynamic pricing technology also helped politically because tolling skeptics could see tolling in a more benevolent light – that is, it wouldn't have to be something that slowed traffic with cumbersome tollbooths; drivers could have a choice about whether to pay or not; and the charge could vary with levels of congestion, etc. More attention to the many roles played by technology would be helpful to practitioners and useful for theorists to examine.

Second, *the UPA was different from many cross-sector collaborations discussed in the literature in that it existed primarily within a complex intergovernmental system, although clearly there are exceptions* (e.g., Agronoff, 2007; Agronoff & McGuire, 2003). *Both horizontal and vertical relationships were critical.* For the UPA to succeed, connections and partnerships

had to be maintained and/or developed vertically from the federal level to critical state agencies and the legislature, to regional authorities and to local cities and counties. Multiple and overlapping jurisdictions created tensions that had to be managed, and, as the project evolved, different roles and tasks had to be handled by staff at different levels in these hierarchies. Fortunately, in many cases, pre-existing, horizontal relationships among agency staff existed and facilitated their work; nevertheless, key actors at higher levels, had to maintain a clear view of the overall project and all of its moving parts. More extensive incorporation of the literature on intergovernmental relations into the literature on cross-sector collaboration would be useful.

Third, *the roles of sponsors, champions, neutral conveners, process designers, and technical experts all had to be played and played well for the collaboration to succeed. We particularly want to emphasize the process need for carefully designed and managed forums that further promote and stabilize horizontal relationships.* The role of process designer was one that MnDOT was not in a good position to play, but others were, such as SRF consulting, and still others were willing partners in producing a successful design. Careful attention to process design and management – knowing that the process in practice is not really controllable – is a requirement for successful practice. Understanding from a theoretical standpoint what process designs should contain, how they should be developed, how they should be managed, and what they should do is a subject for further research.

Fourth, *a variety of competencies were crucial to the success of the collaboration*, including skills of collaborative leadership referenced immediately above. Also important were competencies in issue framing and persuasion, building coalitions, collaboration itself, technical competencies, grant writing and the organization that goes into it, understanding how the transportation field works, and understanding how to make use of the competencies (or technology) markets have to make rational resource allocation decisions. Practitioners need to make sure they have access to the competencies they need, and academic research should focus on just what those competencies are.

Fifth, within this complex intergovernmental system, *rules and routines from the various public agencies actually helped the collaboration at critical points*. For example, on the one hand, the extraordinary UPA RFP process drove innovation and new collaboration, while on the other hand, the decision by the Minnesota UPA partners to use their normal planning, decision making, accountability mechanisms as much as possible reduced the need for change on the part of the time-constrained collaboration (Feldman & Pentland, 2003, 2008).

Finally, *the UPA collaborative process demonstrated a kind of ambidexterity* (Raisch & Birkinaw, 2008) *over the course of its development*. The ambidexterity involved managing a host of tensions, the poles of which involved: stability versus change; hierarchy versus lateral relations; the existing power structure versus voluntary and involuntary power sharing; formal networks versus informal networks; and existing forums versus new forums. Managing the tensions – meaning being able to handle both poles, to be ambidextrous – typically involved separating the elements of the tension in time or space, but sometimes both aspects of the tension were present. For example, actors tried to keep stable as much as they could while changing other things; this was *the strategy of spatial separation*. Alternatively, the application process relied a great deal on lateral relations, informal networks, new forums, and more power sharing, while the implementation process saw a re-emergence of the importance of hierarchy, formal

networks, existing forums, and less power sharing; this was *the strategy of temporal separation*. Managing the tensions was not always easy; for example, MnDOT and the MetCouncil were not always keen on sharing power with other actors, but there were times when they had no choice. An important area for future research is to explore what kinds of ambidexterity are necessary in large, multi-actor collaborations, and how best they might be managed.

It is worth noting that *the whole UPA process has been relatively invisible to the public*. Its invisibility has probably been a benefit during implementation planning; however, *attention to public education in the next phase is necessary if the public is to adapt to the changes easily*. In addition, media reporters and editors have not paid much attention to the process other than announcing the award. Lack of attention means that media have not contributed to the process of building (or undermining) trust, and the media also have not provided the accountability function that they often do. No doubt, key players have had in mind the bad press they would face if they let this opportunity slip through their grasp. Practitioners obviously should pay attention to the role the media may or should play in cross-sector collaboration. More research is needed into the roles and effects of the media as well.

To conclude, our view is the UPA process to date must count as a very large-scale collaboration success of the community betterment sort (Himmelman, 2002). Pulling together such a complex assembly of human and non-human elements clearly was not easy, but equally clearly appears to have been necessary if Minnesota was to put together a winning proposal. Said differently, it is difficult to imagine how the same result would have come from the UPA process had those with the greatest power simply moved forward without engaging other stakeholders. Our interviews indicate that while those with the most power may have wished to engage less with other key stakeholders, they had to in order to win the UPA competition. These other stakeholders may not have had as much power overall, but they clearly had blocking or veto power that could have stopped the more powerful partners in their tracks.

We also believe the UPA collaboration appears headed for further success. Whether or not the desired outcomes of the collaboration are fully achieved, a number of important lessons can be learned from the effort so far that may help Minnesota and other areas in the future with addressing their transportation challenges.

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Appendix A

Interviewee Characteristics

Interviewee Characteristics

Interview Code	Sex	Elected or Appointed?	Organization	Title/Rank	Policy Field	Policy Level
Interview 1	M	NO	Humphrey Institute, U of MN	Fellow	Academic	State
Interview 2	F	YES	Metro Transit	Executive	Regional Quasi-government Agency	Metro
Interview 3	M	YES	MnDOT	Upper Management	State Government Agency	State
Interview 4	M	NO	Citizen's League	Principal lobbyist	Advocacy	State
Interview 5	M	NO	35W Solutions Alliance	Lawyer	Advocacy	Metro
Interview 6	M	NO	MnDOT	Middle Management	State Government Agency	State
Interview 7	M	YES	Federal Transit Administration	Chief Counsel	Federal Government Agency	Federal
Interview 8	F	YES	City of Minneapolis	Council Member	City Government	City
Interview 9	M	NO	SRF Consulting	Principal consultant	Private sector	N/A
Interview 10	M	YES	MnDOT	Middle Management	State Government Agency	State
Interview 11	M	NO	Humphrey Institute, U of MN	Fellow	Academic	State
Interview 12	M	NO	MnDOT	Middle Management	State Government Agency	State
Interview 13	M	YES	Federal Highway Administration	Upper Management	Federal Government Agency	Federal
Interview 14	F	YES	MN House	Legislator	State Legislature	State

Interview 15	M	YES	MN Senate	Legislator	State Legislature	State
Interview 16	M	NO	MnDOT	Upper Management	State Government Agency	State
Interview 17	M	YES	FHWA - state	Executive	Regional Government Agency	Midwest Region
Interview 18	M	YES	City of Bloomington	Council Member	City Government	City
Interview 19	M	NO	Center for Transportation Studies, U of MN	Executive	Academic	State
Interview 20	F	YES	MN Senate (retired)	Legislator (retired)	State Legislature	State
Interview 21	F	NO	MnDOT	Middle Management	State Government Agency	State
Interview 22	M	NO	Metro Transit	Middle & Upper Management	Regional Quasi-government Agency	Metro
Interview 23	M	NO	Center for Transportation Studies, U of MN	Executive	Academic	State

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Introduction

    PNLC

    Purpose of project and our role

    Confidentiality

1. Tell me about your history with this collaboration.

2. What do you see as the purpose of UPA? What problem(s) is it trying to solve?

3. Who are the primary partners? Secondary partners? Had they ever worked together before? Example?

4. What do you see as the role of technology in this partnership? How is technology affecting who is in collaboration? How partners work together?

5. Let's get a bit more specific here. How does UPA actually get its work done?
   a. How is it organized?
   b. Where are important policy decisions about UPA made?
   c. How about operational or implementation decisions?
   d. How does UPA decide "who should decide?"

6. Can you talk more about decision-making? What is an example of an especially effective decision? A less effective decision?

7. Accountability can be tricky in partnerships. How does UPA hold partners accountable?
   a. Outcomes can also be hard to determine/measure. How had UPA determined successful outcomes?

8. 8. Anything else you would like to add that I haven't asked?

Appendix C

Thematic Coding Structure

Nodes/Subnodes	Text Explanation	Related Proposition #(s)	# of Sources	# of References
Initial Conditions (IC)	What led up to the partnership's formation?	1	1	1
IC - Competencies	What competencies held by individuals and organizations contributed to the collaboration?	10	4	6
IC - Competencies/Economics			4	5
IC - Competencies/Embedded Relationships			1	1
IC - Competencies/Management and Process Implementation			3	3
IC - Competencies/Political			6	16
IC - Competencies/Technical			9	13
IC - Convening	Who did the convening of the collaboration initially? What was the purpose of the initial convening?	1, 4	9	26
IC - Existing Relationships or Networks	Had the partners/conveners ever worked together or shared information before? In what capacity had they worked together previously?	3	12	32
IC - Existing Relationships or Networks/35W Solutions Alliance			6	8
IC - Existing Relationships or Networks/394 MnPass			1	1
IC - Existing Relationships or Networks/Other Existing Partnership			7	11
IC - General Environment	Was there particular legislation or public policies (federal, state, local) that were important? Was there a particularly significant event?	1, 11, 12	17	38
IC - Incentives	What incentives compelled the partners to work together in the case of UPA?	4	8	14
IC - Knowledge and Expertise	What kind of knowledge and expertise do partners bring to the table, and how are these competencies decribed?	9, 10	5	10
IC - Mandates	Was the UPA collaboration mandated? Who are what mandated this collaboration?	1	3	4
IC - Opposition	Was ther opposition to UPA initially? Later? Who opposed UPA? (It might be the interviewee him/herself.)	2	12	28
IC - Problem Identification	What is the purpose of UPA? What was the problem the UPA was trying to solve? Was there initial agreement on what the problem was?	3	18	35
IC - Sector Failure	Were there previous attempts to solve the problem that failed?	2	3	3
IC - Sector Success	Were there previous attempts to solve the problem (or similar problems) that were successful?	1	3	4
IC - Technologies	What do you see as the role of technology in this partnership? How did the development of new technologies affect the collaboration?		11	20
Miscellaneous			14	27
Outcomes and Accountabilities (OA)	How does the UPA collaboration think about the outcomes of its work?	18, 19, 20, 21	0	0
OA - Accountability	To whom is the collaboration accountable? How does the collaboration determine who is accountable for what?	21	14	21
OA - Future Collaboration	What is the potential for future collaborations as a result of the UPA collaboration? How has UPA set the stage for future collaborations in the field?	22	3	5
OA - Outcomes	How will you know that the UPA has been successful?	18, 19, 20, 22	12	24

Nodes/Subnodes	Text Explanation	Related Proposition #(s)	# of Sources	# of References
Partnership Characteristics (PC)	What is the scope of the partnership?		3	3
PC - Individual Background	What is your history in the transportation field? Your history with this collaboration? How did you become involved?	18	8	14
PC - Individual Background/Extent of UPA Involvement			9	25
PC - Individual Background/Past Experiences in Collaboration			3	4
PC - Individual Background/Professional History			7	15
PC - Individual Background/Reason for Involvement in UPA			4	7
PC - Length of Partnership	When was the partnership formed?	4	1	1
PC - Primary or Secondary Partners	Who are the primary partners? Who is in charge of UPA? Who are the secondary partners? How has this changed over time?	5, 12	15	49
PC - Primary or Secondary Partners/Primary			11	17
PC - Primary or Secondary Partners/Secondary			7	13
PC - Type of Partnership	What does this partnership do? Is this partnership primarily delivering services, providing administrative coordination between agencies, engaging in advocacy, or implementing policies?	15	2	3
PC - Type of Partnership/Administrative Coordination			1	1
PC - Type of Partnership/Advocacy			1	3
PC - Type of Partnership/Policy Implementation			0	0
PC - Type of Partnership/Service Delivery			1	3
Process (PS)	How does the partnership/collaboration get its work done?	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	4	4
PS - Agenda Setting	How have individuals or institutions/organzations participating in the collaboration influenced the political agenda of UPA?	14	8	22
PS - Bureaucracy	The UPA collaboration involves state government agencies, state quasi-governmental agencies, state legislators, county and city government, and federal agencies. How has the involvement of multiple levels of government affected how the collaboration works? How it makes decisions and what decisions it has made?	14	10	18
PS - Champions	Who provides important leadership? Who are the particular sponsors or champions of this collaboration?	3, 5	10	15
PS - Communication	How does partners share information and communicate across knowledge areas?	6	9	19
PS - Conflict Management	What conflicts exist among UPA partners? How does the collaboratoin deal with differences among partners? What created these differences?	8, 17	3	4
PS - Decision Making	How are decisions made among partners? Who is included in decision-making? Who is excluded from decision making? How does UPA decide "who should decide"?	8, 16	17	36
PS - Effective and Ineffective Decisions	Example of a particularly effective decision? Example of a less effective decision?	8, 16	1	1
PS - Effective and Ineffective Decisions/Effective			14	19
PS - Effective and Ineffective Decisions/Ineffective			16	20
PS - Planning	How does the collaboration set goals? Decide what are the priorities? What is the planning process?	9, 10	12	28
PS - Power	Are there differences among partners in terms of the amount of influence they have or are viewed as having? How are these power imbalances managed?	8, 16	4	6
PS - Trust	How as trust developed between members? How has the collaboration built legitimacy with stakeholders? What has been the role of shared knowledge, expertise, and competencies in building trust?	6, 7	3	3