

Transportation Committee

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 11, 2017

Subject: MOU and agreements with Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Transportation Advisory Board funding for the Travel Behavior Inventory

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to:

1. Negotiate and execute an agreement with Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Transportation Advisory Board regarding long-term funding for the Travel Behavior Inventory.
2. Authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into agreement with the State of Minnesota, Department of Transportation, for distribution of federal funds.

Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions

Metropolitan Transportation Services Planning Analyst Jonathan Ehrlich presented this item. Rodriguez expressed her thanks for Jonathan's work on this item. Dorfman asked if the TBI would address specific circumstances, for example senior living residence has concern that Metro Mobility hours do not work for them and there have been demographic changes. Ehrlich responded that the TBI looks at observed and known travel behavior. The Regional Model helps to look at what people might do if options were available, and can provide estimates of usage where transportation services do not exist, and can act as an aid for a potential study.

Motion by Rodriguez, seconded by Elkins and passed.

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: December 12, 2016

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 11, 2017

Subject: MOU and agreements with Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Transportation Advisory Board funding for the Travel Behavior Inventory

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Work Program

Staff Prepared/Presented: Jonathan Ehrlich, 651-602-1408, Amy Vennewitz, Dep. Dir. Finance & Planning, 651-602-1058

Division/Department: MTS

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize its Regional Administrator to:

- Negotiate and execute a Memorandum or Agreement with Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Transportation Advisory Board regarding long-term funding for the Travel Behavior Inventory.
- Authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into agreement with the State of Minnesota, Department of Transportation, for distribution of federal funds.

Background

The Metropolitan Council, like all large MPOs, maintains a regional transportation forecasting model. This model is regularly updated to reflect changes in regional demographics, transportation networks, and observed travel patterns and behaviors. The region's model is developed using data from the Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) which has been an on-going data collection program since 1949. Traditionally the TBI data have come from a decennial household travel survey and a transit on board survey every five years. From 2015-2016 the Council engaged a consultant to make recommendations for the future structure and frequency of the TBI program considering the needs of the model, contemporary policy concerns, the pace at which changes in travel patterns now occur and advances in technology. Council staff took the consultant recommendations and developed a 10-year TBI program which includes TBI surveys (household interview survey, transit on-board survey, 3rd party data collection, other surveys) and periodic updating of the regional travel demand forecast models

A dependable source of funding is important to implementing a long-term data collection program. The Council proposed that the funding of the program be split between the Council, MnDOT, and the Regional Solicitation, recognizing that the TBI and regional model is used by the state, the region, and by local governments for planning, project development, project justification, and design.

Rationale

The MOU will demonstrate the intent of each of the parties to contribute their portion of the funding for the TBI program, as well as establish that the Council will contribute local matching funds to federal funds contributed from MnDOT and the Regional Solicitation. It will also describe how Council staff will bring future funding proposals to MnDOT and to TAB, how the Council will share data from the TBI and the regional model with regional partners, and how the Council will involve regional partners and their needs in regional model development.

MnDOT is the distributor of STP funds, both through the Regional Solicitation and through its District “C” program. An agreement will be necessary to distribute the funds to the Council and to enable MnDOT to assist with the Request for Proposals process.

Thrive Lens Analysis

The Travel Behavior Inventory Program

- Demonstrates efficient and effective use of public financial resources (Stewardship) by creating a long-term program that can be cooperatively funded in a dependable way.
- The regional model is used for justification of major transportation projects, both to quantify their benefits across the region, as well as to enable their actual construction, bringing the Prosperity associated with major transportation investment to the region
- The TBI will collect information on travel behavior along with information on race, ethnicity, income, and ability. This Equity data will improve the ability to directly analyze the effect of investments on historically underrepresented populations.
- The regional model is used to forecast the effect of transportation projects and programs on air quality, pollutant emissions, and greenhouse gas emissions. Forecasts from the model are used both in evaluating Sustainability and Livability of regional plans and also in providing information to local governments.

Funding

For the first six years of the program, the breakdown of funding partner contributions is outlined below.

Funding Partner	Funding	% of Total	2017-18	2019-20	2021-22
Reg. Solicitation	\$2.7 million	36%	\$1,000,000	\$850,000	\$850,000
Met Council	\$3.2 million	42%	\$1,700,000	\$1,000,000	\$500,000
MnDOT	\$1.7 million	22%		\$850,000	\$850,000
Total	\$7.6 million	100%	\$2.7 million	\$2.7 million	\$2.2 million

For the remainder of the program, the total cost will be equally divided so that each of the three partners pays one-third of the total cost. For the work beginning in 2017 MnDOT had already programmed all of its available funding so is not able to contribute funds until 2019. This accounts for the different percentages among funding partners in the first six years of the program. In future years, the Council will continue to submit a funding proposal to TAB and MnDOT for the anticipated TBI and model update tasks and provide cost estimates for the program.

Known Support / Opposition

On October 19, 2016, the Transportation Advisory Board passed a motion directing staff to develop a memorandum of agreement for future funding based on the principle of equal funding shares between the Council, MnDOT, and TAB. The TAB also directed staff to show the TBI as off-the-top funding in funding scenarios being developed for the 2016 Regional Solicitation.

On October 20, 2016, MnDOT’s Transportation Programming and Investment Committee (TPIC) committed to participating in 1/3 of the cost of the TBI on an ongoing basis, beginning with \$850,000 in 2019.