

ACTION TRANSMITTAL 2014-31

DATE: May 15, 2014 Transportation
TO: Advisory Board Technical
FROM: Advisory Committee
PREPARED BY: Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, 651-602-1717
SUBJECT: 2017 CMAQ Transit Capital Project Selection
REQUESTED ACTION: Recommend that TAB accept the project ratings and select projects from the Request for Regionally Significant Transit Capital Projects
RECOMMENDED MOTION: Recommend that TAB accept the project ratings and select projects for 2017 CMAQ transit capital funding

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION: In March of 2014, TAB recommended the authorization of \$20 million of CMAQ funds for regionally significant transit capital projects. The Metropolitan Council released the request for projects on March 20, 2014. The project evaluation criteria are: (1) regional significance; (2) usage and impacts of the project; (3) equity; (4) project readiness; (5) project costs; and (6) emissions reduction.

The application deadline was April 11, 2014. MTS received six applications for a total request of \$35,960,000 for the \$20 million available.

Project	Project Budget	CMAQ Request
Lake Street Station at I-35W	\$40,970,100	\$7,000,000
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	\$14,164,000	\$7,000,000
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park-and-Ride Structure	\$12,200,000	\$7,000,000
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	\$1,200,000	\$960,000
MOA Transit Station Renovation Project	\$22,873,730	\$7,000,000
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station	\$14,600,000	\$7,000,000

A CMAQ Project Rating Committee was established upon recommendation by the Technical Advisory Committee with representatives from MnDOT Metro District; Metropolitan Transportation Services, Southwest Transit, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Scott County (representing TAC).

The rating committee reviewed the six projects and rated the six criteria (high/medium/low). The various criteria have one to three individual measures that were considered in developing the rating. The spreadsheet used by the Rating Committee is attached.

RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY: TAB develops the process for awarding regional federal transportation funds and approves projects for funding.

STAFF ANALYSIS: This one-time process is in response to the time sensitivity in allocating these 2017 CMAQ funds. A Project Rating Committee reviewed the projects, rated the individual criteria and presented the ratings to the Funding & Programming committee on April 17th. Following the Funding & Programming Committee meeting, applicants were provided the ratings for information. CMAQ Rating Committee members submitted revised criteria ratings based on the project presentations presented to TAB. Two criteria ratings for Cedar Grove Transit Station were raised from Low to Medium.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION: At its April 17, 2014, meeting, the Funding & Programming Committee reviewed the preliminary project ratings from the CMAQ Project Rating Committee. The Committee recommended that TAB fund the top three projects and distribute the funding available among these projects. The Committee recognized that the applicants had not been given a chance to review their ratings prior to them being presented to the Committee. In addition there was no appeals process provided in the project selection schedule. The Committee recommended that the ratings be sent to the applicants for information.

The Technical Advisory Committee recommended that TAB accept the project ratings and select the projects for 2017 CMAQ transit capital funding.

ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE COMPLETED
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	April 17, 2014
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	May 7, 2014
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Approve	
Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee	Concurrence	
Metropolitan Council	Concurrence	

2017 CMAQ Transit Capital Criteria Rating

Project	Regional Significance	Usage & Impacts	Equity	Project Readiness	Project Costs	Emissions Reductions	Composite Rating
MOA Transit Station	High	High	High	High	Medium	Low	High
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High	High	High
Lake Street Station at I-35W	High	Medium	High	Medium	High	Low/ Medium	High
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	Low	Medium	Low/ Medium	High	High	High	Medium
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park-and-Ride Structure	High	Medium	Low/ Medium	Medium	Low	Medium	Medium
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station	Medium	Medium	Low/ Medium	Low	Low	Low	Medium/ Low

REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Project	Measure #1 Comments	Rating	Measure #2 Comments	Rating	Measure #3 Comments	Rating	Composite
	Consistency with TPP; regional significance		Population and number of jobs within 1/2 mile		Job and Activity Centers served or connected		
MOA Transit Station	TPP, major destination	High	11,000 (21,600 S. LOOP) jobs 2,100 population	High	6 online	High	High
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	TPP, major link DT St. Paul to MOA/Ft. Snelling/MSP	High	5,380 riders-day 82,500 jobs	Medium	5 online/adjacent	High	Medium
Lake Street Station at I-35W	TPP, major transfer point, improves accessibility of system DT Mpls to Burnsville; TOD	High	8,000 jobs-10 minute 12,000 pop-10 minute 20,000 riders-day 10.4% of jobs on corridor	High	6 online/adjacent	High	High
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	TPP; feeder accessibility	Medium	41,202 jobs in corridor 799-750 riders-day	Low	2 online	Low	Low
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park- and-Ride Structure	TPP, improves accessibility of system; TOD/shared parking	High	5,350 jobs-10minute 3,100 pop-10 minute 25,421 riders-day Major job access	High	11 on extension	High	High
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station	TPP	Medium	1,600-2,000 jobs	Low	2 online (Mall of America)	Medium	Medium
Methodology	TPP relationship/role in system plan; station/corridor importance to and role in Transitway system (high) or connection to transit system (moderate); role/support for TOD development		Number of jobs and population served within 1/2mile or 10 minute; share of regional population/jobs and/or ridership served by corridor		Number of regional job and activity centers served by corridor where service or station is located.		

USAGE AND IMPACTS

Project	Measure #1 Comments	Rating	Measure #2 Comments	Rating	Measure #3 Comments		Rating	Total Score	Composite
	Estimated Total Ridership Opening Year		Estimated New Ridership Opening Year		Estimate of operating (cost)/savings or increases	(Cost)/Savings per new rider			
MOA Transit Station	Opening Year 2017 (5) Opening Ridership 2,500,000 (6)	11	400,000	6	\$1,013,542	\$1.85	5	22	High
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	Opening Year 2016 (6) Opening Ridership 1,780,000 (5)	11	280,540	5	(\$839,000)	(\$2.99)	4	20	High
Lake Street Station at I- 35W	Opening Year 2019 (4) Opening Ridership 253,000 (4)	8	139,000	3	(\$1,178,534)	(\$8.48)	3	14	Medium
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	Opening Year 2017 (5) Opening Ridership 175,000 (2) 2019 - 187,500	7	187,000	4	(\$450,000)	(\$2.40)	4	15	Medium
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park- and-Ride Structure	Opening Year 2019 (4) Opening Ridership 8,414,351 (Really?) (3)	7	77,454	2	No system numbers provided - Calculation provided	(\$1.91)	4	13	Medium
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station	Opening Year 2016 (6) Opening Ridership 285,468 (3)	9	40,872	1	\$396,000	\$9.69	6	16	Medium
Methodology	Earlier implementation, higher points		More new ridership opening day, higher points			Lower cost per new passenger, higher points		Addition of three measurements	

EQUITY

Project	Measure #1 Comments	Rating	Measure #2 Comments	Rating	Measure #3 Comments	Rating	Composite
	Serve or Impact Low-Income/Minority Populations		Number of Low-Income and Minority Population w/in half mile		RCAP with direct connections		
Lake Street Station at I-35W	Centered in a hugely diverse neighborhood.	High	Much higher than regional averages.	High	Exist.	High	High
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	"Connects" neighborhoods with these populations.	Medium	Not explicit.	Medium	"Connects" with RCAPs.	Low-Medium	Medium
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park-and-Ride Structure	Some commentary -- not adjacent?	Low-Medium	Some commentary -- not adjacent?	Low-Medium	No.	Low-Medium	Low/Medium
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	Connections to Green Line service and populations.	Low-Medium	2% low income, 27% minority.	Low-Medium	Bren Road. Connections to Mpls.	Low-Medium	Low/Medium
MOA Transit Station	Okay narrative but not persuasive.	Medium	No context.	Medium	Connects to RCAPs.	High	High
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station	Narrative does not support this.	Low-Medium	Narrative does not support this.	Low-Medium	None.	Low-Medium	Low/Medium

PROJECT READINESS

Project	Measure #1 Comments	Rating
	Project Implementation	
MOA Transit Station	65	High
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	50	Medium
Lake Street Station at I-35W	55	Medium
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	60	High
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park-and-Ride Structure	55	Medium
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station	45	Low
Methodology	Points Assigned Per Score Sheet Used in Previous Project Ratings High - 60+ Medium - 50-59 Low - Less than 50	

PROJECT COSTS

Project	Measure #1 Comments	Rating	Measure #2 Comments	Rating	Additional Consideration	Rating	Composite
	Detailed Budget		Secured Funding		Total cost and total money leveraging		
MOA Transit Station	Detailed Budget	Medium	Partially secured (\$10 M TIGER not secure)	Medium	Replace existing station; connections to Blue Line, Red Line	Medium	Medium
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	Very Detailed	High	Secured Funding	High	Leveraging future investments in the corridor (BRT service)	Medium	High
Lake Street Station at I-35W	Very Detailed	High	CTIB - Apply mid-2014 Small starts - Apply mid-2014	Medium	Part of larger MnDOT project	High	High
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	Very Detailed	High	Secured Funding	High	Use Marschall Road transit station; connect to future Green Line LRT	Medium	High
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park-and-Ride Structure	Limited Detail	Medium	Partially secured (SWLRT portion not secure)	Medium	Replace/expand existing park & ride; connect to future Green Line LRT	Low	Low
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station	Two line items	Low	Not answered in application. Presentation - \$1.5 M committed	Low	Leveraging investments in the corridor - Component of Red Line	High	Low

EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

Project	Measure #1 Comments	Measure #2 Comments	Rating
	Explanation	Reduction	
Lake Street Station at I-35W		267.27	Low/Medium
B Line Bus Rapid Transit		1,005.56	High
Downtown Hopkins LRT Station Park-and-Ride Structure	Trips removed from the road could come from 1 of the 2 routes. 1/2 of the VMT reduced applied to each route.	308	Medium
Minnesota River Valley 169 Connector	The VMT reduction appears high, but the methodology was clearly shown.	1,219	High
MOA Transit Station		211.21	Low
TH 77 - Cedar Grove Transit Station		189.47	Low
Methodology	Applicants must explain how the project will reduce vehicle miles (VMT) traveled and provide an estimate of annual VMT reduction along with an explanation of methodology to receive any score. The emission rates from various pollutants were then applied to VMT reductions in the proposals to produce grams of these pollutants reduced annually and these were then converted to short tons. The emission reductions ranged from 189 to 1219 tons. These were then grouped and rated Low, Medium, or High based on the amount of emissions reduced.		

TAB Executive Committee

May 13, 2014

\$20M 2017 CMAQ Allocation Recommended Options to Consider

Option 1

Select three highest rated projects and allocate \$20 million equally.

Mall of America Transit Station	\$6.67 million
Lake Street Station at I-35W	\$6.67 million
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	\$6.67 million

Option 2

Select three highest rated projects, plus reallocate the 2016 CMAQ Chicago Avenue bus service grant to provide funding for the Hopkins project (per Metro Transit proposal dated May 12, 2014) and allocate the funding as follows:

Mall of America Transit Station	\$7 million
Lake Street Station at I-35W	\$7 million
B Line Bus Rapid Transit	\$7 million (2016 funds)
Downtown Hopkins Station P&R	\$6 million



May 12, 2014

Bill Hargis, Chair
Transportation Advisory Board
390 North Robert St
St. Paul MN 55101

RE: 2017 Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Funding Allocation

Dear Chair Hargis:

On behalf of Metro Transit, I would like to thank TAB for its consideration of several Metro Transit applications for 2017 CMAQ project awards. The TAB's action to make funds available will improve transit usage and increase regional mobility. Metro Transit supports the strong ratings the scoring committee provided to the I-35W & Lake Street Station, Mall of America Station renovation, and B Line projects. In reviewing the range of applications, it's clear that available funds fall short of meeting the needs of other high quality projects requested. In anticipation that TAB may choose to fund the three highest rated projects as recommended by the TAC Funding & Programming Committee on April 17, 2014, I am writing to propose an approach to fund an additional Metro Transit project in the 2017 solicitation.

In the 2011 Regional Solicitation, TAB awarded Metro Transit a grant for improved bus service on Chicago/Portland Avenues in Minneapolis, Richfield, and Bloomington. The grant is for standalone limited-stop bus and service frequency improvements. Our intent was to couple this with capital facility funding to implement an arterial BRT corridor. Since 2011, the arterial BRT program is positioned for success with three initial lines. Chicago Avenue remains a key component of this system, with nearly 8 million annual rides possible in 2030 for a modest investment. But our current focus is on the A Line (Snelling Ave, 2015), B Line (West 7th St, 2016), and C Line (Penn Avenue, 2017). Metro Transit could move forward with a separate limited-stop bus service in 2016 on Chicago Avenue, but alternate approach may better reflect regional priorities.

The Downtown Hopkins Station park-and-ride project is urgently needed to advance the region's transit vision. From the 2017 CMAQ scoring evaluation completed last month, this project falls just below the top-rated projects. This project would merit funding if more dollars were available in the 2017 solicitation. The provision of a strategically located, structured park-and-ride in the Downtown Hopkins Station area will provide a means for those who would like to access LRT at this station by personal automobile and enable the parking needs of adjacent redevelopment to be met in the same facility thereby maximizing the redevelopment potential on the remnant parcel. Park-and-ride access and redevelopment in close proximity to the station will generate higher station ridership. A park-and-ride at the Downtown Hopkins Station will reduce the park-and-ride footprint at both the Shady Oak and Blake stations opening up more opportunity for transit ridership generating redevelopment to occur at those stations.

To meet these needs, I would like to propose the \$7 million 2016 Chicago Avenue CMAQ grant be reallocated to complete the B Line project funding, and then the 2017 CMAQ funds that would have been allocated to the B Line be instead awarded to the downtown Hopkins park-and-ride.

A service of the Metropolitan Council

Metro Transit is keenly aware that previous grant reallocation proposals have been difficult, as they've often come as funds are expiring and occur without a competitive solicitation process. In this proposal, Metro Transit can better time funding availability to project timing and ensure a key component of Southwest LRT progresses as planned, crucial to Hopkins' TOD and economic development strategy.

This allocation would follow full grant awards, with any inflation as determined by TAB, to the I-35W & Lake Street Station and the Mall of America Station renovation projects proposed in the 2017 CMAQ solicitation. In the event the Southwest LRT project does not proceed as planned for 2017 program year construction, these 2017 funds would revert to Metro Transit for use improving Chicago Avenue transit service. Metro Transit also reserves the ability to prepare a grant request for Chicago Avenue capital projects in a future regional solicitation.

This proposal allows TAB to stretch its 2017 funding allocation to an additional project of regional significance, while better aligning two arterial BRT projects' program years to available funding. I believe this is a winning strategy for the region and for Metro Transit. If the TAB does not support this approach, Metro Transit will continue development of service improvements on Chicago Avenue within the 2016 program year; the awarded 2016 grant will not be returned to TAB.

In summary, if TAB chooses to select the three highest rated projects in the 2017 CMAQ evaluation and agrees to the reallocation of the 2016 Chicago Avenue CMAQ grant, Metro Transit recommends the following funding allocation:

\$7M	B Line BRT (Reallocated from 2016 Chicago Avenue project)
\$7M	Mall of America Transit Station Renovation Project
\$7M	Lake Street Station at I-35W South
\$6M	Downtown Hopkins Park-and-Ride Structure

Metro Transit staff will attend the May 21, 2014 TAB meeting to share and support this proposal. I request your evaluation, discussion, and approval of this action at the May meeting. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Brian J. Lamb
General Manager
Metro Transit

Cc: Adam Duinick, Metropolitan Council TAB Representative
Pat Bursaw, TAB Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair
Karl Keel, TAB TAC Funding and Programming Committee Chair
Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator

Memorandum

To: TAB Executive Committee

From: Karl Keel, Funding and Programming Committee Chair
Pat Bursaw, Technical Advisory Committee Chair

Date: May 9, 2014

Re: 2017 CMAQ Solicitation – Metro Transit Grant Allocation Proposal

We are sending this memo as requested by Metro Transit to indicate our response to a potential proposal to allocate additional CMAQ funds as part of the 2017 CMAQ grant allocation process. In essence, as we understand, additional 2016 CMAQ funds could be made available through the withdrawal of a Metro Transit CMAQ bus purchase/start-up service grant for Chicago and Portland Avenues in Minneapolis and Richfield and American Boulevard in Bloomington (\$7 million). These funds could be used to fund one of the top rated 2017 CMAQ projects under consideration that can use the funds in 2016, and allow an additional CMAQ project to be funded above the currently anticipated \$20M. Where the proposal breaks with policy and past practice is that Metro Transit proposes to select their Hopkins project for funding directly without consideration of other projects not currently recommended for selection from the 2017 CMAQ solicitation.

- Since there is no current TAB or TAC process for this type of decision, we acknowledge that this is a policy matter and should be addressed directly by TAB.
- There have been an increasing number of requests to reallocate funds recently that seem to circumvent a long-standing process approved by TAB that allocates funds to projects based on a project's merits as determined by an established, objective process.
- We believe that a stable, consistently applied process is necessary if we want to maintain a trusted process for distributing funds that is supported by a diverse and wide range of stakeholders.
- It would seem that the ongoing need to work outside the established process would suggest that for certain types of projects the process does not work and may need to be modified.
- TAC and the Funding and Programming Committee have already identified the need to establish additional policies and procedures to address the new challenges under MAP21

May 9, 2014

of redirecting funds when a project is withdrawn and the funds must be spent in the current fiscal year, and have started work on this. No additional projects were anticipated to be withdrawn in 2014, and therefore we had understood that the new policy was needed by February of 2015 when the next round of projects was reviewed for timely delivery. That need is now heightened, and we will move forward and would appreciate any guidance or direction from TAB.

- We appreciate the contact from Metro Transit staff to confirm the appropriate process for their proposal, and appreciate their challenges and their hard work to try to find viable solutions. We also appreciate the real needs of projects across the region and understand that the timing of meeting regionally significant needs doesn't always line up with previously prescribed processes. We look forward to working with TAB to find ways to lay out a clear framework for merging policy decisions with an objective selection process that is transparent, supported, and works in the best interest of the public.