

BRIDGE FUNDING HISTORY ANALYSIS

The 2014 Regional Solicitation was the first Solicitation following the end of the dedicated federal funding called the Bridge Improvement and Replacement (BIR) program, whose funding level was around \$10 million per Regional Solicitation cycle. Despite the federal BIR program ending, TAB decided to keep funding bridge projects with other federal funding sources.

At its September 18, 2019, meeting TAB members suggested, along with no minimum/maximum, a minimum funding amount for bridges (similar to 2018), a funding range (similar to 2016), or a minimum number of projects. The latter was meant to avoid the inflexibility that could be caused by funding amounts. It should be noted that by virtue of having an application category, there will at least one project selected.

The following minimum/ maximum funding amounts have been used since 2014:

- 2014: None.
- 2016: TAB approved allocating \$10 million to \$15 million to the Bridge application category in response to only one bridge project being funded in 2014.
- 2018: TAB approved allocating a minimum of \$10 million to the Bridge application category. Elimination of the maximum was in response to the inflexibility that can be caused by a \$5 million range.
- 2020: The current application packet, which is out for public review, removed the minimum or maximum amount for bridges in order to give TAB more flexibility in its funding decision based on the number and quality of bridge projects that are submitted. This approach would treat bridge projects consistently with the other four roadway application categories that all comprise the roadways modal group.

2014

#	Applicant	Project	Federal	Total	Score
1	Saint Paul	Kellogg/3rd Street Bridge	\$7,000,000	\$56,150,000	826
2	Hennepin County	CSAH 35 over Midtown Greenway	\$2,815,200	\$3,519,000	802
3	Hennepin County	CSAH 152 over the Midtown Greenway	\$3,170,400	\$3,963,000	772
4	Minneapolis	10th Avenue SE River Rehabilitation	\$7,000,000	\$30,000,000	734
5	Hennepin County	NB CSAH 81 over Lowry/Victory PKWY	\$2,487,756	\$3,109,695	680
6	Hennepin County	SB CSAH 81 over Lowry/Victory PKWY	\$2,184,797	\$2,730,996	669

- Min/Max: None. One project funded.
- Hypothetical Outcomes:
 - \$10M Minimum: Top three projects would have been funded.
 - \$10M-\$15M Range: Top three projects would have been funded.
 - Two-Project Minimum: Either two or three projects would have been funded, depending on factors from the other Roadways categories.

2016

#	Applicant	Project	Federal	Total	Score
1	Hennepin County	W Broadway Ave Bridge	\$7,000,000	\$13,500,000	943
2	Saint Paul	Kellogg Blvd Bridge	\$7,000,000	\$17,630,000	754
3	Hennepin County	Shoreline Drive Bridge	\$2,000,000	\$2,500,000	667
4	Ramsey County	CR C Bridge in Roseville	\$4,471,200	\$5,589,000	643
5	Hennepin County	Shadywood Rd Bridge	\$1,520,000	\$1,900,000	592
6	Washington County	Stonebridge Tr Bridge	\$940,240	\$1,175,300	583
7	Minneapolis	Nicollet Ave Bridge	\$7,000,000	\$22,180,000	517
8	Saint Paul	Lafayette Rd Bridge	\$5,064,000	\$9,375,000	508

- Min/Max: \$10M to \$15M. Two projects funded. The \$15M cap prevented the possibility of funding more projects, as the third project would have brought the total to \$16M.
- Hypothetical Outcomes:
 - \$10M Minimum or Two-Project Minimum: It is possible that more than two projects would have been funded.
 - No Min/Max: It is possible that more than two projects would have been funded. However, it is also possible that only one project would have been funded.

2018

#	Applicant	Project	Federal	Total	Score
1	Hennepin County	Vernon Ave Bridge in Edina	\$7,000,000	\$9,150,000	819
2	Hennepin County	Shoreline Dr Bridge in Orono	\$2,200,000	\$2,750,000	703
3	Ramsey County	Lexington Parkway Bridges	\$7,000,000	\$9,192,114	676
4	Saint Paul	Kellogg Blvd Bridge	\$7,000,000	\$63,903,000	676
5	Hennepin County	Washington Ave N Bridge	\$2,312,000	\$2,890,000	550
6	Ramsey County	CR C Bridge in Roseville	\$5,609,716	\$7,012,145	550
7	Anoka County	Viking Blvd Bridge	\$1,436,296	\$1,795,370	545
8	Minneapolis	Nicollet Avenue Bridge	\$7,000,000	\$22,200,000	373

- Min/Max: \$10M minimum. Three projects funded. The Anoka County project was funded as the lone A-Minor Connector project. Had that option not been available, TAB would have had the following options:
 - Fund the top four projects for a total of \$23.2M
 - Fund three projects, which would mean funding only one of two projects with a tied score.
 - Fund two projects, totaling \$9.2M.
- Hypothetical Outcomes:
 - \$10M-\$15M Range: Same three projects would have been funded.
 - Two-Project Minimum or no Min/Max: Either the top two projects or the same three projects would have most likely been funded (i.e., TAB could have funded the two tied projects, but staff thinks that is an unlikely outcome).

Potential Pitfalls of Using Minimums and Maximums

In practice, there has always been at least one project funded in each application category and usually two or more, so a rule may not be needed. History has shown several potential inflexibilities that have been, or could be, created by requiring a certain amount of funding to go towards bridges.

Funding Ranges: While the original range was created to assure that more than one project was funded, the \$15 million cap was responsible for preventing consideration of funding a third bridge project in 2016. It is even possible that a \$7 million project could have transcended the entire \$5 million range, rendering TAB's bridge-related stipulations impossible to meet.

Funding Minimum: As nearly happened in 2018, a combination of projects falling just below the minimum line can force TAB to fund well over that line. Further, a tied score can tie TAB's hands even more, as would have happened had the Anoka County bridge project not been an A-Minor Connector.

Minimum Number of Projects: This reduces the possibility of TAB's hands being tied. The only risk is in the possibility of tied scores. For example, if there is a two-project limit and the second- and third (and maybe fourth-)-ranked projects all have the same score, TAB would, in theory have no choice but to fund all of the tied projects at a large cost to the other roadway categories. Historically, TAB has not been willing to fund one tied project while not funding the other.