

Process to evaluate scope change requests for regionally-selected projects

Adopted by the Transportation Advisory Board on March 16, 2011

ACTION TRANSMITTAL 2011-35

Projects submitted for consideration through the regional solicitation are often just concepts or unrefined ideas. Project sponsors work on the preliminary and final design, environmental studies etc... after the TAB awards funds to the project. Sometimes during project development the project sponsor has to make significant design changes or finds that the construction cost was underestimated. When that happens, project sponsors may be required to request a scope change and TIP/STIP amendment because the scope and cost in the TIP/STIP has to be consistent with final project documentation that is sent to the FHWA.

Projects sponsors, Met Council and TAB staff, the TAC Funding & Programming Committee (F&PC) and the region would benefit from an adopted methodology to evaluate requested project scope changes. MN/DOT Metro State Aid has been very good at sorting out the significant scope changes that require action from the TAB. The FHWA has provided guidance on when a cost increase triggers a TIP/STIP amendment, and when a change in a project's design requires a scope change and TIP/STIP amendment (attached). The TAC and TAB want to be comfortable that the revised project scope of a regionally-selected project still provides about the same benefits as the original project scope and would have scored high enough to have been selected like the original project scope – to be fair to the other projects not selected. Below is a proposed outline of a process and guidelines for scope change requests.

- 1) Any construction elements added to the project scope must be eligible according to the solicitation criteria used to evaluate the original project submittal, unless the additional elements are already programmed in the STIP.
- 2) Additional federal funds will not be provided and federal funds cannot be swapped between projects of the same or different sponsor.
- 3) Met Council and TAB staff will provide data on the original project to the TAC F&PC, including cover page, project description, location map, layouts, sketches or schematics, and the original project cost estimate.
- 4) The project sponsor must provide data on the revised project scope to the TAC F&PC, including a complete project description, location map, project layout or sketches or schematics, checklist of work that still needs to be done and a revised project cost estimate.
- 5) The project sponsor must also recalculate the responses to certain key criteria based on the revised project scope and provide them to the TAC F&PC. Met Council and TAB staff may consult with the scoring group chair and individual project scorers if necessary to evaluate the recalculated responses and estimate the change in the original project score.
- 6) The TAC F&PC will base their recommendation on whether the estimated score of the revised project scope would have been high enough to have been awarded funds through the regional solicitation. A recommendation to approve the scope change and adopt a TIP amendment will go before the TAC, TAB Programming Committee and full TAB for adoption, then to the Metropolitan Council for concurrence. A recommendation to reject the scope change and TIP amendment will go before the TAC, TAB Programming Committee and full TAB for approval.