

ACTION TRANSMITTAL No. 2017-03

DATE: December 20, 2016
TO: Technical Advisory Committee
FROM: TAC Funding & Programming Committee
PREPARED BY: Steve Peterson, Manager of Highway Planning and TAB/TAC Process (651-602-1819)
Joe Barbeau, Senior Planner (651-602-1705)
SUBJECT: Programming Regional Solicitation Projects for FY 2022
REQUESTED ACTION: Recommend a course of action for programming 2016 Regional Solicitation projects for 2022
RECOMMENDED MOTION: That TAC recommend to TAB programming of one 2022 project per mode from the 2016 Regional Solicitation

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION: As part of the Regional Solicitation process, TAB must approve a program of projects to be funded for fiscal years 2020 and 2021. Traditionally, after TAB has programmed Regional Solicitation projects, funds become available because of increases in federal funds, project withdrawals, or scope changes that occur with already-programmed projects.

Looking back at the 2014 Regional Solicitation, an additional seven originally unselected projects were funded following the original TAB award. These projects were funded through TAB's Federal Funds Management Process as funds became available to the region. However, because development of some projects had discontinued, the highest-scoring projects were not funded through this reallocation process. Further, some of the funds went to increase the federal funding share of already-programmed projects.

By officially selecting a small number of projects to program for 2022 (i.e., guaranteeing them funds by 2022) and encouraging sponsors of those projects to prepare them for 2021 authorization, the region will be in a better place when reallocation of funds is needed. This approach would put these projects first in line when a 2021 project in the same mode withdraws or when additional 2021 funding becomes available for other reasons. This should prove beneficial as it helps assure selection of projects that are consistent with regional practices, can address tight scoring gaps, and can be used to promote regional balance. It will prompt seamless reprogramming of extra funds that meets TAB's general philosophy of funding projects that have been through a scoring process as opposed to providing more funds to higher-cost projects with federal capacity.

The potential risk in this approach is that if 2021 funds do not become available or the 2022 sponsors are unable to move their projects up to 2021, these projects would come "off the top" from the 2022 program as part of the 2018 Regional Solicitation. Past history, however, indicates that funds will most likely become available. This approach will program conservatively for 2022, rendering it less likely that projects will claim funds from the next Regional Solicitation.

If this approach is endorsed by TAB, one project per mode will be selected for 2022 as an extension of the 2018-2021 program. The full program, including these projects, will be selected

based on where there were small scoring gaps between the last funded project and the first unfunded project or to enhance geographic balance.

RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY: The Regional Solicitation is a key responsibility of the TAB and is part of the Metropolitan Council’s federally required continuing, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning process for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION: At its December 15, 2016 meeting, the Funding & Programming Committee voted to recommend programming of one 2022 project per mode from the 2016 Regional Solicitation.

Discussion was generally supportive of the staff-suggested 2022 projects in the “Base” scenario (members did not address specific projects for the other scenarios):

- Roadway (Roadway Expansion): Highway 169/101st Ave. Interchange (City of Brooklyn Park)
- Transit (Transit Expansion): Expansion of Electric Bus Service in Eden Prairie, Chanhassen, Carver, and Chaska (SouthWest Transit)
- Bike/Pedestrian (Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities): Minnesota Valley State Trail, Bloomington Section (DNR)

There was, however, some concern that two of the three projects are in Hennepin County. However, the transit project does make an investment in Carver County and helps achieve greater regional balance.

There was discussion of whether projects could be skipped over in favor of lesser-scoring projects. Some felt this could be done to further geographic balance, while others felt it would be contrary to the Regional Solicitation’s data-driven scoring and selection process. Skipping of projects has not historically occurred and runs counter TAB’s Project Selection Process and Changes policy, adopted in 2002.

ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE COMPLETED
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	12-15-2016
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Adopt	
