

Minutes

TAB Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting Date: April 5, 2023

Time: 9:00 AM

Location: Virtual

Members Present:

- Jenifer Hager, Chair, Minneapolis
- Jack Forslund, Anoka Co
- Lyndon Robjert, Carver Co
- Erin Laberee, Dakota Co
- Scott Mareck, Ramsey Co
- Jason Pieper, Hennepin Co
- Craig Jenson, Scott Co
- Lyssa Leitner, Washington Co
- Andrew Witter, 7W

- Karl Keel, Bloomington
- Charlie Howley, Chanhassen
- Robert Ellis, Eden Prairie
- Jim Kosluchar, Fridley
- Paul Oehme, Lakeville
- Ken Ashfeld, Maple Grove
- Ross Beckwith, West Saint Paul
- Michael Thompson, Plymouth
- Kelsey Fogt, Minneapolis
- Nick Peterson, Saint Paul
- Bill Dermody, Saint Paul

- April Crockett, MnDOT
- Steve Peterson, Council MTS
- Michael Larson, Council CD
- Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB
- Innocent Eyoh, MPCA
- Bridget Rief, MAC
- Matt Fyten, STA
- Adam Harrington, Metro Transit
- Praveena Pidaparathi, Freight
- Colleen Eddy, DEED
- Vacant, MN DNR
- Kyle Sobota, Bicycle
- Mackenzie Turner Bargaen, Pedestrian
- Josh Pearson, FHWA (ex-officio)

= present

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Hager called the regular meeting of the TAB Technical Advisory Committee at 9:04 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

The committee approved the agenda with no changes. Therefore, no vote was needed.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Keel and seconded by Leitner to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2023, regular meeting of the TAB Technical Advisory Committee. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment on Committee Business

None.

TAB Report

Koutsoukos reported on the March 15, 2023, Transportation Advisory Board meeting.

Business – Committee Reports

Executive Committee (Jenifer Hager, Chair)

Chair Hager reported that the TAC Executive Committee met prior to the meeting and discussed information items. She added that the May, 5, 2023 TAC meeting will be held in person and the intent is to have some meetings in person. The rationale for this is that membership turnover has led to members not being familiar with each other.

1. [2023-18: Streamlined 2023-2026 TIP Amendment: Three Project Changes](#)

Barbeau said that the requested action involves changing three projects in the TIP:

1. MnDOT requests cost increases to three of its purchases in the Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities program (Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310). These increases are reflective of industry-wide cost increases.
2. MnDOT requests a change in scope – removing drainage and adding transportation management systems (TMS) – and a cost increase for its MN 62 noise wall project (SP 2763-60). This is a state-funded project.
3. SouthWest Transit requests a cost increase to its electric bus charging station project along with removal of the busses and addition of a new station. This is funded through a Clean Transportation Grant being delivered by MNDOT Central Office.

Motion by Mareck and seconded by Kosluchar to recommend adoption of an amendment to the 2023-2026 TIP to change three projects. **Motion carried.**

2. [2023-19: Streamlined 2023-2026 TIP Amendment: Three new Projects](#)

Barbeau said that the requested action involves adding three projects to the TIP:

1. Dakota County requests preliminary engineering for the I-35/CSAH 50 Interchange be added. The county was awarded Congressional Directed Spending in 2023 for this project.
2. Hennepin County requests its complete streets projects on CSAH 3 (Lake Street) be added. Individual project lines in this request are funded through multiple federal funding sources.
3. Metro Transit requests that its Blue Line Extension New Start Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) project be added. Funding is being moved from 2026. The project is funded with FTA section 5309 (capital improvement) funds.

Motion by Eyoh and seconded by Nick Peterson to recommend adoption of an amendment to the 2023-2026 TIP to add three projects. **Motion carried.**

Planning Committee/TPP Technical Working Group (Scott Mareck, Chair)

Mareck reported that the TAC Planning committee meeting was cancelled in March and that the April meeting will start 30 minutes early to accommodate two information items. He summarized the March TPP Working Group meeting.

Funding & Programming (Vacant, Chair)

Chair Thompson reported that the March 16, 2023, meeting did not include business items. He added that the Committee had discussions about the PROTECT funding and the Regional Solicitation.

Information

1. [Potential Changes for 2024 Regional Solicitation](#) (Joe Barbeau, MTS)

Joe Barbeau provided the [presentation](#).

INCREASING SAFETY POINTS

Staff provided an analysis of adding 100 and 300 points to each Regional Solicitation funding category, primarily in safety criteria. Because the increase is in response to injuries and fatalities



in collisions, the Transit Planning Technical Work Group suggested that no criterion should increase in the transit categories. Harrington asked why serious injuries and deaths have increased and whether there is a connection to specific categories. He added that ridership is the most connected criterion to safety and that other measures are a stretch. Mareck said that speed might be the biggest contributor to severe crashes, though there are other factors, including design, that impact safety. Steve Peterson said that the Regional Safety Action Plan is going to examine systemic analysis. Kosluchar asked if there is a way to incorporate proactive and reactive safety benefits. Steve Peterson said this is more of a long-term consideration and that most of the highway scoring is reactive while there are proactive considerations in some of the other categories. Harrington expressed doubt that increasing points for safety would change the applications. He also suggested that TAB identify the types of projects it would like to target. Koutsoukos said that increased points in safety could impact what projects are applied for. Eyoh asked whether what areas have the biggest safety concerns is known, suggesting targeting these areas with potentially higher points. Leiter stated that the points addition is arbitrary and not a good measure of the actual impact of safety measures. Pieper suggested consideration of not having a relative reduction in the infrastructure condition score for bridges. Robjent suggested that in some of the roadway categories that the crashes reduced and pedestrian safety be proportionately prorated. Kosluchar suggested looking for other ways to improve safety going into the 2024 Regional Solicitation.

Members expressed a preference for a 100-point increase as opposed to 300 points, which would provide a drastic swing. Thompson said that TAB members suggested including an option beyond 100 points because that amount did not seem likely to be impactful. Members also expressed the belief that it is not important for all funding categories to have the same total project costs.

Breaking Ties

Staff proposed a tiebreaker to be addressed by staff following completion of the final scores.

Keel suggested that common measures could be used as tiebreakers within categories and as a source of comparison across categories. Laberee asked whether geographic balance could be used for breaking ties. Barbeau said that using geographic balance comes after scores are finalized and it is not realistic to pre-determine geographic balance when the tiebreakers are assessed. Robjent suggested that ability to absorb PROTECT funds could be used as a tiebreaker. Steve Peterson replied that most transit and bicycle/pedestrian projects do not have any PROTECT eligibility. Fyten suggested that using Multimodal Elements as a tiebreaker would favor urban projects. Hiniker suggested using the highest-value categories for tiebreakers. Barbeau replied that in bridges, the highest-value category is likely to result in a tie.

Increasing Federal Maximums

Maximum federal funding amounts have not kept up with inflation. Increasing federal maximum awards would help sponsors cover costs but would result in funding fewer projects. Harrington suggested raising the maximum award for 2024. Mareck suggested reevaluating maximum awards for 2026 given that the total funding is likely to be \$100M less than it was in 2024 than it was in 2022. Robjent suggested increasing maximums for 2024. Koutsoukos pointed out that the TAC has suggested reducing the maximum for Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities and questioned whether members would want to increase the maximum award in that category. Nick Peterson suggested not reducing that amount. Robjent suggested examining federal share percentage by category. Steve Peterson said that at the March Funding & Programming Committee meeting, specific categories were discussed as opposed to an across-the-board increase.

Bus Rapid Transit Limitations

Robjent said that legislative action could impact transit projects. Fyten agreed and suggested that it is premature to make a change at this time. Hiniker said that if transit award maximums are increased that the limitation would have to be increased.



Other

Koutsoukos posed the question of whether an applicant can apply for a roadway project along with a bike/ped project that is essentially the bike/ped portion of the roadway project. Robjent said that this could work in some cases, though there are challenges to building only the trail.

2. [PROTECT and Regional Solicitation Program Balancing](#) (Brian Shekleton, MnDOT; Bethany Brandt-Sargent, MTS; Steve Peterson, MTS)

Because of time, this presentation was not completed. Hager said that Funding & Programming Committee members were split between using the PROTECT money on options 1 and 2, with a slight leaning towards option 2.

3. [MnSHIP Draft Investment Scenario](#) (Brad Utecht, MnDOT)

Because of time, this presentation was not completed. Staff will send this information to members.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned.

Committee Contact:

Joe Barbeau, Senior Planner

Joseph.Barbeau@metc.state.mn.us

651-602-1705

