

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD  
Metropolitan Council  
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805

Minutes of a Meeting of the  
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
November 21, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karl Keel (Chair), Joe Lux, Brian Isaacson, Colleen Brown, Cynthia Wheeler, Ann Pung-Terwedo, Innocent Eyoh, Greta Alquist, Craig Jenson, Tom Johnson, Andrew Witter, Lyndon Robjent, and Heidi Schallberg (staff)

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted as presented.

**3. Approval of the Minutes from the October 17, 2013, Meeting**

Minutes from the October meeting were approved unanimously.

**4. TAB Report**

Heidi Schallberg reported on the October TAB meeting. The TAB Coordinator position was reposted with a deadline in early December. TAB approved the North Urban Regional Trail scope change and related TIP amendment, along with TIP amendments for the HSIP solicitation and the I-35W North Managed Lane. TAB also approved the release of the Transportation Alternatives Program solicitation, which will go to Council for concurrence with the solicitation release in mid-December. TAB also approved changes to its bylaws that address the elimination of its subcommittees and changes to the executive committee membership. Presentations were given by MPCA on electric vehicle charging stations, by Council staff as an update on the Transportation Policy Plan, and by Metro Transit on an overview of regional transportation management organization and travel demand management activities.

**5. Scott County CSAH 17 from Vierling Dr to TH 169 in Shakopee**

*Scope Change Request*

Karl Keel summarized the request from the City of Shakopee, which would add locally-funded mill and overlay and pavement rehab work to this HSIP-funded project. The safety project elements would not change. The committee discussed why this needed to be processed as a formal scope change; MnDOT State Aid used to handle these requests to add locally-funded work to a project more informally but has since been told not to, which requires these more formally-approved changes. State Aid plans to reapproach the Federal Highway Administration about this issue. The committee also discussed the possibility of using a consent agenda for requests such as this to minimize the need for project sponsors to attend.

MOTION: Joe Lux motioned to recommend the approval of the scope change. Brian Isaacson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

*TIP Amendment*

The related TIP amendment would modify the TIP to include the mill and overlay and pavement rehab in the project scope.

MOTION: Isaacson motioned to recommend the approval of the TIP amendment. Innocent Eyoh seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**6. Other 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments**

*Section 5310 Funding - MnDOT*

The TIP amendment request would add 21 projects using \$1,265,600 in federal Section 5310 funding from MnDOT's recent solicitation for 2014.

MOTION: Tom Johnson motioned to recommend the approval of the TIP amendment. Eyoh seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

*St. Croix Boom Site Recreation Area Planning and Construction*

The amendment request would add two projects for the St. Croix Boom Site Roadside Recreational Area for planning, preliminary engineering, rehabilitation and construction using \$500,000 in federal Public Lands Highway Discretionary funding in 2014.

MOTION: Isaacson motioned to recommend the approval of the TIP amendment. Lux seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**7. TIP/STIP Amendment Process Discussion**

Pat Bursaw presented on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) amendment process for the region. Staff from MnDOT, Met Council, and the Federal Highway Administration participated in a Kaizen event to review the current process and make recommendations for improving it. The issues identified related to the process, timing, accuracy, and added value. She reviewed the main observations and recommendations that came from the review. Part of the recommendations included initiating discussion within the Metropolitan Council to review its process for reviewing and approving TIP amendments. TAC members have noted that many of its action items do not require discussion. In the Council process, which involves this committee, TAC, TAB, Council's Transportation Committee, and the Council, there is only one reason decision made, which is TAB's approval. The committee discussed the possibility of streamlining the TIP amendment approval process based on the type of amendments. There are two main amendment types, adding new projects or making changes to existing ones. Several years ago the committee discussed the possibility of streamlining the process, but it didn't move forward at the time. Another way to view amendments is by the funding source, if it originated from the regional solicitation or an outside selection process. For the 2013-2016 TIP, only 35 percent of amendments were for projects with regional solicitation funding (including HSIP). Without HSIP, only 25 percent of amendments included regional solicitation funding. Simple amendments could possibly go to TAB directly, and TAB could send them back if they felt additional technical review was necessary. Project descriptions in the TIP should be consistent and provide for some flexibility, such as using "intersection improvements" rather than specifying a signal or a roundabout, which can trigger an amendment if a change is made further into design. Amendments resulting from scope changes are different since those are funded through a competitive process. Areas for further discussion include how to deal with different types of scope changes consistently. TAC will have the same presentation at its next meeting.

**8. Regional Solicitation Evaluation Update**

Schallberg provided a brief update on the evaluation study status. An additional local representative was added to the Project Management Team from Dakota County (Mark Krebsbach with Brian Sorenson as backup). The Council concurred with TAB's approval of using modal evaluation categories and the basic eligibility for each category. At their November meeting, TAB approved modal subcategories for the bicycle and pedestrian facilities and transit/travel demand management categories. The roadway subcategories are still under discussion. TAB will also adopt approximate funding ranges for each modal category before a new solicitation (next summer for a solicitation released in the fall). Additional technical input was provided on the roadway subcategories through a TAC meeting and an ad hoc smaller technical group. Based on that input, the team is also reviewing bridge data from the previous five solicitations. At the last

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Steering Committee meeting, members discussed wanting to be able to compare across categories, not just within. They expressed concern about funding lower-scoring projects just because there were applications in that subcategory and said there should be no intent to guarantee funding in each subcategory. The Steering Committee was interested in an active role for policy makers, combined with objective scoring and review from the technical committees. The next step in the process is to discuss higher-level criteria for each category. Committee members expressed concern that bridges might not compete as well in scoring if evaluated with A Minor and Non-Freeway Principal Arterial projects. Scoring overall was a concern and it was suggested that if any testing could be done, that would be helpful.

### 9. **Other Business**

Schallberg said that MnDOT is considering a Safe Routes to School solicitation for infrastructure projects in 2015-2016. More information was unavailable at the time, but potential applicants should consider that possibility.

### 10. **Adjournment** With no other business, the meeting adjourned.