

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

Minutes of a Meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
October 17, 2013

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karl Keel (Chair), Joe Lux, Brian Isaacson, Colleen Van Wagner, Greta Alquist, Tom Johnson, Mary Karlsson, Eriks Ludins, Richard McCoy, John Sass, Jenifer Hager, Steve Albrecht, Andrew Witter, Susan Moe, Adam Harrington, 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 September 18, 2013, Meeting

Minutes from the September meeting were approved unanimously with the correction of the spelling of Eriks Ludins' name.

4. TAB Report

Heidi Schallberg reported on the September TAB meeting. As part of the review of its bylaws, the TAB bylaws task force recommends continuing to take all business directly to the full TAB and eliminate the policy and planning subcommittees. The Executive Committee would need to alter its membership in light of these changes, and recommendations were outlined for that annual process. TAB will be asked to approve the bylaws changes at its next meeting. TAB approved the action items from this committee, which included the Dakota County roundabout scope change and related TIP amendment approval. TAB discussed the Regional Solicitation Evaluation, which H. Schallberg covered later in the agenda. TAB also heard presentations on Minnesota GO and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan from MnDOT.

5. Dakota County North Urban Regional Trail Project (SP#019-090-015)

Scope Change Request

Chris Hartzell presented the county's scope change request to modify the scope for the project to increase the length by 0.3 miles, add landscaping, change one underpass to an at-grade midblock crossing, narrow roadway for trail accommodations, and change the trail alignment. The changes resulted from right-of-way difficulties and required realignment of the trail. The change would also increase the budget to a total of \$1,600,000 with \$794,080 in Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds and an increased local amount of \$805,920. The cost increases would not have affected the scoring because cost effectiveness was not included in the criteria for the previous Transportation Enhancements program. The project was ranked 7th out of 17 selected projects in the 2007 solicitation. Based on a review of the original application, the proposed scope changes would not have been likely to considerably change the project score.

MOTION: Lyndon Robjent motioned to recommend the approval of the scope change. Richard McCoy seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

TIP Amendment

The related TIP amendment would increase the budget to a total of \$1,600,000 with \$794,080 in Transportation Alternatives (TAP) funds and an increased local amount of \$805,920.

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

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

MnDOT – Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) for 2014-2016 Solicitation

B. Isaacson presented the TIP amendment request to add 24 projects for the HSIP allocation for years 2014, 2015, and 2016 with a total of \$15.5 million in HSIP; the amendment would also modify the budgets for setasides for the years 2014-2016 currently in the TIP. The number of projects was consolidated from the original list of 71 projects that varied widely in size.

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

As a follow-up discussion, B. Isaacson said that the region seems to have viewed HSIP differently over time, sometimes viewing it the same as STP, which is part of the regional solicitation. Yet there's a perception at MnDOT that HSIP isn't viewed the same as the regional solicitation projects, even though HSIP projects have been subject to TAB scope change and sunset year policies. The committee discussed that these projects are usually smaller and may not need regional review for changes, yet going through the Council's committee process for criteria review adds to the timeline. Staff could check on how often HSIP projects have had scope change or program year changes. MnDOT will come back to a future meeting with more information on any potential changes, separating those with the solicitation from the process once a project is selected.

MnDOT – I-35W North Managed Lane

B. Isaacson presented the amendment request to add the I-35W North Managed Lane Environmental Assessment and Preliminary Design project in the year 2014 with a total of \$904,540 using \$814,086 in federal Interstate Maintenance Discretionary funds and state funding of \$90,454.

MOTION: Karl Keel motioned to recommend the approval of the TIP amendment. Eriks Ludins seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

7. 2017 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Solicitation

H. Schallberg reviewed changes proposed for the 2017 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) application and criteria. TAB previously directed staff to explore conducting a TAP solicitation in late 2013/early 2014 using the Transportation Enhancements application from the 2011 regional solicitation as the base with modifications to include eligibility for Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects and other MAP-21 changes. Staff proposed some additional streamlining in qualifying criteria questions that do not necessarily require an answer, just compliance. The committee discussed looking for other options for the Safe Routes criteria addressing compliance with the Transportation Policy Plan since all Safe Routes projects would be likely to comply. MnDOT may have additional documents that could be used for Safe Routes in place of the Council's Transportation Policy Plan. Clarification was also needed on the application for how to submit applications and the deadline date and time.

MOTION: B. Isaacson motioned to recommend the approval of the 2017 TAP application and criteria and the release of the solicitation. L. Robjent seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The committee would have additional time for review and comment before the action item would be prepared for the Technical Advisory Committee meeting.

8. Regional Solicitation Evaluation Update

H. Schallberg provided a brief update on the evaluation study status. The TAB approved the Steering Committee's recommendations for Step 1 of the process, which includes the recommendation to evaluate projects by mode rather than by funding program and the recommendation on general eligibility within each mode. The project team added local representation to the project management team with a Dakota County representative; Mark Krebsbach will be the primary representative with Brian Sorenson as his alternate. The Steering Committee approved recommended subcategories for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and for transit; more work is needed for the roadway subcategories recommendation. The project team will schedule some form of an ad hoc technical group meeting to get additional input on the next steps of the process, including the roadway subcategories. She provided handouts with the recommendations. L. Robjent noted that if the schedule slips for recommendations or making changes, TAB should set a drop dead date for the completion of the new solicitation so that if it is not completed by then, the old solicitation would need to be used for the next solicitation.

9. MnDOT State Aid Report

Dan Erickson provided several handouts summarizing current status for projects in the region's program and reviewed the contents of each one. He covered the status for projects that were solicited for 2013; projects in 2013 that were not originally programmed in that year; the 2013 funding reallocations, including existing projects that could take additional funds and the county projects that used the remainder; and a MnDOT redistribution of federal funding they received from other states that didn't spend all their funding. B. Isaacson noted that State Aid staff did significant work to manage these balances on short timeframes. D. Erickson said State Aid staff would report on 2014 projects beginning in January 2014; those reports could be monthly if the committee wanted them more frequently. As the current year projects are reviewed, it could be helpful for other project sponsors to see if others are falling behind schedule to gauge if those on schedule should hold off on closing out their projects in case additional funding becomes available.

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