

## **ACTION TRANSMITTAL**

**DATE:** March 13, 2014  
**TO:** TAC Funding and Programming Committee  
**PREPARED BY:** Heidi Schallberg, Senior Planner (651-602-1721)  
**SUBJECT:** TIP Amendment Process Streamlining  
**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** Recommend that the Transportation Advisory Board adopt a process to streamline TIP amendments through the Council committee process as described in the attachment.

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION:** Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments are approved based on four elements: fiscal constraint; consistency with the adopted regional transportation plan; air quality conformity; and opportunity for public input. Currently, all TIP amendments proceed through five committees within the Metropolitan Council for action. Amendments begin at the Funding and Programming Committee, move to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and are adopted by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). The Metropolitan Council's Transportation Committee and the full Council concur with the TAB's action. This process takes approximately 10-12 weeks to complete.

In September 2013, staff from MnDOT, the Metropolitan Council, and the Federal Highway Administration participated in a Kaizen event to evaluate the processes used in the region for TIP and State Transportation Improvement Program amendments and make recommendations on how to reduce the processing time. One of the recommendations from the group was to explore the possibility of streamlining the five-step Met Council process.

The Funding and Programming Committee previously discussed the possibility of streamlining this process in 2008. A concern at the time was that the proposed process included the amendment being sent to MnDOT after TAB approval with the Council receiving notification of the amendment. Due to the state statutes that designate the Metropolitan Council as the federally-required metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Twin Cities region, there were legal concerns about not having amendments go through the Council. The TAB is the region's method of complying with the federal requirement for MPOs to include local elected officials, but the TAB, in conjunction with the Council, comprise the MPO.

**RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY:** Federal law requires that all transportation projects that will be partially funded with federal funds must be in an approved TIP and meet the following four tests: fiscal constraint; consistency with the adopted regional transportation plan; air quality conformity; and opportunity for public input. It is the TAB's responsibility to adopt and amend the TIP according to these four requirements.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:** In a review of amendments for the 2013-2016 TIP, 12 of the 20 amendments (or 60% of amendments) would have qualified to be streamlined under this

proposed process. For the 2014-2017 TIP as of the date of this transmittal, 5 of 14 submitted amendments (or 36% of amendments) would have qualified to be streamlined under this proposed process. A streamlined process would shorten the Council's TIP amendment process by approximately four weeks for amendments that qualify, thereby expediting the overall process that also includes approvals from the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration or the Federal Transit Administration.

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**ROUTING**

| <b>TO</b>                                     | <b>ACTION REQUESTED</b> | <b>DATE COMPLETED</b> |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| TAC Funding & Programming Committee           | Review & Recommend      |                       |
| Technical Advisory Committee                  | Review & Recommend      |                       |
| Transportation Advisory Board                 | Review & Adopt          |                       |
| Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee | Concurrence             |                       |
| Metropolitan Council                          | Concurrence             |                       |

## **Metropolitan Council Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments: Proposed Streamlined Process**

### *Conditions for Using a Streamlined Amendment Process*

Any project where:

- 1) The federal funding for the project is from a program not administered by the Transportation Advisory Board and the Metropolitan Council (and constitutes “new money” added to the TIP).
- 2) The project is consistent with the adopted Transportation Policy Plan.
- 3) The project is not a regionally-significant project or is a regionally-significant project currently in the TIP but is not changing the scope or any other elements that would potentially change the air quality conformity determination.
- 4) The project does not relate to a scope change before the committee.

### *Process*

The TIP amendment request is submitted as usual. The Minnesota Interagency Air Quality and Transportation Planning Committee will, in its review of the project for air quality conformity determination, clarify if the project would be eligible for the streamlined process. If the project meets the overall criteria, Met Council staff submits the request for streamlining to the TAC Executive Committee, which approves or denies the streamlined process. If approved, the amendment moves as an action directly to TAB. Information about streamlined amendments could be presented as information to the Funding and Programming Committee and TAC. If denied, the amendment would move through the full five-committee Council process (TAC Funding & Programming Committee, TAC, TAB, Transportation Committee, and the Metropolitan Council).

Example projects that could use this process:

- Congressional earmarks
- Projects funded through statewide programs, such as Section 5310 transit projects or Safe Routes to School (before 2017).
- Cost increases that do not affect the federal amount or project scope.

Project sponsor submits TIP amendment request

Met Council TIP staff submits request for air quality & interagency reviews

Met Council TIP staff notifies TAC Executive Committee of submittals that meet streamlining criteria

TAC Executive Committee approves or denies streamlined process

Denied  
*(10-12 week process)*

Amendment follows full five-committee Council process

Approved  
*(6-8 week process)*

Amendment as action item at TAB

Amendment at Transportation Committee

Met Council concurrence