

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
Minutes of a meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
December 20, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Oehme (Chair, Chanhassen), Joe MacPherson (Anoka County), Lyndon Robjent (Carver County), Chad Ellos (Hennepin County), Joe Lux (Ramsey County), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Emily Jorgensen (Washington County), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Steve Peterson (Metropolitan Council), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Molly McCartney (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT Metro District State Aid), Innocent Eyoh (MPCA), Gina Mitteco (MnDOT Bike & Ped), Jen Lehmann (MVTA), Robert Ellis (Eden Prairie), Jim Kosluchar (Fridley), Ken Ashfeld (Maple Grove), Michael Thompson (Plymouth), Nathan Koster (Minneapolis), Anne Weber (St. Paul), and Joe Barbeau (staff)

1. Call to Order

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

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: Koutsoukos moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Eyoh. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the November 29, 2018, Meeting

MOTION: Lux moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by MacPherson. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. TAB Report – Information Item

Koutsoukos reported on the December 20, 2018 TAB meeting.

5. Program Year Extension: Ramsey County CSAH 31/CSAH 58 Intersection Improvements – Action Item 2019-02

Barbeau said that Ramsey County received \$1,018,607 from the 2014 Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Solicitation for program year 2019 to fund its County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 31/CSAH 58 intersection improvements project. Ramsey County is requesting an extension of the program year to 2020 following delays to design after a pilot project on Maryland Avenue was performed in response to a nearby traffic fatality in 2016.

MOTION: MacPherson moved to recommend approval of the program year extension request. Seconded by Thompson. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. 2018 Highway Safety Improvement Program Project Selection – Action Item 2019-03

Peterson said that MnDOT programs the HSIP solicitation, which is designed for 70% of its program to be spent on reactive projects and 30% on proactive projects. The proposed program of projects selected by MnDOT includes eight percent over-programming. It also funds one project in Chisago County, since the funds are distributed within MnDOT districts. Thompson, who was on the scoring committee, said that the new scoring system worked out well. Peterson said that MnDOT would like to form a small group to review the scoring process.

MOTION: Eyoh moved to recommend approval of the projects identified for funding by MnDOT through the HSIP solicitation. Seconded by MacPherson. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Program Year Change Request for City of Brooklyn Center – Action Item 2019-05

Barbeau said that the City of Brooklyn Center received two projects on Highway 252 in the 2016 Regional Solicitation: \$7 million for construction of an interchange at 66th Avenue North and \$1,902,640 for a pedestrian overpass at 70th Avenue North. Both projects are programmed for 2021. MnDOT recently

received Corridors of Commerce funding for converting Highway 252 to a freeway and adding MnPASS to Highway 252/I-94. This larger Corridors of Commerce project is slated for delivery in 2023 and encompasses the two Regional Solicitation projects within its project area. The Corridors of Commerce project on Highway 252 needs to wait until 2023 because a parallel north-south corridor, I-35W, will be under construction from 2019 to 2022 to add a MnPASS lane and make other improvements. MnDOT and other project partners do not want to have major construction projects on parallel corridors simultaneously. In an effort to coordinate all the Highway 252 projects, the City of Brooklyn Center, along with MnDOT, is requesting that its two Regional Solicitation projects be moved from 2021 to 2023.

MOTION: Thompson moved to recommend approval of the program year change request. Seconded by Ellis. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. 2018 Regional Solicitation Funding Options– Action Item 2019-04

Peterson said that at its December 19, 2018, meeting, TAB reduced the number of scenarios to be considered by the technical committees from five to two. The remaining two scenarios include an amended version of the Base Scenario, dubbed the Base Plus Scenario, and the already-existing Expansion-Heavy Scenario. On a split vote, TAB also voted to express a preference toward the Base Plus Scenario. The Base Plus Scenario included the following adjustments to the original Base Scenario:

- Add Ramsey County’s Lexington Parkway Connection project at \$2.24 million
- Add Washington County’s Helmo/Bielenberg Bridge project at \$4.4 million
- Add \$4 million (partial funding) to the City of St. Paul/HOURCAR unique project request
- Reduce funding for the MVTA Orange Line Connector project request from \$2.744 million to \$1.5 million
- Reduce funding for the Metro Transit Route 6 from \$7million to \$6.724 million
- Eliminate the Hennepin County Osseo Road project at \$6.12 million
- Eliminate the Minneapolis ITS project at \$3 million

This amended scenario was proposed by Hennepin County, which voluntarily gave up its Osseo Road project, so the TAB motion included giving “favorable treatment” in the 2020 Regional Solicitation. The details on what “favorable treatment” means would need to be explored further by Council staff and the technical committees. Adding back the Osseo Road project as part of the 2018 Regional Solicitation would bring total over-programming in this scenario to over 12%.

Ellos said that Hennepin County’s Osseo Road project should be an option to include in the Base Plus Scenario, since it was removed as a result of a Hennepin County-suggested compromise. Peterson said that the addition of the project would bring over-programming up to 12.2%, which is higher than the 11% TAB expressed comfort with at its meeting. Ellos responded by suggesting an offer of partial funding to the project. Kosluchar asked whether, beyond two Safe Routes to School projects identified, any discussion of adding bicycle and pedestrian projects occurred at TAB’s meeting. Peterson replied that most of the over-programming discussion involved transit and roadway projects. Kosluchar asked whether geographic balance was improved in the Base Plus Scenario, to which Peterson replied that such analysis had yet to occur.

MacPherson expressed displeasure with the idea of favorable treatment to a specific project for the next Regional Solicitation cycle, suggesting that each Regional Solicitation should be on its own.

McCartney asked how much over-programming would be needed to partially fund the Carver County US 212 project, to which Koutsoukos said it would be too much over-programming, as the Hennepin County Osseo Road project that outscored it would also have to be funded.

Lux asked about the implications of partial funding. Lehmann replied that MVTA can make it work. Flintoft replied that Metro Transit supports it.

Robjant asked why the Base Plus Scenario adds two Roadway Expansion projects, to which Koutsoukos replied that this funds Washington County’s project.

Thompson suggested that the Committee could recommend 10% over-programming without specifying projects.

Mitteco expressed concern with the risk involved in additional over-programming. She added that she did not like the idea of providing “favorable treatment” to a project in the next Regional Solicitation. Peterson said that there are several potential inflows of new funding including unspent funds from other states, new federal funding, and withdrawn projects.

McCartney said that more over-programming leads to flexibility should funding become available.

MOTION 1: Robjent moved to recommend over-programming at 10% without specifying any projects. Seconded by Thompson.

Ellos suggested directing TAC to recommend projects.

MOTION 1 was approved unanimously.

Given potentially increased over-programming, Brown suggested that a policy may be needed to direct MnDOT Metro District State Aid on how to determine which projects should be delayed. She suggested that a policy on this could be a part of the TAB Federal Funds Management Process, which is going to be updated soon.

MOTION 2: Kosluchar moved to ask staff to work with MnDOT Metro District State Aid to create a policy that would address how to determine what project(s) are delayed in over-programmed situations. Seconded by Brown. The motion was approved unanimously.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: MacPherson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Eyoh. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.