

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAC FUNDING & PROGRAMING COMMITTEE

Thursday, June 20, 2019

Committee Members Present: Michael Thompson (Acting Chair, Plymouth), Joe MacPherson (Anoka County), John Sass (Dakota County), Jason Pieper (Hennepin County), Joe Lux (Ramsey County), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Emily Jorgensen (Washington County), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Heidi Schallberg (Metropolitan Council), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Molly McCartney (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT Metro District State Aid), Mehjabeen Rahman (MPCA), Mackenzie Turner Borgen (MnDOT Bike & Ped), Nancy Spooner-Mueller (DNR), Aaron Bartling (MVTA), Karl Keel (Bloomington), Robert Ellis (Eden Prairie), Jim Kosluchar (Fridley), Ken Ashfeld (Maple Grove), Jenifer Hager (Minneapolis), Anne Weber (St. Paul)

Committee Members Absent: Paul Oehme (Chair, Chanhassen), Lyndon Robjent (Carver County)

I. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, acting committee chair Thompson called the regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee to order at 1:29 p.m. on Thursday, June 20, 2019.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Ashfeld and seconded by Lux to approve the agenda. **Motion carried unanimously.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by MacPherson and seconded by Spooner-Mueller to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2019, regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee. **Motion carried unanimously.**

IV. TAB REPORT

Koutsoukos reported on the June 19, 2019, TAB meeting.

V. BUSINESS

1. 2019-29 Anoka County Federal Funding Exchange Request

Barbeau said that Anoka County is requesting a shift of federal funds from its County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 22 bridge project and its Trunk Highway (TH) 47/CSAH 116 intersection improvement to its CSAH 11 railroad grade-separation project. The CSAH 11 project, which is programmed for 2021, would receive all of the federal funds, though funds currently attached to the other projects would be reimbursed in the applicable years (2022 and 2023).

Barbeau said that in 2015, two applicants moved federal funds between projects, prompting an effort to establish a federal funding exchange policy. This policy was never completed because there was concern about eliminating the disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) requirement. Efforts to establish a proxy for the requirement were not successful. Given the past inability to establish a policy, the action transmittal in the agenda packet provided a staff recommendation to deny a request. However, information provided by Anoka County following release of the agenda packet could lead to an updated staff recommendation. Should the request be approved, staff recommends that it be done with the following stipulations:

- All projects will be delivered in their current program year and subject to the Council's Program Year Policy.
- All projects will be included in the Transportation Improvement Program.

- All projects will be completed as proposed in their original applications and subject to the Council's Scope Change Policy. MnDOT Metro District State Aid has agreed to monitor the defederalized projects the way it would without this action.
- Should either or both of the defederalized projects not be completed, Anoka County will reimburse the region the amount of federal funding assigned to the project(s) at the time of defederalization.
- The federal funds exchange approval should be conditional on the county completing a resolution agreeing to the above.

Doug Fischer, Anoka County, shared information about the projects in question and said that the county is willing to undertake a DBE effort on its own.

Keel asked what would become of the money saved on the projects without federal funds. Fischer replied that the City of Coon Rapids will benefit due to diminished local cost. Keel said that removing federal funds from projects is an opportunity to expand public transportation dollars and there is an obligation to do so when possible.

Kosluchar asked whether DBE is addressed when projects are defederalized in outstate Minnesota, to which Fischer replied it is not.

Schallberg said that given the presentation from Fischer, the Council's recommendation is to recommend approval with the stipulation that the county use a DBE process on its own, along with the aforementioned stipulations.

Brown asked whether the defederalized projects need to be included in the TIP. Barbeau said it is probably not necessary. Keel said he supports the proposal without the DBE or TIP requirements. Sass expressed agreement. Ashfeld expressed agreement but suggested that if TAB is unlikely to approve it without addressing DBE, perhaps DBE should be included.

Barbeau asked how much urgency there is for the decision to be made. Fischer said that he will need to know whether the funding transfer it allowed in four-to-five months, though whether DBE is required can be determined later.

Keel moved to recommend approval of the request with the following stipulations:

- All projects will be delivered in their current program year and subject to the Council's Program Year Policy.
- All projects will be completed as proposed in their original applications and subject to the Council's Scope Change Policy. MnDOT Metro District State Aid has agreed to monitor the defederalized projects the way it would without this action.
- Should either or both of the defederalized projects not be completed, Anoka County will reimburse the region the amount of federal funding assigned to the project(s) at the time of defederalization.
- The federal funds exchange approval should be conditional on the county completing a resolution agreeing to the above.

Seconded by Ellis.

Schallberg moved to amend the motion to include the stipulation that the Anoka County Board will apply a DBE equivalent to the defederalized projects. Seconded by Turner Borgen.

Amendment to motion was defeated.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. 2019-30 Scope Change Request for the City of Burnsville's Lake Marion Greenway

Barbeau said the City of Burnsville requests a scope change for its Lake Marion Greenway project to shift about 1,200 feet of its off-road trail to an on-road facility. He said that this is the first scope change request to occur under the new scope change policy, which is less focused than previous scope change practice on trying to determine the precise score that a project would have received with the requested scope. He said that the project was only funded by a one-point margin but while the proposed change is a minor degradation to the project, it's not likely that the scoring would have resulted differently. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the scope change. The request includes a \$50,500 project cost reduction. The applicant suggests a federal funding reduction of 80% of that, or \$40,400. Staff recommends that reduction.

Ryan Peterson, City of Burnsville provided an overview of the request. Turner Borgen asked about the impact to pedestrians. Peterson that they would share the designated bike lane. Schallberg said that there would be a pedestrian gap, to which Peterson stated that the gap already exists.

Keel moved to approve the request with the \$40,400 reduction in federal funds. Seconded by Schallberg. **Motion carried unanimously.**

3. 2019-31 Scope Change Request for Hennepin County's CSAH 81 Bridge Replacement

Barbeau said Hennepin County was awarded \$7,000,000 in Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for the 2021 fiscal year in the Bridges category as part of the 2016 Regional Solicitation. The project's primary purpose is to replace the northbound and southbound bridges of County State-Aid Highway (CSAH) 81 (W. Broadway Avenue) over Victory Memorial Parkway, Theodore Wirth Parkway, Oakdale Avenue, and Lowry Avenue on the border of Minneapolis and Robbinsdale. The County is requesting a scope change that would reflect the following changes:

- Reconfiguration of the Victory Memorial Parkway / Theodore Wirth Parkway / Oakdale Avenue / Lowry Avenue intersection. The proposed reconfiguration was the impetus for the request and reduces crossing distances. This requires movement of the placement of the bridges.
- Replacement of a third bridge structure, the on ramp from Lowry Avenue to northbound CSAH 81.
- Relocation of trail connections. The original scope included trail access along the bridges. The proposed change eliminates that access and focuses on improved throughput at the below intersection. The original scope included widening the original bridges from 35.5 feet to 48.3 feet to accommodate the trails. While those trails are no longer planned, the bridges will still be constructed to the wider width.

Barbeau said that the project scored 276 points above the highest unfunded project in the scoring category and that the proposal is generally an improvement. He said that staff recommends approval with no federal funding removed. Kosluchar said that he likes the improved bicycle and pedestrian connections.

Lux moved to approve the request. Seconded by Brown. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. 2019-32 TIP Amendment for Hennepin County's CSAH 81 Bridge Replacement

Barbeau said the previous item, 2019-31, needs an accompanying TIP amendment. The amendment is to the 2020-2023 TIP and will not be official until FHWA has approved the TIP.

McCartney moved to approve the request. Seconded by Schallberg. **Motion carried unanimously.**

VI. INFORMATION

1. Regional Solicitation; Technical Changes on Bicycle/Pedestrian Applications

Barbeau shared potential changes for bicycle and pedestrian funding categories in the 2020 Regional Solicitation.

Barbeau reminded the committee that it had suggested awarding points to applicants that submit a letter from the entity responsible for maintenance that the trail will be maintained. The Technical Advisory Committee suggested that language be used as a qualifying criterion. Jorgensen asked whether the 50 points already essentially serves as a qualifying criterion, given how small the scoring margins are between projects. Barbeau replied that some projects are funded by more than the 50 points that the measure is worth, though he does not recall how many projects were funded despite not scoring in the measure. Members generally supported it as a qualifying criterion.

Steve Elmer, Metropolitan Council, shared potential Gaps and Barriers scoring measures to include the Regional Bicycle Barriers Study (RBBS). The first would award 50 points based on whether the project was in the RBBS or on a major river crossing and 50 points for a qualitative reply. The second would award ranges of points based on quality of response and whether, and on which tier, the project was on the RBBS. Jensen said that the work group that advised staff on the RBBS wanted the first option to award 70 points for the qualitative element and 30 points for the RBBS element. Other members expressed a preference toward that breakdown.

Barbeau said that the Policy Work group has supported a \$4 million dollar maximum, down from \$5.5 million, in the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities application category. Lux said that the Ramsey County Parks department prefers a lower maximum.

Barbeau said that staff wishes to remove reference to the Regional Bicycle Trail (RBTN) map from the Pedestrian facilities application category.

Barbeau said that in the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) the Student Population measure reads "student population within one mile of the elementary school, middle school, or high school served by the project." This was interpreted in several ways in 2018 and staff suggests basing student population on enrolled students, which MnDOT's SRTS staff says should be easy for schools to provide. Jorgensen said that schools also serve as community centers, indicating that more than enrolled students access them. Schallberg replied that the intent of the SRTS program is to get kids to walk or bike to school. Lux said that schools are going to vary when it comes to accuracy on this data.

Barbeau said that MnDOT's SRTS staff suggested adding inclusion in a SRTS plan as a scoring measure, which is reflected in the attached language. Pieper suggested language that a project is consistent with an adopted SRTS plan.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned.

Joe Barbeau
Recording Secretary