

Minutes

TAC Funding and Programming Committee



Meeting date: January 23, 2025,

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lakeville – Paul Oehme | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TAB Coordinator – Elaine Koutsoukos | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anoka Co. – Jerry Auge |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eden Prairie – Robert Ellis | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Metro District – Aaron Tag | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver Co. – Drew Pflaumer (Alt) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fridley – Jim Kosluchar (Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Metro District State Aid – Colleen Brown | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eagan – Russ Matthys |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis – Katie White (Alt) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Bike/Ped – Mackenzie Turner Bargaen | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin Co. – Emily Buell |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plymouth – Michael Thompson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPCA – Lauren Dickerson (Alt) | E Dakota Co. – Jacob Chapek |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Paul – Anne Weber | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNR – Nancy Spooner-Walsh | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Co. – Adam Jessen |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met Council – Cole Hiniker | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban Transit Assoc. – Vicky Loehrer | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wash Co. – Madeline Dahlheimer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro Transit – Scott Janowiak | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = present, E = excused |

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Jim Kosluchar, Fridley called the regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee to order at 1:00 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

No changes were made to the agenda, rendering it approved.

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Robert Ellis, Eden Prairie, and seconded by Jerry Auge, Anoka Co., to approve the minutes of the November 21, 2024, regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee. **Motion carried**

Public comment on committee business

None.

TAB report

Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, outlined the agenda items and discussion at the January 15, 2025, meeting of the Transportation Advisory Board.

Business

1. **2025-06:** Program Year Extension Request: Columbia Heights's Central Avenue Lighting and Pedestrian Improvements (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning presented item 2025-06, a program year extension request from Columbia Heights to move its MN 65 (Central Ave) lighting and pedestrian improvement from 2025 to 2028.

It was moved by Auge, and seconded by Colleen Brown, MnDOT Metro District State Aid, that the TAC Funding and Programming Committee recommend approval of Columbia Heights's program year extension request to move its MN 65 (Central Ave) lighting and pedestrian improvement from 2025 to 2028. **Motion Carried.**

2. **2025-07:** Program Year Extension Request: Minneapolis's Whittier Neighborhood Safety Improvements (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Barbeau, presented item 2025-07, a program year extension request from Minneapolis to move its Whittier neighborhood intersection safety improvements project from 2025 to 2026.

It was moved by Paul Oehme, Lakeville, and seconded by Katie White, Minneapolis, that the TAC Funding and Programming Committee recommend to approval of Minneapolis's program year extension request to move its Whittier neighborhood intersection safety improvements project from 2025 to 2026. **Motion carried.**

3. **2024-40:** Scope Change Policy Update (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Barbeau, MTS Planning, presented item 2024-40, a recommended update to the Scope Change Policy.

Emily Buell, Hennepin Co. stated Hennepin County is supportive of the \$100,000 maximum reduction that can be completed administratively as a starting point but if there are any future updates to this policy, she might recommend revisiting that and increasing it to reflect updated construction costs.

It was moved by Madeline Dahlheimer, Washington Co., and seconded by Auge that the TAC Funding & Programming Committee recommend approval of the updated Scope Change Policy. **Motion carried.**

4. **2024-41:** Program Year Policy Update (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Barbeau, presented item 2024-41, a recommended update to the Program Year Policy.

Chair Kosluchar asked for clarification about third extension requests being submitted to TAB Executive Committee. Barbeau responded that TAB showed concern for items that were not progressing, and this extension process is a way to address that.

It was moved by Brown and seconded by Auge that the TAC Funding & Programming Committee recommend approval of the updated Program Year Policy. **Motion Carried.**

Information

1. Regional Solicitation Development of Application Groupings (Steve Peterson, MTS Planning)

Steve Peterson, MTS Planning, presented.



Buell expressed interest in the hybrid approach but raised concerns that the "dynamic and resilient" category might become a catch-all for projects that don't clearly fit into the climate or healthy and safe categories. She also asked about the placement of bridge projects within the hybrid model. Peterson noted that during the workshop, many application categories seemed to naturally fall under the dynamic and resilient category. Ultimately, the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) will decide how much funding each category receives. While no specific application categories for bridges have been defined yet, Peterson mentioned that this is being addressed by the Technical Steering Committee before moving on to the policy workgroup and, eventually, the funding and programming phase.

Dahlheimer pointed out the challenge for technical staff in projecting how projects will fit into the new categories without a clear understanding of the scoring criteria. She suggested using real-world examples from recent regional solicitation projects to see how they would fit into the new categories, which could help identify potential gaps or areas of confusion. While the climate category seems straightforward, the inclusion of "healthy and safe" creates complexities. For example, projects like a roadway or trail could fit into both safety and roadway categories, potentially creating overlap. Peterson responded that over the next nine months, the Technical Steering Committee will refine the categories and scoring measures. Special issue working groups will focus on specific areas such as equity, safety (bike/pedestrian/transit/roadway), and climate. While equity might not be an application category itself, it could be a measure applied across most categories. These working groups will help determine how projects are scored and compared, allowing for flexibility and adjustments as work progresses. The goal is to gather feedback and refine the approach rather than present final decisions immediately.

Scott Janowiak, Metro Transit, asked whether the new application structure will have a similar number to, or fewer categories than before. Peterson replied that policymakers have not yet provided specific direction on the number of categories. Peterson replied that policymakers have not yet provided specific direction on the number of categories. Cole Hiniker, MTS Planning, raised a concern about whether the existing application criteria and measures align with the new TPP objectives. He asked if an analysis has been done to check how well current measures would fit into the new categories, or if there was a need to reconsider measures before exploring new ones. Peterson confirmed that an initial analysis had been conducted to ensure all project types fit within the new objectives. However, once draft application categories are developed, a similar exercise will be conducted to see if the existing measures align with the new categories. This will help determine if adjustments are necessary. Peterson added that feedback indicated not every category needs to measure everything. For instance, a safety category might only require a few specific measures. Some measures, such as cost-effectiveness and readiness, might not be necessary for every category. Molly Stewart from SRF mentioned that their team is already reviewing current measures, identifying those that no longer apply, and considering new data sets and requirements that have emerged over the past decade.

Russ Matthys, Eagan, asked how the proposed hybrid structure compares to other MPOs with similar models. Peterson explained that there are many ways to distribute funds across regions, and there is no single "correct" approach. The peer review process will explore these various models to see if a direct comparison with other MPOs is feasible or if a more tailored approach should be developed. Stewart added that further investigation with peer regions is needed to determine the best path forward.

Chair Kosluchar inquired about how the hybrid model and goal-oriented structure would influence future TPP updates. Hiniker explained that the current strategic structure, which includes goals, outcomes, and modal investment plans, aims to assess regional issues and progress. The goal is to understand the effectiveness of past investments and identify any gaps. While this may not



affect the five-year update, it could influence the ten-year update, as there will be enough time to evaluate how the new structure works in practice.

Oehme, chair of the Technical Steering Committee, shared that at the Policy Working Group meeting on January 15, policymakers expressed support for a flexible approach to structuring the new solicitation and are in favor of simplifying and streamlining the application process. The focus is on reducing the burden for agencies applying for funds while continuing to progress with the hybrid model. Lauren Dickerson, MPCA, asked how the past application categories relate to the five TPP goals. Peterson explained that projects are often categorized into multiple goal areas, with some projects overlapping between categories, such as safety-related projects that also address other elements. The challenge is in properly categorizing projects to ensure clarity, especially when they serve multiple goals. The Technical Steering Committee's guidance will be crucial in defining the path for these projects.

Dickerson suggested using a radar chart model to visually represent how projects contribute to multiple goals. This could help assess how projects benefit various goal areas, such as health and safety, climate change, and equity. Peterson agreed that this idea is worth exploring and noted that scoring projects based on multiple goals is an important topic for future discussion.

Chair Kosluchar noted that some projects don't fit neatly into a specific infrastructure category but blend multiple types. These projects might not compete well under the current scoring system. Peterson agreed, recalling how similar issues arose when transitioning from roadway functional classification-based categories 10 years ago. In early cycles, both the old and new scoring systems were tracked to ease the transition. Flexibility in the scoring system may be necessary moving forward.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

Business completed; Auge moved, and Koutsoukos seconded, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

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