

MEETING OF THE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday | July 21, 2021
12:30 PM

REPORTS

1. **Chair's Report** – Hovland reported that the Regional Solicitation application will be before TAB in September as action items. It is preferred that TAB members discuss policy issues this month in July and clean up any final items at the August meeting, if needed. This will give the technical committees adequate time to discuss any potential changes TAB is considering and its impact on other parts of the application. Action items start at TAC Funding and Programming the day after August TAB meeting. The Unique Projects application is entirely new so requires additional time to build the application materials before public release. Need to know if there are any major concerns that staff can provide options to get final direction at August meeting.
2. **MnDOT Report** – Barnes reported that the legislative session ended and that MnDOT received Trunk Highway bonds appropriations, \$200 million for the Corridors of Commerce program, \$100 M for 2024 and \$100 M for 2025; \$100 million for general state road construction; and \$113 state road construction for MnDOT regional community investment priority. On the federal side, metro district received \$55 million of COVID relief CRRSA funds and Metropolitan Council received \$20 million. The I-494 project received a \$60 million INFRA grant. MnDOT is working on an equity definition and would like feedback by August 6 on what equitable transportation means.

MPCA Report – Biewen reported that MPCA is continuing to implement the VW settlement by upgrading vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations. Biewen responded to questions from previous meetings regarding maintenance of charging stations. For EV stations funded with VW settlement funds, the funding recipient must sign a 5-year service agreement, maintain 95% uptime, repair the station within 24 hours and have them fully operational within 48 hours. There is a website, <https://www.plugshare.com/>, that has information on chargers, where they are, whether they are operational, what power they provide, and the type of charger they are.

MAC Report – Crimmins submitted a report. MSP's average daily departures for July are 420, a 69% increase over July of 2020 and a 4% increase from June. Delta Airlines resumed service to Paris on July 7th. July active routes will increase to 189; 180 domestic flights & 9 international flights. August schedule shows a slight decrease to 412 average daily departures. Popup vaccination sites in Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 are planned through August 5. Covid testing is currently available in the Blue parking ramp.

Metropolitan Council Report – Barber reported Metro Transit launched transit safety and security initiatives. Metro Transit is increasing redeployment of community service officers, increasing staff for real time information center, and making sure full-time police officers are hired, trained, and ready for full comprehensive approach to safety and security.

BUSINESS

TAB approved the following items and they were forwarded to the Transportation Committee.

1. **2021-21:** 2021-2024 Streamlined TIP Amendment, MnDOT: I-35W Frontage Road Turnback (*August 9, 2021, Transportation Committee*)

Transportation Advisory Board recommended that the Metropolitan Council adopt an amendment to the 2021-2024 TIP to increase the cost and scope of MnDOT's I-35W turnback in Bloomington (SP # 2782-363).

INFORMATION

1. Equity in Transportation

Charles Small and Maurice Henderson II, US DOT, presented this item. The presentation can be viewed at timepoint 32:20 on the meeting link provided below.

2. 2022 Regional Solicitation

Transit Background – Cole Hiniker presented information on the ABRT category established in 2020 for up to \$25 million, the \$32 M maximum funding for all BRT projects, the midpoint shift of \$5 million to the transit category, and the guarantee of funding a project in transit market areas 3, 4, or 5.

Maximum and Minimums – Discussion on rolling back the \$10 million maximum for Strategic Capacity category back to \$7 million. There were comments on letting it go through a few cycles. There was a recommendation for the technical committees to review projects that were not funded as a result the higher maximum. MnDOT has cautioned on expansion projects which adds ongoing obligations. What was benefit systemwide as a result of the increase? This isn't saying that it shouldn't be done, but would like pros and cons. There was also discussion about outer counties adding density and needing expanded infrastructure. Expansion can't be ignored metro-wide. There was discussion on having projects that are climate conscious. Expansion projects are typically more expensive and, if federal funding is reduced, local funding will increase on the project. There wasn't a consensus on whether to change the \$10 million maximum back to \$7 million for Strategic Capacity.

Categories and purpose statements – Recommendation for categories to remain the same.

Criteria weighting – TAB members discussed TAC's recommendation on increasing the weighting of Safety criterion in the Spot Mobility application. There was concern about moving the points out of the Congestion/Air Quality criterion. Recommended that the technical committees review all the criteria to determine where additional points could come from to add to Safety.

Guarantees – TAB reviewed the previous guarantees for functional classification, bridge funding target of \$10 million, ABRT up to \$25 million, total BRT funding maximum up to \$32 million, and transit in a new market. There was discussion on the bridges \$10 million target, that lowering the amount or removing the guarantee would have an impact. There was discussion on the BRT funding and TAB recommended waiting until after transit ridership settles back down after the pandemic and revisit this next round. TAB recommended no changes to the current guarantees.

Modal funding ranges – There was discussion on shifting funding from roadways to transit and bike/pedestrian categories. However, there was no consensus on the funding ranges and TAB will continue discussion at the next meeting.

Unique projects – Projects that are in this category that do not fit in other categories was the original purpose for this category. The purpose statement adds flexibility in case there are projects that fit into a gray area of where they should apply, especially if a project is unique. For the criteria weighting, projects that score the highest over all the criteria would rate the highest. Members were fine with the outcome of the criteria weighting of the work group. TAB members accepted the recommendations of the Unique project work group for preparing the application.

Link to July 21, 2021, TAB agenda and materials - [072121 Agenda - Metropolitan Council \(metro council.org\)](https://www.metrocouncil.org/072121-Agenda-Metro-Council)