

Regional Solicitation Policy Work Group Meeting #5 Notes

Unique projects

MTS staff reviewed the history of the unique projects.

- 1990 Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) (\$50,000 FAU)
- 2008 MPCA Diesel Retrofits (\$500,000 CMAQ)
- 2010 TBI \$ (special federal ARRA funding)
- 2012 MPCA Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
- \$500,000 CMAQ-additional federal funds became available
- Part of local match provided by Xcel Energy
- 2014 Transit On-Board Survey (\$800,000 STP-additional federal funds became available)
- 2016 and 2018 Regional Model/TBI (\$2.7M STP in 2016, \$850,000 in 2018)
- 2018 St. Paul/Hourcar Mobility Hub Charging Stations (\$4 M)

Information on Shared Mobility was shared at the meeting. Examples of shared mobility projects are:

- Mobility hub planning, design, and construction (wayfinding, hub typologies)
- Microtransit pilots and testing
- TDM/shared mobility integration pilot
- Mobility-as-a-Service integration and testing (coordinated payments, fare collection upgrades, platform development/user interface)

Question on the amount of the Southwest Transit application funded that included shared mobility features. The total project cost was \$4,591,000, federal amount was \$3,672,800.

Committee members requested a list of the TMO providers funded under the TMO set aside.

- Move Minnesota – serves St. Paul
- Move Minneapolis – serves downtown Minneapolis
- Commuter Services – 494 Corridor – serves Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina, Minnetonka, and Richfield
- Anoka County TMO Commute Solutions – serves Anoka County
- Metro Transit Commuter Services

TAB should set objectives of what it wants to accomplish with unique projects. Suggest that unique projects must meet minimum criteria. Unique doesn't have to be one-time projects; the Travel Behavior Inventory is an example. Examples of criteria include:

- Does it the project contribute to the transportation system?
- Is the project regional or can the project be replicated throughout the region?
- Does the project further equity?
- Does the project improve safety?
- Does the project improve air quality?
- Is the project innovative?
- Other

What is meant by innovation? Does innovative mean brand new or new to the region? TAB will need to determine definition. Members cautioned against doing innovation to just do innovation. The projects should be good projects.

If more than one project comes in, TAB will need a way to evaluate projects against each other. Having a Unique category allows projects to be better evaluated. At a previous TAB meeting, members expressed a desire to have projects that are on the cutting edge. An option for addressing unique projects is to decide on each unique project individually before determining how the remaining Regional Solicitation projects are awarded funding.

Recommendations

- Set aside an amount of funding for the next solicitation for program years 2024 and 2025. Solicit for the projects in the next solicitation.
- Come up with criteria in the next two years.
- Use a percent of funding to set aside instead of an amount. The amount of funding will be dependent on the total amount of funding that will be available when awarding funds, approximately \$180M - \$200 M total. Recommend 2.5 % for set aside.
- Set the local match at a minimum of 50% of total project cost.
- Retain flexibility in the total cost of the project. The project must receive a minimum to be viable.

Equity

Include the definition of equity in the application.

The equity question will be clarified so that the applicant must identify the equity populations served by the project, outreach to the underrepresented populations, and benefits to these people.

Options for scoring housing and equity measures:

Housing – Current Housing Score points are 70 points. Staff recommendation is to reduce the points to 50 and move the 20 points to the Equity score. The 50 points for the Housing score would be divided into 40 points based on the Housing Performance Score and 10 points on a qualitative response on how the project connects to affordable housing within a half mile of the project.

Equity – The current scoring methodology has a multiplier that is negative; it reduces points based on location. Distribute the points as 40 percent to engagement efforts and 60 percent to benefits.

Proposal is to add bonus points for applicants who respond to the Equity questions well. The bonus points would be based on location of equity populations.

Work group members recommended that a definition of minority population is included to make sure that it isn't defined as white. (e.g., some areas in the metro area have whites as the minority; this isn't what is meant).