



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP

Meeting #14 Notes

August 25, 2025

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Virtual Meeting – Microsoft Teams

Yellow = In attendance

- Glen Johnson (Chair & TAB Citizen Rep)
- Brian Martinson (Vice Chair & TAB Non-Motorized Rep)
- James Hovland (TAB Chair)
- Mary Liz Holberg (TAB, Dakota Co)
- Peter Dugan (TAB Citizen Rep) / Rachel Chinitz (TAB Citizen Rep Alt)
- Amity Foster (TAB Transit Rep) / Tim Marino (TAB Transit Rep Alt)
- Aurin Chowdhury (TAB, Minneapolis)
- Mark Steffenson (TAB, Maple Grove)
- Julie Jeppson (TAB, Anoka Co)
- Stan Karwoski (TAB, Washington Co)
- Mai Chong Xiong (TAB, Ramsey Co)
- John Ulrich (TAB, Scott Co)
- Don Do (TAB, Citizen Rep)
- Alexander Ask (TAB, Non-Motorized Rep Alternate)
- Joe MacPherson (TAC Chair)
- Brian Issacson (TAC Vice Chair)
- Michael Thompson (TAC F&P Chair)
- Marc Brieese (State-Aid AT Rep)
- Aaron Tag (TAC F&P, MnDOT)
- Craig Jenson (Bike-Ped WG Co-Chair)
- Jordan Kocak (Bike-Ped WG Co-Chair)

Meeting Agenda

1. Meeting Objective Overview
2. Review and Discuss Topics
 - a) Funding Availability for 2026 Solicitation
 - b) Program Reserve Considerations
 - c) Geographic Balance Options
3. Decision Point Topics
 - a) Local Match Requirements
 - b) Minimum and Maximum Awards for Active Transportation Related Categories
4. Next steps

Meeting Notes

Funding Availability for 2026 Solicitation and Program Reserve Considerations

Staff presented current revenues to date and expected revenues to be in the program account by the end of 2026.

Member Karwoski began the discussion with noting that he thinks we should be spending the money we are expecting to have by the time the solicitation but not to spend future funds that we are expecting in 2027. We need to spend the resources we have to show the ongoing need of the funds for projects in the region.

- He also noted that he thinks there should be some reserve funding to ensure there are no cash issues in the future when many projects are drawing funds from the program.

Member Jepson agreed with member Karwoski and added that a potential \$50 million for 2026 would be large enough and good amount for the first year of the program. She stated she did not want to spend future dollars based on estimates as it would not be fiscally responsible.

- She noted that a good target for reserve funding should be around 10% of funds, while acknowledging that reserve funding needs to be weighed against other sources redistributing the funds if too much remains unencumbered in the account.

Member Ulrich agreed with member Karwoski and Jepson. He reiterated that reserving 10% of existing revenues would not be too much or too little.

Technical members noted that as project awards pile up between multiple solicitations and are reimbursement based, this could complicate funding if no reserves are left as projects can typically request late reimbursement after projects finish.

Member Holberg stated she had some concerns over putting too much funding into any single solicitation as it could lead to funding projects with less merit or viability just because the funding was made available. She also noted that future consistency is going to be important for local partners to consider for future solicitations, so putting too much into the first could be an issue. She wants to be cautious on this first round and to consider implications for the future program.

- Staff agreed and noted that we might not want to have high fluctuations in the amount of funding awarded from Solicitation to Solicitation. If we award on the higher end, ie \$70 M, it might mean a Solicitation of \$50M or less in 2028.

Member Ulrich asked if we included an “up to” amount if that could work?

- Staff replied that having the total award amount as an up to would be very different from how Regional Solicitation is done and could complicate the solicitation.

Vice Chair Martinson asked if the planned solicitation cycle would follow the federal process of every other year?

- Staff replied that the AT solicitation could be annual if that is what is desired from TAB members, but would require likely additional staff to maintain an annual solicitation. As this would not be an issue until 2027, there would be time to staff up to prepare if needed.

Member Ulrich stated that we could do two years for this first round and then move to annual after that.

Vice Chair Martinson stated that with the increase in inflation over the past couple of years, that needs to be something we consider as well with solicitation timings and how much funds to release next year. Every project that is delayed or not funded will be more expensive in the future. He is leaning toward releasing more funds for 2026 to get more project funded sooner.

Technical members agreed that inflation is a big issue in construction especially right now. Any interest gained from funds in the account will be offset by increases in project costs in future years.

Member Karwoski noted that if we stuck to spending existing funds for 2026 but went to annual in 2027 and beyond that could be another way to help with inflation.

Geographic Balance Options

For time on the decision points in the meeting, the geographic balance discussion was pushed back to September.

Local Match Requirements

Staff presented considerations for local match

Member Jepson stated that she was in support of not imposing a local match on applicants. There are a lot of small communities where the total budget are in the low millions, any match for even a million dollar grant would be prohibitive for these communities. This is a huge opportunity to get projects funded in more types of communities that cannot afford the match.

- She is also in favor of option two to allow for the grants to fund more than just construction, its important to be able to fund the design of projects to be built as much as building them.

Member Karwoski agreed with member Jepson on not imposing a match for these grants. He has spoken with staff and was convinced that a match for these could be prohibitive for smaller communities. He offered an idea to base match on the size or status of a community. One option could be a 5% match for communities above 5,000 residents (typically a state aid eligible community) and no match for communities under 5,000 residents.

- He is also in favor of option two except for allowing ROW to be funded through the grants.

Typically if a project needs to acquire ROW still, it is an indication the project is not quite ready to go and could face major delays or cost increases based on the negotiations for land.

Member Xiong agreed with member Karwoski. She is leaning toward no match and to fund other aspects of projects but not ROW acquisition.

Member Holberg stated that she is a proponent of requiring a local match for grant awards but for very small communities could see a compromise as member Karwoski mentioned. Larger communities should have a match as it helps communities prioritize projects and what is the most important to apply for.

Member Jepson stated that a lot of the cons of no match are making assumptions but we do not know what will happen with the first solicitation. No match would level the playing field for applicants and would be the most simple. She noted that it would be much easier to reassess and add a match in future solicitations than take one away. She also stated that it was telling the legislature did not include a match requirement in the bill and if they had intended for there to be a match, they would have required that from the beginning.

Technical members noted that some counties have helped local communities apply and meet match in the past, so if there is a match imposed that would not necessarily eliminate very small communities from participating.

Chair Johnson asked if we would be able to narrow options for TAB to consider. He said it seemed clear the 20% option or no change from federal requirements does not have support. He also proposed to remove 10% match as well. He moved to narrow the options that the group would recommend to no match or a 5% match and the group agreed on consent. Staff will develop program details and TAB will decide at the end of the process.

Chair Johnson also moved to include additional eligibility for grants (option 2) without ROW acquisition for recommendation. The group agreed on consent.

Planning category match

Member Holberg had a question on the planning category to confirm that it would cover systemwide planning instead of project specific.

- Staff clarified that is correct. The planning specific category will focus on more systemwide planning for communities without such plans to provide aid for these communities to prepare to apply for grants for construction or other active transportation initiatives in the future.

Chair Johnson noted that this category would tie into the legislative language that requires grants to consider the planning conducted within communities for selecting of infrastructure grants.

The group moved to agree with the staff recommendation and recommend that there be no match for the planning category.

Minimum and Maximum Awards for Active Transportation Related Categories

Staff presented proposed minimum and maximum awards for active transportation categories

The group agreed with the proposed minimum and maximum awards for the infrastructure categories and recommended that they move forward.

For the planning category, the group discussed options to remove the minimum award amount.

Vice Chair Martinson noted that there are many types of planning at very different scales which could take place and that removing the minimum award amount maximizes flexibility and applicability to many different types of planning projects and applicants.

Member Jepson agreed that it makes sense to remove the minimum and defers to staff on this matter.

Next month the group will discuss geographic balance considerations, solicitation timing and begin to provide feedback on the application materials.