

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805
Minutes of a Meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
November 17, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Mayasich (chair, Ramsey County), Lynne Bly (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT Metro State Aid), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Jen Lehmann (MVTA), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Lyssa Leitner (Washington County), Joe MacPherson (Anoka County), Gina Mitteco (MnDOT Bike & Ped), Ryan Peterson (Burnsville), Steve Peterson (Metropolitan Council), Lyndon Robjent (Carver County), John Sass (Dakota County), Nancy Spooner-Mueller (DNR), Carla Stueve (Hennepin County), and Joe Barbeau (staff)

OTHERS PRESENT: Carl Ohrn (Metropolitan Council) and Nick Thompson (Metropolitan Council)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: Koutsoukos moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Ryan Peterson. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the October 20, 2016, Meeting

MOTION: Ryan Peterson moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Sass. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. TAB Report – Information Item

Koutsoukos reported on the November 16, 2016, TAB meeting. Scott McBride, MnDOT, reported that FAST Lane funding is available with an application deadline in February. MnDOT submitted three applications this year and will look at the opportunity to submit again after learning about out the guidance.

The following actions were taken:

- Approval of a streamlined TIP amendment for the Metro Transit 12th Street Transit Ramp.
- Approval of a scope change for Three Rivers Park District.
- Approval of the TIP amendment that accompanies the Three Rivers Park District scope change.
- Approval of a motion for TAB to vote on TBI funding at its December meeting.
- Acceptance of TAC's recommendation to include the following recommendations from the TBI work group:
 - That consultant selection committees for TBI- and modeling-related activities include local agency representation.
 - That Council modeling staff establish a regional transportation modeling work group, inclusive of the counties and other interested agencies, to establish how to best assure that the regional model is of optimal use to the Council's regional partners.
 - That Council staff provide a graphic version of TBI and modeling activities.
 - That a scope of work be provided.
 - That a breakdown of funding sources be provided.

5. Regional Solicitation Scoring Appeals – Action Item 2016-57

Koutsoukos said that applicants of seven Regional Solicitation applications have challenged the scoring of one or more measures.

A. Shared Mobility, Community Outreach and Development Program Demonstration, CarFreeLife (Travel Demand Management)

- Requests re-evaluation of:
 - 2: Average Weekday Usage
 - 4A: Congestion Reduction/Air Quality

2. Role in the Regional Transportation System and Economy

The applicant said that its proposal had the highest number of users among proposals that used a conversion factor to derive anticipated actual users rather than indirect users or project area gross population numbers. The scorer and Scoring Committee chair agreed to change the score to give the application the top score and change the other scores proportionately.

MOTION: Ryan Peterson moved to accept the change recommended by the scorer. Seconded by Bly. The motion was approved unanimously.

4A. Congestion Reduction/Air Quality

The application scored no points in this category. The applicant felt that the proposed project will lead to improved air quality. The scorer said that the response makes no mention of congested roadways and does not have a strong answer regarding reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips and therefore recommends no change. The Scoring Committee chair agreed with this.

MOTION: Sass moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by Lehmann. The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Learn to Ride Bicycle Program Expansion, Cycles for Change (Travel Demand Management)

- Requests re-evaluation of:
 - 2: Average Weekday Usage
 - 5: Innovation

2. Average Weekday Usage

The applicant said that it reported usage and therefore should not have scored zero. The scorer and Scoring Committee chair recommended using 500 daily users and adjusting the score accordingly.

MOTION: Lehmann moved to accept the change recommended by the scorer. Seconded by Ryan Peterson. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Innovation Reduction/Air Quality

The applicant felt that the application should score at least 100 points for expanding its geographic scope, or possibly up to 200 points for innovation beyond the existing program. The scorer said that the project is not a new policy or program, leaving it with a maximum score of 100. The scorer did not feel the score of 50 should be changed. The Scoring Committee chair agreed.

Leitner asked whether the scoring guidance says that scorers must assign different amounts of points to each project. Koutsoukos said that it does not.

MOTION: Stueve moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by Flintoft. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. Arterial Corridor Management, City of St. Paul (Roadway System Management)

- Requests re-evaluation of:
 - 5A: Vehicle Delay Reduced
 - 5B: Kg of Emissions Reduced

5A. Vehicle Delay Reduced

The applicant questioned use of the Synchro model as many congestion-reducing elements are not captured by the program. The scorers and Scoring Committee chair agreed that this is worth exploring for the future but given that the scoring guidance was followed, no change should be made.

MOTION: Ryan Peterson moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by Stueve. The motion was approved unanimously.

Robjent reported that when he reviewed this proposed scoring change he found an error on Hennepin County's project data that over-scored itself for this category.

MOTION: Robjent moved to re-score measure 5A in Roadway System Management to reflect a correction to the applicant's error for delay. Seconded by Sass. The motion was approved unanimously.

5B. Kg of Emissions Reduced

The applicant questioned use of the Synchro model as many emissions-reducing elements are not captured by the program. The scorers and Scoring Committee chair agreed that this is worth exploring for the future but given that the scoring guidance was followed, no change should be made.

MOTION: Robjent moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by Koutsoukos. The motion was approved unanimously.

Leitner said that the City of St. Paul, in its challenge, did a good job of outlining scoring issues. Koutsoukos replied that this will be reviewed in time for the next Regional Solicitation.

Robjent pointed out that with the error correction to measure 5A, measures 5A and 5B have the expected direct relationship in scores that was lacking following the Scoring Committee meeting.

D. Town Center Station - LRT Green Line Extension Re-Evaluation, City of Eden Prairie (Transit Expansion)

- Requests re-evaluation of:
 - 1B: Average Number of Weekday Transit Trips Connected to the Project
 - 2A: New Annual Riders
 - 4A: Total Emissions Reduction
 - 6A: Risk Assessment

1B. Average Number of Weekday Transit Trips Connected to the Project

The applicant felt that its connection to the Metro Green Line Extension was not appropriately counted. The scorer and Scoring Committee chair said that the Metro Green Line Extension is a planned route and is not a part of the score along with the existing routes. The project received 15 points for connection to a planned transitway.

MOTION: Mitteco moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by Sass. The motion was approved unanimously.

2A. New Annual Riders

The applicant felt that the scorer's 25 percent reduction in points was based on incomplete information that the third-year data was used. The scorer and Scoring Committee chair felt that, in light of that information, elimination of the reduction is appropriate and the measure should be re-scored.

MOTION: Ryan Peterson moved to accept the change recommended by the scorer. Seconded by Stueve. The motion was approved unanimously.

4A. Total Emissions Reduced

The applicant felt that a change to 2A should lead to a change in this measure. The scorer and Scoring Committee chair said that the score in this measure was not dependent on measure 2A and should therefore not be changed.

MOTION: Bly moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by Mitteco. The motion was approved unanimously.

6A. Risk Assessment

The applicant said that it provided enough information to score the full 50 points. The scorer and Scoring Committee chair said that the score is based on information provided at the time of the application deadline. Some of the information arrived later. Therefore, they recommended no scoring change.

MOTION: Bly moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by Sass. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. Local Service Expansion in Rosemount, MVTA (Transit Expansion)

- Requests re-evaluation of:

-5: Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements of the Project and Connections

The applicant said that the scores of zero were not appropriate for travel experience, transit stop bike connections, or transit stop pedestrian connections. The scorer and Scoring Committee Chair agreed to provide five points to each score for a total of 15.

MOTION: Bly moved to accept the change recommended by the scorer. Seconded by Sass. The motion was approved unanimously.

F. Route 444 Modernization, MVTA (Transit Modernization)

- Requests re-evaluation of:

-5A: Percent Reduction in Passenger Travel Time

-6: Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements of the Project and Connections

5A. Percent Reduction in Passenger Travel Time

The applicant said that the travel time reduction was not accounted for. The scorer and Scoring Committee chair agreed that this was missed due to an error in the spreadsheet and that the score should be adjusted accordingly.

MOTION: Leitner moved to accept the change recommended by the scorer. Seconded by Stueve. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements of the Project and Connections

The applicant felt that the scorer did not account for some connections and for use of the shoulder. The scorer agreed that he had missed language about shoulders though he had not missed any connections and suggested a 10-point increase. The Scoring Committee chair agreed.

MOTION: Sass moved to accept the response from the scorer and not change this score. Seconded by MacPherson. The motion was approved unanimously.

G. Minnesota Valley State Trail-Bloomington Section, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities)

- Requests re-evaluation of:
 - 3A: Socio-Economic Conditions

The applicant said that there may have been a discrepancy between the results displayed on the map entitled “Socio-Economic Conditions” and the results indicated on the application itself. The scorer and Scoring Committee Chair agreed that the application response incorrectly listed its geographic area and agreed that the score should change from 5 to 7.5, rounded to 8.

MOTION: Mitteco moved to accept the change recommended by the scorer. Seconded by Lehmann. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of the Final Scores

Robjnt moved to recommend approval of the final scores, reflective of the changes made due to appeals and the correction of the error to the Hennepin County Roadway System Management project. Seconded by MacPherson. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Regional Solicitation Inflation Adjustment – Action Item 2016-58

Steve Person said that the TAB Executive Committee asked TAC to consider two options for inflation adjustment: no inflation and a two percent per year adjustment that would have the effect of adding eight percent for 2021 projects and 10 percent for 2022 projects. MnDOT, which is currently in the process of programming the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) projects, will follow TAB’s lead regarding inflation, though some at MnDOT would prefer not to add inflation.

Leitner asked why there is a desire for HSIP to forgo inflation, to which Steve Peterson replied that this would allow for funding of more projects. Leitner said that Washington County prefers that philosophy for the Regional Solicitation as well. Lehmann said that some agencies do not have the funds to absorb inflated projects and a known absence or presence of inflation could impact how agencies apply for projects. Steve Peterson said that there has been discussion about deciding upon inflation before the application is released for future Regional Solicitations.

Robjnt said that he supports eschewing inflation in favor of more projects.

Ryan Peterson asked whether previous solicitations have awarded inflation. Ohrn said that inflation has always been included. Robjnt said that the federal maximum award has been increased, an act that could be considered a replacement of inflation.

Bly suggested that applicants presumed that inflation would be included when they applied and that the absence of inflation could therefore lead to more risk.

Stueve that rather than eliminating inflation, the inclusion of 2022 projects could be used to increase the number of projects. Leitner replied that this would not increase the overall number of projects. She added that there is project risk with or without inflation.

Ohrn said that the inclusion of inflation has served as an incentive for completing projects in advance because applicants still receive the full amount awarded if they complete their projects early.

Flintoft asked what the Regional Solicitation says about inflation, to which Koutsoukos replied that it simply instructs applicants to estimate its costs in current-year dollars.

Robjent asked whether members could look at funding scenarios with and without inflation to inform the decision. Steve Peterson said that a draft exists for both scenarios but had not been unveiled so as not to impact the recommendation. Brown said that applicants should be aware that scenarios are drafts at this time and should manage their expectations.

Ryan Peterson suggested that inflation should be addressed as it always has and the decision around inflation should be made earlier for the next solicitation.

Sass said that Dakota County re-estimates inflation every year and does not pay attention to the change from the time the project is awarded to when it is completed and that he therefore supports not including inflation.

MOTION: Sass moved to recommend to TAC that inflation not be added to projects programmed in the 2017 Regional Solicitation. Seconded by Robjent. The motion failed by a vote of nine to five.

Jenson asked whether the inflation rate can be set somewhere between two percent per year and zero, to which Steve Peterson replied in the affirmative.

MOTION: Ryan Peterson moved to recommend that projects programmed in the 2017 Regional Solicitation be provided eight percent inflation for 2021 and ten percent inflation for 2022. Seconded by Stueve. The motion was approved by a vote of nine to four.

Mayasich introduced two new members, Joe MacPherson from Anoka County and Nancy Spooner-Mueller from DNR. He also introduced the new Director of Metropolitan Transportation Services, Nick Thompson.

7. Regional Solicitation Draft Funding Scenarios – Information Item

Metropolitan Council staff passed out draft funding scenarios. Flintoft asked for an explanation of the difference between the “modernization” and “expansion” scenarios in the bicycle and pedestrian mode. Steve Peterson explained that the approach in that mode did not change and that any difference was reflective of fitting projects into the full program after changes to other modes.

Jenson said that there had been interest in reducing the maximum federal amount for the Multiuse Trails and Bicycles category so more projects could be funded. He suggested that, given the likely inclusion of three projects receiving over \$5 million, this may be discussed again for the next solicitation.

Koutsoukos said that the draft scores will be provided to TAC and TAB and that the Funding & Programming Committee will make a recommendation to TAC at its next meeting.

8. Adjournment

Robjent moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by MacPherson. The meeting was adjourned.