

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805

Minutes of a Meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
April 16, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Mayasich (chair), Colleen Brown, Mark Filipi, Jenifer Hager, Brian Isaacson, Craig Jenson, Jane Kansier, Mary Karlsson, Elaine Koutsoukos, Bruce Loney, Eriks Ludins, Gina Mitteco, Ryan Peterson, Lyndon Robjert, Amanda Smith, John Sass, Carla Stueve, Michael Thompson, Cynthia Wheeler, Andrew Witter, and Joe Barbeau (staff)

OTHERS PRESENT: Gayle Gedstad (MnDOT), Jim Grube (Hennepin County), Maury Hooper (Hennepin County), Carl Ohrn (MTS), Steve Peterson (MTS), Katie White (MTS)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: Eriks Ludins moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Andrew Witter. Mark Filipi moved to rearrange agenda item 8, 2014 Regional Solicitation Development of Funding Alternatives, to immediately follow the TAB report. Seconded by Elaine Koutsoukos. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: Brian Isaacson moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Filipi. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. TAB Report

Elaine Koutsoukos reported that TAB Executive Committee met prior to the April TAB meeting. There was complex discussion regarding the Regional Solicitation funding and final scores, which will be part of the TAB discussions and recommendations at this TAB meeting. The Metropolitan Council approved the draft amendment to the 2040 Housing Policy Plan on March 25. The plan has three main components including an update of the allocation of affordable housing need and update of the criteria to develop the housing performance scores. The plan is out for public comment until May 15. On Thursday 4/09 updated local forecasts of population, employment and households went out to local governments. The forecasts will be out for public comment until May. TAB approved the 2016-2019 TIP schedule.

5. 2014 Regional Solicitation Development of Funding Alternatives – Action Item

Steve Peterson said that TAB thought the eight funding scenario options provided in the packet is too many and would prefer that three scenarios be provided for consideration: 1) the mid-level “base” scenario brought to the Committee last month, 2) the mid-level “expansion-heavy” scenario, and 3) the mid-level “modernization/reconstruction-heavy” scenario. TAB requested that Staff provide the following items for information:

- Pie chart showing the solicitation as a proportion of total funding.
- Pie chart showing the proportion of bikeway/ped funding vs. overall funding.
- Map highlighting the projects versus the geographic areas highlighted in the equity measure.
- Information on which projects are included in the geographic areas highlighted in the equity measure
- List of the Council sector representatives.
- Summary charts and maps for all options considered. Add to the table the number of projects submitted, by county.
- List of proposed projects that are connected to each other.
- Information on travel behavior?

Steve Peterson provided the following overview comments:

1. The mid-level and all additional preliminary scenarios proportioned the \$143.57 M of 2018 and 2019 funds by mode to reflect the TAB-approved modal funding ranges (based on historic averages).
 - A. Roadways Including Multimodal Elements (48%-68% of funds)
 - B. Transit and TDM Projects (22%-32% of funds)
 - C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities (10%-20% of funds)
2. Money was distributed between the various sub-categories within each mode based on the dollar value of the projects submitted.
3. Per TAB's direction, \$7 M is set aside for TMO/TDM funding (\$5.8 M for base-level TDM funding for Metro Transit and the TMOs and \$1.2 M for the competitive TDM solicitation). This \$7 M is reflected in all of the preliminary funding scenarios shown in the attached tables.
4. As in all past solicitations and the development of this year's scenarios, the point breaks have been used to assist in "drawing lines" for funding recommendations. However, there is not a good natural break in the scores for the multiuse trails and bicycle facilities category.
5. For Safe Routes to School funding, most preliminary funding scenarios distribute \$953,884 (2 projects) to this sub-category. MnDOT's target for Safe Routes to School funding is approximately \$1 M. The next project on the ranked list is for \$177,600, which would meet and exceed this target.
6. No A-Minor Arterial Connector projects are funded in any preliminary scenario.
7. While some of the 2017 federal funds have been allocated, some remain to be distributed in this solicitation. The 2017 TAP funds and the 2017 CMAQ funds for transit expansion were allocated in separate solicitations. TAB has directed the approximately \$19 M of STP funds toward the roadway category. TAB also set aside \$4.32 M of CMAQ funds for roadway system management projects, similar to past allocations. Since the beginning of the solicitation, MnDOT has determined that an additional \$3.3 M of 2017 CMAQ funds are available. In order to develop preliminary scores, staff suggests that \$3.3 M of new funds could be assigned to 2017 system management projects since these types of projects can be delivered relatively quickly. If this is done, the freed up funds could be used to fund the #8 ranked roadway reconstruction/modernization project (\$3.13 M requested) in a later program year.

Steve Peterson then posed two key questions:

1. To what level should we over-program? All current funding scenarios are over-programmed by approximately \$3 M-\$5 M (2%-3.5%).
2. What funding scenarios does the Committee wish to forward to TAC? Given TAB's direction, the Committee is most likely looking at the mid-level funding scenario, which has been broken into three sub-scenarios: the base scenario, the roadway expansion-heavy scenario, and the roadway reconstruction/modernization-heavy scenario.

TAB hopes to decide on a final funding program in May, though a special meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 3.

Historically, based on the 2003 through 2011 Regional Solicitations, roadway expansion has accounted for 66 percent of roadway funding, while the mid-level base scenario has it at 52 percent. Reconstruction and modernization shows an increase from 16 percent to 33 percent. Bridges and system management show drops from 11 percent to nine percent and from seven percent to six percent, respectively. Historically, multiuse trails and bicycle facilities have accounted for 88 percent of bicycle and pedestrian funding, while the mid-level scenario has it at 89 percent. Pedestrian facilities shows a decrease from 12 percent to seven percent, while Safe Routes to School, which has never been a part of the solicitation, accounts for four percent in the mid-level base scenario. This is the first time that there has been a transit modernization category. The only application is shown as funded in the mid-level base scenario.

Steve Peterson shared the mid-level base scenario, which was provided at last month's meeting.

The Council was recently informed of \$3 million in additional CMAQ funds. The scenarios reflect this funding going toward roadway system management. This enabled \$3.1 to be shown funding Ramsey County's White Bear Avenue reconstruction project.

Steve Peterson shared the “roadway expansion-heavy” mid-level funding scenario, which adds three roadway expansion projects, adds one bridge project, and subtracts five reconstruction/modernization projects from the base scenario. He then shared the “roadway reconstruction/modernization-heavy” mid-level funding scenario, which adds one reconstruction/modernization project, adds four bridge projects, and subtracts three expansion projects from the base scenario. The funding summaries show these scenarios overprogrammed at between \$4.5 million and \$6 million.

Michael Thompson said that the “roadway expansion-heavy” scenario causes a lot of other projects to be removed.

Tim Mayasich said that TAB has asked for three scenarios and will have to address the details. Therefore the question is whether there is more to do at a technical level. Isaacson question whether the Committee has pushed enough boundaries to draw out a complete set of options for policymakers.

Gina Mitteco asked whether the bicycle and pedestrian elements of roadway projects can be quantified. Koutsoukos replied that they can. Witter suggested that this information be added to the pie charts TAB requested.

Ryan Peterson said that MnDOT provides very little funding for expansion and that this is therefore a rare opportunity to expand. Carla Stueve expressed disagreement, stating that a lot of Hennepin County bridges are in bad condition and that safety should be key.

Isaacson asked about the connection between the Trunk Highway 36 interchange project and the Hadley Avenue trail tunnel project. Carl Ohrn said that the two projects are related but not co-dependent.

Isaacson said that there is not a compelling reason to favor one or more of the packages. MOTION: Brian Isaacson moved to send the three mid-level scenarios to TAB as they are. Seconded by Filipi.

Mary Karlsson suggested that staff try to call out the differences among the three scenarios. Isaacson added that the summary page should show where the scenarios land within the TAB-established modal ranges.

Koutsoukos said that staff is contacting sponsors to see what projects can move up and potentially use the 2016 CMAQ funds of \$12.3 Million. That decision, however, cannot move forward until the final regional solicitation projects are selected. Steve Peterson said that the TAB executive committee expressed interest in using funds for additional projects as opposed to providing additional funds for already-programmed projects.

The motion to send the three mid-level scenarios to TAB as they are was approved unanimously.

6. Scope Change Request – Hennepin County CSAH 53 Reconstruction Project – Action Item

Barbeau said that Hennepin County received \$7,000,000 in Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding for reconstruction of CSAH 53 from just west of Washburn Avenue to 16th Avenue in Richfield for FY 2016. The County is requesting a scope change that would expand upon its original scope. Additions include an increase in project lane miles, increased length of bicycle facilities, \$4 million in City of Richfield utility reconstruction, and a cost increase. Staff reviewed the submitted scope change request. The project originally scored 708 points and was ranked second out of seven projects that applied in the “A” Minor Relievers category.

Staff review, which included sharing the proposed update with some of the scorers from the 2011 solicitation, examined whether the updated project would have scored well enough to be funded. The most notable scoring change was “Crash Reduction Cost Effectiveness”, which dropped by roughly 50% due to the large project cost increase. This drops the score to 654, which is below the 687 that an unfunded project, also sponsored by Hennepin County, received. Based on the information provided by the City, the input of the original scorers, and the Process to Evaluate Scope Change Requests for Regionally-Selected Projects, staff recommends denial of the requested scope change. Jim Grube, Hennepin County Engineer, said that the County seeks the Committee’s

support. The Richfield City Council now supports the project and the City will be taking 18 homes. The project will add off-road bicycle access around the entire City of Richfield. With \$4 million from the city and an unusually high amount dedicated for contingency, one could interpret this \$40 million project to be \$33.54 million. Barbeau added that he ran that amount by the Crash Reduction Cost Effectiveness scorer, who said that the amount would raise the score by 15 points, still not enough to overcome the unfunded project.

Mayasich asked how far the project has gone through the process. Grube replied that it is 50 to 60 percent complete.

Colleen Brown said that it is difficult to determine where this project should rate amongst other projects for cost/benefit-related scores because all projects have funding amounts that shift.

Mitteco asked whether benefits on the score were factored based on removal of the median. Barbeau said that for the crash reduction on the principal arterial being relieved, the scorer originally gave the project 50 out of 50 points, so that score could not be increased. For the crash reduction on the reliever, the scorer originally gave the project 30 out of 50 and Barbeau said he is unsure of what that score did not change.

Robjent express agreement with Brown that it is very difficult to compare cost. MOTION: Robjent moved to recommend approval of the scope change request. Seconded by Witter.

Karlsson asked whether the local funding for the cost increase is available. Grube replied that it is.

Mayasich suggested that for fairness sake, the scoring analysis should be shared with the applicant.

Robjent asked whether the County would complete this project anyway, regardless of whether the federal funding was dropped. Grube replied that the County board and City of Richfield would be unhappy about losing \$7 million; they are already contributing \$20 million and another \$7 million would be prohibitive.

The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Solicitation Release – 2015-2017 Transit TDM Solicitation – Information Item

Katie White said that in the 2009 Regional Solicitation, TAB set-aside \$7 million in CMAQ funds for TDM activities in FFY 2013-2014. The funding was meant to support both the baseline TDM activities of the TMOs and Metro Transit, and also to fund new innovative TDM activities at the rate of \$600,000 per year. TAB now has 2015, 2016, and 2017 funding for innovative TDM projects available, for a total of \$1.8 million. Under the current schedule, 2018 and 2019 funds will be available in the spring of 2017 for the next innovative TDM solicitation. The criteria scoring innovative TDM solicitation were adopted through TAB action in September 2014 as part of the adoption of the current Regional Solicitation criteria. In 2013 the first solicitation for innovative TDM projects was released and seven projects were funded on October 1, 2014. Spending for these projects is currently underway.

MOTION: Filipi moved to release the TDM solicitation. Seconded by Brown. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. 2017 Regional Solicitation Funding Update – Information Item

Barbeau said that the tables included in the agenda packet reflect some changes in funding amounts believed to be available for the Regional Solicitation. Some changes are minor. Major changes include about \$3.2 million in additional 2017 CMAQ funding and just under \$1 million in additional 2017 STP funding.

9. 2014 HSIP Solicitation Project Ranking – Information Item

Issacson said that the Committee will take action on this item next month. Seventy percent of the funding is used for reactive projects, while 30 percent is used for proactive projects. The agenda packet includes a list of projects selected in each track along with projects not selected. Local partners helped to score the proposals.

Robgent asked who proactive projects are selected. Gayle Gedstad said that County Road Safety Plans are the starting point. Carla Stueve said that the best projects are low cost and cover a large area, as opposed to being spot improvements.

10. Report on Streamlined TIP Amendments – Information Item

Barbeau said that in the roughly one year since the amendment streamlining process was enacted, 22 amendments have gone through, or are scheduled to go through, Council. Of those roughly two thirds have been streamlined. Streamlined amendments take an average of 11 days between their first meeting, TAB, and Council concurrence, while standard amendments that are not regionally significant take an average of 59 days between their first meeting, Funding and Programming, and Council concurrence.

The TAC Executive Committee approves use of the streamlined process for each amendment. Koutsoukos relays each streamlined amendment to Funding and Programming Committee and TAC via her TAB report.

11. Other Business

None.

12. Adjournment

MOTION: Filipi moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Thompsons. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned.