
*Transportation Advisory Board
Of the Metropolitan Council*

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Wednesday, September 3, 2014
9:00 A.M.**

Members Present: Doug Fischer, Lyndon Robjent, Brian Sorenson, Tom Johnson, Tim Mayasich, Lisa Freese, Elaine Koutsoukos, Mark Filipi, Michael Larson, Adam Harrington, Pat Bursaw, Innocent Eyoh, Jim Gromberg, Dave Christianson, Danny McCullough, Karl Keel, Jean Keely, Steve Albrecht, Paul Oehme, Kim Lindquist, Bruce Loney, Jenifer Hager, Paul Kurtz, Hilary Holmes (for Michelle Beaulieu) (Members Excused: Steve Bot, Jan Lucke, Bridget Rief, Michael Thompson, Duane Schwartz)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mark Filipi made the motion and Tim Mayasich seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

3. Approval of March Minutes

The August 6, 2014 meeting minutes were approved as written. Mark Filipi made the motion, Steve Albrecht seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

4. TAB Report

Elaine Koutsoukos reported on TAB's August 20 meeting:

Chair: Bill Hargis reported that TAB Executive Committee met prior to the TAB meeting and reviewed future TAB agendas. Bill introduced the new Freight representative, William Goins, from FedEx.

MnDOT: Scott McBride announced that MnDOT let the 610 project, a Corridors of Commerce Project, for \$80 M.

MAC: Carl Crimmins reported that the American Public Works Association is awarding the diamond interchange project at I-494/34th as National Project of the Year.

Met Council: Katie White distributed a schedule of the Public Workshops for public comment for the draft 2040 Transportation Policy Plan. Arlene McCarthy announced the Rail~volution Conference will be in Minneapolis August 20-24.

TAC: Elaine Koutsoukos read TAC Chair Bursaw's report on the August TAC meetings. TAC welcomed 3 new members: Michael Larson, Met Council Community Development; Dave Christianson, Freight Representative, MnDOT Freight Office; and Danny McCullough, Non-Motorized Representative, Statewide Non-Motorized Transportation Committee.

A Work Group to address use of withdrawn funds was established. Several members volunteered to serve on the work group. This group will also review the latest scope change policy and propose any needed revisions prior to being finalized. The work group will complete its work by the end of the year and forward its recommendations to TAB.

TAC members were asked to begin thinking about the new TAC chair following completion of the current chair's 3-year term that ends in December 2014.

Regional Solicitation Update: Steve Peterson, SRF, presented an update of the Regional Solicitation packet. There was significant discussion on the Equity Measures. Discussion will continue in the next month. A request was made, after the Solicitation is completed, to look at the impacts of the Equity and Housing Scores.

Consent List:

Five consent items were approved:

- July TAB minutes
- Scope change request from Ramsey County for Dale Street
- Functional Classification System Map
- 2017-2019 HSIP Solicitation
- Public Comments and approval of the I-494 TIP Amendment

Action Items:

Four action items were approved:

- Regional Solicitation Modal Funding Ranges
 - Roadways: 48 - 68% (\$72M - \$102M)
 - Transit & TDM: 22 - 32% (\$33M - \$48M)
 - Bicycle & Pedestrian: 10 - 20% (\$15M - \$30M)
- 2015 Unified Planning Work Program
- Public Comment Report on DRAFT 2015-2018 TIP
- Final 2015-2018 TIP

Info Item:

Corridors of Commerce – Mark Gieseke, MnDOT, presented an overview of the Corridors of Commerce program. Mark responded to the TAC comments forwarded to TAB. The funding for the program in 2014 and 2015 is \$31.5M. This is not a formal solicitation, but a request for potential projects. A website to submit public comments electronically will open on September 3 and be open for two weeks. MnDOT's Commissioner will make the selection of projects.

5. Committee Reports

A. Executive Committee (Pat Bursaw, Chair)

The Federal Funding Reallocation Work Group will meet on September 9. Thanks to those who volunteered to serve on this group, and others are welcome. Joe Barbeau is coordinating this group.

B. Funding and Programming Committee (Karl Keel, Chair)

Action item 2014-60: Regional Solicitation Design:

Karl Keel introduced this item from the agenda. Steve Peterson from SRF presented an overview. Heidi Schallberg presented the equity section. Discussion as follows:

Housing

Comment: Moving from county-based scoring to city-based is a big shift.

Response: The committee met and determined that the city scores is the most accurate method. Counties are too broad of a scale to use. County work in the various cities is included in the city score. Current county score methodology is also tilted in favor of counties with HRAs.

Comment: If the county is applying for a project and they have a good housing score, the city score should not be used. The housing points are half the safety points.

Response: The methodology behind the scores is being updated. If we used the county scores they would not differentiate between the counties because most are so close to one another.

Comment: The projects in this solicitation are regional, not local, so the county score would be better to use.

Comment: Please explain the normalized score process for cities too small to have their own housing score.

Response: The points for housing would be removed from the total number of points possible and a formula is used to normalize with other cities that do have housing scores.

Equity

Comment: Will the Council provide a guideline to scorers to explain the 'benefit' of a project falling in these areas?

Response: The benefits to these populations and communities depends on the project.

Comment: EJ concerns have been used against projects in the past where there are concerns about short-term construction impacts. These short-term impacts can be negative or perceived to be negative. This area should not aim to remove points from projects.

Response: Thought should go into the projects on how to address these considerations.

Comment: What is a highway benefit? What is the correlation between equity and highways? What about the perception of negative impacts?

Response: None of the community relations information goes into the solicitation; this is all handled through project development several years in the future. The criteria in the solicitation should reflect EJ priorities. Projects get points awarded for intent.

Comment: EJ is very specific on project impacts. Disconnect due to unintended consequences as a result of this solicitation.

Response: EJ also includes principle to "prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income communities." Not just impacts.

Comment: For highway projects an increase in speed and decrease in congestion can increase the air quality of affected communities.

Comment: Which reinforces the fact that the Regional Solicitation is oriented to support the urban areas based on RCAPs.

Comment: EJ says to “avoid, minimize, mitigate” and the best option for most of these areas would be to “avoid” and not do the project at all.

Comment: We have limited funds but they should be allocated to disadvantaged neighborhoods, all else being equal in project applications.

Comment: Equity shouldn’t be in the expansion category. It is hard to deliver expansion projects in these areas.

Comment: Transit expansion is very different from highway expansion. Considerations reflected in the different criteria weightings. Transit has equity/housing weighted higher than roadways.

Karl Keel moved the recommended motion from Funding & Programming. Jim Gromberg seconded.

Mark Filipi moved to amend the recommendation to use the Steering Committee percentages and weighting. Innocent Eyoh seconded.

Comment: Our job is to advise the policy groups, so this is our professional opinion. This is not a policy perspective.

Comment: Agree. This is not a policy perspective. The Work Groups spent a lot of time talking about this. We tried to strike a balance. It was frustrating to have the Steering Committee turn around the Work Group recommendations. There will be unintended consequences from using the RCAPs.

Comment: It is likely that TAB will go their own way on this.

Comment: The Council has Thrive and wants to see it implemented in its work products, which includes having equity in the Regional Solicitation. The Council has the option to disagree with the outcome on this issue and potentially delay the release of the solicitation and therefore funding.

Comment: The Steering Committee recommendations are forcing something that doesn’t belong. Housing doesn’t take highway condition into consideration when making housing investments.

Comment: We are picking transportation projects. Lots of things are important to society that aren’t in the solicitation.

Comment: We will conduct a review of the solicitation once the process has concluded and see what the consequences are.

Comment: Jane Kansier from MVTa had a Title VI Comment at Funding and Programming – what was the resolution?

Response: We communicated with FTA in Washington D.C. and they agreed with the Council’s approach to and use of the MPO region EJ area averages, not transit system EJ area averages.

Vote on amended motion: 9-14. Motion fails.

Vote on original motion: 18-6. Motion carries.

Action item 2014-62: Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and the Solicitation

Amy Vennewitz presented a quick change needed to the TDM portion of the solicitation.

Comment: Are TMOs funded through 2017? There is no change and they are funded through 2019 at the flat \$2.9M.

Comment: We need to clarify in the memo that the operating dollars isn't changing. The proposal makes sense given the types of projects submitting for these funds.

Comment: Council staff needs to quantify the impact of TMOs to determine if this is a worthwhile expenditure of federal funds.

Comment: This is difficult to measure. TAB has appreciated their reporting in the past. It is hard to find objective measures for their impact.

Motion to forward this recommendation to TAB made by Karl Keel, seconded by Adam Harrington.
Motion passed.

C. Planning Committee (Lisa Freese, Chair)

The Planning Committee did not meet this month.

6. Special Agenda Items

There were no special agenda items.

1. Agency Reports

Mark Filipi reminded members that the TPP Workshops are underway.

8. Other Business and Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:30AM.

Prepared by:

Katie White