

Minutes of the REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAC FUNDING & PROGRAMING COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 22, 2019

Committee Members Present: Paul Oehme (Chair, Lakeville), Joe MacPherson (Anoka County), Angie Stenson (Carver County), John Sass (Dakota County), Jason Pieper (Hennepin County), Kevin Roggenbuck (Ramsey County), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Emily Jorgensen (Washington County), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Cole Hiniker (Metropolitan Council), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Jody Carr (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT Metro District State Aid), Mehjabeen Rahman, Mackenzie Turner Borgen (MnDOT Bike & Ped), Jen Lehmann (MVTA), Karl Keel (Bloomington), Jim Kosluchar (Fridley), Ken Ashfeld (Maple Grove), Michael Thompson (Plymouth), Jenifer Hager (Minneapolis), Anne Weber (St. Paul)

Committee Members Absent: Nancy Spooner-Mueller (DNR), Robert Ellis (Eden Prairie)

I. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Oehme called the regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee to order at 1:32 p.m. on Thursday, August 22, 2019.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Koutsoukos to approve the agenda with item 2019-47 moved up to follow item number 2019-38. Seconded by Jorgensen. **Motion carried unanimously.**

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Brown and seconded by Pieper to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2019, regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee. **Motion carried unanimously.**

IV. TAB REPORT

Koutsoukos reported on the August 21, 2019, TAB meeting.

V. BUSINESS

1. Scope Change request for Scott County's CSAH 2 and CSAH 91 Roundabout

Barbeau said The City of Elko New Market was awarded \$1,792,800 in Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds for fiscal year 2020 as part of the 2016 HSIP Solicitation. The award, managed by Scott County, was to fund a roundabout at the intersection of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 2 and CSAH 91. The scope consists of an unbalanced (2-lane by 1-lane) roundabout with pedestrian connections. Scott County is proposing a scope change that would extend multi-use trail construction and add decorative lighting. The project cost would increase and there is no reason to be concerned about the added elements. The question is whether federal funds can be moved to new project elements. Jenson said that Scott County does not anticipate the project coming under budget, but should a low bid come in, the federal funds could be used on the new elements. Keel said he supports the motion because it is a small amount of funding.

It was moved by Keel and seconded by MacPherson, to recommend approval of Scott County's request to change the scope of its CSAH 2 and CSAH 91 roundabout project to revise adjacent trail connections and allow HSIP funds to be used on new project elements. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2. 2019-38 2020-2023 TIP Amendment Request for Scott County's CSAH 2 and CSAH 91 Roundabout

It was moved by Keel and seconded by Thompson to recommend adoption of the 2020-2023 TIP Amendment Request for Scott County's CSAH 2 and CSAH 91 Roundabout. **Motion carried unanimously.**

3. 2019-47 2020 Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Application for Release for Public Comment

Kaare Festvog, MnDOT, provided a brief overview of changes proposed for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Solicitation. The scoring process is being changed in part to encourage bicycle and pedestrian project applications.

It was moved by Brown and seconded by Kosluchar, to recommend adoption approval of the draft 2020 HSIP application for release for public comment. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. 2019-39 2020 Regional Solicitation Funding Categories

Steve Peterson, Metropolitan Council, shared the proposed Regional Solicitation funding categories, which include a new "Spot Mobility and Safety" category, a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) program, and a Unique Projects category.

Hiniker added that TAB is still in the process of defining the BRT program.

Brown asked whether the Unique Project category would include any requirement related to project feasibility, to which Peterson said that this will be determined prior to the 2020 Regional Solicitation, when a project within the category will first be selected. Koutsoukos added that Council staff will work with FHWA to determine project deliverability. Hager said that the Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) should be included as part of the program, as opposed to competing with other unique projects. Keel asked what happens if there are no good projects, to which Peterson replied that the funding would go toward projects in the other categories.

Lehmann said that with TAB defining the BRT program, it would not go through technical review of impacts elsewhere in the Regional Solicitation; staff confirmed. She asked whether the final new market guarantee definition will go through technical review. Peterson said that TAB wants the Policy Work Group to review that again. Hiniker said that the Transit Work Group's recommendation is going to be the same regardless of what BRT program moves forward. Lehmann commented the new market guarantee definition as stated by Hiniker is different than what is shown in the packet and does not reflect feedback from suburban providers to ensure express services are eligible. She added that suburban transit providers are concerned about the lack of technical feedback, confusion over changing language, impacts on what transit elements are eligible/ineligible in each category, and the process of determining a BRT program and a new market guarantee. Lehmann questioned how concerns with the language and process will be carried forward with Funding & Programming's motion. Metropolitan Council staff responded they would be documented in the transmittal memo.

It was moved by Koutsoukos and seconded by Roggenbuck, to recommend approval of the funding categories in the 2020 Regional Solicitation, acknowledging that TAB is still determining the details of the eligibility of the categories. **Motion carried unanimously.**

5. 2019-40 2020 Regional Solicitation: Modal Funding Ranges

Peterson said that the modal funding ranges are proposed to reflect historic ranges, though 2.5% is proposed to be taken off the top for the Unique Projects category. Roggenbuck asked whether the targets are “hard targets” to which Peterson replied that while there is flexibility, the last three Regional Solicitations have seen the mid-points reflected.

It was moved by Koutsoukos and seconded by Hiniker, to recommend adoption of the historic funding ranges by mode, after setting 2.5% aside for Unique Projects, for the 2020 Regional Solicitation. **Motion carried unanimously.**

6. 2019-41 2020 Regional Solicitation: Funding Category Minimum and Maximum Funding Amounts and Inflation Factor

Peterson provided information on the maximum and minimum funding awards. This includes reducing the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities category from \$5.5 million to \$4 million. TAB wants options on how to try to accommodate large projects and an increased number of projects. Staff provides three options: 1. Allow for different maximums for projects with barriers and those without, 2. create two different trail categories (big and small projects), and 3. allow for only one project to be awarded up to \$5.5 million with the rest at the maximum of \$4 million.

For the third option, Kosluchar asked whether a \$5.5 million project would be funded regardless of whether it scored well enough to be funded, to which Peterson replied that that would not be the case. Hiniker suggested that a large project could be required to be in the top 10. Kosluchar asked whether a large project would be able to take less money, to which Peterson replied in the affirmative. MacPherson said that a fourth option could be to simply leave the maximum at \$4 million. Hiniker suggested that the maximum could be left at \$5.5 million given that 20% of the projects in the past solicitation requested at least \$5 million. Oehme suggested that two or three projects could be funded at \$5.5 million and have the other maximum be lower than \$4 million.

Lehmann stated the BRT program should be included in the minimum and maximum award table for consistency in showing all categories and questioned how the Regional Solicitation package funding ranges are impacted if a BRT program option is selected that exceeds the \$25 million to \$31 million amount that has been proposed. Metropolitan Council staff responded that if more money is allocated to transit it could potentially come from over-programming.

It was moved by Keel and seconded by Thompson, to recommend adoption of the minimum and maximum funding amounts for the 2020 regional Solicitation reflecting a decrease in the Traffic Management Technologies maximum from \$7 million to \$3.5 million; a \$1 million minimum and \$3.5 million maximum for the new Spot Mobility & Safety category; an increase in the Strategic Capacity (Roadway Expansion) maximum from \$7 million to \$10 million; an increase in the Transit Modernization minimum from \$100,000 to \$500,000; an increase in the TDM minimum from \$75,000 to \$100,000; and a decrease in the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities maximum from \$5.5 million to \$4 million with a recommendation to use the \$4 million maximum and, if another alternative is chosen, to allow one project to receive a maximum award above \$4 million but no higher than \$5.5 million. Roggenbuck asked whether the BRT category is needed in this item, to which Peterson said that the funding range is going to be decided by TAB. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Pieper asked whether inflation was going to be provided, to which Peterson replied that it is not.

7. 2019-42 2020 Regional Solicitation: Weighting of Criteria and Measures

Peterson presented proposed point-weightings of criteria and measures. Hager suggested that the new Safe Routes to School measure, Completion of Safe Routes to School Plan, could allow for local plans, given that it costs money to create a Safe Routes to School Plan.

It was moved by Roggenbuck and seconded by MacPherson, to recommend the weighting of the criteria and measures for the 2020 Regional Solicitation. **Motion carried unanimously.**

8. 2019-43 2020 Regional Solicitation Application Categories

Peterson presented changes to the scoring criteria. These include replacing the Equity “multiplier” with “bonus points,” and adding an affordable housing connection sub-measure to the Housing Performance Score measure. The bonus points would be awarded to any project that scores at least 80% in the category. Pieper expressed distaste for the term “bonus.” Amy Vennewitz, Metropolitan Council, said that this term has been used with the Policy Work Group and TAB and has not been questioned. Stenson expressed concern with potential contention related to applications that just miss the 80% threshold for bonus points. She added a suggestion of a 400-word limit for all questions within the equity measure.

Peterson presented other changes, including inclusion of public involvement in the risk assessment form, addition of a pedestrian safety measure in some Roadways categories, and inclusion of the Regional Bicycle Barriers Study and Major River Barrier Crossings in the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities scoring.

Regarding the public involvement addition to the risk assessment form, Lehmann asked who reviewed the public involvement language in the transit section and whether it makes sense to relax this in the Transit application categories as meetings aren’t typically held until funding is secured to help balance public expectations. Brown recalled the language applied to construction projects only.

Keel suggested that the Regional Solicitation is becoming more complicated, which is contrary to the goals of the 2014 update.

It was moved by Hager and seconded by Koutsoukos to recommend approval of the attached measures and scoring guidance for each application category for the 2020 Regional Solicitation with an update to Safe Route to School measure 1B (Completion of Safe Routes to School Plan) to allow for locally adopted plans or studies specifically addressing Safe Routes to School Criteria to score 50% of the available points. **Motion carried unanimously.**

9. 2019-44 2020 Regional Solicitation Policies, Qualifying criteria, and Project Eligibility

Peterson said that key changes to the Solicitation include removal of the \$10 million bridge minimum, changing the ADA transition plan requirement from “substantially working towards” to “complete,” and including a qualifying criterion requiring all Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities applications to include a letter from the operator of the facility confirming that it will remove snow and ice for year-round bicycle and pedestrian use.” He added that in response to a request from a potential applicant, Council staff is reminding the committee that the Solicitation currently states that projects listed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) are not eligible for Solicitation funding.

Passing along a question from a potential applicant, Koutsoukos asked whether plowing should be required on trails funded within road projects. Members were not interested in pursuing that.

Regarding whether to allow projects already in the TIP to be funded, Roggenbuck said that projects in the TIP are assumed to be fully funded. Thompson suggested that projects in the TIP should be allowed to apply.

Lehmann suggested adding a space for transit applicants to report their transit market(s) in the “Transit and Travel Demand Management (TDM) Projects Only” section of the Qualifying criteria. Hiniker said that this was not necessary, as this can be determined by checking a map. Lehmann replied that there has been discussion of qualitative assessment of transit market. Metropolitan Council staff stated the BRT program language in the Solicitation application will be updated for TAB per results of the Policy Work Group meeting.

It was moved by Roggenbuck and seconded by Hiniker to recommend to TAB adoption of the policies, qualifying criteria, and project eligibility for the 2020 Regional Solicitation with elimination of the prohibition on projects in the TIP. **Motion carried unanimously.**

10. 2019-45 2019-45: 2020 Regional Solicitation: Guaranteed Funding

Peterson stated that the draft Regional Solicitation includes a guarantee of funding at least one roadway project in each functional classification and funding at least one “new market” transit project. Lehmann commented that the definition in action transmittal 2019-45, which is different than the definition in action transmittal 2019-39, would exclude new express service to the urban core. Metropolitan Council staff distributed a revised definition of new market guarantee.

Stenson suggested that including the Bridge category as eligible to meet the functional classification requirement should be clarified.

It was moved by Hiniker and seconded by Roggenbuck to recommend to continue to fund at least one roadway project in each functional classification and to fund at least one “new market” transit project, with a the definition of “new market guarantee” to read “new market guarantee to fund at least on transit project that is outside of market areas 1 and 2 for at least one end of the project.” **Motion carried unanimously.**

11. 2019-46 2020 Regional Solicitation: Release for Public Comment

It was moved by Roggenbuck and seconded by Jenson, to recommend approval of the draft 2020 Regional Solicitation for release for public comment and that a meeting for Technical participants be scheduled to review comments and potential changes. **Motion carried unanimously.**

VI. INFORMATION

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Roggenbuck to adjourn the meeting. **Motion carried unanimously** and the meeting was adjourned.

Joe Barbeau
Recording Secretary