

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805
Minutes of a Meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
October 19, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim Mayasich (Chair, Ramsey County), Lynne Bly (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT State Aid), Robert Ellis (Eden Prairie), Innocent Eyoh (MPCA), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Jack Forslund (Anoka County), Jenifer Hager (Minneapolis), Cole Hiniker (Metropolitan Council), Emily Jorgensen (Washington County), Jim Kosluchar (Fridley), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Jen Lehmann (MVTA), Jason Pieper (Hennepin County), Lyndon Robjent (Carver County), John Sass (Dakota County), Angie Stenson (Scott County), Michael Thompson (Plymouth), Mackenzie Turner Bargaen (MnDOT Bike & Ped), and Joe Barbeau (staff)

OTHERS PRESENT: Tony Fischer (Metropolitan Council), Cathy Huebsch (MnDOT), Carl Ohrn (Metropolitan Council)

1. Call to Order

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

2. Adoption of Agenda

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

3. Approval of the Minutes from the September 21, 2017, Meeting

MOTION: Oehme moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Lehmann. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. TAB Report – Information Item

Koutsoukos reported on the September 20, 2017, TAB meeting. TAB approved a streamlined TIP amendment for MnDOT projects along I-35W and I-494. TAB heard informational items on the 2018 Regional Solicitations. Discussions included scoring removal of snow from trails as more than a yes versus no measure, highlighting travel time improvement and reliability as having a higher improvement in the Transit Modernization customer improvement criterion, keeping transit maintenance facilities as eligible project types, and whether to set aside funding for suburban demonstration transit projects. TAB also was provided informational presentations on the MnPASS III study, the 2018 Unified Planning Work Program and the transit chapter of the Transportation Policy Plan.

5. TIP Amendment – I-394 and MN 62 Lane Re-Striping – Action Item

Barbeau said that this amendment is to add a project that received funds from the 2017 Legislative funding package to the 2018-2021 TIP. The project, which will add temporary lanes on I-394 and MN 62 as mitigation during the I-35W/Lake Street project, has been determined to be regionally significant and subject to the TIP amendment process.

Sass asked what causes a project to be regionally significant. Eyoh said that an expansion of at least one mile triggers this designation.

MOTION: Thompson moved to recommend approval of the TIP amendment. Seconded by Eyoh. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Measures and Scoring Guidance – Action Item 2017-29

Barbeau said that this item captures all scoring measures and guidance.

Barbeau said that TAC suggested a change to the review of Section 106 historic resources section of the Risk

Assessment. Brown said that TAC combined “no historic properties affected” with “no adverse effect’ anticipated” into one item with no deduction. She said that the former does not affect a project while the latter includes follow-up work with the State Historic Preservation Office. MOTION: Brown moved that no historic properties affected” and “no adverse effect’ anticipated” be separated with the former receiving 100 percent of the points and the latter receiving 80 percent of the points, respectively, in the review of Section 106 historic resources part of the Risk Assessment. Seconded by Robjent. The motion was approved unanimously.

Lehmann provided suggested changes to the Equity scoring measure that reflects timing of Title VI and NEPA, broadens the definition of engagement, and requires scorers to document negatives not acknowledged in the application. Hiniker suggested adding reference to plans along with surveys or study recommendations, which the group was generally comfortable with. MOTION: Lehmann moved to adjust the Equity measure with her proposed changes. Seconded by Flintoft. The motion was approved unanimously.

Hager suggested that the parallel route element of the first measure within “Role in the Regional Transportation System and Economy” in the Roadway Expansion and Reconstruction/Modernization categories was misconstrued as improving congestion along a parallel route. She added that congestion is being considered in the vehicle delay reduced measure as well. Ohrn said that project improvements impact other routes and that congestion is only a small part of the studies that contribute to the first measure. Hager suggested the measure be re-worded to not imply that the project is addressing congestion on the parallel route. She added that she is not comfortable with the ability for the scorer to have discretion in selecting the parallel route. Ohrn replied that this is included to make sure that applicants do not game the system by selecting a parallel route that is not the next immediate route. Hager suggested that the wording be changed to “adjacent” parallel route. MOTION: Hager moved to add “adjacent” to “parallel route” and to clarify the “congestion on parallel routes” language in the scoring guidance. Seconded by Robjent. The motion was approved unanimously. Hager added that the criterion awards points based on studies that had minimal city participation and that potential applicants were not aware of the likely role of these studies in the Regional Solicitation. Mayasich said that cities of the first class should be included on the study teams. Robjent said that most of these studies relate more to principal arterials than to A-minors. Ohrn said that Council staff approached TAC for city representation. Hiniker suggested that Council staff make sure studies that will impact the Regional Solicitation will be shared with the Committee. Stenson asked whether the weighting of the Principal Arterial Conversion Study needs to be revisited in light of the intersection review process. Ohrn said that the study tries to establish tiers to rate needs. Fischer added that the study establishes three tiers.

Barbeau said that in the Transit Modernization criterion “Service and Customer Improvements,” TAB wants travel time savings to be set apart from the other elements, possibility with a return to its former quantitative measure. Hinkier said that the measure should remain qualitative, as it’s difficult to weigh travel time value given differences in ridership, route length, and other variables. Koutsoukos said that some applicants misunderstood the measure in 2016 but that TAB wants time savings to be a priority. Hiniker said that TAB did not specify a desire to award that element a specific number of points and that scoring the element is complicated. Mayasich asked Hiniker to come up with language for the TAC meeting, to which Hinker agreed.

Barbeau said that TAC created a proposed 50-point measure for those agencies that agree to remove snow from trails funded in the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities category. TAB asked that the technical committees find a way to make that measure more than simply a yes/no measure by finding a way to scale the score and allow a written reply. Thompson said that whether agencies are plowing is difficult to track. Mayasich asked whether the policy can be referenced. Hiniker suggested adding “year-round” to the qualifying criterion related to maintenance. Sass cited a federal rule that requires maintenance be completed. MOTION: Hiniker moved to recommend eliminating the 50-point award for plowing and add “year-round” to the qualifying requirement related to maintenance. Seconded by Robjent. Brown said that the Three Rivers Park District does not plow its trails. The motion was approved

unanimously. Barbeau said that the 50 points will be returned to their previous location in the Usage measure, with 25 points each going to population and employment.

Barbeau said that TAB prefers that maintenance garages and facilities still be eligible within the Transit Management category. MOTION: Flintoft moved to allow maintenance garages and facilities in the Transit Modernization category. Seconded by Flintoft. The motion was approved unanimously.

MOTION: Eyoh moved to recommend the attached measures and scoring guidance for each application category in the 2018 Regional Solicitation, inclusive the changes recommended by the Committee. Seconded by Turner Bargaen. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Criteria/Measure Weighting – Action Item

Barbeau shared the criteria and measure weighting with the group. This should be changed to reflect the removal of the snow plowing measure from Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities. MOTION: Koutsoukos moved to recommend the criteria and weighting measures. Seconded by Lehmann. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Awarding One Roadway Project per Functional Classification – Action Item

Barbeau said that there were no complaints about guaranteeing funding for each functional classification but given that a connector was funded despite being ranked behind 15 un-funded projects, the issue is being revisited.

MOTION: Robjent moved to retain the provision that each classification be awarded at least one project. Seconded by Ellis. Mayasich said that applicants put forth a lot of effort on applications and the projects are not all on equal competitive footing. The motion was approved unanimously.

9. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Modal Funding Ranges – Action Item 2017-32

Barbeau said that the proposed modal funding ranges are consistent with history dating to 2003. Robjent asked why the inclusion of the \$10 million to \$15 million bridge mandate is shown removed. Barbeau said that this was added prior to the 2016 Regional Solicitation and that the TAB member who moved had meant to state a percentage rather than an amount. This could also be viewed as restrictive.

MOTION: Hager moved to recommend the historic modal funding ranges and to eliminate the bridge mandate. Seconded by Koutsoukos. The motion was approved unanimously.

10. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Qualifying Criteria and Eligibility – Action Item

Barbeau shared differences to the introduction, qualifying criteria, and eligibility. The draft removes restriction that TAB will only fund one roadway, bridge, bicycle, or pedestrian trail within the same corridor. Hager said that this change would impact geographic balance. MOTION: Robjent moved recommended against this change. Seconded by Sass. The motion was approved unanimously.

Barbeau said that TAB sometimes discusses a minimum score requirement for a project to be eligible for funding. Staff recommends this and suggests a minimum score that is 50% of the top score within each category as opposed to a flat number, since, for example, 500 points in one category does not meet the same standard as 500 points in another. MOTION: Robjent moved to recommended against the change. Seconded by Kosluchar. The motion was approved unanimously.

Barbeau said that the draft qualifying criteria includes a criterion requiring that any sponsoring agency with at least 50 employees must be substantially working toward completing its ADA Transition Plan. Staff recommends this, as it is consistent with direction from FHWA. Thompson suggested simply following federal requirements. Brown said that MnDOT makes sure that ADA is adhered to, but Barbeau pointed out that this is an agency-wide issue and not simply a transportation issue. Cathy Huebsch of MnDOT said that FHWA indicates that agencies must have a plan in process by 2020 and suggested retaining the language. Members suggested that staff seek more direction from FHWA. MOTION: Thompson moved to recommend

against including the ADA Transition Plan language. Seconded by Robjent. The motion was approved with one vote against.

Regarding the rationale of adding a requirement that transit projects show independent utility to prevent double-counting, Flintoft said that rider double-counting will always happen if multiple routes use a stop. Barbeau said that this is an issue of counting riders in two different projects.

The first “other” from “The applicant must include a letter or resolution from their governing board omitting to fund the entire local match if other the agency is not successful in securing other funding sources for the local match.” Will be removed in the forms section of the Solicitation.

Stenson expressed concern with the proposed requirement to require that Roadway Expansion projects expanding thru lanes or building a new interchange on an existing signalized corridor have completed signal retiming within the five-year period before the application is submitted for funding. She stated that some roadways do not have signals. Barbeau replied that the language could be adjusted to account for those. Robjent said that a project he was considering is on a MnDOT route and MnDOT has not completed a signal retiming in the past five years. MOTION: Stenson moved to not include this requirement and to have staff bring back new language. Seconded by Robjent. The motion was approved unanimously.

In response to the question of what is meant by “Whether to request documentation of Local Support, by listing any public involvement completed to date,” Barbeau said that some TAB members are interested in assurances that applicants are reaching out to the public, though others do not want to see TAB involved in that. MOTION: Robjent moved to eliminate this item. Seconded by Sass. The motion was approved unanimously.

Barbeau said that staff is rethinking the requirement that TDM applicants must not have received any audit findings, material weaknesses, significant deficiencies, or material non-compliances in either of the two preceding fiscal years, as it is vague and even the Council has had an audit fining in the past two years. Lehmann moved to eliminate this item. Seconded by Forslund. The motion was approved unanimously.

Barbeau said that TAB discussed the difficulty for suburban transit routes to compete. The Committee declined to make a recommendation on this issue.

MOTION: Sass moved to recommend approval of policies, qualifying criteria, and project eligibility for the 2018 Regional Solicitation, inclusive of changes made at the meeting. Seconded by Eyoh. The motion was approved unanimously.

11. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Funding Category Minimum and Maximum Funding Amounts – Action Item

Barbeau said that two changes are proposed to the federal minimum and maximum federal funding amounts: increasing the maximum Travel Demand Management award from \$300,000 to \$500,000 and decreasing the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities maximum from \$5.5M to \$3.5M. The latter was discussed during design of the 2016 Regional Solicitation and recommended by the Committee and TAC. However, TAB did not follow the recommendation. Had it, three or four additional projects could have been funded.

MOTION: Sass moved to recommend the federal maximum and minimum awards with an increase of the Travel Demand Management maximum federal award from \$300,000 to \$500,000 and a decrease in the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities maximum federal award from \$5,500,000 to \$3,500,000. Seconded by Forslund. The motion was approved unanimously.

12. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Inflation Rate and Year of Cost estimate – Action Item

Barbeau said that inflation was not included in the 2016 Regional Solicitation and that while most members agreed with that decision, there was concern with the decision being made after the applications had been submitted. MOTION: Forslund recommended not using and inflation adjustment and that cost estimates be in current year dollars. Seconded by Lehmann. The motion was approved unanimously.

- 13. 2018 Regional Solicitation: Release Regional Solicitation Package for Public Comment – Action Item**
MOTION: Hager moved to recommended approving the Regional Solicitation for release for public Comment. Seconded by Kosluchar. The motion was approved unanimously.
- 14. TPP Update: Highway Revenue – Information Item**
Item omitted due to time constraints.
- 15. Other Business**
None.
- 16. Adjournment**
MOTION: Lehmann moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Koutsoukos. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting was adjourned.