

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

Thursday, October 22, 2020

Committee Members Present: Paul Oehme (Chair, Lakeville), Jerry Auge (Anoka County), Angie Stenson (Carver County), Jason Pieper (Hennepin County), John Mazzitello (Ramsey County), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Emily Jorgensen (Washington County), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Cole Hiniker (Metropolitan Council), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Molly McCartney (MnDOT Metro District), Innocent Eyoh (MPCA), Colleen Brown (MnDOT Metro District State Aid), Mackenzie Turner Bargaen (MnDOT Bike & Ped), Nancy Spooner-Mueller (DNR), Aaron Bartling (MVTA), Robert Ellis (Eden Prairie), Jim Kosluchar (Fridley), Ken Ashfeld (Maple Grove), Michael Thompson (Plymouth), Jenifer Hager (Minneapolis), Anne Weber (St. Paul)

Committee Members Absent: John Sass (Dakota County), Karl Keel (Bloomington)

I. CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Oehme called the regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee to order at 1:33 p.m. on Thursday, October 22, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held via teleconference.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved without a vote. A vote is only needed if any changes are made to the agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: It was moved by Spooner-Mueller and seconded by Koutsoukos to approve the minutes of the September 17, 2020, regular meeting of the Funding & Programming Committee. The motion was approved unanimously via roll-call.

IV. TAB REPORT

Koutsoukos reported on the October 21, 2020, TAB meeting.

V. BUSINESS

None

VI. INFORMATION

1. Regional Solicitation Before and After Study Update

Lance Bernard, HKGi and Ashley Hudson, Bolton & Menk provided an update on the Regional Solicitation Before and After Study. They provided a project overview and update on the findings on the seven project tasks.

McCartney asked whether the study is examining the initial project cost estimate versus the final project cost. Bernard replied that this is not a part of the project scope but it could be examined. Koster said that lower-cost projects tend to score well in the risk assessment measure and that cost increases diminish that benefit.

Hiniker asked whether the bicycle and pedestrian evaluations are as complex as those done for the Regional Solicitation. Bernard said that MPOs handle it in different ways and that a lot of MPOs rely on their long-range transportation plans to inform their funding. Hiniker asked

whether bicycle and pedestrian projects were funded by MPOs that tend to award funds to larger projects, to which Bernard replied that these MPOs tend to include projects that are parts of larger bicycle/pedestrian networks.

2. 2020 Regional Solicitation Funding Scenarios

Steve Peterson, Metropolitan Council, updated the group on TAB's response to the six funding scenarios that were provided at the October 21 TAB meeting. TAB members prefer two scenarios: the Historical Process scenario and the More Projects scenario. TAB also requested that while 10 percent overprogramming should occur, it should not be assigned to projects at this time but should be assigned after consideration of what rationale(s) should be used. TAB members also expressed concern with Scott County's lack of funding, MnDOT's concern with being able to provide as much match as they historically have, the inclusion of multimodal elements in many roadway projects, and the preference not to shift the modal midpoints away from the recently-assigned \$5 million extra for transit.

Koster said that two years ago, some applicants took less funding than they applied for, which could be an option this time.

Hiniker said that the geographic balance focus is on counties and asked whether there has been consideration for the types of applicants receiving, and not receiving, funds. Peterson said that the unique applicants could be shown. Barbeau said that unique applicants have been shown in the past and noted that the use of counties is a way to generally indicate geographic distribution. Jenson noted that a lot of projects are collaborations between counties and cities.

Pieper asked whether the \$10 million maximum federal award in the Strategic Capacity category has to be retained. Peterson said that applicants in that category applied with the expectation of that amount available. Oehme suggested that this might be more of a consideration for the next Regional Solicitation.

Regarding overprogramming, Pieper asked whether withdrawn projects are mostly roadway projects. Peterson said that withdrawals have happened in all modes, but a more specific breakdown can be created.

Koster said funding more Traffic Management Technologies projects would address the goal of funding low-cost, high-benefit projects, along with more projects.

Koster asked whether all of the Travel Demand Management projects are eligible, to which Peterson replied that that is still yet to be determined. Peterson added that all four projects are likely to get at least partial funding.

Hiniker said that the rules that limited the Gold Line to only receiving one project enabled opt-outs to get funding.

Stenson suggested that the overprogramming could be used for bicycle and pedestrian projects since they are low-cost.

Oehme asked whether higher-scoring projects are ever skipped to achieve regional balance. Peterson replied that skipping high-scoring projects has occurred to fund each functional classification, per rule, but not to achieve regional balance.

Oehme asked whether partial funding is ever done, to which Peterson replied that it has never been considered this early in the process.

Hiniker asked whether the safety or multi-modal impacts of a scenario can be determined, sharing an example of a Washington County project near the funding line that scored 120 out of 120 on crash reduction. Koutsoukos cautioned that this could effectively change the established weights of the measures.

Lyndon Robjert from Carver County said that TAB leaned heavily toward the Historical Process scenario and suggested that the focus be on the overprogramming in that scenario. Oehme suggested that overprogramming could be used to fund Pedestrian Facilities and Safe Routes to School projects as well as to fund projects in Scott County and Dakota County. Stenson said that if all the Roadway projects that needed to be funded to help those counties were funded at 50 percent it would be \$16.5 million, leaving \$3.5 million for bicycle and pedestrian projects, though that ignores transit.

Thompson said that TAB was interested in knowing the impact of the bicycle and pedestrian elements included in the roadway projects.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned via voice vote.

Joe Barbeau
Recording Secretary