

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
Minutes of a Meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
July 19, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Oehme (Chair, Chanhassen), Ken Ashfeld (City of Maple Grove), Lynne Bly (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT State Aid), Robert Ellis (City of Eden Prairie), Innocent Eyoh (MPCA), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Jenifer Hager (Minneapolis), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Emily Jorgensen (Washington County), Karl Keel (Bloomington), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Jen Lehmann (MVTA), Joe Lux (Ramsey County), Gina Mitteco (MnDOT Bike & Ped), Steve Peterson (Metropolitan Council), Jason Pieper (Hennepin County), Lyndon Robjent (Carver County), Michael Thompson (Plymouth), Anne Weber (St. Paul), and Joe Barbeau (staff)

OTHERS PRESENT: David Burns (Metropolitan Council) and Jenna Fabish (Dakota County)

1. Call to Order

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

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: Lux moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Peterson. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the May 17, 2018, Meeting

MOTION: Ellis moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Lehmann.

Jorgensen said that Hally Turner was incorrectly denoted as Holly Turner. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. TAB Report – Information Item

Koutsoukos reported on the June 20, 2018 TAB meeting, which included a report that the Legislature added \$400 million to Corridors of Commerce. Three additional projects were selected, including one in the metro area; a Minnesota Highway 52 / 1-94 MnPASS project. Seven action items were approved: five TIP amendments; a scope change request for Anoka County’s Hanson Boulevard project; and release of the Draft 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program for public comment.

5. Scope Change Request: Dakota County CSAH 50 Reconstruction – Action Item 2018-41

Barbeau said that Dakota County was awarded \$3,200,000 in Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for the 2020 fiscal year in the Roadway Reconstruction/Modernization category as part of the 2016 Regional Solicitation. The scope includes improvements to CSAH 50, installing a traffic signal at the CSAH 50 and CSAH 23 intersection, and providing a non-motorized grade-separated crossing. Through its preliminary design process, Dakota County determined that construction of a roundabout at Holyoke Avenue, the project’s western terminus, should be added to reduce crashes. Additions to the project include: construction of a two-lane by one-lane roundabout at the intersection of CSAH 50 and Holyoke Avenue; expansion of the project’s limits along CSAH 50 to 600 feet west of Holyoke Avenue to include work related to the proposed roundabout; inclusion within the project limits, Holyoke Avenue between 256 feet north of CSAH 50 and 300 feet south of CSAH 50.

In the re-scoring exercise, most categories did not change. Four scoring categories did change:

- Construction / Reconstruction Date: The roadways being constructed for the roundabout are newer than the previously-included roadways, reducing the score for this category by five points.
- Vehicle Delay Reduction: Addition of the roundabout led to a one-point increase, discovered through the modeling effort, which found an improvement in air quality, but that improvement did not improve the score.
- Crash Reduction: A new cost/benefit ratio was determined, leading to an increase of four points.

- **Cost Effectiveness:** The cost is increasing from \$4,000,000 to \$7,000,000. However, the cost is set at \$6,400,000, which negates \$600,000 for a watermain and a stormwater reuse system. The need for these items was discovered recently. Had the application included the roundabout in the first place this would not have been part of the total cost and points. This leads to a 21-point decrease in the cost effectiveness score.

The project total decreased by 21 points, bring the score to a total of 513 points, one point above the highest-scoring unfunded project. Regarding funding, as nothing is being taken away from the original project, should the scope change request be approved, there is no need to take federal funds.

Peterson asked how much effort went into the County's efforts to re-run its modeling and crash cost-benefit studies. Jenna Fabish, Dakota County, replied that nearly two weeks of staff time was put into the effort.

Hager expressed disagreement with the notion that five points should be lost for construction/reconstruction date simply because newer roadways were added with local funds.

MOTION: Keel said that the Committee has justification to recommend approvals and moved to recommend approval of the scope change request. Seconded by Hager. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. **2019-2022 TIP Amendment: Dakota County CSAH 50 Reconstruction – Action Item 2018-42**

Barbeau said that this TIP amendment is for the 2019-2022 TIP, currently out for public comment. The amendment, if approved, would not take effect until the 2019-2022 TIP and STIP are approved by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT). He added that the County wishes to start the project in 2019 and will be paid back its federal funds in 2020.

MOTION: Keel moved to recommend approval of the TIP amendment request. Seconded by Lux. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. **Scope Change Policy Update – Information Item**

Oehme introduced the topic. He said that a work group met to explore simplifying the scope change process. Barbeau added that there are currently two policies, the Scope Change Consultation Process and the Process to Evaluate Scope Change Requests for Regionally Selected Projects. The latter is deficient in that it provides very little direction. The former needs tweaking and better acknowledgment of transit projects. Work group members are suspicious of the effectiveness of precisely re-scoring projects. Oehme presented the work group's projects to the TAB Executive Committee, whose members are interested in justification for why a project remains funded in lieu of an unfunded project. TAB Executive Committee members also expressed disagreement with the work group's notion of not taking small funding amounts away. Therefore, that is not reflected in the draft policy and the work group proposes to amend TAB Federal Funds Management Process to simplify redistribution of small funding amounts.

Koutsoukos asked why there is language about termini changes under both administrative and formal scope changes. Work group members in attendance did not recall. She also added that language on new projects should be better-highlighted.

Thompson asked whether application scores have fallen below the highest-scoring unfunded project in the past. Koutsoukos replied that it has happened and TAB can use common sense in determining whether a request should be approved.

Hager said she had thought that cost-effectiveness was not re-scored. Barbeau said that that was discussed at the work group, but there is no existing policy on that. Keel suggested an appeal process for the total cost.

Ashfeld said that from category-to-category, there could be lacking clarity on what project would have been funded per a scoring change, based on the size of the gap between the lowest-funded and highest-unfunded projects.

Flintoft suggested language that says that the original score is completed at the time of application and that it is not possible to accurately re-score projects at a later time.

8. Geographic Balance in the Regional Solicitation – Information Item

Peterson shared maps that showed that projects funded in the 2003 to 2016 Regional Solicitations were in close alignment in terms of dollars awarded versus population and jobs. David Burns, Metropolitan Council, showed maps that indicated traffic generation to individual project areas is regionwide.

9. Other Business

Koutsoukos said that 136 project applications were submitted for the 2018 Regional Solicitation. This included a reduction in roadway projects from the past, aside from bridges.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: Brown moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Keel. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.