

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805
Minutes of a Meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
March 22, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Oehme (Chair, Chanhassen), Lynne Bly (MnDOT Metro District), Colleen Brown (MnDOT State Aid), Innocent Eyoh (MPCA), Anna Flintoft (Metro Transit), Jenifer Hager (Minneapolis), Craig Jenson (Scott County), Jim Kosluchar (Fridley), Elaine Koutsoukos (TAB), Joe Lux (Ramsey County), Joe MacPherson (Anoka 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), Sulmaan Khan (MnDOT), and Elizabeth Stiffler (St. Paul)

1. Call to Order

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

2. Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: Bly moved to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Thompson. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Approval of the Minutes from the February 22, 2018, Meeting

MOTION: Brown moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by Lux. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. TAB Report – Information Item

Koutsoukos reported on the March 21, 2018, TAB meeting. TAB Chair Jim Hovland reported that there are several governance bills in the legislature and information was distributed on some. A bill regarding adding a funding application category for freeways to the 2018 Regional Solicitation was also distributed.

Scott McBride, MnDOT, reported that the Corridors of Commerce applications will be in front of the Minnesota State Legislature soon. Many proposals overlapped but MnDOT is scoring all of them separately. Eighty-nine proposals were for projects in the Metro area out of 150 statewide. The \$400 million dollars designated are to be spent over a four-year period and will be allocated all at once.

Lisa Freese, TAC Chair, reported that Ken Ashfeld, Maple Grove, and Anne Kane, White Bear Lake, have been appointed by Metro Cities to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

Two action items, both scope changes, were approved:

- North Loop Pedestrian Project, HSIP, Minneapolis – TAB approved a scope change request to eliminate seven pedestrian curb ramps and a pedestrian median and add sidewalk work at two locations, and accessible pedestrian signal push buttons at two locations, and replace signals, with no reduction of federal funds.
- Trunk Highway 13 / CSAH 21, Scott County – TAB approved a scope change request to adjust the project limits, change two signalized intersections to roundabouts, and adjust intersection access.

5. Scope Change: St. Paul Expo Schools Safe Routes to School – Action Item 2018-25

Barbeau said that the City of St. Paul was awarded \$498,400 in Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for the 2018 fiscal year in the Safe Routes to School category of the 2016 Regional Solicitation. The project was awarded funding to construct several sidewalks near the Expo Elementary school. The City wishes to adjust to scope to remove the 443-foot-length of sidewalk along Eleanor Avenue and the 484-foot length along the west side of Saratoga Street. The original application stated that 1.12 miles, or 5,914 feet, in sidewalk length were to be paved. The two lengths proposed for elimination total 927 feet, or 16% of the 5,914 feet discussed in the original application. This project scored 958 points out of 1,100. The other two projects in the

category, which were both funded, scored 711 points and 700, points, respectively. Given those factors, the project was not re-scored. The City did not propose a federal funding amount. As discussed above, the sponsor is requesting removal of 16% of the sidewalk from the scope. A proportionate reduction of the \$498,400 originally awarded would bring the federal amount to \$418,656.

Elizabeth Stiffler from the City of St. Paul said that attendees at neighborhood meetings did not want to see many trees removed. Both lengths of sidewalk being removed have sidewalks across the street.

Mitteco asked whether either part being removed was part of primary route identified in the Safe Routes to School plan, to which Stiffler replied that they are not.

Brown said that other funding options include providing 80% of the new total amount or eliminating 80% of the amount attributed to the portion of the sidewalk being removed.

MOTION: Hager moved to recommend approval of the scope change with federal funding at 80% of its cost estimate. Seconded by Thompson. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Scope Change: Scott County CSAH 21 / TH 13 Reconstruction – Action Item 2018-26

Barbeau said that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) was awarded \$972,000 in Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds in the 2014 HSIP Solicitation to convert two intersections along Trunk Highway 212, at CSAH 41 and CSAH 36, to reduced-conflict intersections (RCIs). MnDOT no longer wants to construct the RCI at CSAH 36 and instead proposes the following:

- Remove the current median access on TH 212. This includes the left turn lane from eastbound TH 212 to northbound CSAH 36.
- Remove the right turn lane from westbound TH 212 to northbound CSAH 36.
- Remove the CSAH 36 roadway from the railroad bridge south to TH 212 along with the railroad bridge north to the intersection of Laurel Avenue.
- Construct a new driveway for the resident northeast of the TH 212 / CSAH 36 junction to provide direct access to TH 212.
- Realign the CSAH 36/Laurel Avenue junction to become a 25-mph curve.

Because MnDOT administers the scoring for the HSIP Solicitation, staff did not reach out to any project scorers regarding this request. This project was funded in the “proactive” subcategory of the solicitation. Ten proactive projects were funded while eight were not funded. The projects were prioritized by the scoring committee based on the engineering expertise of the members, so a rescoring is not possible. While the attached letter states that the project will now cost \$958,491, MnDOT has since revised its estimate to \$1,059,500. MnDOT is requesting 90% funding (the maximum for HSIP and the standard for projects funded through the HSIP solicitation) of \$953,550. While various elements of the project are changing or being replaced, no elements are being removed.

Robjent said that Carver County was included in discussions on this project with MnDOT. The rail bridge does not meet clearance requirements and the proposed change addresses this issue and makes the area safer. The County, therefore, is in support of the request. Pieper asked whether removal of the westbound turn lane presents a safety issue and whether cutting off the connection to the neighbors is appropriate. Robjent replied that the proposed change is safer. Sulmaan Khan from MnDOT said that there is only one property owner and MnDOT is providing a direct connection to that property.

Jenson said that it is difficult to score proactive HSIP projects but that the discussion among the scoring committee members tends to favor corridors and that, therefore, this version of the project would probably have received roughly the same score as it originally received.

MOTION: Lux moved to recommend approval of the scope change request. Seconded by Robjent. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. TIP Amendment: Safety Performance Measures – Action Item 2018-27

Barbeau said that a TIP amendment is needed to add text related to performance measures to the 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to incorporate safety performance measure language before the May 27 federal deadline. Failure to do so could jeopardize the ability to process TIP amendments.

David Burns provided background information, including performance targets on number of traffic fatalities, rate of fatalities, number of crashes involving serious- injuries, rate of serious-injury crashes, and number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries.

Hager asked whether Towards Zero Deaths and Vision Zero were acknowledged and suggested that the proposed language sends a message of comfort with a given number of deaths. Burns replied that the Council is federally mandated to show a target number and that targets should be achievable. Mitteco said that the target numbers do not look promising. Peterson said that there is no specific rule about whether the ultimate goal of zero deaths can or cannot be addressed so language can be added.

MOTION: Hager moved to approve the TIP amendment with the addition of language related to Towards Zero Deaths and Vision Zero. Seconded by Kosluchar. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. MnDOT State Aid Project Update – Information Item

Brown shared a handout on adjustments of Solicitation funds and Project delivery. 2019 is no longer over-programmed, though 2020 is at this point. She anticipates 92% of projects programmed for fiscal year 2018 will be authorized in fiscal year 2018.

9. TPP: Priorities for Mobility Funds – Information Item

Peterson shared a summary on MnDOT mobility investments.

10. Other Business

None

11. Adjournment

MOTION: Eyoh moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by MacPherson.

Oehme said that the scope change work group worked through about two-thirds of its agenda and will meet again in April.

The meeting was adjourned.