

Minutes

TAC Funding and Programming Committee



Meeting date: May 16, 2024

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

- Bloomington – Karl Keel
- Lakeville – Paul Oehme (Vice Chair)
- Eden Prairie – Robert Ellis
- Fridley – Jim Kosluchar
- Minneapolis – Nathan Koster
- Plymouth – Michael Thompson (Chair)
- St. Paul – Anne Weber
- Met Council – Steve Peterson
- Metro Transit – Scott Janowiak

- TAB Coordinator – Elaine Koutsoukos
- MnDOT Metro District – Jody Carr
- MnDOT Metro District State Aid – Colleen Brown
- MnDOT Bike/Ped – Mike Samuelson
- MPCA – Lauren Dickerson
- DNR – Nancy Spooner-Walsh
- Suburban Transit Assoc. – Heidi Scholl

- Anoka Co. – Jerry Auge
 - Carver Co. – Darin Mielke
 - Dakota Co. – Jenna Fabish
 - Hennepin Co. – Jason Pieper
 - Scott Co. – Adam Jessen
 - Wash Co. – Madeline Dahlheimer
- = present, E = excused

Call to order

The regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee was called to order by the chair on May 16th, starting at 1:00 PM.

Agenda approved

Chair Thompson noted that a roll call vote was not needed for approval of the agenda unless a committee member offered an amendment to the agenda. Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Elaine Koutsoukos, seconded by Jason Pieper, to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2024, regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Public comment on committee business

None

TAB report

E. Koutsoukos reported on the May 15, 2024 Transportation Advisory Board meeting

Business

2024-27: Adoption of the Draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), pending public comment (Joe Barbeau, MTS) – roll call

Joe Barbeau of the Metropolitan Council's Metropolitan Transportation Services office presented the draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program for consideration.

J. Barbeau highlighted that the TIP aims to balance investment across various transportation modes, ensuring that both transit and highway projects receive significant funding. This balance is crucial for addressing the diverse transportation needs of the region.

J. Barbeau mentioned that all federally funded projects must be included in the TIP to receive federal funding. Once the council approves the TIP, it will be reflected in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), ensuring compliance with federal requirements.

J. Barbeau explained that the TIP needs to be released for a 45-day public comment period starting the next day, with final approval expected in August by the council.

Chair Thompson called for a motion to recommend adoption of the TIP. Nathan Coster made the motion and seconded by Jason Pieper from Hennepin County. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Information

Regional Solicitation Funding Options (Steve Peterson, MTS)

Steve Peterson of the Metropolitan Council's Metropolitan Transportation Services office presented the most recently updated regional solicitation funding scenarios. The scenarios are as follows:

- **Midpoint:** This scenario distributes funds evenly across projects.
- **Safety:** This scenario allocates additional funds to projects with high crash reduction benefits.
- **Bike-Ped Heavy:** This scenario shifts more funds to bicycle and pedestrian projects

Steve Peterson explained that the scenarios also include active transportation pilot projects using \$15.8 million of sales tax funds. He highlighted the need for a balanced approach and invited feedback from the committee members.

Maddie Dahlheimer from Washington County commented that completing a regional solicitation application is not easy; it is costly and may require a consultant contract to apply. This limits who can apply for funds. M. Dahlheimer suggested that rather than adding more Active Transportation funds to this Regional Solicitation cycle, that a separate solicitation, with a simpler application process, occur as another pilot to allow for a wider range of communities to apply.

Cole Hiniker noted that the scenarios presented could result in Transit funding falling below the lower end of the modal range, which has not been done before. He suggested that this point should be clearly communicated to TAB. He also mentioned the importance of providing TAB with detailed information about the percentage of total score for each application and the total funding requested in each category. C. Hiniker emphasized that this information would help TAB make informed decisions and ensure a fair distribution of funds.



Jason Pieper from Hennepin County supported presenting this information to TAB but emphasized that it was TAB's role to decide on the funding distribution. He suggested that technical staff should provide all necessary information but remain neutral on specific recommendations. J. Pieper stressed that the role of the technical staff is to facilitate the decision-making process by providing accurate and comprehensive data.

Jerry Auge from Anoka County raised concerns about potential double-dipping of funds for projects that could receive both federal and active transportation funds. He pointed out that some projects might end up receiving multiple sources of funding, which could be problematic.

Elaine Koutsoukos noted that this issue would need to be carefully managed to ensure fairness and compliance with funding rules.

J. Auge suggested that clear guidelines should be established to prevent such situations and ensure a fair allocation of resources.

Darin Mielke from Carver County highlighted a specific concern regarding a project initially submitted as a roadway modernization project that had to be changed to an expansion project due to design constraints. He questioned how such changes would be handled and whether they could impact the project's eligibility or scoring.

S. Peterson acknowledged the concern and mentioned that the project would need to be re-evaluated to ensure it meets the criteria for the new category.

Scott Janowiak from Metro Transit emphasized the importance of not shifting too much funding away from transit, as transit should remain a priority for the region. He expressed concerns about the potential long-term impacts of reducing transit funding and the need to maintain a balanced approach.

S. Janowiak pointed out that reducing transit funding could affect the region's ability to meet its transportation and environmental goals.

Nathan Koster from the City of Minneapolis stressed the need for clear communication and timely decisions regarding the allocation of active transportation funds to ensure that projects can proceed as planned. He noted that delays in the decision-making process could jeopardize the success of the pilot projects. Koster suggested that a streamlined process be established to expedite the allocation of funds and avoid unnecessary delays.

Heidi Scholl from MVTA expressed support for including additional projects in the overprogramming to ensure that Transit funding remains within the established modal ranges. She also emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility in the funding process to accommodate changing project needs. H. Scholl mentioned that having a buffer in the funding allocation could help address unexpected changes in project scope or cost.

Reports

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

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