

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
Metropolitan Council
390 N. Robert St., St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1805

Minutes of a Meeting of the
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
September 18, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karl Keel (chair), Steve Albrecht, Colleen Brown, Jenifer Hager, Brian Isaacson, Craig Jenson, Tom Johnson, Elaine Koutsoukos, Joe Lux, Bruce Loney, Paul Oehme, John Sass, Cory Slagle, Michael Thompson, Andrew Witter, and Joe Barbeau (staff)

1. Call to Order

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

2. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted as presented.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Minutes from the August meeting were approved unanimously.

4. TAB Report

Elaine Koutsoukos reported on the September 17 TAB meeting. TAB approved three action items: a streamlined TIP amendment for a Safe Routes to School project in West St. Paul; the regional solicitation packet, using the Steering Committee-recommended weighting of measures; and delaying the transit demand management application from the regional solicitation until spring 2015.

5. 2017-2019 Regional Solicitation Update – Information Item

Heidi Schallberg from Metropolitan Transportation Services said that TAB approved the solicitation package with the Steering Committee-recommended scoring weights. The Transportation Committee then recommended that the Council concur with that recommendation. The Council will vote on Wednesday, September 24. Koutsoukos added that Metropolitan Council Staff has been internally testing the online application program and will have external volunteers testing next week.

Karl Keel asked what the outcome of the equity discussion was at TAB. Schallberg replied that a motion to table the solicitation until the 2014 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) is complete failed. There was a motion for an amendment to accept the package with the work group-recommended weighting. That motion failed 15-14 before the original motion passed 18-8. Lux added that the debate was philosophical in nature until members seemed to decide that they were splitting hairs and it was time to make a decision.

6. Scope Change Requests -- Information Item

a) City of Bloomington: Normandale Boulevard (CSAH 34)

Joe Barbeau said that the City of Bloomington received funding from the 2011 regional solicitation for reconstruction of Normandale Boulevard (CSAH 34) from West 94th Street to the 8500 block of Normandale Boulevard as a four-lane divided roadway with left-turn lanes and multi-use trails. The scope change would: e

- Eliminate the originally-planned cul-de-sac at Norman Ridge Drive (southerly), leaving right-in/right-out access intact.
- Eliminate the originally-planned cul-de-sac at Northwood Ridge leaving right in/right out access intact. The median would be opened at this point, allowing for left-out movements.
- Adding right turn lanes at Mount Normandale Drive, Southwood Drive, Norman Ridge Drive (southerly), and Toledo Road.

The project is programmed in 2016. A TIP Amendment is not required because the project description will not change. Julie Long from the City of Bloomington sated that the right turn lanes are only under consideration.

MOTION: Joe Lux moved to recommend approval of the scope change request. Seconded by Brian Isaacson. The motion was approved unanimously with Keel abstaining.

b) Three Rivers Park District – Nine Mile Cree Regional Trail: East Segment

Keel said that this request will add to the project length of the trail awarded to Three Rivers Park District in the 2011 regional solicitation. Termini are proposed to be removed along with some realignment.

Barbeau said that staff reviewed the submitted scope change request. Based on a review of the proposed changes, the scope change would not have been likely to considerably change the project score, provided the City of Edina portions are completed as promised by the City and the Park District. He added the following additional considerations:

- The proposed scope change extends the overall project length to include the Edina Promenade and Xerxes Avenue from the Promenade to 75th Street West, better-filling the gap between Nine Mile Creek Trail West and the Xerxes/75th Street intersection, at which point an existing trail begins, heading east.
- However, the proposed change creates two gaps of significance, to be constructed separately from the project by another entity, the city of Edina
- Staff review for this request uncovered an error in the original scoring. Because the overall project cost of \$10,200,000 was errantly entered into a spreadsheet as \$1,200,000, the cost-effectiveness score was over-scored. Staff estimates that the total score of 180 would have been 71, reducing the total score to 651. With the now-proposed changes, the cost effectiveness score would be altered from 71 to 69, rendering the impact of the scope change minimal.

Toby Muse, a consultant on the project, provided an overview of the key changes. They are:

- The City of Edina’s reconstruction of the Tracy Avenue/Valley View Road Intersection proposes a roundabout. The project necessitates revising the western limit to Doron Lane. The City will include trail from Tracy Avenue to Doron Lane as part of its project.
- The original alignment proposed to pass under the CP Rail line. This is not feasible due to flood levels in Nine Mile Creek and other constraints. The updated proposal is for a box-Culvert under 70th Street.
- The original alignment proposed to cross Highway 100 perpendicularly. This is not feasible due to limited City right-of-way and other difficulties getting across the highway at that angle. It is now proposed for crossing at an angle.
- Reconstruction of Parklawn Avenue is proposed for the City of Edina CIP for 2016. The roadway will be reconstructed similarly to Gallagher Drive, which already has a trail.
- The original alignment terminated at the start of Edina Promenade. The proposed extension utilized the existing path on the promenade and extends south down Xerxes Avenue connecting with an existing trail on 7th Street West.

Keel said that the original intent of the project seems to be accomplished in the proposal, though historically, there would be a tendency to remove funding for the proportion not being built. He added that he would be comfortable leaving the funding the same.

Craig Jenson asked how the scoring error occurred. Barbeau replied that it seems to be an error of missing one digit on a funding amount when pasting into Microsoft Excel, leading to inflated cost effectiveness numbers.

MOTION: Tom Johnson moved to recommend approval of the scope change request. Seconded by Isaacson. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. TIP Amendment – Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail: East Segment

Barbeau said that this amendment is needed to accompany the Three Rivers Park District scope change request and that there is no reason not to approve it if the scope change is approved.

MOTION: Isaacson moved to recommend approval of the TIP amendment. Seconded by Steve Albrecht. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. Program Year Policy Revisions – Information Item

Schallberg said that this policy was in need of date changes and while the changes are administrative, it was decided to share the changes with the applicable committees.

9. Other Business

Isaacson said that MnDOT may propose a coordinated signal timing project for the regional solicitation. Any counties or cities interested in participating should let him know. Keel said that bundling among cities and counties seems like a good idea. Johnson said that he would support such an application. Lux said he would also support it and added that Ramsey County could not apply for such a project on its own but could participate. Keel asked whether there would be time to apply for the upcoming solicitation to which Isaacson replied that it depends on factors such as how many participants are included.

10. Adjournment

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.