

Minutes

TAC Funding and Programming Committee



Meeting date: March 20, 2025,

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

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| ☒ Eden Prairie – Robert Ellis | ☒ MnDOT Metro District –Jody Carr | ☒ Anoka Co. – Jerry Auge |
| ☒ Fridley – Jim Kosluchar (Chair) | ☒ MnDOT Metro District State Aid – Colleen Brown | ☒ Carver Co. – Darin Mielke |
| ☒ Lakeville – Paul Oehme (Vice Chair) | ☒ MnDOT Bike/Ped – Mackenzie Turner Bargaen | ☒ Dakota Co. – Jacob Chapek |
| ☒ Eagan – Russ Matthys | ☒ MPCA – Lauren Dickerson | ☒ Hennepin Co. – Emily Buell |
| ☒ Minneapolis – Nathan Koster | ☒ DNR – Nancy Spooner-Walsh | ☐ Ramsey Co. – Kevin Roggenbuck |
| ☒ Plymouth – Michael Thompson | ☒ Suburban Transit Assoc. – Heidi Scholl | ☐ Scott Co. – Adam Jessen |
| ☒ St. Paul – Anne Weber | | ☒ Wash Co. – Madeline Dahlheimer |
| ☒ Met Council – Steve Peterson | | ☐ = present, E = excused |
| ☒ Metro Transit – Scott Janowiak | | |
| ☒ TAB Coordinator – Elaine Koutsoukos | | |

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Kosluchar called the regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee to order at 1:02 p.m.

Agenda approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. Therefore, a vote was not needed for approval.

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Nancy Spooner Walsh, DNR, seconded by Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, to approve the minutes of January 23, 2025, regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee. **Motion carried**

Public comment on committee business

TAB report

Business

1. **2025-10:** Program Year Extension – Washington County CR 19A Realignment Project (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning, presented. Jerry Auge, Anoka Co., asked if the bridge part of this over the railroad is currently at -grade crossing and if it's going to be an overpass. Madeline Dahlheimer confirmed stating it's currently an at grade rail crossing and the project includes adding that grade-separated crossing.

It was moved by Colleen Brown, MNDOT State Aid, and seconded by Auge, that the Funding and Programming Committee recommend approval of Washington County's program year extension request for its County Road 19A (Keats Avenue) realignment from 2026 to 2027.

Motion carried.

Information

1. Regional Solicitation Evaluation: Base Application Structure (Steve Peterson, MTS Planning and Molly Stewart SRF)

Steve Peterson, MTS Planning, presented. Kosluchar asked whether enough people have volunteered for the special issue working groups. Peterson replied that an adequate number have volunteered.

Scott Janowiak, Metro Transit, asked if the transit customer experience language would functionally replace transit modernization and if it could preserve eligibility for support facilities-based projects, like bus garages. Peterson responded that the transit customer experience language would likely be equivalent to transit modernization. He noted that the Transit Technical Working Group still needs to clarify whether projects should be focused on customer-side improvements (e.g., upgrading bus stops) or support facilities (e.g., bus garages). He also mentioned that operations-related projects are eligible.

Emily Buell, Hennepin Co., raised the point that Safe Routes to School projects might score better under the local pedestrian network category than the safety category, as they generally focus on improving access rather than reducing fatalities or serious crashes. Peterson agreed, explaining that Safe Routes to School projects are often aimed at providing safer access for students rather than directly addressing crash reduction. He suggested these projects would likely fall under the "local pedestrian" and "local bike network gaps and barriers" categories.

Buell inquired about the status of bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects under the current funding structure. Peterson stated that while the eligibility for bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects has not been fully discussed, he assumed both would be included in the new structure, though this will be something for the special issue working group to discuss. He noted that previously, federal funding for such projects required meeting minimum standards.

Eyoh asked whether there may be some change in how to approach funding within functional classifications. Peterson said that roadway projects used to be funded based on functional classification. He said that after moving away from that a rule was established that at least one project within each functional classification must be funded; a rule that could be retained. He added that collectors could be funded as they're federally eligible, even though TAB has



chosen not to fund them. This is also the case with freeways. Kosluchar whether this would be considered as an overall issue or by smaller groups. Peterson said that given the variation of categories this should be a matter for the Technical Steering Committee to address, with input from special issue working groups.

Buell raised concerns about the language used to describe equity and climate action in funding proposals, given the new federal direction. She wanted to ensure that the language used would not jeopardize funding eligibility. Peterson said that language changes have been made to align with federal guidelines, such as combining climate and natural systems under the "environment" category. He emphasized that equity and community connections are still a focus and will be carefully considered moving forward.

Nathan Koster, Minneapolis, suggested going back to aligning with the original goals such as simplification, given how many variables can change moving ahead. Kosluchar suggested providing participants with summaries of the goals. Peterson said that staff will remind members of the special interest working groups of the goals.

Michael Thompson, Plymouth, asked if funding for the Travel Behavior Inventory and unique projects would continue under the new structure. Peterson clarified that while there was no dedicated funding for unique projects in the last cycle, the Travel Behavior Inventory is a long-standing commitment, with funding contributions from the Met Council and MnDOT. He suggested that unique projects may not need separate funding under the new structure if they fit into the broader application categories. Thompson expressed support for the Travel Behavior Inventory, emphasizing the importance of good data but voiced concerns about the unique projects category, which he felt was unclear. Kosluchar agreed with Thompson, suggesting that the previous structure for unique projects was cumbersome, and he prefers a more flexible approach under the new framework.

Peterson reminded attendees of the upcoming in-person meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on April 2. He noted that this meeting would include further discussion on these topics and would help refine the proposals moving forward.

Other Business

Koutsoukos shared an update from the Federal Highway Administration regarding projects funded through formula funds, stating that these projects will continue as planned. She clarified that discretionary funds are at risk due to the federal funding pause.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Council contact:

Robbie King, Senior Planner
Robbie.King@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1380

