

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

Minutes of a Meeting of the  
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
November 15, 2012

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Karl Keel (Chair), Adam Harrington, Craig Jenson, Joe Lux, Colleen Van Wagner, Brian Isaacson, Ann Pung-Terwedo, Kate Garwood, Carl Ohrn, Lisa Freese, Tom Johnson, John Powell, John Sass, Lyndon Robjent, Chuck Ahl, Kevin Roggenbuck, and Heidi Schallberg (staff)

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m.

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

The agenda was adopted with the addition of a discussion of HSIP funding under Other Business.

**3. Approval of the Minutes from the October 18, 2012, Meeting**

Minutes from the October meeting were approved without change.

**4. TAB Report (Kevin Roggenbuck)**

Kevin Roggenbuck said the TAB will meet on November 28<sup>th</sup> and so did not have an informational update.

**5. MAP-21 Program Review Update**

Brian Gage presented an update on MnDOT's MAP-21 funding allocation discussions. Recommendations from work groups on allocating funding from MAP-21 will go to MnDOT division directors. Two main approaches have been discussed to date. One would take funds off the top for meeting interstate pavement targets and bridges, and the current STIP could be fully covered. The second approach would fund bridges, interstate pavement, and National Highway System (NHS)/Metro reliability projects, which would be for congestion and mobility projects. The latter approach would leave a \$70 million gap in the STIP. Recommendations will go to the Transportation Program Investment Committee (TPIC) later in the month. It is important to work toward MAP-21 performance targets to avoid potential penalties. MAP-21 changes direction and puts more emphasis on meeting performance targets. Keeping existing programming the same does not necessarily reflect the new MAP-21 emphasis. Both approaches would meet MAP-21 requirements; however, the second option would put the state in a better position for meeting those performance targets. B. Gage also distributed a handout for funding in 2017, which is still a fluid situation. Overall, projects programmed in 2013 will be okay; those in 2014 are likely safe. Decisions will be made within the next month to be able to move ahead and consider future solicitations. Pat Bursaw said that one of the biggest issues with MAP-21 is not having the flexibility to shift projects year to year regardless of federal programs. That's a bigger issue in the rest of the state than in the metro area, but funding may not return to the region if projects slip in the future.

**6. Recommendations of the Federal Program Delivery Work Group**

P. Bursaw presented for the work group since the chair, Tim Mayasich, was unable to be at the meeting. The work group was asked by TAC to address issues with projects delivering on time as well as questions about scope changes. The work group recommendations include two documents, a new program year policy and a scope change consultation process.

*Program Year Policy*

In the past, projects were allowed to move forward when they could not be completed in the year in which they were programmed, and a large number of projects in the region did so. With MAP-21, MnDOT is now tied more to program categories and performance targets, so they will not be able to shift funding from year to year regardless of program. The work group originally discussed starting the policy implementation with projects scheduled in 2015 and 2016, but it became apparent that wouldn't be possible because the funding couldn't be guaranteed for 2014 projects if they were allowed to slip. The proposed program year policy would eliminate the previous sunset year that allowed projects additional time while also providing a process and criteria for potential schedule extensions. Projects will be expected to be delivered in the year in which they are originally programmed. Discussion included the need for the committee to review its priorities and process for allocating returned funding. The policy also needs to be clearly communicated to make everyone aware of the new rules and process.

The work group also made additional recommendations that would assist with implementation, including providing regular project and program monitoring and reporting, investigating the possibility of shifting federal funds from regionally-selected smaller projects to larger projects with over-matched federal funds, considering project types and complexity related to project delivery in future project solicitations, and reviewing roles and responsibilities for program management in the region.

Chuck Ahl moved to approve program year policy with minor wording edits from State Aid, John Powell seconded. Motion carried with one vote against.

Carl Ohrn moved to review priorities for returned funding at a future meeting and ask TAC what they want to do. Lyndon Robjent seconded, and the motion carried.

*Scope Change Consultation Process*

P. Bursaw reviewed examples of scope changes and said the proposed process does not change much but rather clarifies the process in writing. Discussion included the need for the process to be communicated with all current project sponsors and also be included in the next regional solicitation. C. Ohrn moved to recommend approval of the process with that communication to project sponsors and applicants. C. Ahl seconded, and the motion carried.

**7. CMAQ TDM Solicitation**

Katie White is a new planner in Metropolitan Transportation Services and will be taking over more of the TDM work in the future. In the 2007 Regional Solicitation, \$7 million in CMAQ funds were set aside for 2011-2012 regional TDM programs. However, due to new regulations from the MAP-21 federal transportation law and discussions with MnDOT, Met Council's Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) staff requests, based on previous discussion at this committee, that the base regional TDM program funding at \$5.8 million per biennium be retained and the \$1.2 million previously designated for new and innovative TDM projects be deferred. The savings

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gained from this deferral would be used to offset other regional projects that could be deferred or cancelled due to over-programmed funds for the FY 2013 – 2014 cycle. The next solicitation could be considered for 2014.

Kate Garwood motioned to recommend deferring \$1.2 million from the \$7 million biennial regional CMAQ allocation previously designated for new and innovative TDM projects. C. Ohrn seconded, and the motion carried.

**8. TIP Amendment Requests**

***HSIP Program, MnDOT***

Brian Isaacson presented the amendment request to add the HSIP projects recommended for funding in the last solicitation. The amendment would allow these projects to move forward instead of waiting for the overall regional solicitation amendment, which is dependent on MAP-21 discussions. MnDOT will have information about the next HSIP solicitation for 2014-2016 in the next month or so. C. Ohrn motioned to approve the TIP amendment to add the listed HSIP projects from the last solicitation, C. Ahl seconded, and the motion carried.

***NHPP Projects, MnDOT***

B. Isaacson presented the TIP amendment request to add two National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) projects, SP# 7080-51, unbounded concrete overlay on I-35 from CSAH 2 to the I-35E/I-35W split and SP# 0285-65, mill and overlay of I-694 from the I-94/I-694 split to east of I-35W. This funding is controlled by MnDOT and does not come through the Metropolitan Council's process. These two projects will fill a funding gap in 2013 in this funding program by being moved up from 2017. C. Ahl motioned to approve the TIP amendment to add these two projects, C. Ohrn seconded, and the motion carried.

**9. Robert Street Improvements, West St. Paul**

***Scope Change Request***

C. Ohrn discussed the staff review of the requested scope change, which does not affect the amount of federal funding. A grade-separated pedestrian crossing would be eliminated from the original project because of cost increases. Staff considered if the project score would have likely changed enough to have affected the funding recommendation in the solicitation. Three projects at the bottom of those funded were all grouped closely together within six points, so all three projects were funded. The Robert Street improvements project was the last of these three projects. Given the close grouping and scoring decreases in cost effectiveness and multimodal elements from increased costs and elimination of the pedestrian bridge, staff felt it may not have been picked for funding in that round. Committee discussion included that the project still had the same termini and provided the same or greater safety benefits. The primary difference in functionality was the elimination of the pedestrian bridge. Matt Saam from the City of West St. Paul said the project included increased access management, turn lanes and safety benefits. The changes came from their advisory committee. The bridge would not align with a planned future trail that is not likely to be built by the county, so the city felt it was not the right timing to build a pedestrian bridge that did not connect to the trail at this time, but the city is still investigating the possibility of partners for that work in the future. Discussions included the difficulty of determining exact point differences in scoring and questioning if the project would have been funded or not. J. Powell moved to approve the scope change in light of the original project benefits, improved access management, the ped bridge not connecting to a trail, and reasonable increased costs. C. Ahl seconded the motion. L. Robjent asked if the federal funding could be reduced by the

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original cost estimate for the ped bridge (\$300,000). K. Keel asked for a friendly amendment to the motion to change the motion to approve the scope change with a \$300,000 reduction in federal funding based on the original cost estimate for that project element. L. Robjent seconded, and the motion to amend the original motion carried with two votes against. The motion to approve the scope change with the funding reduction carried with one vote against.

*TIP Amendment Request*

C. Ahl moved to modify and recommend the related TIP amendment with the \$300,000 reduction in federal funding, J. Powell seconded, and the motion to recommend the TIP amendment carried.

**10. TH65 Transit Service, Anoka County**

*Scope Change and TIP Amendment Requests*

Kevin Roggenbuck provided the staff review of the scope change request to the CMAQ-funded TH65 transit service. The county wanted to use money saved on land purchase to extend service and purchase an additional vehicle. Based on the service extension gaining riders and providing increased air quality benefits, staff recommended approval of the scope change. All project elements included in the original application remain part of the project.

C. Ahl motioned to approve both the scope change request and the related TIP amendment. J. Powell seconded, and the motion carried.

Adam Harrington asked how the service would be funded once the CMAQ funding expires. K. Garwood said the county would need to figure that out in the future.

**11. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

Submitted by: Heidi Schallberg