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

Minutes of a Meeting of the  
FUNDING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE  
May 31, 2012

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Karl Keel (Chair), Greta Alquist, Craig Jenson, Kate Garwood, Brian Isaacson, Mike Klassen, Lyndon Robjent, Carl Ohrn, Ted Schoenecker, Jenifer Hager, Charles Carlson (for Adam Harrington), Tom Johnson, Chuck Ahl, Kevin Roggenbuck, and James Andrew (staff)

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m.

II. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted unanimously.

III. TAB Report (Kevin Roggenbuck) – Information Item

There was no TAB Report as there was no TAB meeting between the last F&P Committee meeting and this one.

IV. 2011 Regional Solicitation Funding Options (based on direction from TAB) – Action Item

K. Roggenbuck and J. Andrew presented the staff memos that described the process for developing federal funding options and the various recommendations that F&P must make for TAB's consideration including funding alternatives. These alternatives consider all programs except for HSIP and RRX.

The memo included discussion of the urgency of making a decision on funding options in June. As discussed in the memo, staff believed that a TIP amendment with a public comment period would be necessary to add any projects selected from the 2011 Solicitation and that the TAB would not be able to simply add them to the TIP as part of the public comment period. This information would be presented to TAB but would be discussed with FHWA to better understand expectations for public involvement.

The memo also included a recommendation for applying an inflation factor to all projects selected to receive funding. The committee agreed to a lower inflation amount than what MnDOT is proposing which was 25% and agreed to the staff recommendation of half that amount which would apply an inflation rate of 10% for projects programmed in 2015 and 12% in 2016.

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There was considerable discussion about the two funding options described in the staff memo. The first was based on awarding an amount of funding as close as possible to what was requested by STP category and the other funded more Augmenters and fewer Bike/Walk and Connector projects.

Several members liked the Augmenter theme because the TAB asked for a policy based theme and had been recently discussing wanting to fund more preservation type projects. The Augmenter criteria were recently changed to give more credit to older more troubled roadways.

L. Robjant stated that if we have an Augmenter theme, we should also forward themes that fund more of the other types of minor arterials or principal arterials or bike/walk projects.

T. Johnson stated that the regional direction has changed when it comes to highway investment toward doing more with less funding and only doing expansion when preservation needs have been met. He pointed out that the first theme rewards more expansion projects because of the large number of Expanders submitted.

L. Robjant pointed out that there was preservation in all projects, not just those in the core and that some of the core projects included expansion elements.

There was some discussion of how much the "A" Minor Arterial system had expanded, mostly in the form of Expander roadways. Mary Karlsson from the Metropolitan Council approached the committee to clarify that the system has expanded by 20% from when it was established. K. Keel stated that the minor arterial categories do not necessarily match development patterns since Bloomington is outside of the ring but has no room for expansion as it is a built-out community and some relievers do not follow congested roadways.

On the question of what to do with the TDM program if the region ends up with far less money than is programmed, K. Garwood suggested that the region could keep the existing programs stable by removing the extra \$1.5M that they are scheduled to receive for the next two years and the following two years. This would allow them to keep their existing programs but would not allow any new activities to be funded.

A suggestion was made to only fund 5 Expanders and allow two more Connectors to be funded, which would fit the preservation theme better than funding 6 Expanders. There is a significant point break between the fifth and sixth Expander which would seem to justify this approach.

C. Ahl stated that we could instead just take one Bike/Walk project off instead of two and reduce the Expanders to five and allow for some overprogramming.

G. Alquist stated that at first glance it was alarming to see only one Bike/Walk project in the Augmenter option, but looking at all of the Augmenter projects that would be added,

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they all include significant bike and pedestrian elements that are real enhancements. We can't compare these in terms of quality but if we look at the regional plans and goals, she would feel more comfortable with exploring the Augmenter option because of this dynamic.

C. Carlson stated that there is a big gap between fifth and sixth project in the CMAQ transit category in terms of point breaks. He also felt that the sixth project also does not lend itself well to contingency because, as a major construction project, requires a timeline that is longer. Every other project can get less funding or deal better with funding uncertainty because they are buses and operations which require less lead time.

K. Roggenbuck reminded the committee that there is a recommendation in the works to remove sunset dates. If we move forward with these options, the working group might recommend elimination of the sunset date which would apply to these projects. That needs to be a part of TAB's action.

Mary Karlsson stated that the discussion today has not been reflected to the group doing the A Minor Arterial Study and asked that members communicate their thoughts on these issues to the steering committee for the study.

The committee had consensus to recommend two contingency options. The first reduces federal funding levels to what is available and at equal proportions for each project and the second is to push projects out through 2017. The committee agreed to forward the discussion to the TAC without a recommendation on funding options.

V. Other Business

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

VI. Adjourn

Submitted by:  
James Andrew