

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

Metropolitan Council Building, 390 Robert Street No., Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101

TAB PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes: October 14, 2010
Metropolitan Council Chambers.

Members Present: Bill Hargis, Co-Chair, Jim Hovland, Co-Chair, Tony Bennett, Dennis Berg, Jan Callison, Robert Lilligren, Scott McBride, Richard Mussell, Becky Petryk, Jill Smith, Dick Swanson, David Thornton, Jon Ulrich.

Guests and Staff: Karl Keel, TAC Funding and Programming Committee Chair, Bloomington.
Pat Bursaw, MN/DOT Metro Program Management.
Arlene McCarthy, Metropolitan Council Transportation Services.
Kevin Roggenbuck, TAB Coordinator.

I. Call to order.

Co-Chair Hovland called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM.

II. Adoption of the Agenda.

Mr. Hovland asked for a motion to approve the amended agenda. Mr. Lilligren moved, seconded by Mr. Ulrich, to adopt the agenda. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

III. Approval of the Programming Committee minutes from September 9, 2010.

Ms. Callison moved, seconded by Mr. Mussell, to approve the minutes from the September 9, 2010 TAB Programming Committee meeting. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

IV. Information Items and Action Transmittals.

Information: Additional FFY 2011 federal funds, MN/DOT.

Ms. Bursaw presented this item to the committee. Ms. Bursaw said that she will share information with the committee, explain what MN/DOT will do and ask the TAB how they would like to address it.

Ms. Bursaw said approximately \$95 million in federal transportation funds that normally would have been distributed as earmarks are coming to Minnesota as formula funds in FFY 2011. Ms. Bursaw explained that the federal funds will be split along traditional lines, 75% for MN/DOT and 25% for local governments. The funding is further split 50/50 between the Metro District and Greater Minnesota. Projects must be let by September 15, 2011 and the funding requires a 20% match. Ms. Bursaw said MN/DOT will use uncommitted bond funds as the match and because they are bond funds, MN/DOT projects must have a 20-year useful life.

Ms. Bursaw said MN/DOT said the Transportation Program and Investment Committee looked at the program areas and performance targets and decided to use all of this one-time money on pavements. Approximately \$37 million will be available for the Metro District and projects will be chosen by the end of October.

Ms. Bursaw said approximately \$12 million would be available to the metro area local program, including a share less than \$1.0 million for Chisago County. Ms. Bursaw described a range of approaches, in general terms, for allocating the local share.

Mr. Lilligren asked what type of federal funds are these and why is Chisago County getting a piece of the metro area local funds? Ms. Bursaw said it is not clear which program the federal funds are in, but last year they came as undetermined and they were treated like STP funds. Ms. Bursaw explained that Chisago County is part of the MN/DOT Metro Area Transportation Partnership and traditionally gets a small share of funding that comes to the Metro District.

The committee members discussed referring the item to the TAC Funding and Programming Committee to develop options for the TAB to consider. The committee generally favored an approach that created jobs now rather than later and was accessible to cities and counties, but did not want to conduct a lengthy and complicated solicitation process. Mr. Ulrich moved, seconded by Ms. Petryk, to direct the TAC to develop a formula to distribute these additional FFY 2011 federal funds back to the metro area for preservation projects. Discussion followed.

Ms. Callison said she would like to hear options other than preservation projects. The committee discussed the ARRA solicitation. Some of the cities that requested ARRA funds did not get any and many cities that did get ARRA funding had a hard time delivering their projects on schedule.

Mr. Ulrich requested to withdraw his motion. Hearing no objections, Mr. Hovland invited a new motion. Mr. Ulrich moved to refer this item to the TAC Funding and Programming Committee to develop options for distribution of the additional \$12 million to the metro area in FFY 2011, mindful of the MN/DOT guidance. Ms. Smith said the ability to deliver the project should be part of the funding decision. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-58: STP project scope change for SP# 211-010-07, TH 13 improvements in Savage, City of Savage.

Mr. Keel said he will present the action items from the TAC.

Mr. Keel described the original project scope and explained the need for the scope change. Mr. Keel said Mr. Powell, the Savage City Engineer, is available to answer questions.

Mr. Ulrich moved, seconded by Mr. Lilligren, to recommend approval of the STP project scope change request as described in action transmittal 2010-58. Discussion followed.

Mr. Berg and Ms. Smith asked whether any properties in the area would be denied access in the revised scope. Mr. Powell replied that no properties would be denied access and described how the Port of Savage would still be accessible. Mr. Powell also explained why the project cost increased and that the city of Savage will cover the cost increase.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-59: 2011-2014 TIP amendment for the revised scope of SP# 211-010-07, TH 13 improvements in Savage, City of Savage.

Mr. Keel explained that the revised project scope for SP# 211-010-07, TH 13 improvements in Savage must be amended into the TIP.

Mr. Ulrich moved, seconded by Mr. Lilligren, to recommend adoption of the TIP amendment as described in action transmittal 2010-59. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-60: 2010-2013 TIP amendment for SP# 0280-66, I-35W North mitigation and design feasibility study, MN/DOT.

Mr. Keel described the project and explained that it needs to be amended into this TIP because funding will sunset this year and MN/DOT needs to use it on an eligible project in 2010.

Mr. Swanson moved, seconded by Mr. McBride, to recommend adoption of the TIP amendment as described in action transmittal 2010-60. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-61: 2011 Regional Solicitation, Revising the regional functional classification system for highways.

Mr. Keel explained that the rest of the agenda items are related to the 2011 regional solicitation. Some are recommended actions from the TAC and others are just committee reports with not recommended action.

Mr. Keel said the technical committees felt there are some inadequacies in the current metro area roadway functional classification system and recommend that a study be conducted. The technical committees realize there is not enough time to complete a study in time for the 2011 regional solicitation, but should be done for future solicitations. The system of "A" Minor Arterials was developed 20 years ago and has not been evaluated since it was created.

Mr. Lilligren moved, seconded by Ms. Smith, to recommend that the TAB initiate a study to re-conceptualize the metro area roadway functional classification system after the 2011 regional solicitation has concluded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-62: 2011 Regional Solicitation, Elevating preservation as a goal.

Mr. Keel presented this item to the committee. Mr. Keel explained that the technical committees felt that preservation is an important need on the "A" minor arterial system that is not addressed in the regional solicitation. "A" minor Augmenters are in the full developed area within the 494/694 ring. Building capacity expansion projects is expensive and the technical committees recommend the Augmenter category as a good candidate for a pilot use of preservation criteria. Mr. Keel answered questions from the committee members.

Mr. Hargis moved, seconded by Ms. Petryk, to recommend adding preservation criteria to the "A" minor arterial Augmenter category to measure the preservation value of proposed projects. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-63: 2011 Regional Solicitation, Improve project cost estimating.

Mr. Keel presented this item to the committee. Mr. Keel said the technical committees recommend using a construction item checklist to guide applicants in developing better cost estimates. The technical committees will look at using a shorter version of MN/DOT's project scoping document. The technical committees did not favor using standard unit costs and did not want to add an onerous process to the solicitation. Mr. Lilligren said the TAB should be sensitive about adding to the cost of preparing an application.

Mr. Lilligren moved, seconded by Ms. Callison, to recommend that the TAB use a project construction checklist to help improve the accuracy of cost estimates in the regional solicitation. Discussion followed.

Mr. Thornton asked if the checklist would be a pass/fail format. Mr. Keel said no, the checklist would be used as a way to make applicants think about the construction elements in the project and put more thought into the cost estimate. Mr. Lilligren asked if the accuracy of cost estimates is factored into the project scores. Mr. Keel said no, but the "maturity of project concept" criterion evaluates how much work has already been done developing the project.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-64: 2011 Regional Solicitation, Revising the integration of modes criterion.

Mr. Keel presented this item to the committee. Mr. Keel said most proposed projects provide for other modes but there is not much difference among the scores in the "integration of modes" criterion. The technical committees considered making the provision of other modes a qualifying criterion but ended up just recommending refining the evaluation of the criterion to focus on regional impacts.

Mr. Lilligren moved, seconded by Ms. Smith, to recommend that the TAB that the "integration of modes" criterion be revised to evaluate the degree of connectivity to modal networks or destinations. The committee discussed how the Complete Streets concept is not fully understood by local governments and that it is not emphasized in the "integration of modes" criterion.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

2010-65: 2011 Regional Solicitation, Encourage more traffic signal timing projects in the CMAQ category.

Mr. Keel presented this item to the committee. Mr. Keel said traffic signal re-timing projects involve more engineering cost than construction cost but can have a significant air quality and traffic congestion benefit. These types of projects are not submitted very often because the cost to develop them is greater than the funding received in the solicitation to construct them. Mr. Keel said the technical committees recommend using some CMAQ funds specifically for these projects, but one sponsoring agency needs to step forward so they can be bundled and processed through MN/DOT State Aid as a group.

Mr. Hargis moved, seconded by Ms. Smith, to recommend to the TAB that a new CMAQ funding program for traffic signal retiming projects be established. Discussion followed.

Ms. Smith asked whether this program would take away money from other CMAQ projects and how have these signal retiming projects scored in previous solicitations. Mr. Keel said putting money toward these projects would mean less money for other CMAQ projects but the amount is undecided. Previously, traffic signal upgrade projects have scored high in cost effectiveness but low in other criteria. The committee discussed the difference between traffic signal pre-emption used by emergency vehicles vs. traffic signal prioritization used by transit vehicles.

The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Information: 2011 Regional Solicitation, Non-freeway principal arterial projects and consistency with the new 2030 TPP.

Mr. Keel presented this item to the committee. Mr. Keel said the technical committees discussed changing the project eligibility criteria to reflect the improvement priorities for the metro highway system in the new Transportation Policy Plan, but did not reach a consensus opinion. Committee members felt the TAB should wait until the Met Council adopts the final plan before changing the solicitation criteria.

Information: 2011 Regional Solicitation, CMAQ transit issues.

Mr. Keel presented this item to the committee. Mr. Keel said the technical committees discussed the three CMAQ transit issues at length but did not come to a consensus on any of the three. Regarding the question of using a two-year timeline to solicit for CMAQ transit projects, Mr. Keel said some technical committee members were concerned that applicants would miss an opportunity to fund an important project if the 2011 CMAQ solicitation were canceled. Others felt the regional solicitation should reward projects that have long-term planning behind them. Regarding the transfer of \$5 million in CMAQ funds per year to a transit preservation program, Mr. Keel said the technical committees did not want to take funding away from transit expansion projects or lose control over how it would be allocated. Regarding the creation of a regional service improvement plan and using it in the regional solicitation, Mr. Keel said the technical committees were reluctant to use it because it has not been developed.

Mr. Hovland invited Ms. McCarthy to comment on the technical committees report. Ms. McCarthy thanked the TAB for considering the three CMAQ issues.

V. Other Business.

Committee members did not raise any other business.

VI. Adjourn

Mr. Hovland adjourned the Programming Committee meeting at 2:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted:
Kevin Roggenbuck,
TAB Coordinator.