

Minutes

TAC Funding and Programming Committee



Meeting date: February 26, 2026,

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☒ Eden Prairie – Robert Ellis | ☒ MnDOT Metro District – JoDene Carr (Alt) | ☒ Anoka Co. – Jerry Auge |
| ☒ Fridley – Jim Kosluchar | ☒ MnDOT Metro District State Aid – Colleen Brown | ☒ Carver Co. – Darin Mielke |
| ☐ Lakeville – Paul Oehme | ☒ MnDOT Bike/Ped – Mackenzie Turner Borgen (Alt) | ☒ Dakota Co. – Jacob Chapek |
| ☒ Minneapolis – Gustave Stewart (Alt) | ☐ MPCA – Lauren Dickerson | ☒ Hennepin Co. – Emily Buell |
| ☒ Plymouth – Michael Thompson | ☒ DNR – Nancy Spooner-Walsh | ☒ Ramsey Co. – Codie Leseman |
| ☒ St. Paul – Anne Weber | ☒ Suburban Transit Assoc. – Heidi Scholl | ☒ Scott Co. – Jon Rudolph |
| ☒ Eagan – Russ Matthys | | ☐ Wash Co. – Madeline Dahlheimer |
| ☒ Met Council – Cole Hiniker | | ☐ FHWA – Scott Mareck (ex-officio) |
| ☒ Metro Transit – Scott Janowiak | | ☒ = present, E = excused |
| ☒ TAB Coordinator – Elaine Koutsoukos | | |

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Metropolitan Council acknowledges that the land we currently call Minnesota and specifically the seven-county region is the ancestral homeland of the Dakota Oyate who are present and active contributors to our thriving region. As part of the Metropolitan Council's commitment to address the unresolved legacy of genocide, dispossession, and settler colonialism and the fact that government institutions, including the Metropolitan Council, benefitted economically, politically, and institutionally after the forceable removal of the Dakota Oyate, the Metropolitan Council is dedicated to instilling Land, Water, and People Commitments in regional policy. These commitments support the Dakota Oyate, the eleven federally recognized Tribes in Minnesota, Ho-Chunk Nation, and the American Indian Communities representing over 150 diverse Tribal Nations that call the seven-county region home.

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Kosluchar called the regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee to order at 1:00 p.m.

Agenda approved

Chair Kosluchar noted that a roll call vote was not needed for approval of the agenda unless a committee member offered an amendment to the agenda. Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Michael Thompson, Plymouth, and seconded by Katie White, to approve the minutes of January 15, 2026, regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee.

Motion carried.

Public comment on committee business

TAB report

Elane Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, reported on the February 18th regular TAB meeting.

Business

1. **2026-18:** Program Year Extension Request: City of Anoka's TH 47 Corridor Improvement (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning and Ben Nelson, Anoka, presented. Nelson explained that the city is still awaiting the RCE planning grant, which has delayed the preliminary design and property acquisition needed for the North and South corridor projects. He noted that the North segment cannot proceed independently, and completing both projects within the originally allocated fiscal years (North: 2027, South: 2028) is not feasible. Nelson also confirmed that while FY 2027 funding is secured, FY 2028 is overprogrammed, and full funding for the South segment is not yet secured.

Thompson asked if both projects could be accelerated to 2029 instead of 2030. Nelson responded that this would be very aggressive, and the city prefers FY 2030. Koutsoukos and Barbeau provided context on previous extensions, noting that three-year extensions are rare and usually reserved for exceptional circumstances. Nelson clarified that the FRA planning grant covers both segments. Colleen Brown, MnDOT, confirmed that FY 2027 funds are available, FY 2028 is overprogrammed, and FY 2029 funds would not be accessible until 2030.

Committee members discussed policy considerations. Thompson and Jerry Auge, Anoka, expressed support for moving both projects to FY 2030 to avoid losing federal funding and to allow proper project planning, particularly given BNSF coordination requirements. Robert Ellis also supported the motion and suggested staff explain financial impacts and historical precedents for longer extensions in future committee materials.

It was moved by Thompson, and seconded by Brown, that the Funding and Programming Committee Recommend approval of the program-year extension request to move Anoka's TH 47 corridor improvements and its TH 47 railroad crossing grade from 2027 and 2028, respectively, to 2030 and combine the projects into one contract **Motion carried.**

2. **2026-19:** Release of the 2026 Regional Solicitation (Steve Peterson, MTS Planning)

Steve Peterson, MTS Planning, presented. Thompson raised concerns about limiting the number of project submittals. He cautioned that restricting applications could prevent the most effective projects from being funded and noted that the funds come from the metro sales and use tax, with the Council receiving only a small portion. Thompson suggested that policymakers could review geographic equity after projects are selected but warned that arbitrary limits might have unintended consequences. Jim Kosluchar acknowledged the concern and noted that lowering the match requirement for smaller entities was one approach to encourage broader participation.

Darin Mielke and Hiniker added to the discussion, suggesting that agencies could be limited initially but that additional projects could be funded later to achieve geographic balance. They emphasized the importance of documenting application numbers and participation to provide context to the legislature, ensuring that a low number of applications does not appear as low demand. Mielke also asked about planning grants, and Joseph Widing clarified that eligibility requirements focus on communities without recent plans and that joint applications are possible but subject to maximum award limits.

Mielke highlighted a suggestion from Washington County to give extra points for year-round



winter maintenance, allowing comprehensive projects to be considered even if they do not meet certain criteria. Steven Peterson confirmed that this change had been noted and could be reassessed in the next cycle, particularly for the 2027 cycle, with potential impacts on solicitation timing to be decided by TAB and the Council.

Emily Buell reiterated Hennepin County's support for reestablishing the bridge investment target, emphasizing the criticality of maintaining safe bridge infrastructure. Cole Hiniker moved the recommended motion, noting that recording these discussions and documenting agency participation would help provide context for lower-than-typical application numbers and inform future cycles.

Finally, Kosluchar and Peterson confirmed that the anticipated project application period would likely occur in June or July, with the call for projects opening as early as the end of April or early May and extending roughly six weeks into June.

It was moved by Hiniker, seconded by Mackenzie Turner Borgen, that the Funding and Programming Committee Recommend that the Technical Advisory Committee recommend approval of the release of the 2026 Regional Solicitation, Active Transportation Solicitation, and Highway Safety Improvement (HSIP) Solicitations, including the following changes resulting from the public comment period.

- Change the crash years used in the Regional Solicitation safety applications and HSIP applications from 2020-2024 to 2021-2025.
- Change Active Transportation's Complete Streets scoring criterion to add "Agencies or organizations without roadway ownership or jurisdiction may include the community's local ordinance or policy where the project is located and describe how the project would support advancing complete streets in this community."
- Change the Access to Key Destinations scoring criterion in Active Transportation's Local Bicycle Facilities application and Regional Solicitation's Regional Bicycle Facilities application to add the following language: "Applicants may identify additional destinations up to 1 mile from the project location but will need to demonstrate that these destinations have a continuous bicycle facility connection that provides safe access from the project location. These destinations must be clearly marked outside of the one-half mile buffer." **Motion carried.**

Information

1. Agency Community Considerations Scoring Workshop (Amy Vennewitz, Director MTS Planning)

Amy Vennewitz explained that the team is working on a short timeline for agency scoring. The initial call for scores went only to participants in the interest group, but additional agency scores are needed because not all members are able to participate. The goal is to secure roughly ten scorers, with up to fifteen lined up in case of dropouts. She noted that attending the workshop is a requirement for scoring community considerations. The workshop is scheduled for Monday, March 30, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and will run for half a day, covering best practices from both community and agency perspectives. Vennewitz emphasized that while scorers must attend, the workshop is also open to any agency staff who want to learn more. Approximately fifteen community-based organization staff will participate and contribute to scoring the applications. Interested individuals can register for the workshop using the link provided in the flyer.

2. TAB Member Orientation Sessions – March and April (Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator)

Koutsoukos provided an update on upcoming orientation sessions for new TAB members and alternates. She announced that the first orientation is scheduled for March 6 from 1:30 to 3:00 PM. Committee members who wish to attend can contact her directly or coordinate through Robbie King. Koutsoukos noted that additional sessions will be scheduled later in March or April to accommodate members who are still being appointed.



Reports

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m.

Council contact:

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

