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Citizens Involvement Committee

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Agency: Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study

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Summary

- Officials provided an update of the status of proposals in four programs. An overview of these programs and the proposed projects can be found [here](#). Go to attachment 5a and tables 1, 2, 3 and 4.
- Connecting Communities updated the status of project proposals and will announce project proposal awards in March.
- The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program directed \$13.4 million to four projects.

Follow-Up Questions

- [Director Curtis Baker](#) said project spending must take place on schedule. This could mean that, if a given project slows down, other projects are “pulled forward.” Does this mean that projects that weren’t approved initially could get funding if an approved project slows down?
- What is the process for evaluating and scoring proposals for the four primary programs?

Notes

- Baker welcomed everyone and started the meeting at 6:31 p.m. Others in attendance were Jeff Gardner, AMATS transportation planner, Heather Reidl, AMATS mobility planner, Seth Bush, AMATS GIS coordinator, Austen Rau, Bill Sepe ([TASCforce](#)), and William Maki.
- Baker reviewed the status of grant requests from four primary funding sources and one supplemental source administered by AMATS:
 - Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG)
 - Resurfacing Program

- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)
 - Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA)
 - TASA Supplemental
- STBG - Project requests for \$89 million were submitted. There is \$15 million available from this funding source.
- Resurfacing Program - 42 projects have been submitted with \$32 million requested; \$15 million is available from the fund.
- CRP - This program focuses on keeping traffic moving. Seventeen projects were submitted with \$23 million requested. There is \$8 million available from this funding source.
- TASA - Twenty-three projects were submitted with \$17.6 million requested. There is \$1.2 million available from this funding source.
 - TASA Supplemental - The TASA Supplemental program funds trail projects. TASA Supplemental project requests may or may not be awarded.
- For all four funding sources, AMATS received 118 project proposals with an overall funding request of \$165 million. The AMATS staff will score the proposals and send them to committees for further review. Baker said about 24% of the proposals are likely to be approved. Final approvals will be made in January.
- Baker opened the meeting up for questions about these projects.
 - Rau: How does the 24% approval rate compare to other municipalities?
 - Baker: There is no definitive data available, but we're a bit below what seems to be the average approval rate of about 30%.
 - Rau: Do the scores of the proposed projects change much from this point on?
 - Baker: Occasionally, communications that lead to clarification of some aspects of the project proposal can lead to changes, but that happens infrequently and generally leads only to small changes when it does happen.
 - Rau: What is the status of TASA funding going forward?
 - Baker: He hopes for somewhere between \$2 million and \$3 million going forward, especially to finish the [Rubber City Heritage Trail](#).
 - Rau: Will AMATS recommend that the top three scoring trail projects be approved?
 - Baker: Yes.
 - In response to another question from Rau, Baker said that, once funds are committed to projects, it is expected to "spend on schedule." As such, if a particular project slows down, other projects are "pulled forward."
- It was noted that [Metro RTA's](#) Director of Planning and Strategic Development, Valerie Shea, is leaving Metro RTA, but Sepe was of the opinion that her departure

wouldn't slow any AMATS projects.

- Reidl presented an update of the [Connecting Communities initiative](#). A notice of funding availability for projects that would integrate land use and transportation has been sent to local communities. There are two \$40,000 grants available.
 - Rau asked if these funds could support feasibility studies. Baker replied that proposals for feasibility studies weren't likely to be considered.
- Gardner reported on the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program. This program funds projects that seek to reduce emissions by reducing traffic and barriers to traffic flow. Gardner said the program received 15 project proposals totalling \$57 million. The program funded four projects for \$13.4 million.
- Curtis again opened up the meeting for questions.
 - Maki: What is a slip ramp?
 - Curtis: At some intersections, there is a continuous right hand turn lane called a slip ramp.
 - Rau: Could a Connecting Communities initiative fund any aspect of the [Veterans Trail](#)?
 - Curtis: Possibly, but a new feasibility study would probably need to be conducted.
- The remainder of the meeting was devoted to welcoming guests and to general discussion among the participants. The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m..

Notes to reader: Unless quotation marks are used, all text is paraphrased. If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email us at documenters@signalakron.org with "Correction Request" in the subject line.