Michigan Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

DOT/MPO Partnership to Better Serve Michigan Communities

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Presentation Overview

- MAP-21 Challenges
- MDOT/MPO Collaboration
- Advantages
- Grant IT System
- Business Process
- Results
Background: TE, SRTS, & RTP in Michigan before MAP-21

- **TE** – centralized DOT review and selection process
- **SRTS** – centralized DOT review and selection process after school-based planning process
  - Quarterly communication between DOT and MPO’s sending TE and SRTS application and approved project lists
  - All Local TE and SRTS projects implemented by Local Agencies through MDOT’s letting process and with MDOT oversight
  - Both TE and SRTS Programs were and are in the same MDOT office
- **RTP** – administered by the MDNR
MAP-21 Challenges: MDOT perspective

- Less than 90 days to prepare new program
- Many unknowns
- Grant IT system was scheduled for August 2013 implementation and designed with “TE” in mind
- 6 Large MPO’s and State received direct suballocation in MI
  - could result in 7 different TAP Programs
- Avoid disruption of existing TE projects that were “in the pipeline”
- Let’s not make the same mistakes again!
MAP-21 Challenges: SEMCOG perspective

- Less than 90 days to prepare new program
- Many unknowns
- SEMCOG did not have a system established to process TAP projects
- SEMCOG did not have staff available to solely dedicate to TAP
- Because of “Fiscal Constraint”, there is pressure to obligate all available funds within a FY
- Pressure to show value of projects
Answer:
DOT/MPO Collaboration

- MDOT and SEMCOG began meeting to coordinate respective TAP’s
- MDOT Selection Advisory Committee utilized by SEMCOG for project comment and technical review
- Schedules have been coordinated to fully integrate MDOT’s Selection Advisory Team into SEMCOG’s TAP application process
- SEMCOG funded some projects from MDOT’s FY 2013 Conditional Commitment list
Answer:
DOT/MPO Collaboration

- SEMCOG (and the 5 other Large MPO’s in MI) adopted the MDOT Grant System for TAP applications and review documentation
- Monthly meetings are held between MDOT and MPO’s to discuss the implementation status of all TAP projects (MPO selected and MDOT selected)
- Reports have been developed to track project progress through the grant application, review, selection, and implementation processes
Advantages: MDOT’s perspective

- Win-win for customers! One application, DOT and MPO’s will coordinate reviews and negotiate funding
- MDOT grant system makes statewide TAP reporting much more efficient
- More collaboration can lead to better projects that are more likely to be implemented
  - “$ on the ground”, benefitting MI communities
- Good government in action!
Advantages: SEMCOG’s perspective

- Staff time savings - didn’t have to “reinvent the wheel”
- Did not require a new application portal
- Take advantage of MDOT’s experience with TE and SRTS projects
- Builds even more professional links between MDOT and SEMCOG
- SEMCOG can consider funding all or part of an application submitted to MDOT, and vice versa
Other Advantages

- Jointly funding projects – MPO’s use all or a portion of their suballocated TAP funding and MDOT uses “Any Area” funds on the same project
  - Helps the Large MPO’s with small TAP suballocations (examples: Niles area receives $43,000/year from the South Bend, IN urbanized area and Kalamazoo receives $246,000/year)
- So far, MDOT and the MPO’s have jointly funded 6 TAP projects
- More collaboration likely
Other Advantages

- Proactive and joint approach to outreach/education of TAP to public
  - Two TAP workshops held
    - Focus on best practices, advice to getting projects funded, & technical assistance on navigating both MGS and eligibility requirements
    - One specific to SRTS - changes under MAP-21/TAP, planning process, eligibility, case studies
  - Ongoing MDOT/SEMCOG outreach to communities
    - Emphasis on meeting prior to application (recommendations; potential other funding sources; meeting match requirements; etc.)
Important Notes

- MDOT and MPO’s still retain separate competitive selection processes
- Former TE activities and SRTS are still being treated as two separate programs at the DOT level, however, they share the same review schedules
- RTP is still being administered by the MDNR
MDOT Grant System: Tool that Facilitates Collaboration
Results:
Example Jointly Funded Project

Southwest Detroit Business District: West Vernor Avenue Streetscape and Pedestrian Safety Project

Scheduled for November 2013 letting

Project Budget:

MDOT TE: $3,394,170
SEMCOG TAP: $1,000,000
Detroit & Private: $1,066,448

$5,460,618
Questions?