

5C. Carryover Spend Down Projects - Update

BACKGROUND

The Transportation Policy Council's (TPC) Project Selection Process approval in January 2023 included a commitment for MPO staff to review projects submitted to H-GAC to assess whether projects could let or be transferred to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) by August 31, 2025. This process (to identify carryover spend down projects) screened projects for readiness and then assessed how well the "ready projects" aligned with the TPC's priorities and goals expressed through the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). As a result of the carryover spend down project identification effort, on December 15, 2023, the TPC programmed 60 projects represented by 25 sponsors with \$335,225,653 of federal funds. All projects except one (with total project cost of \$500K) are scheduled to let or be transferred to FTA by August 31, 2025.

CURRENT SITUATION

H-GAC staff has been engaged in the following activities to ensure the 59 projects let or are transferred to FTA by August 31, 2025:

- Held a workshop for sponsors of the carryover spend down projects on February 7, 2024, where TxDOT presented the Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) process; Federal Transit Administration (FTA) presented the FTA "Transfer" process as well as the steps it takes to become an FTA Recipient; and MPO staff discussed the Regional Strategic Transportation Fund (RSTF) program.
- Developed "Next Steps" tracking spreadsheets with due dates for each task and is coordinating with sponsors weekly.
- Scheduled quarterly meetings with the sponsors of carryover spend down projects.
- Continued coordination with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and TxDOT to address FHWA's comments on approximately \$210M of projects with Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) "Exceptions" (note: this means the STIP has been approved conditionally with pending questions about the projects with "Exceptions").
- Continued coordination with FHWA and TxDOT regarding FHWA's rejection of approximately \$10.5M of projects requested to be transferred to FTA.
- Prepared a "Question and Answer" meeting for local government sponsors to answer questions regarding the federal/TxDOT guidelines to procure consultants.

Sponsors with additional projects they believe can let or be transferred to FTA by August 31, 2025, should contact MPO staff as soon as possible. Staff will review the full list of potential projects and present any potential recommendations to add more spend down projects to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) and TPC for preview in July 2024.

ACTION REQUESTED

For information and discussion only.

