A. MANAGER’S MEMORANDUM

Source: TED Business Group
Subject: North Aurora Road Improvement Project (SC033) Federal Surface Transportation Funding
Action: FYI
DATE: February 13, 2020

TO: Doug Krieger, City Manager
    Bill Novack, Director – TED Business Group

FROM: Andy Hynes, Deputy City Engineer – TED Business Group

SUBJECT: North Aurora Road Improvement Project (SC033)
          Federal Surface Transportation Funding

PURPOSE:
To provide City Council with an update regarding federal funding for the upcoming improvements to North Aurora Road between Frontenac Road and Fairway Drive (CIP Project SC033).

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:
North Aurora Road is a minor arterial road with an average daily traffic of approximately 22,000 vehicles. The road is a primary connection between the cities of Naperville and Aurora and provides access to numerous businesses and subdivisions. North Aurora Road between Fairway Drive in Naperville and Pennsbury Lane in Aurora is a traffic bottleneck as the only remaining section of this corridor with a single lane for each direction for several miles on either side. The existing traffic already exceeds the capacity of the current roadway and is expected to grow to nearly 33,000 vehicles per day by 2040.

The City has been working on two projects to improve the North Aurora Road corridor between Illinois Route 59 and Eola Road that are included in the Naperville’s Roadway Improvement Plan. The first project is being conducted in partnership with the Naperville Township Road District to improve the roadway between Frontenac Road and Fairway Drive (CIP Project SC033). The second project will improve the underpass at the CN/Wisconsin Central Railroad (CIP Project BR005) in collaboration with the Naperville Township Road District and the City of Aurora (as each agency has jurisdiction of a portion of the roadway along the corridor). The scope of the projects consists of widening the existing three lane road to accommodate two traffic lanes in each direction with a center turn lane, multi-use trail, sidewalk, roadway lighting and drainage enhancements.

Following the completion of the preliminary engineering study, the City applied for federal funding. In December 2015, the City obtained $6,000,000 through the federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) to be applied to construction costs for the improvements between Frontenac Road and Fairway Drive (CIP Project SC033). This STP funding represents over 50% of the total anticipated $11,200,000 construction cost. Separate state and federal funding has been secured for the railroad underpass improvements.

DISCUSSION:
The improvements to North Aurora Road between Frontenac Road and Fairway Drive (CIP Project SC033) were scheduled for an April 24, 2020 bid opening with construction
beginning in late spring or early summer. City staff and our consultant have completed the plan documents, securing permits, coordinating utility relocations, and working to complete the necessary land acquisition to allow the project to proceed.

On February 5th, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) issued the attached memorandum regarding the status of the region’s federal STP funds. The memo explains that the currently available STP funds exceed the approved funding obligations. As a result, any projects scheduled for the remaining bid openings in federal fiscal year 2020 in the northeast Illinois area will need to be reprogrammed to a future year.

Due to this funding deficit, the North Aurora Road project will not be able to proceed to the April bid opening. City staff has requested that the DuPage Mayors and Managers (DMMC) reprogram the $6 million of STP funds for the project in the 2021 federal fiscal year with a revised bid opening date of January 15, 2021. The DMMC will need to consider how this project and other similarly funded projects will fit into future years.

City staff is continuing to move forward with completion of the project bid documents with the hope that the STP funding may become available. Private utility work may also proceed this year in advance of the roadway construction if possible.

**RECOMMENDATION:**
Include this information in the February 13, 2020 Manager's Memorandum.
North Aurora Road Widening – $6 million of STP Funding Delayed

North Aurora Road Underpass at the CN/Wisconsin Central Railroad – January 2022 Letting

Project Location Map
MEMORANDUM

To: Council of Mayors Executive Committee

CC: Subregional Planning Liaisons, Chicago Department of Transportation staff

From: CMAP Staff

Date: February 5, 2020

Re: FFY 2020 Local STP Program Status

Over the past two years, local governments in northeastern Illinois have delivered a transportation program of unprecedented size. Local Surface Transportation Program (STP-L) spending has been $30 - 40 million higher each year than is typical. The Councils have seen many important projects go to construction or make significant progress toward implementation. As a result, remaining STP-L funding for the current year is limited, and not all projects targeting a state letting in federal fiscal year 2020 (ending September 30) can be accommodated. This memo provides context on the shortfall and describes actions needed to adjust the program.

Background

Federal rules require metropolitan planning organizations, including the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, to develop a transportation improvement program (TIP) that lists the projects that will use federal funding. The TIP is to include the specific fund source that will be used in each year for each phase of a project. The projects to be funded from the current year of the TIP cannot add up to more than the available funding, a requirement known as fiscal constraint. STP-L funds are subject to this requirement. After a deduction for the STP Shared Fund in accordance with the STP agreement, the amount for the council programs is $133,856,514 in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2020. To maintain fiscal constraint, the total amount of STP-L funds programmed in CMAP’s TIP in FFY 20 cannot exceed that amount.

In comparison, sponsors of local projects are seeking authorization to use $223,457,965 in STP-L funds in FFY 20. The accompanying spreadsheet lists these projects. As was discussed at the August and October Council of Mayors Executive Committee meetings as well as at individual
Council meetings over the past several months, STP-L funding is only available to program in FFY 20 for construction projects up to and including those on the March 6, 2020 state letting.

The allotment of STP-L funds provided to the region is set by a formula developed by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). In the past two years, actual use of STP-L funds has significantly exceeded the allotment. In FFY 18 and FFY 19, local governments used (“obligated”) $356 million in STP-L funds, or $76.7 million more than the combined allotments for those two years. IDOT was able to accommodate the additional funding requests in the previous two years, but has indicated that it cannot do so this year, as described in this letter. For reference, the accompanying spreadsheet lists the projects on which STP-L funding was obligated by the Councils in FFY 2018, 2019, and 2020 (through January).

**Action needed**

The Councils will need to move all funds for construction and construction engineering project phases currently targeting the April, June, July, September, or November lettings of this year to FFY 21 in the TIP. Funding for phase 1 and phase 2 engineering and right-of-way currently programmed in FFY 20 can remain programmed in FFY 20. Project sponsors should continue moving forward with their project(s) so that they can use any funding that may become available. CMAP will closely monitor projects and recommend reallocating resources if so. Project sponsors are encouraged to also explore other funding sources where possible. However, project sponsors should not execute agreements for project phases not programmed in the TIP in FFY 2020, as this could inadvertently reduce funding available to the region.

**Next steps**

At the end of federal fiscal year 2020 (September 30, 2020) the regional STP-L balance will be reset to $0 and all Councils will build new programs using their new STP-L allotments for FFY 2021-25 to program projects in the TIP. Under the STP agreement, Councils may choose to grandfather projects into their new programs that could not be accommodated in FFY 20.