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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LANSING

KIRK T. STEUDLE
DIRECTOR

January 7, 2010

Mr. Homayoon Pirooz, P.E.
Project Management Manager
City of Ann Arbor
100 North Fifth Avenue
P.O. Box 8647
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-8647

City of Ann Arbor
Project Management

JAN 12 2010

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RE: 2012 MDOT Local Bridge Program Funding Selections

Dear Mr. Pirooz:

This office received your letter dated December 28, 2009, concerning the Local Bridge Advisory Board (LBAB) meeting held on November 5, 2009, and the projects selected for funding for the 2012 fiscal year. As you stated, Ann Arbor's East Stadium Boulevard bridges were not selected by the voting members of the LBAB. The voting members of the board are staff professionals from cities, villages, and county road commissions from across the state. The LBAB carefully reviews the applications submitted to them and the recommendations from the Region Bridge Councils (RBC) who are also professional staff of cities and counties. For clarification, there are two Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) employees who are members of the LBAB and one employee is a member of each RBC however, these members do not have voting rights and cannot make selection decisions.

Below, responses have been created based on the bulleted points within your letter.

- *"The three local bridge projects that have been approved for MDOT's 2012 Local Bridge Program Funds have Federal Sufficiency Ratings (FSR) ranging from 33.1 to 74.6 out of 100. The FSR for the City's E. Stadium Bridge over S. State Street is 2 out of 100."*

Within the Local Bridge Program (LBP), the FSR is primarily used to determine the eligibility for the category of work in the applications. An application with an FSR less than or equal to 50 is eligible for consideration of replacement. The University RBC and the LBAB may or may not use the FSR as a selection influence.

- *"The three local bridges have Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes ranging from 8,000 to 11,300 vehicles per day. The City's E. Stadium Bridges carries about 28,900 vehicles per day."*

The Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is incorporated into the computer generated traffic rating points and the RBC and LBAB can consider it when making selections. However, the ADT is only a portion of the criteria used for the final selections of projects.

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- *“The three local bridges have been scheduled to receive about \$836,000 to \$2,777,000 each from MDOT. In our letter of October 23, 2009 we asked for \$3,000,000 assistance from the Local Bridge Program. This amount is consistent with the level of funding that has been distributed.”*

In April, 2005, the city of Ann Arbor was notified that the Stadium Boulevard over State Street bridge replacement project had been selected for funding with a cost estimate of \$766,000 (per the application submitted by the city). Afterward, meetings were held with members of your staff where it was brought up that, due to the vertical alignment raise and the increase in bridge width, the E. Stadium Boulevard over Ann Arbor Railroad structure would also need to be replaced. After considerable work by the city, the updated construction estimate for the overall project was increased to \$14.2 million.

The LBAB was informed of this increase and they made a decision that the city could continue with the project at the original estimated amount of \$766,000 or reapply for the updated amount. The city submitted new applications for the two bridges with updated construction estimates during the 2006 call for applications. Representatives from the city attended the LBAB meeting in November, 2006, where the board informed them that they wanted to see the city secure a defined funding source before the board would consider applying additional funds to the project.

The University RBC noted in their October 2007 meeting that the E. Stadium Boulevard over State Street project, as originally selected, had not proceeded toward contract. Based on this, the updated estimate of \$14.2 million, and that the city had not secured additional funding for the project, the RBC made a motion to remove the project from the selected for funding list.

During the November 2009 meeting, the city gave a presentation to the LBAB in support of the additional funding being requested. As part of the presentation, the city explained the hardships that would be encountered for the next four years if it were to proceed with the project without LBP funding. The city also explained that it will be proceeding with the project with or without the LBP funding so any LBP funds would not be sitting idle. The LBAB considered this, that no additional funds other than from the city had been secured for the project as had been requested in the November 2006 LBAB meeting, and that the two E. Stadium Boulevard applications were among eleven applications requesting over \$35 million in funding for the 2012 fiscal year. These considerations led to the projects selected at the November, 2009 meeting: three projects selected for \$5.7 million.

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- *“At the LBAB meeting you stated concern regarding the City’s potential inability to fund its entire project and how that could potentially tie-down the 2012 Local Bridge funds. In our earlier written correspondence and again during our presentation to the LBAB, we repeated our full intention to begin the construction of the E. Stadium Bridges as early as 2010, or two years in advance of 2012 when first the Local Bridge Program funds would become available.”*

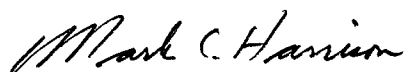
At the November 2009 meeting, I reiterated to you what the concern had been from the LBAB regarding the funding for these projects. The correspondence you sent, the information included in the applications for the E. Stadium Boulevard bridges, and the previously stated concerns by the LBAB went into their selection decisions.

Regarding the scores from previous applications submitted and reviewed for the E. Stadium Boulevard bridges by the University RBC, the overall scores are a combination of computer generated points (72 maximum) and discretionary points (28 points). Applications that meet the definition of a “large” bridge, are submitted to the LBAB for their consideration after the RBC decides if they wish to add discretionary points to them. A “large” bridge is defined as one that has an estimate exceeding half of a region’s annual allocation but, not less than \$1.0 million. For the E. Stadium Boulevard projects, the University RBC chose not to add discretionary points to them before sending them to the LBAB. In the 2006 call, the RBC did add discretionary points to the applications.

The LBAB has reviewed their decision on the selections made during the November, 2009 meeting and specifically, the E. Stadium Boulevard projects. They believe they have been consistent in their handling of Ann Arbor projects and still want to see additional funds secured before LBP funds will be allocated toward them. Once other funds have been secured, the LBAB encourages you to resubmit applications during a subsequent call.

Thank you for working with the Local Bridge Program on this issue. If you have additional questions or comments, please feel free to contact me, at (517) 373-2346.

Sincerely,



Mark C. Harrison, P.E.
Bridge Program Manager
Local Bridge Program