

Memorandum

TO: Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization
CORPO Committee
CORPO County Subcommittees

FROM: Mike Borger, Program Manager
CORPO

DATE: 09/06/2022

SUBJECT: DRAFT CORPO TRAC Priorities

As reported to you previously, two CORPO-area projects were submitted to the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) for the 2022 funding cycle. The TRAC administers a selection process for the Ohio Department of Transportation's (ODOT) largest transportation project investments, funded through their *Major New Capacity Program*. These are projects that have a total project cost of more than \$12 million, add transportation capacity, and are critical to the mobility, economic development, and quality of life of Ohio residents. The 2022 application period closed at the end of May, with two applications submitted from agencies within the Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization's (CORPO) planning area. CORPO staff sent a memo to you on July 13, 2022 that included project information sheets (attached and posted to our website) to solicit the committees' and public feedback.

The TRAC process allows RTPOs like CORPO to provide local input by prioritizing the applications for projects that are located within the agency's transportation planning area. Staff completed a technical evaluation of the projects. This memo provides a summary of how the projects were evaluated and concludes with a recommendation on project prioritization. The priorities will be presented to TRAC at their October 12 public hearing.

Project Evaluation Summary

For CORPO, the technical evaluation included analyzing each of the two TRAC projects with how it aligns with the region's recently adopted transportation Goals and Objectives, developed for the upcoming *2023-2050 CORPO Transportation Plan (CTP)*. Additionally, to the extent possible, staff utilized the scoring criteria outlined in the *Policies for Managing CORPO Dedicated Funds* to assess the two TRAC projects relative to the CTP goals.

For the two projects being ranked, the evaluation results by goal are below.

Adopted Goal: Preserve and Maintain the Existing Transportation System in a State of Good Repair Preservation, The criteria for this goal focuses on the preservation of existing infrastructure. By making improvements to existing infrastructure, the US 23/SR 762 project ranked slightly ahead of the SR 13 Relocation Project which will increase the amount of infrastructure.

Adopted Goal: A Safe Transportation System for All Users The criteria for this goal focuses on a transportation safety. According to state crash data, in 2017, 18 and 19, there were numerous crashes at both the US 23 / SR 762 intersection and along High Street in Mount Vernon, OH (SR 13 Relocation area). Therefore, the proposed upgrade to an interchange at the US 23 and SR 762 intersection will improve safety. Additionally, the SR 13 relocation project will improve multi-modal user safety by routing traffic away from Mt. Vernon's public square. Both projects were considered equal under this goal.

Adopted Goal: Accessibility and Mobility Options for all Users The criteria for this goal focuses on increased mobility options and improved access for all modes. The SR 13 Relocation project intends to route motorists out of the public square, therefore improving pedestrian access. The SR 13 Relocation Project ranked higher than the US 23 / SR 762 project for this goal.

Adopted Goal: An Integrated, Connected and Coordinated Transportation System The criteria for this goal focuses on increased mobility options and access of all modes. The US 23 / SR 762 project will improve the connection between urban and rural areas, an important objective of the integration goal. The US 23 / SR 762 project is the result of a regional planning effort that will complete an element of the master plan envisioned for the Rickenbacker East-West Connector. Although the SR 13 Relocation Project is also a result of a significant local planning effort, the US 23 / SR 762 project ranked slightly higher under this goal.

Adopted Goal: A Transportation System that Supports a Collaborative and Focused Approach to Achieve Economic Vitality The criteria for this goal focuses on regional collaboration and economic vitality. Both projects are on the priorities list of the *Competitive Advantage Projects (CAP)*, which is a partnership between MORPC and One Columbus. The US 23 / SR 762 project will connect US 23 to both the Norfolk Southern Intermodal Terminal and the airport, improving freight movement in the region. The US 23 / SR 762 project ranked slightly higher under this goal.

Adopted Goal: Preserve and Enhance Environmental Resources and Sustainability through the Transportation System The criteria for this goal focused on the preservation and enhancement of natural resources and sustainability. Since both of these projects will have to adhere to NEPA standards, neither project ranks higher than the other for this goal.

Comments Received from the Public

On 07/13/2022 CORPO solicited public comments which were due by 08/12/2022. No comments were received.

MORPC Staff Ranking Recommendation

Based on the goal-by-goal evaluation summarized above, CORPO staff recommends the following priority ranking for the two CORPO-area TRAC applications requesting funding:

Priority 1: US 23 and SR 762 Interchange Improvements

Priority 2: SR 13 Relocation

Staff would like to receive any feedback on the priorities from the CORPO Committee and county subcommittees by September 30th. In early October staff will send a memo with final CORPO priorities and transmit these priorities to ODOT.