

MATS MIO Technical Assistance Subcommittee Meeting

October 25, 2023 Meeting Notes

A. Meeting began at approximately 10:04 AM. In-person attendees were:

1. Amy Bidwell, Midland Dial A Ride Transportation
2. Jack Hofweber, MDOT Mt. Pleasant TSC
3. Terrance Hall, Edenville Township
4. Carl Hamann, Village of Sanford
5. Ryan Smith, City of Midland
6. Maja Bolanowska, MATS
7. Bryan Gillett, MATS

Remote attendees were:

8. Tim Fischer, Michigan Infrastructure Office
9. Kris Brady, Michigan Infrastructure Office
10. Shawn Vaughn, Michigan MiDEAL
11. Joy Nakfoor, Michigan MiDEAL
12. Khalid Yasin, Team McKinsey
13. Jen Mandema, Team McKinsey

B. Bryan briefly reviewed the history of the Michigan Infrastructure Office (MIO) Technical Assistance Program, and the work MATS staff has done since February 2023. Key points were the initial release of the technical assistance program documentation by MIO, MATS Policy Committee selection of two projects for staff to pursue, as well as the August release of the MATS Request for Proposals and subsequent receipt of two consultant proposals.

C. Thereafter, Kris Brady from the recently formed Michigan Infrastructure Office Technical Assistance Center (MIOTAC) presented their new overall structure. Kris reviewed the mission of the MIOTAC and the support they will provide with regard to the principal mission of accessing Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funds for projects in the state of Michigan. As a part of this overall purpose, the Center will work with MPOs and RPOs to enhance their ability to pursue BIL funds for the benefit of local infrastructure projects.

D. Kris elaborated on a new technical assistance process whereby the consulting firm of McKinsey and Company (McKinsey) will provide services to MIO in a variety of capacities, most importantly in the area of "Application Support". In this role they will provide technical analysis, narrative grant writing, and benefit cost analysis support for agencies wishing to apply for BIL grant programs. Kris briefly referenced the available state match fund pool for grants awarded, also a part of the original mission of MIO.

- E. Maja inquired as to the process involved with the McKinsey alternative, and asked about the level of input the MPO would have. Khalid Yasin presented the overall structure of “Team McKinsey” with 3 specific subconsultants being responsible for different areas in the overall scope of work for McKinsey. He clarified that there is a detailed process being drafted that involves an MOU being developed that would specify the work being done. Bryan asked a follow-up question about the readiness to move forward on the part of the MIO/McKinsey team. Kris answered that the first step would be to pass along a version of the MATS RFP sufficient to allow an evaluation of the intent, eligibility for grants and specific projects being proposed. She indicated that the last two weeks of November might be a timeframe that would work in terms of additional progress from the MIO staff.
- F. At 10:30 the remote participants signed off from the Zoom meeting, and discussion proceeded at the MATS office.
- G. Thereafter, several committee members indicated that they still felt somewhat confused regarding the overall MIO program, and the specifics that were presented by the various remote participants. Bryan and Maja attempted to clarify various aspects of both the current situation with the MATS RFP process, as well as recapping what had been presented as an alternative by the MIO and McKinsey staff. Consequently, there are now two alternative processes, i.e. the originally intended process comprising the MATS Request for Proposals and subsequent submittals by the two firms, and the new process involving McKinsey and Company being contracted directly with MIO which MATS learned on October 20th, 2023.

The original purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the two proposals and determine whether they met the original intent of the RFP. However, in light of this new alternative process it became necessary to first determine which of the two approaches MATS should pursue, since if the McKinsey option was chosen there would be no need to score the existing proposals. Consequently, the pros and cons of each process were discussed, and it became increasingly clear that the McKinsey process was a viable approach.

The benefits to MATS of the McKinsey option would be no contract between MATS and the consultant, no need to administer said contract, and no financial risk involved in the payment/reimbursement process.

- H. Thereafter the discussion centered on the overall responsibility of McKinsey (contracted directly with MIO) to MATS and what would guide their work efforts, as well as explaining how the current situation with the MATS-released RFP came about, i.e. the “apples and oranges” projects being included in the same request for proposals. Bryan explained that the vision of the MIO staff at the beginning of the program was to achieve economy of scale by regionalizing the solicitations for consultants, with the consequence that a single consultant would be addressing multiple projects under one contract to an MPO or RPO.

- I. After a great deal of further discussion, a consensus was reached that the McKinsey approach would be both easier on the resources of the MPO, and more likely to succeed due to the targeted engagement of various subconsultants under the "Team McKinsey" umbrella. In addition, it was recommended that several follow-up questions be asked of Kris Brady at MIOTAC to further clarify what documentation would be required from MATS for sufficient direction to McKinsey, and to provide details of the collaboration between MATS and McKinsey as the grant writing process ensues.

- J. In light of the McKinsey process being preferred, it was determined that no further evaluation of the submitted proposals was needed, and that communications should be sent to the two firms informing them that the RFP was being withdrawn.