

## **ACTION TRANSMITTAL 2013-53**

**DATE:** November 13, 2013

**TO:** TAB Members

**FROM:** Regional Solicitation Evaluation Steering Committee

**PREPARED BY:** Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director MTS, 651-602-1058  
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**SUBJECT:** Regional solicitation modal categories funding ranges and application sub-categories for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities and Transit and TDM modal categories

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

- 1) That in summer 2014 prior to the release of the Regional Solicitation, the TAB adopt approximate funding ranges for each modal category, and
- 2) That the design of the next Regional Solicitation application be based upon modal sub-categories for Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities and for Transit and TDM projects as shown in this Action Transmittal.

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION:**

#### **Funding Ranges**

Previous TAB actions established that solicitation projects will be evaluated by modal categories (roadways, bicycle and pedestrian, and transit and TDM) and established the types of projects that would be eligible for evaluation under each modal category. The Steering Committee then discussed whether it would be beneficial to applicants to set approximate funding ranges by mode prior to each Regional Solicitation. These targets would provide a starting base to use when selecting the final list of projects. Potential advantages to setting funding ranges include the following:

- Helping applicants determine the potential size of their funding request or the number of projects to submit based on the amount available and potential competition.
- Providing information to potential applicants about approximate funding levels prior to agencies spending staff resources preparing and submitting an application.
- Providing more transparency and credibility to the process.
- Helping TAC, TAB, and Council staff prepare criteria relative to anticipated funding levels.

It is important to note that established funding ranges would be guidelines and that in the final award of projects, TAB could choose to go outside these ranges if needed. A potential disadvantage to setting funding ranges is that it may set expectations that the ranges are firm and engender criticism if the TAB chooses to move outside of the ranges for the final award of projects. It will be important to clearly communicate that the ranges are guidelines.

**Modal Sub-Categories**

One of the challenges of a competitive process for allocating federal funding is that projects are very diverse and can be quite difficult to evaluate on an “apples to apples” basis. Past experience has found that a fairer comparison of project costs and benefits can be made if projects are grouped into sub-categories where projects have similar characteristics and objectives. The Steering Committee recommends the following application subcategories:

**RECOMMENDED MODAL SUB-CATEGORIES****Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

- On and off-road bicycle facilities
- ADA projects
- Pedestrian facilities (sidewalks and streetscaping)
- Safe Routes to School (infrastructure projects)

It should also be noted that MnDOT guidance recommends that Safe Routes to School projects should receive approximately 15 percent of the Transportation Alternatives Program funds distributed by MnDOT to the Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs).

**Transit and TDM Projects**

- Transit expansion (including diesel, clean diesel, hybrid, and alternative fuel transit vehicle types)
- TDM (including programs such as car sharing and bike sharing)
- Transit system management
- TMO base activities – recommended that TAB continue to set this funding outside of a competitive application process

It is anticipated that the recommendation for sub-categories for the roadway modal category will be brought to the TAB in December 2013.

**RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY:** TAB develops and issues a Regional Solicitation for federal funding. This recommended motion will provide policy direction on the expected funding levels by modal category and design of modal sub-categories for the solicitation.

**COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION:** The Regional Solicitation Steering Committee has met to discuss these issues and recommends the actions as described.

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**ROUTING**

<b>TO</b>	<b>ACTION REQUESTED</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Adopt	
Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee	Concurrence	
Metropolitan Council	Concurrence	