

Information Item

DATE: October 14, 2015
TO: Transportation Advisory Board
PREPARED BY: Steve Peterson, Planning Analyst (651-602-1819)
SUBJECT: 2016 Regional Solicitation Update

The 2016 Regional Solicitation will be released in May of 2016. A draft Regional Solicitation package will be completed in January. Between now and then, the Funding & Programming Committee, TAC, and TAB will see proposed changes and will be asked to provide feedback.

Today's presentation will include: an overview of the development of the 2014 Regional Solicitation, a summary of the modal funding categories, a review of the final survey results, and the draft schedule for the 2016 Regional Solicitation.

History of the 2014 Regional Solicitation and Next Steps for the 2016 Solicitation

October 21, 2015

TAB Meeting

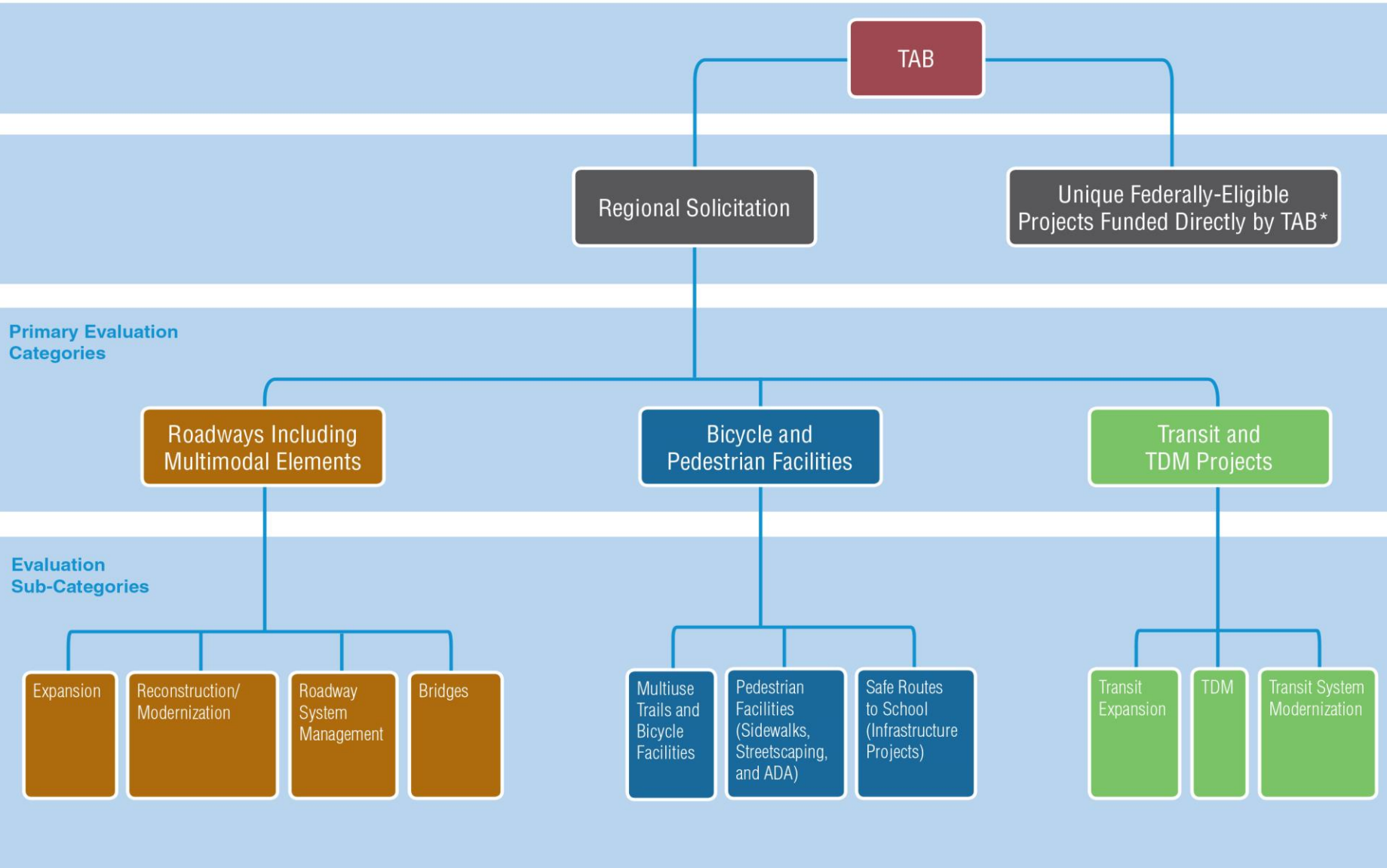


2013/2014 Regional Solicitation Eval.

- Steering Committee (Made up of TAB Members)
 - 14 meetings
 - Projects by Mode
 - Project Eligibility
 - Modal Funding Ranges
 - Scoring Distributions
- TAB Approvals
 - Projects by Mode
 - Project Eligibility
 - Modal Funding Ranges
 - Scoring Distributions

TAB-Approved Recommendations for Evaluation Categories

Regional Solicitation Evaluation – Revised February 26, 2014



**Note: In some cases, there are unique projects that are federally-eligible, but will not be included in the competitive process because they cannot be easily compared to other similar projects. These project types, including base-level TDM funding for the TMOs and Metro Transit, should request funding directly from the TAB.*

Policymaker Workshop 5/6/13

- Important Concepts from the Workshop:
 - Multimodal Solutions
 - Safety
 - Cost Effectiveness
 - Person Throughput
 - Making Connections (roads, trails, housing, transit, jobs, destinations)
 - Mobility
 - Accessibility

How were the 1,000 Points Distributed between the Measures?

- Policymakers Workshop in Arden Hills
- Prioritizing Regional Highway and Transit Investments Workshop Policy Input from Workshops Given to Technical Expert Working Groups to Include in Draft Point Distribution
 - Multiple Rounds of Revisions and Approvals by the Steering Committee and TAB
- TAB Input on Score Distribution for Next Solicitation: Jan. 2016

How was the \$150M Distributed?

TAB-Approved Modal Funding Ranges

Roadways Including Multimodal Elements	Transit and TDM Projects	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Total
48% - 68% of total	22% - 32% of total	10% - 20% of total	100%
\$72M - \$102M	\$33M - \$48M	\$15M - \$30M	\$150M

-Based on Historic Averages

- Steering Committee Developed Modal Funding Ranges; Approved by TAB
- Funding Options Developed based on Modal Funding Ranges
- Funding to Categories within each Mode based on Application Demand, Natural Scoring Breaks, etc.

Post-Solicitation Survey Results

- 66 Responses Received
 - 9 from TAB members
 - 16 from TAC/F&P
 - 17 from applicants
 - 24 from Scoring Committee members
- Results and Ideas Shown in Key Discussion Topics and as part of Recommended Changes to be Discussed in Nov. and Dec.

Key Discussion Topics

- Interchange Approvals
- Functional Classification Modifications
- RR Grade-Separation Projects
- Cost Effectiveness
- New Roadway Alignments

Key Discussion Topics Cont.

- Bridge Eligibility
- Bundling and Geographic Coverage
- Trail Usage
- Existing vs. New Transit Riders

Next Steps

- Nov. 2015: Roadways Applications
- Dec. 2015: Bike/Ped and Transit Applications
- Jan. 2016: Other Measures, Score Distribution, and Modal Funding Ranges
- March 2016: Final Approval of Regional Solicitation
- May 2016: Application Released
- July 2016: Applications Due

Questions

Steve Peterson, MTS Planning Analyst

651-602-1819

Steven.Peterson@metc.state.mn.us

Regional Solicitation Modal Funding Options (Draft 9/18/15)

For the 2014 Regional Solicitation, the TAB Executive Committee requested staff and the PMT to provide modal funding options to help inform applicants of the approximate dollar values available by mode prior to the release of the next solicitation. Approximately \$150 million of total federal funds were available.

Based on discussions of these modal funding options, recommendations were made to use ranges based on historic funding levels as shown in Table 1. A range of points provides TAB with some flexibility in selecting projects based on the quality and amount of projects that are submitted. A 20-percentage point range was proposed for Roadways including Multimodal Elements because of the high percentage of funds going to this mode and the fact that these projects are often awarded the maximum of \$7 million (i.e., there is a five percentage point swing by adding or subtracting a \$7 million project). For Transit and TDM Projects, as well as Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, a 10-percentage point range was recommended.

In some cases, there are unique projects that are federally-eligible, but are not recommended for inclusion in the competitive process (these project types can request funding directly from the TAB). If the TAB decides to fund any of these unique federally-eligible projects out of the \$150 million available through the Regional Solicitation, then the resulting dollar values may change, depending on the type of project funded.

Table 1: Background Information on Funding by Mode

	Roadways Including Multimodal Elements*	Transit and TDM Projects	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Total
Historic Funding (Range and Avg. for 2003-2011)	55%-61% Avg. 58%	20%-29% Avg. 27%	12%-19% Avg. 15%	87%-109% Avg. 100%

**Approximately 3% of roadway funding was allocated to multimodal elements (bicycle, pedestrian, or transit).*

Table 2: TAB Approved Funding Ranges by Mode for 2014 Regional Solicitation

	Roadways Including Multimodal Elements	Transit and TDM Projects	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Total
TAB Approved Ranges	Range of 48%-68% Range of \$72M-\$102M	Range of 22%-32% Range of \$33M-\$48M	Range of 10%-20% Range of \$15M-\$30M	100% \$150M

Table 3: 2014 Regional Solicitation Awarded Funding by Mode

	Roadways Including Multimodal Elements	Transit and TDM Projects	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Total
2014 Solicitation Results	56.6% \$84,939,236	26.4% \$39,663,741	17.0% \$25,520,907	100% \$150,123,884

2014 REGIONAL SOLICITATION SURVEY RESPONSE SUMMARY

Following completion of the 2014 Regional Solicitation, surveys were provided to TAB members, TAC/Funding & Programming members, applicants, and scorers. Themes were difficult to extract, as nearly every respondent provided unique concerns. The most prevalent theme made in the comments was that scoring guidelines are in need of clarity and consistency. Below are lists of themes identified by multiple respondents in each survey.

TAB (9 respondents)

- Geographic distribution
- Equity: How it is defined, the impact on results and consideration of elderly and disabled

TAC/Funding and Programming (16 respondents)

- Scoring Consistency
 - Need better consistency on whether projects (and how many projects) can obtain top score within a category.
 - Try to limit need to interpret scoring guidelines.
- Equity and Housing: re-evaluate how it is scored and how it fits.
- Connectors are not able to compete with other roads.
- Bridges:
 - Not enough applications or funded projects.
 - Make it its own category.
 - Allow B-minors/collectors.

Applicants (17 respondents)

- 13 respondents reported that application preparation was easier compared to past years while only one reported that it was more difficult.
- Desire to be able to include more/longer explanations.
- Scoring criteria and interpretation by scorers/Council staff.
- Some applicants would like to be able to produce the final application as a pdf that looks attractive for distribution/archiving.
- Examine ability to upload documents?
- Are rural projects at a disadvantage?
- Roadway on new alignments should be separate category from existing.
- Examine mapping improvements
 - Drawing project areas (particularly for intersections).
 - Editing (without need to start over).
 - Scaling (to distinguish proposed projects from existing features).

Scoring Committee Members (24 respondents)

- Scorers seemed to have some trouble finding/interpreting information from the applications.
- Scoring committee structure worked well.
- Improve the maps. Some technical glitches and inconsistent provision valuable information. Have applicants show location of improvements and bike/pedestrian connections on project map.
- Timing: Scorers need more time / applications provided in a more timely manner.
- Existing projects tend to be favored over new projects.
- Clarity needed on how to distribute scores after top score assigned. Clarify whether criteria will have a project receive the maximum score. Make sure pro-rating makes sense.
- Make sure instructions to applicants are clear so they all use the same methodology.
- Need validation of information provided by applicants.

DISCUSSION TOPICS TO ADDRESS FOR THE 2016 REGIONAL SOLICITATION

Based on survey responses, meeting discussions, and user feedback, staff has compiled below questions that should be addressed.

1. Should interchange projects be required to complete the Metropolitan Council/MnDOT Highway Interchange Request process prior to applying to the Regional Solicitation?
2. Should the scoring be modified to equalize the competition for projects on all roadway classifications, i.e., expander, collector, reliever, augmenter, and non-freeway principal arterial?
3. Should the scoring be modified to make railroad grade-separation projects more competitive for funding?
4. How and where should cost-effectiveness be measured?
5. Should “new roadways” be a separate application category or can the expansion scoring criteria be adjusted to so that new roadways can be more easily compared to expansions of existing roadways?
6. Should B-minor bridges be eligible for funding in the bridge category?
7. Should bundling be allowed and how wide of a geographic area can projects cover?
8. Should trail usage be based on actual counts rather than number of residents or employees within one mile of the trail facility?
9. Should the scoring for transit expansion projects further favor new riders more than existing riders?

Draft 2016 Regional Solicitation Schedule

DATE	PROCESS
July	Survey applicants, scorers, F&PC and TAC members, TAB on previous solicitation.
August	Staff evaluate previous solicitation scoring. Staff review survey and summarize results.
August 20/Sept. 16	F&PC/TAB - Present Scoring Criteria Sensitivity Analysis.
Sept 17/Oct 21	F&PC/TAB review survey results. Introduce changes to Introduction and Qualifying Criteria sections.
Oct 15/Nov 18	F&PC/TAB discusses changes to measures for roadway applications.
Nov 19/Dec 16	F&PC/TAB discusses changes to measures for bike/ped applications and transit applications.
Dec 17/Jan 20	F&PC/TAB wrap-up discussion on any remaining measures. Release draft 2016 regional solicitation package for public comment; comments due Feb 10.
February 17, 2016	TAB adopts the regional roadway functional classification map identifying eligible "A" minor arterials.
February 18, 2016	TAC F&PC reviews the list of comments and staff responses, and may recommend modifying the draft solicitation package before recommending adoption of the final 2016 regional solicitation package to the TAC.
March 2, 2016	TAC reviews the public comments, staff responses and any revisions from the TAC F&PC. The TAC may also modify the solicitation package before forwarding it to the TAB for adoption as the final 2016 regional solicitation package.
March 14, 2016	TAB presents the draft 2016 regional solicitation to the Met Council as an information item.
March 16, 2016	TAB reviews the revised 2016 solicitation package recommended by the TAC. The TAB forwards the adopted 2016 regional solicitation package to the Met Council for concurrence.
March 28, 2016	The Metropolitan Council's Transportation Committee reviews the 2016 solicitation package and recommends it to the Metropolitan Council for concurrence.
April 13, 2016	The Metropolitan Council concurs with TAB adoption of the 2016 regional solicitation package.
March – May 2016	Online application set-up and testing
May 18, 2016	TAB solicits for Regional Solicitation projects. Staff sends announcements to local governments and other organizations and directs interested applicants to the Met Council website where all the solicitation materials are accessible.
May 19, 2016	TAC F&PC names project scoring group chairs and begins staffing the scoring groups.
May 2016	Met Council and TAB host workshops on the Regional Solicitation applications. Staff describes each program, eligibility requirements and scoring criteria and answers questions.
June 30, 2016	Deadline for staffing the project scoring groups.
July 15, 2016	Regional Solicitation applications are due by 4:00 PM.
July 18 through August 10, 2016	Staff logs in all the applications and reviews the qualifying criteria responses of all applications. Staff meets with the chair of each scoring group to discuss the qualifying criteria review, and may consult with the FHWA field office. Staff prepares a report for the TAC F&PC. Staff notifies the applicants if their project appears not to meet the qualifying criteria and invites them to the TAC F&PC meeting to defend their application.
August 18, 2016	Staff presents the list of projects that may not meet the qualifying criteria and applicants may defend their applications. The TAC Funding and Programming Committee votes on each qualifying issue and reports their decisions to the TAC at their August meeting.
Aug 22 - Oct 7, 2016	Scoring groups meet and evaluate the applications. They develop ranked lists of projects.
October 20, 2016	The TAC F&PC approve the ranked lists of projects and make them available on the Met Council website. Notify applicants that the scores are available and requests for scoring reevaluations of specific criteria can be submitted.
October 31, 2016	Scoring re-evaluation requests are due.
October 31 through November 4, 2016	Staff reviews all the scoring reevaluation requests, consults with the individual scorer and chair and prepares a report for TAC F&PC.
November 17, 2016	The TAC F&PC discusses the scoring reevaluation report prepared by staff. The TAC F&PC votes on all scoring reevaluations and adjusts the project scores and rankings if necessary. Final scores are forwarded to the TAC and TAB for information.
November 21 through December 9, 2017	Staff develops funding options for the modal categories based on anticipated available funding in the programs, adopted procedures and guidance from the TAB.
December 15, 2017	TAC F&PC considers the funding options presented by staff and votes to eliminate, modify or create additional options and forwards them to the TAC. Additional TAC F&PC meeting(s) may be necessary to develop funding options.
January 4, 2017	TAC reviews the funding options forwarded by TAC F&PC and may make adjustments. TAC forwards the options to the TAB Programming Committee.
January 18, 2017	TAB vote to award funds and direct staff to include them into the draft 2018-2021 TIP.