

2018 Regional Solicitation Assessment: Surveys and Sensitivity Analysis

Looking Toward 2020: Top Issues List

April 17, 2019
Transportation Advisory Board



Participant Surveys

- Surveys provided to applicants, scorers, TAB members, and F&P/TAC members.
- Responses:
 - Applicants: 18
 - Scorers: 21
 - F&P/TAC members: 21
 - TAB Members: 12

Survey Themes: Applicants

- Timeline: applications not due near 4th of July.
- How to assign points to projects included in regional studies?
- Confusion regarding the snow and ice control measure.
- Consider new categories for intersection/interchange projects.
- Reward projects with funding secured/committed.
- More funding for Multiuse Trails & Bicycle Facilities.
- Geographic balance.

Survey Themes: Scorers

- Scoring guidance clarity and subjectivity.
- Equity:
 - The presence of more scorers was valuable.
 - Rationale not entirely clear.
 - Does not incentivize meaningful project elements.
- More time to score projects would have been valuable.
- More introductory info for scorers.

Survey Themes: F&P / TAC

- Geographic balance and project type (e.g., BRT vs. local)
- Mode distribution.
- Deadline for new funding scenarios.
- Use studies (e.g., Bicycle Barrier Study) and data (e.g., Streetlight).
- Focus on innovation? New category? How to score?
- Fix or eliminate snow/ice control in Multiuse Trails category.

Survey Themes: TAB

- Geographic balance.
- Emissions and climate change are key issues to focus on more.
- Timing of the process: vote in December before membership turnover.

Scoring Measure Sensitivity Analysis

- More valuable measures tend to have larger impacts.
- A few measures (e.g., housing performance) have minimal impact in several application categories.
- The 2016 issue of scoring outliers was almost non-existent.
 - 2016: 18 outliers.
 - 2018: 3 outliers.

Top Issues Heading Toward 2020

Top Issues Generated from:

- Survey Responses
 - Applicants
 - Scorers
 - TAC / Funding & Programming
 - TAB
- Scoring Committee Suggestions
- Committee Meeting Discussions

1. The Solicitation's Approach to Transit

- The Twin Cities has a total of five transit providers, with Metro Transit providing 94% of rides.
- The \$7M maximum causes Metro Transit to incrementally build out ABRT corridors in an inefficient manner.
- How do regional priorities get implemented, while still enabling smaller projects to compete?
- Policy-level input needed.

2. Technology, Travel Demand Management, and Unique Projects

How do we accommodate the potential influx of interest related to technology and shared mobility?

- Unique Projects:
 - Formalize the category with a set-aside of funding?
 - How to score?
 - TAB directed staff to create a framework for Unique Projects
- Rethinking the Travel Demand Management category?
- Shared mobility / CAV / new technologies
- Policy-level input needed.

3. Geographic Balance

Is geographic balance an issue? If so, what, if anything, should be done to address it?

- TAB should consider whether the Solicitation is for funding projects of regional importance or a local project grant opportunity that spreads around federal dollars across the region or both.
- Currently, the highest-scoring projects are funded and regional balance is a secondary lens to select between funding scenarios.
 - A-Minor Connector set-aside is one exception.
- How should “geographic balance” be measured?
- Policy-level input needed.

4. Incorporation of Studies into Scoring

Should additional regional transportation studies be incorporated into the scoring process?

- The Congestion Management Process and Bicycle Barriers Study will be ready for inclusion into the scoring process.
- Some feedback indicates an interest in finding ways to award points to projects not directly cited in the regional studies used in the current scoring, particularly the Regional Truck Corridor Study.

5. Maximum Federal Award Amounts

Should the federal maximum awards be revisited?

- Should the roadways maximum be increased? The \$7M maximum only funds about 25% of an interchange and MnDOT is lacking matching funds.
- Is the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities maximum too high? For the past two cycles, there has been a lot of feedback that the \$5.5M maximum has limited the number of projects that can be completed.
- Is the transit maximum too low?

6. Regional Solicitation Before-and-After Study

What changes should be incorporated?

- Key findings presented separately.

7. Equity

What changes should be incorporated?

- The role of community engagement.
- The impact of the scoring criterion on equity.
- The impact/value of the Housing Performance score.

8. ADA Transition Plans

Are we ready to require completion as a qualifying requirement?

- 2018 Regional Solicitation: Transition plans must be in process. Plans to be complete by 2020.
- Is this still reasonable? How can we assure that proper progress is being made?

9. Updating the Scoring Measures

Feedback has been provided on several scoring measures. What should change?

- Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities: Re-think how to score the winter maintenance question?
- SRTS: How to define “student population within school’s walkshed?”
- Others?

10. Other Top Issues?

Technical Committees Input:

- Should trail reconstruction projects be allowed to apply since several did this last cycle and a trail that was closed due to poor conditions was funded?
 - Consider how to compare new trails to reconstructed trails in terms of scoring.
- What is the role of MnDOT in roadway expansion and/or roadway reconstruction categories (applicant, supporter of local projects, other)? They were awarded a \$7M award last cycle for an interchange reconstruction and have applied for and been awarded funding in past cycles over the years in various application categories.

Questions

Steve Peterson, Manager of Highways and TAB/TAC Process

651-602-1819

Steven.Peterson@metc.state.mn.us

Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator

651-602-1717

Elaine.Koutsoukos@metc.state.mn.us

Joe Barbeau, Senior Planner

651-602-1705

joseph.barbeau@metc.state.mn.us