

Transportation Advisory Board

of the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities

INFORMATION ITEM

DATE: June 6, 2019

TO: Transportation Advisory Board

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SUBJECT: 2020 Regional Solicitation: Preliminary Changes

Feedback collected during and following the 2018 Regional Solicitation points to several potential improvements to the process. Some of these, including Equity (Measure 3A in all categories) and inclusion of the Regional Bicycle Barriers Study in the Gaps and Barriers measure (Measure 4A in the Multiuse Trail and Bicycle Facilities category) are ongoing and not included in the below discussion.

General Considerations

Federal Minimum and Maximum Funding amounts

Since the 2018 Regional Solicitation, several suggestions have been made regarding changes to the minimum and maximum federal funding awards. This includes potentially reducing the maximum Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities award and increasing the maximum Roadway Expansion reward.

Modes	Application Categories	Minimum Federal	Maximum Federal
Roadways Including Multimodal Elements	Roadway Expansion	\$1,000,000	\$7,000,000
	Roadway Recon / Mod and Spot Mobility	\$1,000,000	\$7,000,000
	Traffic Management Technologies	\$250,000	\$7,000,000
	Bridge Rehabilitation/Replacement	\$1,000,000	\$7,000,000
Transit and TDM Projects	Transit Expansion	\$500,000	\$7,000,000
	Transit Modernization	\$100,000	\$7,000,000
	Travel Demand Management (TDM)	\$75,000	\$500,000
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities	\$250,000	\$5,500,000
	Pedestrian Facilities	\$250,000	\$1,000,000
	Safe Routes to School	\$150,000	\$1,000,000

ADA Transition Plan - Qualifying

In 2018, a public agency needed to have an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan or “be substantially working towards...” completion to qualify. The plan then, and now, was to require a completed plan.

Origination of the Project

A new qualifying criterion is proposed that would require applicants to describe how the transportation problem was identified at the project location, how the potential solution was identified instead of other options, and the public involvement completed to date on the project.

Some Funding & Programming Committee members expressed concern with the effort potentially required to complete this response. Staff envisions it as a paragraph. This would be a “trial run” in 2020 that would not result in any disqualifications. Some TAC members requested a place in the application to note public outreach done to date and this new addition would provide a spot to do this.

Outside, Competitive Funding

The recent survey responses included some sentiment for awarding points to applications that have leveraged other competitive funds. This could be a new measure under the Cost Effectiveness measure. At the June 5, 2019, TAC meeting, the following addition to that measure was suggested: “If a project has been awarded other outside, competitive funding (e.g., state bonding, Transportation Economic Development Program, Minnesota Highway Freight Program), project sponsors may reduce the total project cost for the purposes of this scoring measure by the amount of the outside funding award.”

At the May 16, 2019, meeting, Funding & Programming Committee members expressed sentiment that this would only be appropriate for the roadway funding categories. TAC members suggested amending the existing cost effectiveness measure instead of adding a new cost effectiveness measure.

Roadways

Spot Mobility Category

Spot mobility projects (e.g., at-grade intersection improvements, turn lanes, roundabouts, reduced conflict intersections) can serve as cost-effective improvements to regional mobility and tie directly to the TPP. A \$3.5 million maximum award would be sufficient to fund most such projects, but more input is requested.

Funding & Programming members suggested that this category could serve to provide some geographic balance.

This would be a fifth category within the Roadways measure. There has been discussion of merging bridges into Roadway Reconstruction and Modernization, though that presents some potential scoring challenges.

Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities – Prioritizing Criteria and Measures

Measure 2B: Snow and Ice Control

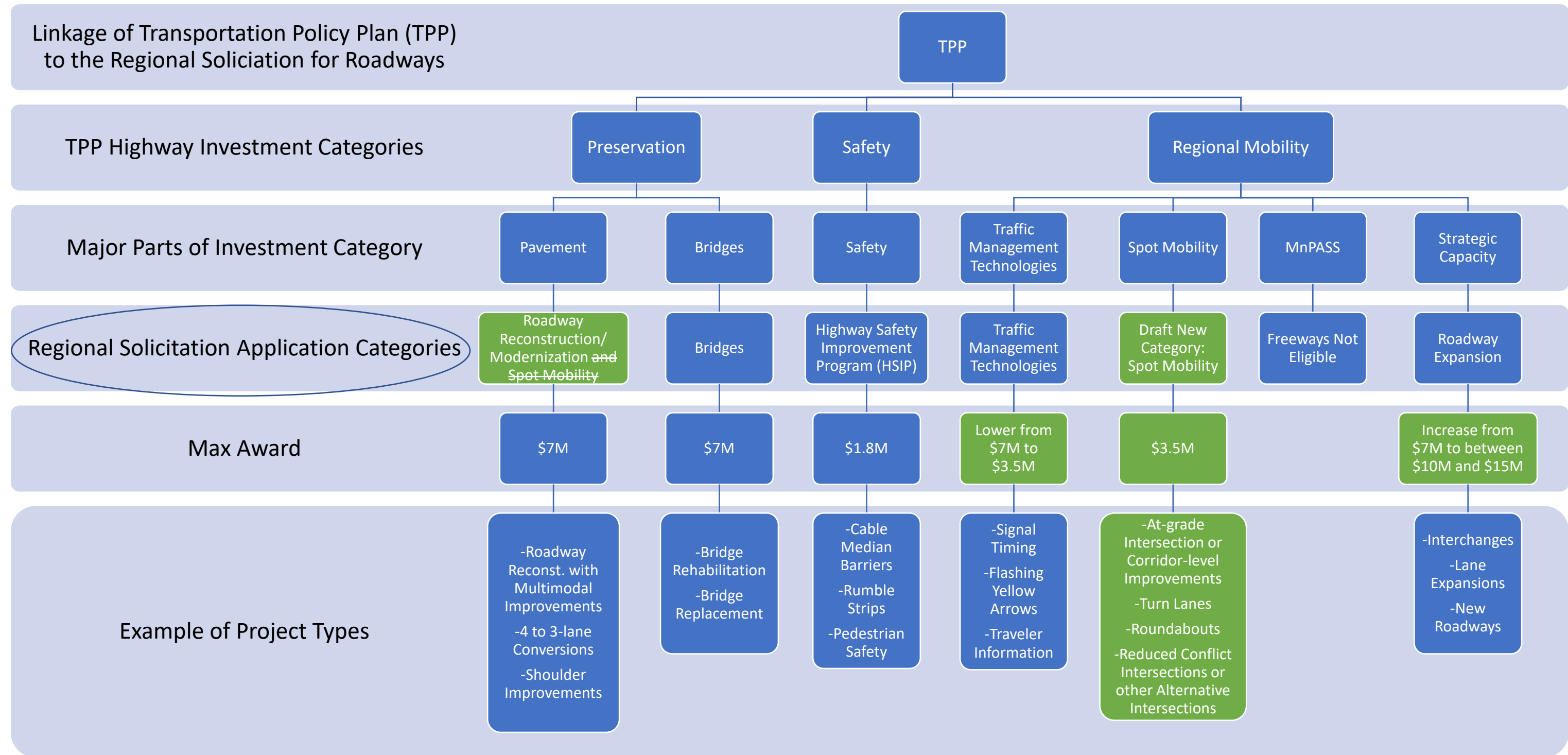
The measure reads: “Confirm that the applicant and/or controlling jurisdiction has a maintenance plan or other policy that mandates snow and ice control to promote year-round usage.” Fifty points were awarded for inclusion of (or reference to) a maintenance plan or policy for snow-removal for year-round use. Otherwise, no points were awarded.

This was a new measure in 2018 and was included after lengthy discussion that included the possibility of using it as a qualifying criterion. Its inclusion was based on the notion that the trails funded by TAB should be for year-round bicycle and pedestrian transportation. Applicants and scorers found the measure confusing in terms of what documentation should be provided and where to draw the line between a scoring and non-scoring application.

Funding & Programming Committee and TAC members suggested that the applicant should submit a letter from the agency responsible for trail maintenance that commits them snow and ice control if awarded funding. There was also sentiment for making this a qualifying criterion.

Regional Solicitation Policy Work Group

Draft: 4/26/2019



The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is administered by MnDOT.
Green boxes indicate draft changes for discussion.