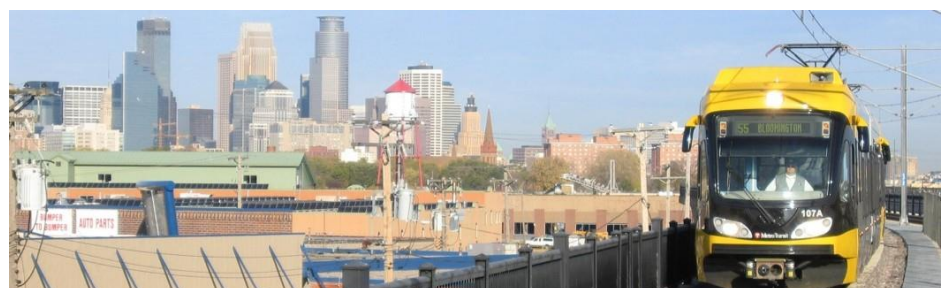


Transportation Planning and Programming Guide

For the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area
October 2019



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Introduction

Large U.S. metropolitan areas must have well-designed, carefully maintained transportation systems that cover travel by all modes including automobile, bus, rail, truck, bicycle, foot, and airplane. In every metropolitan area, an interconnected web of people and organizations works to set priorities, make plans, and implement projects that affect the region's transportation infrastructure.

In the Twin Cities, the regional transportation planning process involves an interconnected group of elected officials, transportation agencies, stakeholders, and residents. It is informed by national, state, district, metropolitan, and local plans and priorities. The participant roles, contributing documents and process for the region's transportation planning and programming are described on the following pages.



Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



Federal regulations require that the mutual transportation planning responsibilities of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the state, and the public transportation operators be incorporated into a written agreement—a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is reviewed and updated as needed by the Council and MnDOT at least once every four years. The MOU may also be modified by mutual agreement at any time. The Council serves as signatory to the MOU in both its roles as the MPO and major regional public transit operator for the region.

Here is the current [MOU between the Council and MnDOT](#).

This guide explains, in more detail than the MOU, the transportation planning and programming process for the Twin Cities metropolitan area. National policy is that the MPO designated for each urbanized area must carry out a continuing, comprehensive and cooperative (3C) multi-modal transportation planning process. The 3C process provides a basis for decision-making and ensures that transportation interests are balanced when public funds are spent.

Finally, this Transportation Planning and Programming Guide describes the participants that create and maintain the Twin Cities transportation system, how those participants work together, the primary products and processes that define their work, the sources and allocation of funds to transportation projects, how plans become programmed projects, and the activities that support planning and programming.

List of Acronyms

3C	Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative Planning Process
ABRT	Arterial Bus Rapid Transit
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ATP	Area Transportation Partnership
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program
CMP	Congestion Management Process
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FAST Act	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program
MAC	Metropolitan Airports Commission
MnDOT	Minnesota Department of Transportation
MnSHIP	Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding

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MPCA	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MVST	Motor Vehicle Sales Tax
RALF	Right-of-Way Acquisition Loan Fund Program
RRA	Regional Railroad Authority
RSIP	Regional Service Improvement Plan
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Program
STBGP	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
TAB	Transportation Advisory Board
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee (of the TAB)
TAC F&P	TAC Funding and Programming Committee
TAC PI	TAC Planning Committee
TAMP	Transportation Asset Management Plan
TBI	Travel Behavior Inventory
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TMA	Transportation Management Area
TPP	Transportation Policy Plan
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program

Chapter 1: Participants

Participants in the transportation planning process include:

- The Metropolitan Council (the Council)
- The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to TAB
- The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)
- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)
- The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC)
- Transit Providers
- Cities
- Counties and County Regional Railroad Authorities
- Tribes and Tribal Governments
- Residents
- The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)
- Other State and Federal Agencies

With the exception of the TAB and TAC, each of these entities has roles and responsibilities in addition to transportation planning. This guide describes their roles only in the context of the region's transportation planning and programming efforts.

Metropolitan Council

Federal law requires that designated metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) conduct transportation planning and the programming of federal funds in urbanized areas. MPOs represent urban areas with a population of 50,000 or more. In areas with a population of 200,000 or more, known as Transportation Management Areas, the MPO is responsible for directly receiving and allocating some federal transportation funds. MPOs develop transportation plans and programs based on the "3C" planning process – cooperative, comprehensive and continuing – and carry out the process with participation by representatives of state and local communities.

The Metropolitan Council is the designated MPO for the Twin Cities area. An organizational chart can be found in Figure 1. The MPO's transportation planning area includes Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington counties, as well as urbanized portions of Wright, Sherburne, and St. Croix (Wisconsin) counties, as shown in Figure 2. The Council is currently Minnesota's only Transportation Management Area.

The Council, originally formed under state legislation in 1967, has 17 members, all appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the state senate. Sixteen members each represent individual geographic districts of approximately equal population and the chairperson serves at large.

Chapter 1: Participants

Under state law (Land Planning Act), the Council develops a Regional Development Guide, which includes policies for shaping the future growth of the region and provides direction to the three system policy plans: transportation/aviation, parks, and water resources.

The Council's role in transportation planning and programming is multifaceted. It includes conducting studies, producing planning documents, and working with state and local agencies, and other partners and stakeholders. That work sets regional direction and priorities for transportation investment in the region's highways, transit, and aviation systems.

These regional transportation planning documents, studies, and processes include:

- The Transportation Policy Plan (TPP), which includes plans and policies for the metropolitan highway, regional transit, regional bicycle and aviation systems.
- The four-year, multi-modal Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a program of highway, transit, bike, walking, and alternative transportation projects proposed for federal funding.
- The Regional Solicitation, a process for selecting and approving a program of projects to receive federal transportation funding that comes directly to the MPO. This process is led by TAB, the Council's transportation advisory body.
- The Congestion Management Process (CMP), a process for evaluating and developing strategies that manage existing and expected future traffic congestion.
- Determining whether plans and proposed investments conform to federal Clean Air Act requirements.
- Classifying roadways as part of the metropolitan highway system.
- Reviewing and approving applications for federal and state funds and assuring these applications are consistent with the stated goals and policies of the Regional Development Guide and the Transportation Policy Plan.
- Under state law, reviewing local communities' long-range comprehensive plans (only within the seven-county metropolitan area) to make sure they are consistent with regional system plans.

In addition to its MPO and transportation planning roles, the Council also:

- Conducts regional land use planning.
- Plans and operates the regional wastewater system.
- Operates much of the public transit regular route system through Metro Transit and private contractors.
- Contractually operates Metro Mobility ADA complimentary transit service, Transit Link shared public dial-a-ride service, and Metro Vanpool.
- Coordinates with Suburban Transit Providers.
- Promotes ride sharing and other travel demand management strategies.
- Administers a revolving loan fund for buying highway rights of way.

See more about the [Metropolitan Council](#).

Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)

Among the Council's advisory committees, the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) has a very special role. The TAB includes local elected officials in the transportation planning and decision-making process, and the membership is spelled out in state law described below. TAB plays a major role in the development of transportation policy, plans and programs for the seven-county metropolitan area. Under the MOU on Metropolitan Planning Responsibilities, TAB is tasked with leading the solicitation, evaluation and recommendation of projects selected for funding with the federal transportation funds allocated to the metropolitan area in a process called the Regional Solicitation.

The TAB consists of 34 members as follows: 10 elected city officials, appointed by Metro Cities; one commissioner from each of the seven county boards in the metro area; the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation or designee; the Commissioner of the Pollution Control Agency or designee; one member of the Metropolitan Airports Commission; one member representing non-motorized transportation appointed by the Council; one member representing the freight transportation industry appointed by the MnDOT Commissioner; two members representing public transit appointed by the Council; one member representing suburban public transit providers appointed by the Suburban Transit Association; eight "citizen" representatives from each of eight pairs of Council districts appointed by the Council; and one Council member. The board's chairperson is appointed by the Council from among the TAB members.

The TAB operates with one standing sub-committee, the Executive Committee, and receives technical input from its Technical Advisory Committee. The relationship of these committees is shown in Figure 3.

See more about the [TAB](#).

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to TAB

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) works closely with the TAB and the Council and is composed of professional staff from city and county governments, as well as the agencies involved in transportation in the metropolitan planning area. The TAC provides technical expertise to the TAB and provides recommendations on action items that will come before the board. The TAC has two standing committees, the Funding and Programming Committee and the Planning Committee, and may appoint one-time multimodal task forces, as needed.

See more about the [TAC](#).

Figure 1 – Metropolitan Council Policymaking Structure

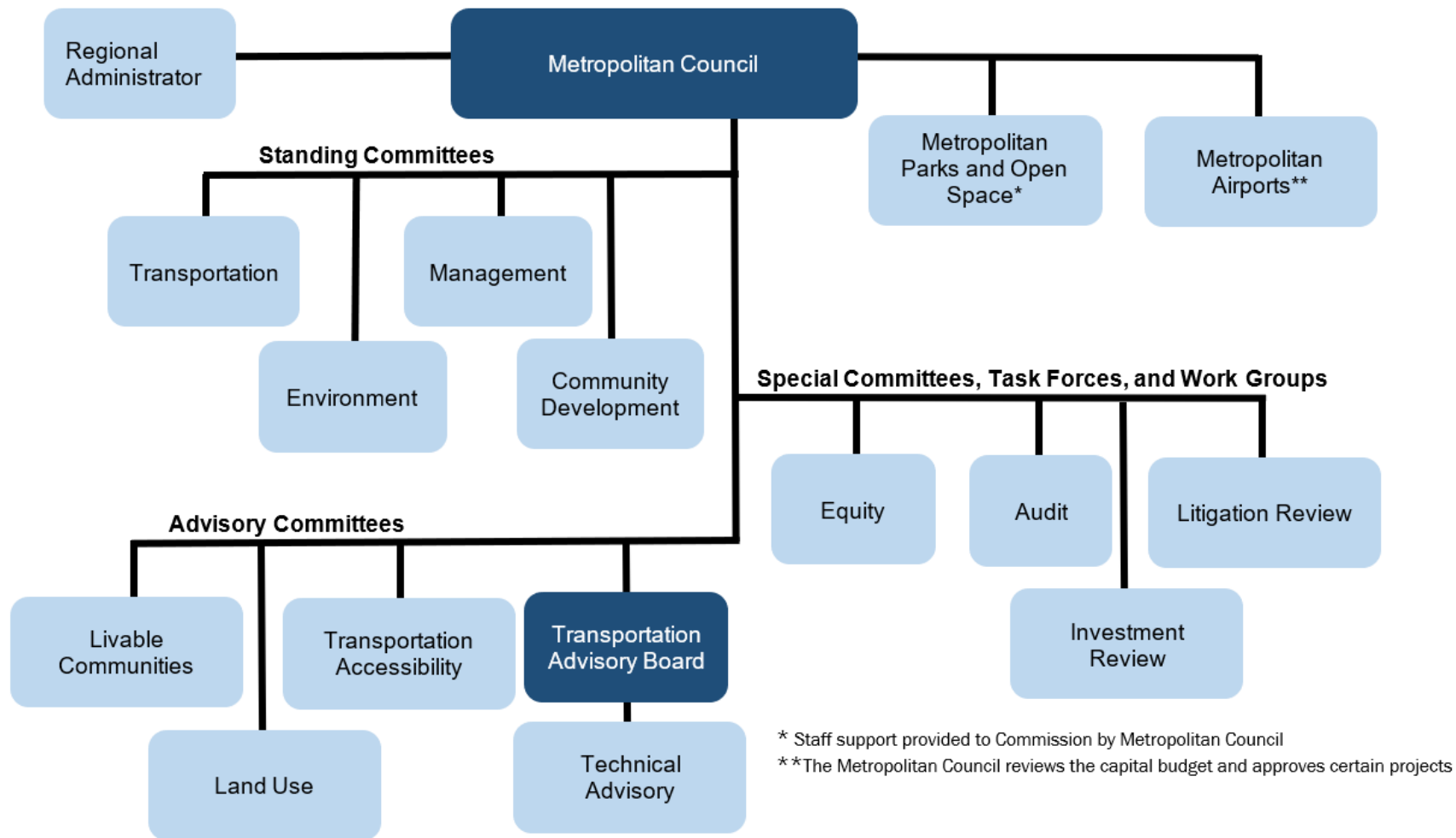


Figure 2 – Metropolitan Transportation Planning Area

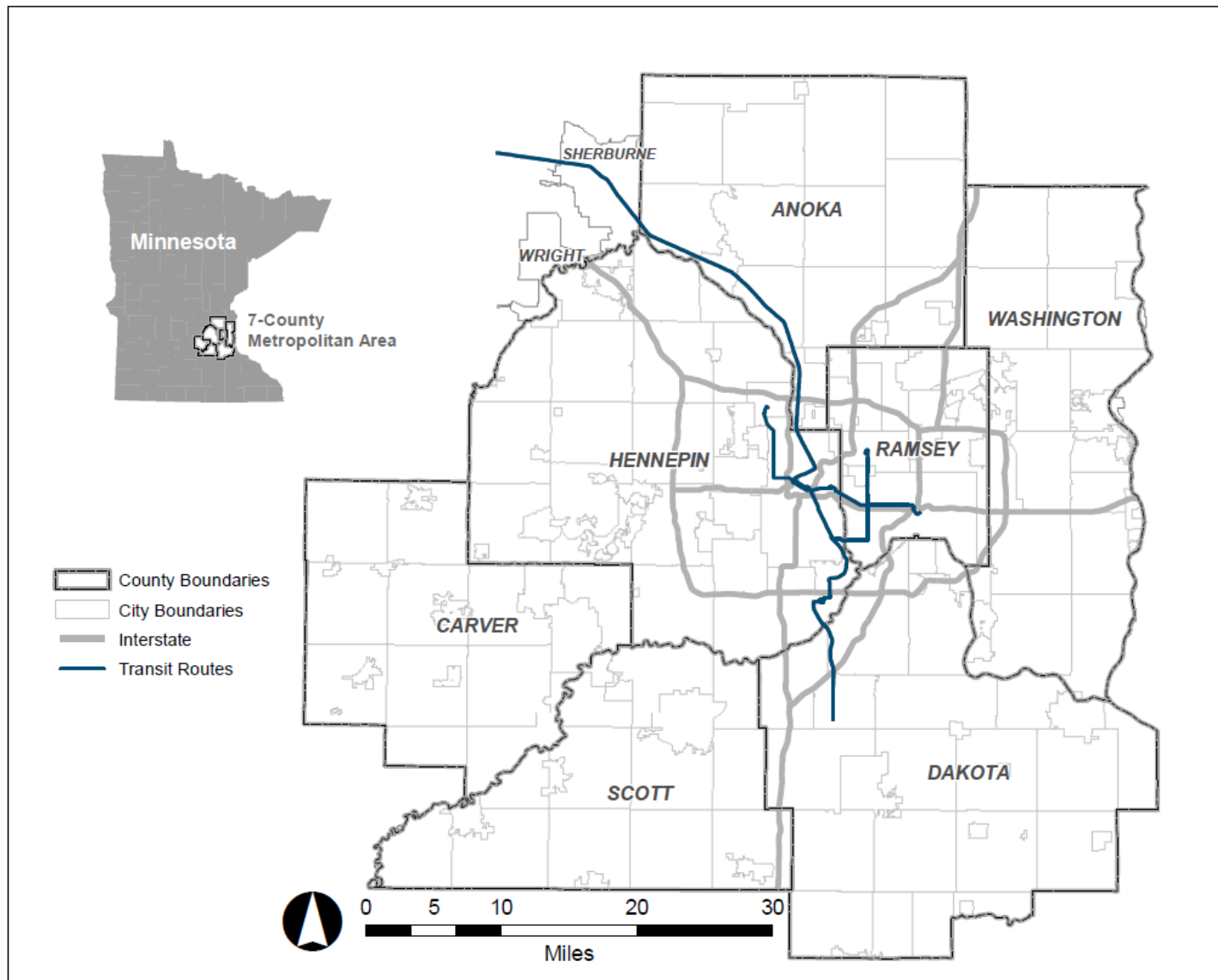
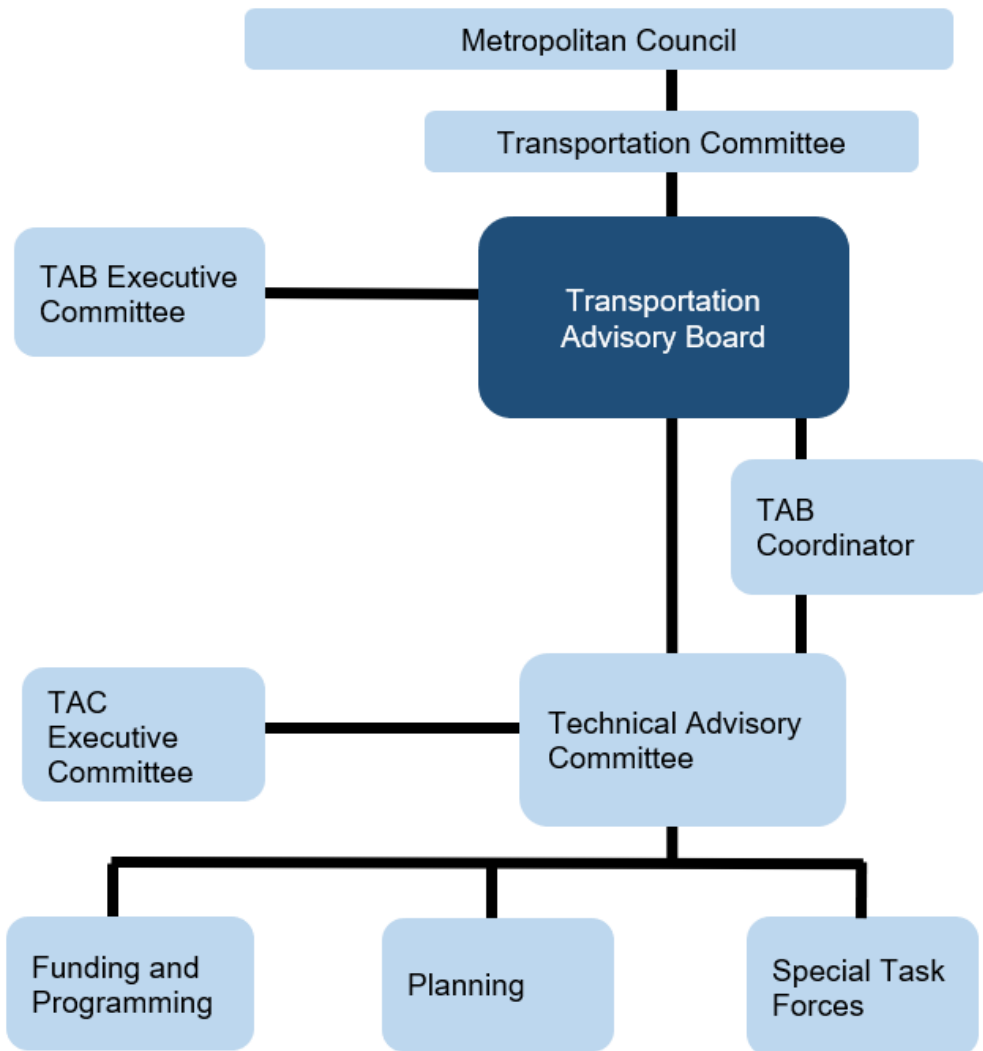


Figure 3 – Transportation Advisory Board



Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is the state’s principal agency for developing and implementing state transportation plans and programs. MnDOT builds and maintains state and interstate highways, conducts statewide multimodal transportation planning and modal plans, and allocates funding to various projects.

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MnDOT also develops the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which incorporates the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) from each of Minnesota's eight metropolitan areas, as well as all other federally funded transportation projects within the state. MnDOT requests joint approval of the STIP and metropolitan area TIP from the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

MnDOT's Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan and its Minnesota State Highway System Investment Plan guide MnDOT's 10-year Capital Highway Investment Plan. MnDOT's plans address performance-based needs in the metropolitan planning area. These plans address preservation, safety, management of the existing system, and other capital improvements that increase mobility consistent with the MPO's planning and policy framework. MnDOT also prepares various modal plans, such as those for freight, passenger rail, aviation, pedestrian needs, and bicycle facilities.

MnDOT plays an integral part in the Twin Cities metropolitan planning process, serves as the liaison between the Council and the USDOT, and participates in the Air Quality Conformity Process.

See more at [Minnesota GO](#).

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) helps Minnesotans protect, conserve, and improve the state's environment. The agency proposes a variety of plans and measurements to monitor pollution and keep it within US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) limits. It also guides the MPO in fulfilling environmental requirements and advises on how transportation and transit projects will affect Minnesota's compliance with environmental regulations.

See more about the [MPCA](#).

Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC)

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) is a public corporation providing coordinated aviation services throughout the metropolitan area. The MAC has broad powers to acquire, develop, and operate airports within a district that approximates the seven-county metropolitan area. It owns and operates seven public-use airports and can raise money to finance airport development and operations. MAC answers directly to the state legislature, but its long-range plans must be consistent with Council plans and policies. Moreover, each airport development project that meets "significant effects" criteria and specific dollar thresholds of \$5 million or more at the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport and \$2 million or more at the reliever airports must have Council approval.

See more about the [Metropolitan Airports Commission](#).

Transit Providers

The Council operates Metro Transit, the largest transit system in the state. In addition to the largest bus system, the Council operates METRO, an expanding network of transitways that currently includes the Blue Line light rail, Green Line light rail, and the Red Line and A Line bus rapid transit. There are also the future Orange Line bus rapid transit (I-35W South), Green Line Extension (Southwest light rail), Blue Line Extension (Bottineau light rail), and Gold Line bus rapid transit. Northstar Commuter Rail is also part of the expanding transitway system. It operates during weekday morning and afternoon rush hours and has limited weekend service. A network of additional bus rapid transit corridors is also being developed with the A Line (Snelling Avenue) currently the first in operation. Other transitway corridors in developing stages with local agencies include Rush Line bus rapid transit, Riverview modern streetcar, and Nicollet-Central modern streetcar.

The Council also administers a number of specialized transit services: Metro Mobility, a transportation service for those unable to use regular fixed-route service due to a disability or health condition; Transit Link, a dial-a-ride transportation service for those traveling to places in the region where regular route service is not provided; and Metro Vanpool, a subsidized vanpool program for commuters not served by regular fixed-route service.

Suburban Transit Providers operate their own regular-route bus services in a dozen cities. These public transit operators give input to the transportation planning process through representation on TAB and TAC. They are also involved with the Council through the region-wide fare collection system and other regional technologies, bus lease agreements, and grant agreements for bus storage facilities, bus shelters, and regular-route transit services.

Transit providers participate in developing the TIP, the regional fare structure, the Regional Route Performance Analysis, and the Regional Service Improvement Plan (RSIP).

Counties and Municipalities

Metropolitan area counties and cities participate in transportation planning at two levels. At the policy level, elected county and city officers serve on the TAB. At the technical level, professional staff from area governments serve on the TAC and its subcommittees.

A 1980 state law allows Minnesota counties to form Regional Railroad Authorities (RRAs) to preserve and improve local rail service and provide for the preservation of abandoned rail right-of-way for future transportation functions. Each of the seven counties in the metropolitan area has formed its own Regional Railroad Authority, and each is used for different purposes.

Regional Residents

Public participation is an essential element of transportation planning in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. Because the region is growing and its demographics are changing, public participation will need to be more coordinated and deliberate. The Metropolitan Council's public

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engagement framework is outlined in Thrive MSP 2040, the Council’s Public Engagement Plan, and the Transportation Policy Plan. Together, these policy documents set the tone and give overall policy direction for public participation in transportation planning.

This [Transportation Public Participation Plan](#) establishes a framework for the region’s stakeholders to influence both long-term transportation policy development and short-term transportation programming. It details the methods and strategies that the Metropolitan Council will use to engage the wide range of stakeholders, from policymakers, to business interests, to residents of the region. It also identifies specific ways those stakeholders can connect to the decision-making process for transportation in the Twin Cities region.

This Public Engagement Plan refocuses participation activities on the people of the region, rather than just the infrastructure we are planning for and building, or the traditional processes that may be commonplace, but do not necessarily engage certain communities effectively. It sets the tone for the Council on how to do business with the people throughout the region.

Traditional processes include advisory committees, boards, and commissions associated with the Council’s planning responsibilities have an open appointment policy, and meetings are open to anyone. Informational meetings, workshops, and public hearings are open to the public and all policy documents are posted on the Council’s website.

In response, this Transportation Public Participation Plan focuses on building long-term relationships, which also include the expectation of ongoing communication (rather than self-contained projects that lack connection to the bigger picture). It is flexible to leverage opportunities for shared agenda-setting and meaningful engagement that might pop up in-between significant planning efforts.

The following principles are front and center when approaching outreach and engagement:

- Equity
- Respect
- Transparency
- Relevance
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Inclusion
- Cultural Competence

See more about [Getting Involved](#) in transportation planning at the Council.

U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) is a federal agency that funds, sets policy for safety, and provides other guidance for transportation by air, highways, rail, transit, and water. The USDOT includes the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), which maintains a local office;

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the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and Federal Rail Administration.

Both FHWA and FTA establish the regulations that govern the development of a metropolitan area's transportation plans and programs. Together, these two organizations review the Council's Transportation Policy Plan (TPP), MnDOT's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and the Council's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The two administrations also certify the 3C metropolitan transportation planning process. The USDOT is the primary funding source for metropolitan transportation planning.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) develops the National Plan for an Integrated Airport System, approves and funds planning and development projects, operates and maintains the national air traffic control system, certifies aircraft and pilots, and establishes and enforces flight operation rules. Metropolitan Airport Commission (MAC) policies must be consistent with both Council plans and those of the FAA.

Tribal relations

The Metropolitan Council seeks to promote timely, appropriate, and consistent government-to-government relations between the Council and the federally recognized Tribal Nations in Minnesota.

The geography of the seven-county metropolitan area encompasses one of the 11 federally recognized Minnesota tribal governments– the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. In addition, the Council is involved with lands and waters held sacred or historically significant to American Indian people beyond the geographic boundaries of tribal-owned land.

Consultation

Government-to-government communication will be conducted in a timely manner by all parties, about a proposed or contemplated decision to:

- Secure meaningful tribal input and involvement in the decision-making process; and
- Advise the tribe of the final decision and provide clarification on the how decisions were reached.

Consultation is a process of meaningful communication and coordination between the Metropolitan Council Chair and Council members and tribal officials before taking actions or making decisions that may affect tribes or tribal interests.

Collaboration

Council staff are encouraged to collaborate with tribal staff when project plans and development directly impact tribal resources. Council staff should include all 11 tribes recognized in Minnesota in this outreach and give them the opportunity to choose to participate or not participate in any given process.

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- Share and compare in a timely manner relevant plans, programs, projects and schedules with the related plans, programs, projects, and schedules of the other parties; and
- Adjust plans, programs, projects and schedules as needed to maintain transparency and accountability.

Coordination

Council staff are encouraged to coordinate directly with tribal groups and members of tribes who have no official capacity within the tribal communities for engagement and input about projects in and around the communities where they reside, or around areas that hold cultural importance.

Chapter 2: Transportation-Related Planning Documents

Major transportation-related planning documents include:

- The Regional Development Guide
- Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)
- The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
- Minnesota Go Vision
- Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan
- Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP)

Regional Development Guide



State statute requires the Council to prepare a comprehensive development guide for the metropolitan area. Thrive MSP 2040, adopted in May 2014, is the first chapter of this comprehensive development guide, which also includes the Transportation Policy Plan, the Water Resources Policy Plan, the Regional Parks Policy Plan, and the Housing Policy Plan. Thrive MSP 2040 sets out the region’s forecasts for population, households, and employment through the year 2040. It provides the regional physical and policy framework, which forms the basis for the type, location, investment priorities, and general implementation and review procedures for these metropolitan systems.

See more about [Thrive MSP 2040](#).

Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)

The Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) is a federally required plan that is prepared and updated by the Council every five years (previously every four years). The TPP describes the region’s approach to metropolitan transportation investments for at least the next 20 years. The TPP is also required by state law as one chapter of the Council’s regional development guide. It highlights planned investment and infrastructure needs for highways, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, freight, and aviation in the region. The TPP also addresses federal transportation planning requirements and Clean Air Act matters, major studies conducted since the last update, and the funds expected to be available to maintain or replace highways and other transportation infrastructure.

The plan must balance planned investments against reasonably expected resources and assure that there are no negative impacts on air quality.

Chapter 2: Transportation-Related Planning Documents

The TPP can be amended as needed. The process to amend the TPP is similar to the process to update a plan. However, for TPP amendments, the sequence for some steps is more flexible.

Figure 4 illustrates how the TPP develops from initiation to adoption. See the full [Transportation Policy Plan](#).

The Council produces studies that include information and analysis to inform future revisions of the TPP, including future transportation system investment decisions. These studies are prepared with stakeholder involvement, including review, comment, and, as appropriate, recommendations from the TAB and its committees. Studies conducted by other agencies are often presented to the TAB for information or comment.

Table 1 summarizes the roles and responsibilities of partners in the regional transportation planning and programming process for the various documents produced.

Table 1 – Transportation Plan and Program Interagency Participation Chart

	Transportation Policy Plan	Transportation Improvement Program	Unified Planning Work Program
Metropolitan Council	Prepares and approves the TPP.	Lead agency in preparing and adopting the TIP. Forwards TIP to MnDOT for inclusion in STIP.	Prepares and approves UPWP. Submits UPWP to MnDOT to forward to USDOT.
Transportation Advisory Board	Participates in plan development; reviews and recommends to the Council.	Conducts regional solicitation for federally funded projects for incorporation into TIP. Recommends TIP to Council for adoption.	Reviews and comments on UPWP to Council.
Technical Advisory Committee	Participates in plan development; reviews and recommends to TAB.	Facilitates regional solicitation process for TAB. Recommends projects for inclusion in TIP and recommends TIP to TAB.	Reviews and comments on UPWP to TAB.
MnDOT	Participates in TAC/TAB review; may comment directly to Council.	Provides region with federal funding target; facilitates minor changes in TIP/STIP; Assists Council in TIP development. Participates in TIP review and adoption through TAC/TAB; Central Office incorporates the TIP in STIP and approves the STIP as governor’s designee. Then submits to USDOT for approval.	Prepares agency work program components for inclusion in UPWP; participates in TAC/TAB review; submits UPWP to USDOT for approval; may comment directly to Council.
MPCA	Participates in TAC/TAB review; may comment directly to Council.	Participates in TIP review/adoption process through TAC/TAB. Reviews and comments to TAB and/or Council.	Prepares agency work program component for inclusion in UPWP; participates in TAC/TAB review; may comment directly to Council.
MAC	Participates in TAC/TAB review; may comment directly to Council.	Reviews and comments through TAC/TAB; may comment directly to TAB or Council.	Prepares agency work program component for inclusion in UPWP; participates in TAC/TAB review; may comment directly to Council.
Local Governments	Review and comment through TAC/TAB; may	Reviews and comments through TAC/TAB; may comment directly to	Review and comment through TAC/TAB.

Chapter 2: Transportation-Related Planning Documents

	comment directly to Council.	TAB or Council.	
Transit Providers	Review and comment through TAC/TAB; may comment directly to Council.	Reviews and comments through TAC/TAB; may comment directly to TAB or Council.	Prepares agency work program component for inclusion in UPWP; participates in TAC/TAB review; may comment directly to Council.
USDOT	Participates as non-voting member in TAC review and comment. FHWA and FTA must determine that the plan conforms to federal regulations.	Participates as non-voting member in TAC review and comment. FHWA and FTA must determine that the TIP conforms to federal regulations.	Reviews and approves UPWP.

Figure 4 – Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) Update Process

1. Council Transportation Committee is briefed on the TPP update scope and schedule.
2. TAC Planning Committee, TAC, and TAB are briefed on the TPP update scope and schedule.
3. Council announces TPP update scope and schedule.
4. TPP update is drafted with input and recommendations from the TAB, TAC, TAC Planning and other committees that may be formed.
5. TAB reviews the draft TPP and provides comments prior to the public comment process.
6. Council reviews draft TPP, considers TAB's comments and approves a final draft TPP for release for public comment.
7. Council holds a public hearing and open house meetings, receives public feedback through multiple processes as specified in the adopted Transportation Public Engagement Plan and compiles a public comment record.
8. Both the TAB and Transportation Committee consider the public comment record and policy implications.
9. Proposed responses to the public comment, including recommended changes to the draft TPP, are reviewed by TAB* and then the Transportation Committee, considering TAB's input.
10. A final TPP is prepared for Council adoption based on public comments, TAB's review and comment, and Council's discussion and direction.
11. Council accepts the public comment report and adopts the final TPP.

**For TPP amendments, public comments and responses may be provided to TAB after Council action. Administrative modifications to the TPP are reviewed by TAC, TAB and the approved by the Council but do not require a public comment process.*

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a federally required annual description and documentation of proposed transportation and transportation-related planning work, studies and processes that will take place each year in the metropolitan area. The UPWP also serves as the Council's application for USDOT transportation planning funds. The UPWP describes four agencies metropolitan-area transportation planning activities: the Council (as the planning agency and major public transit operator), MnDOT, MPCA and MAC. The Council, with participation by MnDOT, prepares a draft UPWP that TAC and TAB review and recommend for Council adoption. MnDOT submits the final UPWP to the FHWA for review and approval and serves as the grant administrator for the planning funds.

Figure 5 – Unified Planning Work Program Process

1. Council notifies MnDOT, MAC, MPCA, and TAB about UPWP preparation process, procedures, and schedule.
2. Agencies submit drafts of their annual work program to the Council to be included in the proposed UPWP.
3. TAC Planning Committee reviews the proposed UPWP and forwards to TAC.
4. TAC reviews, comments, and forwards to TAB.
5. TAB reviews and recommends adoption of the UPWP to the Council’s Transportation Committee.
6. Transportation Committee reviews and recommends UPWP adoption to Council.
7. Council adopts the annual UPWP.
8. Council forwards UPWP to MnDOT, who forwards it to USDOT to receive planning funds.

Minnesota Go Vision

The Minnesota Department of Transportation completed the Minnesota GO visioning process in 2011 to better align the transportation system with what Minnesotans expect for their quality of life, economy, and natural environment. Minnesota Go describes a desired future 50 years from now. It answers the question “what are we trying to achieve?” It does not answer the question “how will we do it?” This latter question is addressed in subsequent statewide, modal, and regional planning efforts. The Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan and MnDOT’s Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan are discussed in more detail below.

Information on MnDOT’s plans can be found at [Minnesota GO](#).



Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan

The Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan serves as the statewide policy framework for all transportation partners as well as MnDOT's family of modal system investment plans. This multimodal plan establishes guidance and priorities for state transportation decisions, which filter down into specific plans for each mode, and into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which identifies priority projects and how money will be spent.

Development of a Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan per Minnesota Statute 174.03 is an integral element in the overall MnDOT planning process. The statewide plan must be updated every five years, with the most recent plan adopted in 2017. To keep pace with changing priorities, opportunities, and challenges, the different modal plans are updated as federally required, every four to six years; though some have no requirements and are updated less frequently. The Multimodal Plan establishes overarching guidance and priorities for making state transportation decisions across all modes—from roadways, to railroads, to bikeways, and beyond. The Plan focuses on activities over a 20-year time frame. The plan is intended for use as a guidance document for local and regional planning efforts so the input of these groups is important. Within MnDOT, the plan guides future modal system and investment decisions, such as the State Aviation System Plan and the Highway Investment Plan.

See more about [Minnesota GO and the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan](#).

Minnesota State Highway Investment Plan (MnSHIP)

MnDOT creates and maintains MnSHIP, the 20-Year Highway Investment Plan, as a guide to future investments in the state trunk highway system. The plan reflects federal, state, and regional policies as well as priorities and projected funding availability as it identifies the long-term system and corridor improvements necessary to achieve and maintain established performance targets. The Plan is informed by the 10-year Capital Highway Investment Plans created by each MnDOT district. The Metro District's 10-year plan must reflect the investment goals and policies of Thrive MSP 2040 and the TPP.

See more about [MnSHIP](#).

Chapter 3: Funding and Programming Process

Programming is the process of selecting projects and investments to be made over a period of time and identifying and committing funds to those projects. MnDOT and the Council develop long-range policy plans typically covering a period of at least 20 years. Consistent with the long-range policy plans, MnDOT develops statewide and district-specific investment plans. Cities, counties, and transit providers also develop their own capital investment plans.

Federal Funding Overview

Figure 6 shows that the majority of the highway and transit funds are distributed by federal formulas to the state of Minnesota from four programs: National Highway Performance Program, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement program and Highway Safety Improvement Program. The region may also receive federal funds through national competitive programs such as the Capital Investment Grant program (New Starts) or the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program.

In Minnesota, selecting projects for funding occurs both centrally at the statewide level as well as by MnDOT districts and offices and through the Area Transportation Partnerships (ATPs) with involvement by local elected officials. ATPs were established at the MnDOT district level to create a more collaborative decision-making process between the Districts and stakeholders such as the MPOs, cities, counties, and tribal governments for the selection of roadway projects receiving federal funds. The Council and its TAB serve as the ATP in the Twin Cities metropolitan area; projects for the urbanized portions of Wright and Sherburne Counties are selected by the ATP in MnDOT District 3.

The federal transportation funds for ATPs are distributed according to population. The federal program funds received by the Council and TAB for allocation are determined by agreement between MnDOT, the TAB and the Council. These include the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) federal formula funds, the state's Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds and metro area Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) formula funds.

Some federal transportation funds designated to the metro area are allocated to projects through the Regional Solicitation process. All federal transportation funds that will be spent in the metro area whether programmed through the Regional Solicitation process, by MnDOT for metro area highway projects, or by the Council for metro area transit projects, must be included in the region's four-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). MnDOT must select projects for the federal funds and state funds it intends to spend in the metro area in a manner consistent with the established state and regional performance objectives as well as the other investment policies and direction in the adopted TPP and state plans. MnDOT's Metro district projects are incorporated into the TIP, along with the projects selected through the Regional Solicitation and federally funded transit projects and are recommended by TAB and approved by the Council.

Transit Funds

As shown in Figure 6, federal transit funds are distributed through the FTA as either formula or discretionary funds. Formula transit funds are allocated to the Public Transit Operator in the major metropolitan areas. In the metro area, the Council/Metro Transit is the designated recipient of federal transit formula funds and in Greater Minnesota MnDOT is the recipient of federal funds for the small metropolitan and rural area transit systems. The Council and Suburban Providers must select projects for the federal transit funds in a manner consistent with established investment policies and direction in the metro area TPP and Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan. These projects are then incorporated into the TIP, which is recommended by TAB and approved by the Council.

Discretionary transit funds are distributed nationally on a competitive basis for specific projects or programs. The Council and the TAB are not directly involved in the allocation of discretionary transit funds. If received, these funds must also be included in the regional TIP.

Regional Solicitation Process

The Regional Solicitation is a key biennial responsibility of the Council's TAB. Through this process, federal funds allocated directly to the metro area are directed to a variety of locally-initiated projects that address transportation problems and help implement regional transportation and development policies as articulated in the regional long-range plan.

Federal funds are available for roadway, bridge, transit capital and operating, and bike and pedestrian projects. The Council, MnDOT, other transit providers, local governments, and other agencies such as the MPCA may all submit project proposals.

The criteria and measures for evaluating project applications and the solicitation process itself are reviewed and updated biennially through the region's cooperative planning process and the revised application is adopted TAB. Projects are solicited, reviewed, scored, and ranked through this process. The TAB sends the recommended program of projects to the Council, which either approves TAB's recommendation or sends it back to TAB for reconsideration. The selected projects are then included in the next draft of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Figure 7 illustrates the Regional Solicitation project selection process.

Project Implementation

Each project funded through the Regional Solicitation will be developed and implemented with assistance, depending on funding source, by MnDOT Metro District's State Aid Division or Metropolitan Council's Grants Department, who will assure that the project is being done per TAB and federal expectations.

Scope Changes

Projects that receive funding through the regional solicitation process are subject to the Scope Change Policy, the purpose of which is to ensure that the project is designed and constructed

Chapter 3: Funding and Programming Process

according to the plans and intent described in the original application. Additionally, federal rules require that any federally funded project scope must go through a formal review and TIP amendment process if the project description or total project cost change substantially. The scope change process allows project sponsors to adjust their projects as needed while still providing substantially the same benefits described in the original application.

Regional Program Year Policy

The Regional Program Year Policy is intended to promote the timely development and delivery of transportation projects awarded federal funds through the TAB's regional solicitation process. At the conclusion of the regional solicitation process, each project is assigned a program year in the TIP. The program year is July 1st to June 30th. For example, a "2022 project" would be delivered between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022. By March 31st of the program year the project must meet criteria showing it is on track for delivery. The TAB may grant a one-year program year extension due to unforeseen circumstances, provided the sponsor has been working on project development. The TAB has adopted criteria and procedures for determining whether a program year extension should be granted. Program year extensions are approved by the TAB and are not forwarded to the Council for concurrence.

See the [Scope Change Policy](#).

See the [Program Year Policy, Criteria and Procedure](#).

See more about the [Regional Solicitation](#) process.

Figure 6– Simplified Federal Highway Trust Fund Distribution in the Twin Cities

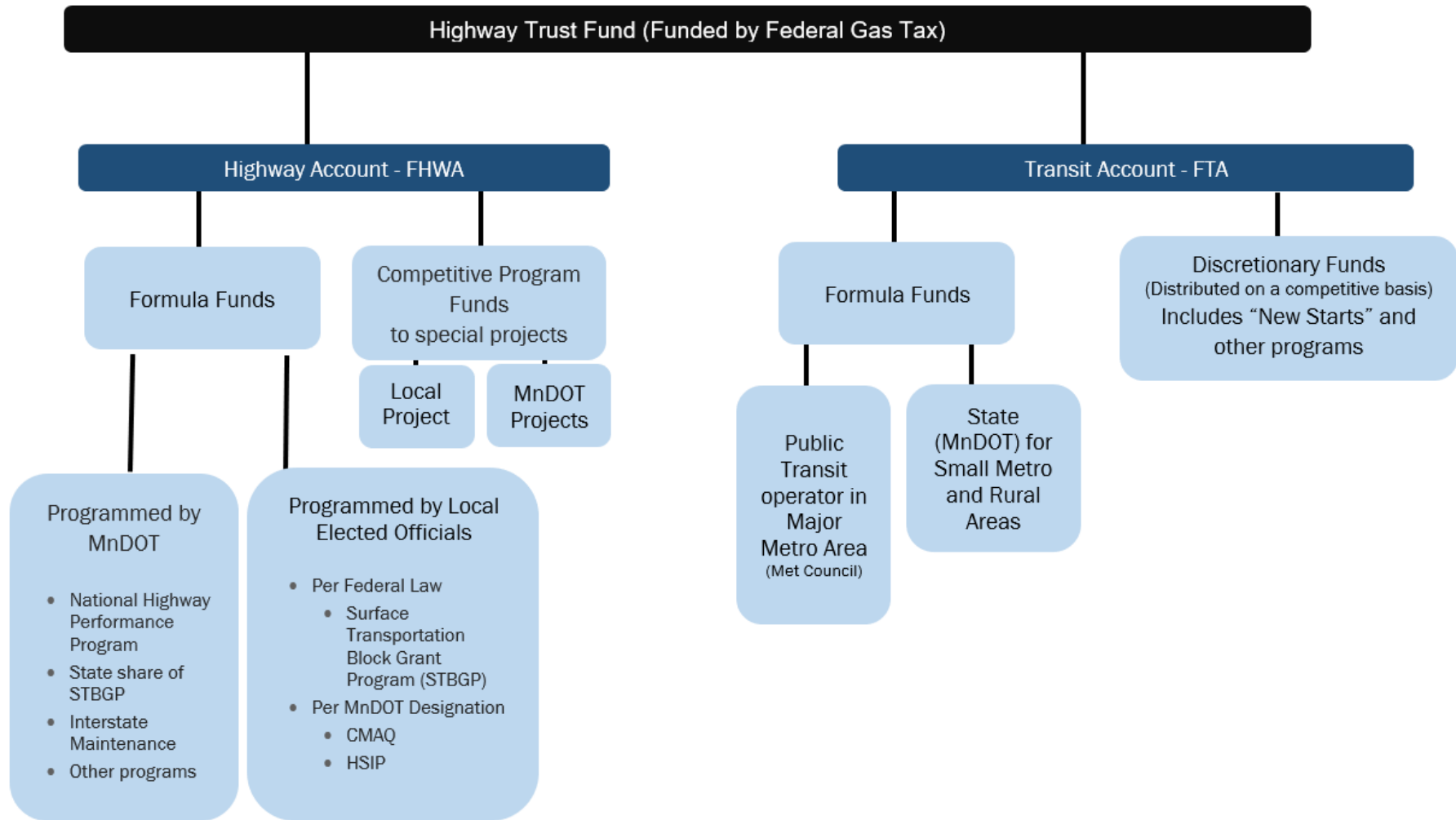


Figure 7– Regional Solicitation Process

1. Based on TAB direction on regional criteria and issues raised from the previous solicitation, TAC F&P develops draft solicitation scoring measures and process for project selection.
2. Draft is forwarded to TAC, which may modify the package, and recommends approval to TAB.
3. TAB reviews the draft solicitation package, may modify it, and approves for purposes of public comment.
4. TAB solicits public comment on the draft Regional Solicitation.
5. TAC F&P reviews public comments, proposed responses, and any previous TAC and TAB modifications and forwards recommended Regional Solicitation to TAC.
6. TAC reviews public comments, proposed responses, and the recommended solicitation, may modify it, and forwards a recommended Regional Solicitation to TAB for adoption.
7. TAB considers public comment, proposed responses, and the recommended Regional Solicitation, may modify it, adopts a final Regional Solicitation and forwards it to the Metropolitan Council for concurrence.
8. Council concurs with the Regional Solicitation (or may send it back but cannot modify).
9. Regional Solicitation is announced, training and information sessions held for potential applicants, and applications received.
10. Council staff leads review of projects against the qualifying criteria. Applicant is notified if a project appears to not meet the criteria and are invited to defend the project. TAC F&P makes final qualification determination.
11. Scoring groups comprised of volunteers from state and local agencies evaluate applications and develop ranked project lists for each category.
12. TAC F&P reviews and recommends ranked list, then notifies applicants that scores are available; applicants may request re-evaluation of project scores.
13. TAC F&P discusses and may revalue and adjust project scores and rankings. Final scores are forwarded to TAC and TAB for information.
14. TAC F&P develops funding options based on anticipated available funding, adopted procedures and guidance from TAB; options are forwarded to TAC.
15. TAC may modify the funding options prior to forwarding a recommended option for approval to TAB.
16. TAB discusses and may modify the funding recommendation. TAB votes to award funds to specific projects and forwards the program of projects to the Council for concurrence.
17. Met Council votes to concur with TAB's recommended program of projects.*
18. The selected projects are included in the next draft TIP.

*The Council may only concur with the Regional Solicitation proposed program of projects or send it back for reconsideration by TAB.

The Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a staged, four-year, multimodal program of highway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects and programs proposed to use federal funding throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The MPO is federally required to prepare the TIP as a short-range program that complements its long-range transportation plan. The TIP must be fiscally constrained, which means that its estimated project costs cannot exceed anticipated revenues.

The Council prepares the TIP in cooperation with MnDOT. The TIP must include all federal funds

proposed to be spent in the MPO urbanized area, including funds allocated through the Regional Solicitation process, federal funds programmed by MnDOT for the Metro District, federal transit funds programmed by the Council and transit providers, federal funds programmed for the urbanized portions of District 3 (parts of Wright and Sherburne Counties) and the town of Houlton, Wisconsin (which is also included in the urbanized area boundary). The projects contained in the TIP must be consistent with, and implement, the regional long-range transportation plan (TRP) as well as the State Implementation Plan for air quality. The TIP and TIP amendments are reviewed and recommended by the TAC and TAB and approved by the Council. Minor TIP adjustments are done administratively by MnDOT and the Council.

TIP Amendments

Sometimes it is necessary to make project changes that cannot be deferred to the next annual adoption cycle, necessitating a TIP amendment. Changes in project scope and changes to the project's program year are the two most common reasons a TIP amendment might be required. MnDOT may also request a TIP amendment to reflect changes arising through the project development progress. TIP amendments are reviewed and recommended by the TAC Funding & Programming Committee and TAC and approved by TAB before being sent to the Council for concurrence. If a TIP amendment request is for a project that is not funded through the Regional Solicitation and not regionally significant, it is eligible for the streamlined TIP amendment process, which enables the TAC Executive Committee to approve it and move the request directly to TAB.

Figure 8 illustrates the development of the TIP from initiation to federal approval. Figure 9 shows the TIP amendment process.

Annual List of Obligated Projects

Early each fiscal year, the Council prepares a list of federally funded projects obligated in the previous fiscal year. This is required to be completed no later than 90 calendar days following the end of the program year, per section 450.332 of Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Figure 8 – Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Process

1. Council works with MnDOT and MPCA to prepare a draft four-year TIP that includes all projects proposed for federal funding in the metropolitan planning area.
2. TAC F&P reviews and comments on draft TIP and forwards to TAC.
3. TAC reviews, comments, and recommends to TAB for release for public comment.
4. MPCA reviews and approves Air Quality Conformity requirements.
5. TAB reviews and approves release of draft TIP for public comment.
6. Council summarizes public comments and proposes responses.
7. Council prepares final TIP and public comment report.
8. TAB reviews comments, responses and recommends the TIP to the Council for adoption.
9. Council's Transportation Committee reviews the TIP and recommends it for approval by the Metropolitan Council.
10. Council adopts the TIP.
11. Council publishes TIP and forwards it to MnDOT, WisDOT and MPCA.
12. MnDOT and WisDOT incorporate the TIP into their respective STIPs*, approve their STIPs, and forward to USDOT for review of conformity with federal transportation law. USDOT also works with US EPA to determine conformance of the STIPs with the Clean Air Act.

**The DOT must incorporate the adopted TIP and cannot change the projects or funding amounts.*

Figure 9 – TIP Amendment Process

1. Project sponsor alerts Council to the need for a TIP amendment.
2. Proposed TIP amendment is provided to the Minnesota Interagency Air Quality and Transportation Planning Committee, which determines whether air quality conformity determination is needed.
3. If air quality conformity determination is needed, proposed amendment is added to the regional air quality model and documentation of air quality conformity is prepared.
4. Council staff and the TAC Executive Committee determine whether the amendment can be streamlined. If not, it is considered by TAC F&P; if yes, the amendment proceeds to step 7.
5. TAC F&P recommends approval of the amendment to TAC.
6. TAC recommends approval of the amendment to TAB.
7. TAB approves and forwards to the Council for concurrence.*
8. The Council's Transportation Committee recommends concurrence.
9. The Council concurs with TAB's approval of the TIP amendment.
10. Council forwards approved amendment to MnDOT for incorporation into the STIP.

** If the amendment is regionally significant, the amendment will be released for a 21-day public comment period. TAB considers public comment and approves the amendment at its subsequent meeting and the remaining steps occur as shown.*

State Transportation Improvement Program

Metropolitan TIP projects are incorporated into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The majority of the metro area projects are incorporated into the Minnesota STIP, though any projects in the Houlton Wisconsin part of the metropolitan area are included in the Wisconsin STIP. The STIP identifies the schedule and funding of transportation projects by state fiscal year (for

Chapter 3: Funding and Programming Process

Minnesota July 1 through June 30). STIPs include all state and local transportation projects with federal highway and/or federal transit funding. Rail, port, and aeronautic projects are included for information purposes. In each state, the STIP is developed and updated on an annual basis and must be approved by FHWA and FTA.

See more about the current [Minnesota STIP](#).

See more about the current [Wisconsin STIP](#).

Chapter 4: Activities that Support Planning and Programming

A number of federal and state requirements and procedures support transportation planning and programming activities. Various agencies and individuals participate in these required supportive activities.

Federal requirements include:

- Congestion Management Process
- Air Quality Conformity Determination Process
- Performance Measures and Targets
- Highway Functional Classification Designation Process
- Travel Forecasting Process
- Public Participation

In addition to federal requirements are state requirements and procedures.

Congestion Management Process

Under federal law, metropolitan planning organizations in areas with populations over 200,000 must develop a Congestion Management Process (CMP) that manages traffic congestion and provides information on transportation system performance. A CMP must measure multimodal transportation system performance, identify the causes of congestion, assess alternative actions, implement cost-effective actions, and evaluate the effectiveness of those actions.

The CMP incorporates and coordinates the various activities of the Council, MnDOT, transit providers, counties, cities, and transportation management organizations to increase the efficiency of the multimodal transportation system to reduce vehicle use and provide lower-cost safety and mobility projects where feasible.

The CMP is incorporated into Chapter 12 of the TPP. The CMP emphasizes four approaches to address regional congestion: freeway system management; travel demand management; transit opportunities; and land use policy. Chapter 12 also notes some shortcoming of the current process and next steps to improve the process, including preparation of a Congestion Management Process Plan.

The Congestion Management Process Plan was developed in 2018 and early 2019. It consists of two documents, the Policies and Procedures Handbook and the Traffic Trends Report. The handbook describes the process followed to assess congested corridors and evaluate the toolbox of strategies that could be implemented to manage congestion. The traffic trends report tracks the effectiveness of the strategies on congestion and documents the individual corridors as they are

Chapter 4: Activities that Support Planning and Programming

evaluated.

See more about the [Congestion Management Process in the TPP](#).

See more about the [Congestion Management Process](#) study.

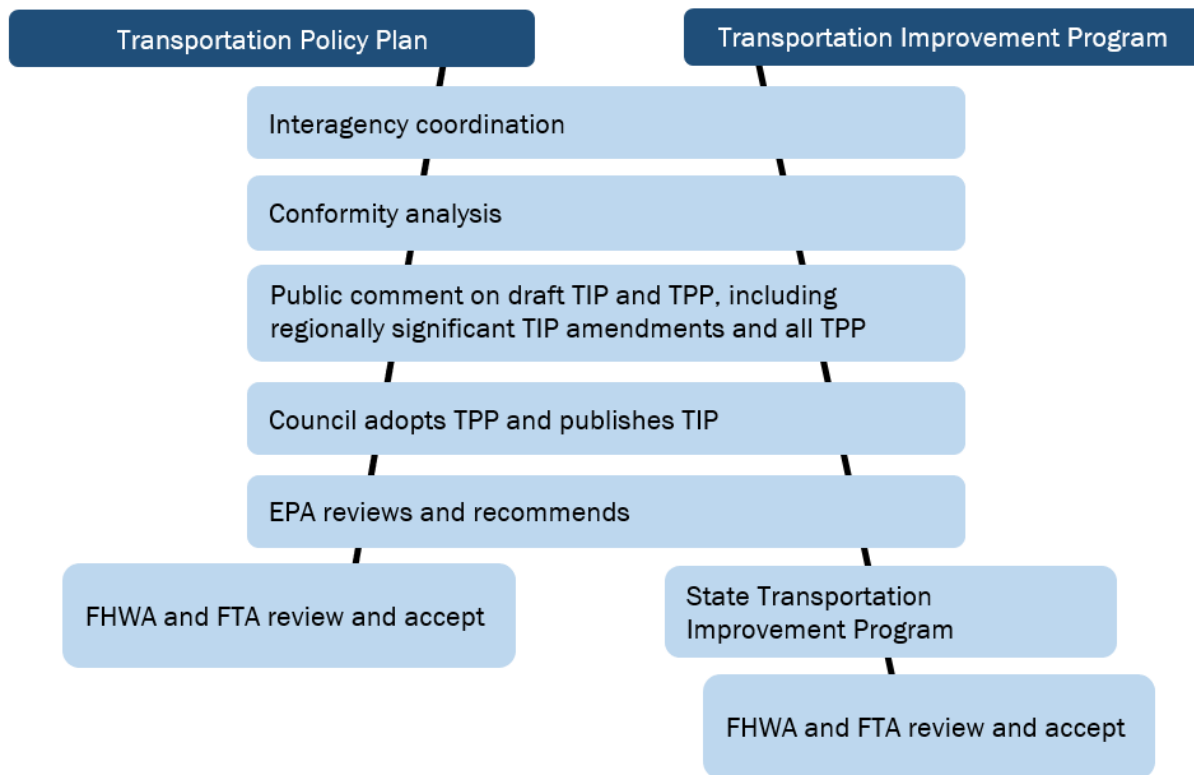
Air Quality Conformity Determination Process

The Federal Clean Air Act Amendments passed in 1990 stipulate that transportation plans, programs, and projects in non-attainment and maintenance areas must undergo an air quality conformity analysis. The EPA designates most of the seven-county metropolitan area and a portion of Wright County, as a maintenance area for carbon monoxide emissions, so that transportation plans, projects, and programs are subject to air quality conformity determination.

The Minnesota Interagency Air Quality and Transportation Planning Committee--involving the Council, MnDOT, FHWA, EPA, MPCA, works to ensure that Minnesota's transportation plans and programs conform to air quality standards. The Council, in conjunction with this interagency committee, evaluates its transportation plans conformity to air quality goals, using technical data, assumptions based on such things as transportation modeling and emissions analysis, and transportation control measures. The Council makes a conformity determination after interagency consultation as part of its adoption of the TIP or TPP.

Conformity determinations are subject to public review and comment before agencies take any formal action. The information, emissions data, analyses, models, and modeling assumptions used to determine conformity is public information available from the Council.

Figure 10– Air Quality Conformity Determination



Performance Measures and Targets

Pursuant to 23 CFR 490.29, all state DOTs and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) must adopt a program to measure system performance and set performance targets in order to monitor progress towards achieving these targets. Federal requirements for performance measures and associated targets were originally established by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act and continued under the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. These requirements establish a planning program that is performance and outcome based. The overall objective of the program is for states and MPOs to invest resources in projects that contribute towards the achievement of national goals. The federal performance management program establishes national performance goals in the following seven areas:

- Safety
- Infrastructure condition
- Congestion reduction
- System reliability
- Freight movement and economic vitality
- Environmental sustainability
- Reduced project delivery delays

Chapter 4: Activities that Support Planning and Programming

Federal requirements further require the establishment of specific performance measures and targets which will be used in order to help achieve the seven national performance goals. The required performance measures are as follows:

- Total vehicular fatalities and serious injuries crashes on all public roads
- Rate of vehicular fatalities and serious injury crashes per 100 million vehicle miles travelled
- Total non-motorized fatalities and serious injury crashes
- Percent of NHS bridges by deck area in good condition
- Percent of NHS bridges by deck area in poor condition
- Percent of pavement on the Interstate system in good condition
- Percent of pavement on the Interstate system in poor condition
- Percent of non-interstate NHS pavement in good condition
- Percent of non-interstate NHS pavement in poor condition
- Percent of reliable person-miles traveled on the Interstate
- Percent of reliable person-miles traveled on the non-Interstate NHS
- Percent of interstate system mileage providing for reliable truck travel time
- On-road mobile source emissions measure.
- Non-single occupancy vehicle measure
- Peak hour excessive delay measure
- Transit Asset Management (TAM):
 - Rolling Stock (revenue vehicles): percent of the following exceeding useful life
 - Articulated bus
 - Bus
 - Cutaway
 - Light rail vehicle
 - Equipment (non-revenue): percent of the following exceeding useful life:
 - Automobiles
 - Trucks/other rubber tire vehicles
 - Facilities: percent rated below a 3 on a condition scale
 - Passenger/parking facilities
 - Administrative/maintenance facilities
 - Infrastructure: percent of track with performance restrictions
 - Light rail

The Council, in coordination with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, has adopted regional targets for the outlined performance measures. Additional information and the [specific targets can be found in Chapter 13 of the Transportation Policy Plan](#).

In addition to the federally required performance measures, the Council also incorporates a performance-based planning approach that is based upon the strategic vision and direction

Chapter 4: Activities that Support Planning and Programming

outlined in the Transportation Policy Plan. This includes the adoption of specific, regional performance measures that support the overarching goals and associated objectives of the TPP. These performance measures are intended to be clear, quantifiable metrics that convey whether the region is achieving the goals and objectives outlined in the TPP. Where applicable, the Plan outlines the potential 2040 modeled outcomes of these regional goals based upon three different investment directions: a “no build” scenario; the current revenue scenario, and an increased revenue scenario. The specific performance measures and a summary of their modeled outcomes can be found in Chapter 13 of the Transportation Policy Plan.

Highway Functional Classification Designation Process

The federal government requires that states and regions cooperatively designate roads according to their primary function. This is called functional classification. For example, major highways exist primarily to move large volumes of traffic at higher speeds over long distances while other roads, like local streets, primarily provide access to land. Appropriate roadway width, speed limits, intersection controls, and other design features vary depending on the function and context of the road. Functional classification is used to determine whether a road is eligible to receive federal highway funds.

The Council has adopted criteria for classifying roads into one of four federally defined categories: principal arterials (which include interstate freeways), minor arterials, collector roads, and local roads as defined in the TPP. In the seven-county metropolitan area, some minor arterials are further designated as A-minor arterials. A-minor arterials are eligible for federal funding through the Regional Solicitation.

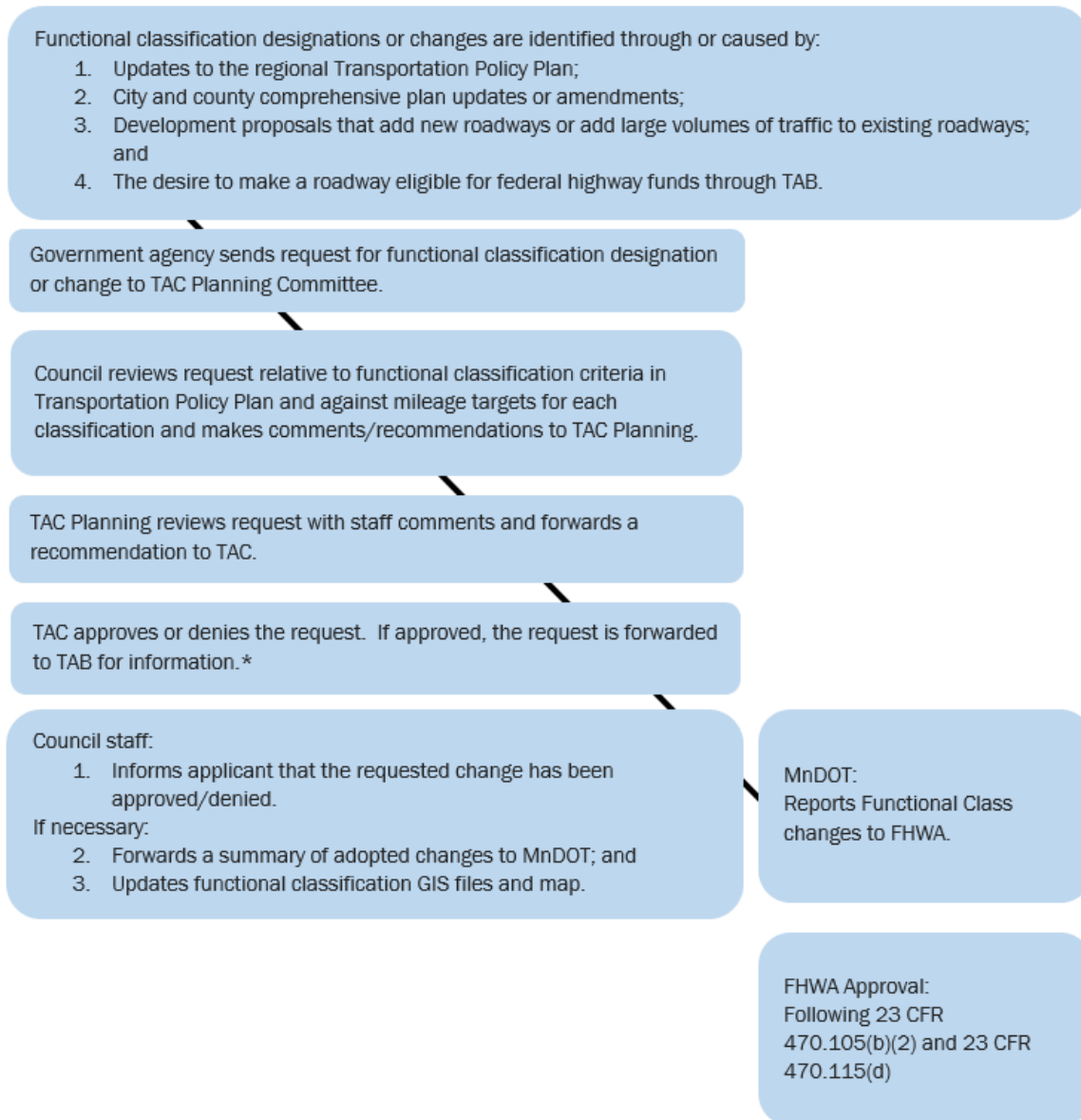
The function of a road within the regional network of streets and roads is fairly stable over time. Occasionally a change in the overall network or adjacent land use will cause a change in function and the government with jurisdiction over the road may request that this change be reflected in the official functional classification designation. Principal arterials are designated by the Council through the TPP because these roads make up the legislatively required metropolitan highway system. Principal arterials can be designated only through a TPP update or administrative modification and require resolutions of support from all impacted jurisdictions.

The functional classification of minor arterial roads is reviewed and recommended by TAC and its committees to TAB. The TAB considers city and county functional classification requests and works to keep the region’s mileage in each classification category within federal guidelines on principal arterial, minor arterial, and collector road mileage.

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Figure 11– Functional Classification Designation and Change Process for Minor Arterials and Collectors*



*Principal Arterial requests continue to TAB and then are considered by the Council.

See more about the [Highway Functional Classification Designation Process](#).

Travel Forecasting Process

The Council, as the region’s MPO, is responsible for ensuring that high quality, consistent, and defensible travel forecasts are completed for all transportation projects in the Twin Cities region. Travel forecasts are also used in the Air Quality Conformity Determination Process. The Council

Chapter 4: Activities that Support Planning and Programming

maintains a multimodal transportation forecasting model that uses a newly revised activity-based travel demand modeling process.

The Council conducts a regional Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI), the information from which is used to update the regional travel forecast model. The TBI is funded jointly by the Council, MnDOT and the TAB. The TBI consists of a series of household travel surveys, a transit on-board survey, and “special generator” surveys conducted for locations such as at the airport and University of Minnesota. Household travel surveys are now conducted on a two-year rolling basis, as opposed to conducting one major survey every ten years as was the past practice, providing more up to date data for inclusion in the regional travel model.

See more about the [Travel Behavior Inventory](#).

Public Participation

As described above, the Council’s transportation planning efforts include a proactive public involvement process and comply with federal public participation plan requirements.

See the [Public Participation Plan](#).

State Requirements and Procedures

A number of state requirements and procedures also support transportation planning activities.

These include:

- The Controlled Access Highway Approval process;
- The Metropolitan Land Planning Act; and
- The Right-of-Way Acquisition Loan Fund Program (RALF)

Controlled Access Highway Approval Process

Minnesota state law (Mn. 473.166) requires the Council to approve any controlled access highway projects in the seven-county metropolitan area before construction or right-of-way acquisition begins. Requests for approval come from the constructing agency— typically MnDOT for a highway project. Under this statute, Council approval of fixed-guideway-controlled access occurs at the time it adopts a locally preferred transit guideway alternative.

Metropolitan Land Planning Act

Minnesota state law (Mn. 473.864) requires local governments in the seven-county Twin Cities region to update their comprehensive plans every 10 years. It also mandates that the Council create a metropolitan development guide and regional system plans for managing the region’s transportation, aviation, water resources, and regional parks and open space systems. The

Chapter 4: Activities that Support Planning and Programming

Metropolitan Land Planning Act also requires the Council to review local comprehensive plans to ensure that they conform to these regional system plans. The Council's review is designed to determine how a community's planned actions relate to the interests of the entire region over the long term. It helps ensure that costly public infrastructure, like roads and sewers, are built in an economical and timely fashion, so that public resources are used wisely.

After a city adopts its plan and the Council finds it to be in conformance with regional system plans, a city may change, or amend, a portion of its plan at any time. The Council must also review these comprehensive plan amendments to determine their conformance with regional system plans.

See more about the Metropolitan Land Planning Act in [Minnesota Statutes 473.851 through 473.869](#).

The Land Planning Act statutes can be found in [M.S. 473.851 through 473.869](#).

Right-of-Way Acquisition Load Fund Program (RALF)

Minnesota state law (Mn. 473.167) allows the Council to levy a regional property tax for advance acquisition of highway right-of-way. The funds are used by the Council to make loans to counties, cities, and townships, which in turn buy property within the officially mapped right-of-way of state trunk highways or metropolitan highways. The loans are repaid before highway construction takes place.

See more about the [Right-of-Way Acquisition Loan Fund Program](#).

Transit Plans and Studies

A number of transit studies are prepared or updated from time to time:

- The Regional Service Improvement Plan (RSIP) for Transit
- The Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Coordination Action Plan
- Regional Transitway Guidelines
- Transit studies

Regional Service Improvement Plan (RSIP) for Transit

The Regional Service Improvement Plan (RSIP) is called for in the TPP and will be updated on an as-needed basis. The RSIP is prepared by the Council as the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization with participation by all transit providers in the region. The RSIP identifies all regional opportunities to improve transit service by increasing frequency, span, and coverage on existing routes and adding new routes to develop new transit markets. The RSIP can inform potential funding for transit expansion and is used as input into the Regional Travel Demand Forecast Model.

See more about the [Regional Service Improvement Plan for Transit](#).

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Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Coordination Action Plan

Federal law requires the creation of coordinated action plans for public transit and human services transportation at the state, regional and local levels. These plans establish goals, criteria, and strategies for delivering efficient, coordinated services to elderly, underemployed or otherwise financially disadvantaged persons and persons with disabilities.

See more about the [Coordination Action Plan](#).

Regional Transitway Guidelines

The Council created and adopted the Regional Transitway Guidelines in cooperation with its partner transitway planning and development agencies in the region. The Regional Transitway Guidelines are technical guidelines based in best practice for the development of corridors where intensive transit investment is planned, as identified in the TPP. The Guidelines provide consistent practices for project partners to use in developing, operating, and maintaining commuter rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit.

See the [Regional Transitway Guidelines](#).

Transit Studies

The Council often leads transit system studies that analyze a policy issues or prioritize regional transit needs across all jurisdictions. Transit providers conduct transit studies to inform needs in their specific service areas. Agencies, such as regional railroad authorities, study corridors or travel sheds to determine viable transit alternatives. These studies examine potential alignments and modes, including both bus and rail options. Land use and zoning needs are also evaluated. These transit studies often inform the Transportation Policy Plan and/or local plans. Most studies require and include agency coordination from multiple regional partners working on transit planning.

Appendix: Useful Links & Glossary

Useful Links

MOU between Council and MnDOT	https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Key-Transportation-Planning-Documents.aspx
Transportation Advisory Board	http://www.metro council.org/Transportation/Planning/Advisory-Board-Staff.aspx
Technical Advisory Committee	http://metro council.org/Council-Meetings/Committees/Transportation-Advisory-Board-TAB/TAB-Technical-Advisory-Committee.aspx?source=child
MN Department of Transportation	http://www.dot.state.mn.us/
MN Pollution Control Agency	http://www.pca.state.mn.us/
Metropolitan Airports Commission	http://www.metroairports.org/Airport-Authority.aspx
Individual Participation Information	http://www.metro council.org/About-Us/TheCouncil/Getting-involved.aspx
Regional Development Framework (Thrive MSP 2040)	http://www.metro council.org/Planning/Projects/Thrive-2040.aspx
Transportation Policy Plan	http://www.metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Key-Transportation-Planning-Documents/Transportation-Policy-Plan-(1)/2040-Transportation-Policy-Plan-DRAFT.aspx?source=child
Unified Planning Work Program	http://www.metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Key-Transportation-Planning-Documents/Unified-Planning-Work-Program.aspx
Federal Funding Overview – FHWA	http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/topics/funding.cfm
Federal Funding Overview - FTA	https://www.transit.dot.gov/grants
Regional Solicitation Process	http://www.metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transportation-Funding/Regional-Solicitation.aspx?source=child
Scope Change Policy	https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transportation-Planning-Process/Transportation-Advisory-Board/TAB-Policies/Scope-Change-Evaluation-Process.aspx
TAB Regional Program Year Policy	http://www.metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Key-Transportation-Planning-Documents/Transportation-Improvement-Program-(TIP)/Regional-Policy-TAB-4-17-2013-updated-9-20104.aspx
Congestion Management Process	https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Key-Transportation-Planning-Documents/Congestion-Management-Process.aspx
Functional Highway Classification	http://www.metro council.org/Transportation/Planning/Transportation-Resources/Functional-Roadway-Classifications/Functional-

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	Roadway-Classifications-Defined.aspx
Travel Forecasting / Travel Behavior Inventory	http://www.metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Planning/Transportation-Resources/Transportation-Behavior-Inventory.aspx
Public Participation Plan	https://metrocouncil.org/About-Us/Publications-And-Resources/Transportation-Public-Participation-Plan.aspx
Metropolitan Land Planning Act	http://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=473.859
Right-of-Way Acquisition Loan Fund	http://www.metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Planning/RALF.aspx
Transportation Coordination Action Plan	http://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transit-Plans,-Studies-Reports/Transit-Transitways/Transportation-Coordination-Action-Plan.aspx
Regional Transitway Guidelines	https://metrocouncil.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Transit-Plans,-Studies-Reports/Transit-Transitways/Regional-Transitway-Guidelines.aspx

Glossary

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	Civil rights legislation passed in 1990. The ADA sets design guidelines for accessibility to public facilities, including sidewalks, trails, and public transit vehicles by individuals with disabilities.
Congestion Management Process	A systematic process for evaluating and developing transportation strategies and plans for addressing existing and future traffic congestion.
Congestion mitigation and air quality improvement program (CMAQ)	A categorical funding program that directs funding to projects that contribute to meeting national air quality standards and further reducing transportation-related air pollution.
Current Revenue Scenario	TPP revenue scenario that assumes revenues that can reasonably be expected to be available based on past years. Under federal guidelines this scenario is called “fiscally constrained.” Under this scenario, no new funding or funding sources are assumed, and the preservation, maintenance and operations of the regional highway system will not be met over time. Under this scenario, the preservation, maintenance, and operation of the transit system will be met, but the regional goal of expanding, modernizing, and improving regional transit cannot be achieved.
Expansion	The addition of new or added capacity to the transportation system and can occur in different forms and different modes.
FAST Act	Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act a five-year federal transportation authorization signed by President Obama on December 4, 2015.
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)	Federal part of DOT that addresses the air transportation mode and all aspects of pilot licensing, airport certification, aircraft certification, aviation rules and regulations, safety, operation, air traffic control,

Appendix: Useful Links & Glossary

	navigational system, fees and taxes, security, airline operations, etc.
Functional Classification	Functional classification Federal taxonomy for roadways based to their primary function— mobility for through trips or access to adjacent lands. A four-class system is used to designate roads (principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors and local streets) in the Twin Cities.
Increased Revenue Scenario	TPP revenue scenario that assumes revenues that can realistically be attained through local, state, and federal sources. Under federal guidelines this scenario is called “non-fiscally constrained”. Under this scenario, more of the regional transportation goals beyond system maintenance and operations for both transit and highways would be achieved.
Infrastructure	Fixed facilities, such as roadways or railroad tracks; permanent structures or improvements.
Metro Mobility	A service of the Metropolitan Council that provides door-to-door dial-a-ride transit service for persons with disabilities that prevent them from using the fixed-route bus and rail system.
Metro Transit	A service of the Metropolitan Council that provides rail transit and the largest amount of regular route bus service in the region.
Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC)	An airport authority established for the Twin Cities area by the state legislature in 1943 to promote aviation in and through the area, operate a system of public airports and ensure provision of air passenger and cargo services.
Metropolitan Planning Area	The geographic area a Metropolitan Planning Organization plans for and provides services to.
Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA)	The geographic area in which the Metropolitan Council ensures that regional services and facilities under its jurisdiction are provided.
Mode	Type of transportation, for example car, bus, bicycle, etc.
Mode share	The share of one of the types of transportation as a percentage of all transportation types. Driving continues to have the largest mode share of all transportation types in the region.
Multimodal	Including or pertaining to multiple modes of transportation, this can be used to describe a transportation system, transportation project, or a travel trip.
Performance measures	An accountability tool that measures progress toward achieving goals and objectives.
Preservation	Preservation activities are directed toward the elimination of deficiencies and major replacement of existing facilities.
Right-of-Way Acquisition Loan Fund (RALF)	This program grants interest-free loans to communities within officially mapped highway corridors to purchase property threatened by development. The loan is repaid when the property is purchased by the

Appendix: Useful Links & Glossary

	<p>highway construction authority.</p> <p>The Minnesota Legislature established the RALF program in 1982. It is funded by a property tax levied by the Metropolitan Council and funds are loaned out on a revolving basis.</p>
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP)	<p>Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) One of the core federal highway funding programs. STBGP provides flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects on any Federal-aid highway, including the national highway system, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intra-city and intercity bus terminals and facilities.</p>
Regional Development Framework (RDF)	<p>The RDF is the vision and planning framework for the Twin Cities region for the next 30 years. It reflects regional concerns and aspirations, anticipates future needs, and addresses our responsibility to future generations. This long-range plan is required to be updated by the Metropolitan Council every 10 years under state law. The policies in the RDF drive the systems and policy plans developed by the Council: the Transportation Policy Plan, the Water Resources Policy Plan, the Regional Parks Policy Plan, and the Council's first Housing Policy Plan update in nearly 30 years. Current RDF, Thrive MSP 2040, was adopted by the Council in May 2014.</p>
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)	<p>The TAB'S Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provides technical expertise and makes recommendations to the TAB and provides a public forum for discussion of technical issues that impact the TAB's role and responsibilities. The TAC is composed of professional staff from city and county governments and the agencies involved in transportation in the seven-county region. The TAC has two standing committees - the Funding and Programming Committee and the Planning Committee.</p>
Transitways	<p>High-demand travel corridors that offer improved transit service that includes bus rapid transit, light rail or commuter rail.</p>
Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)	<p>The Transportation Policy Plan carries forward the transportation vision of the Regional Development Framework and presents the region's policies and plans to guide development of the region's transportation system. The TPP is updated every four years.</p>