

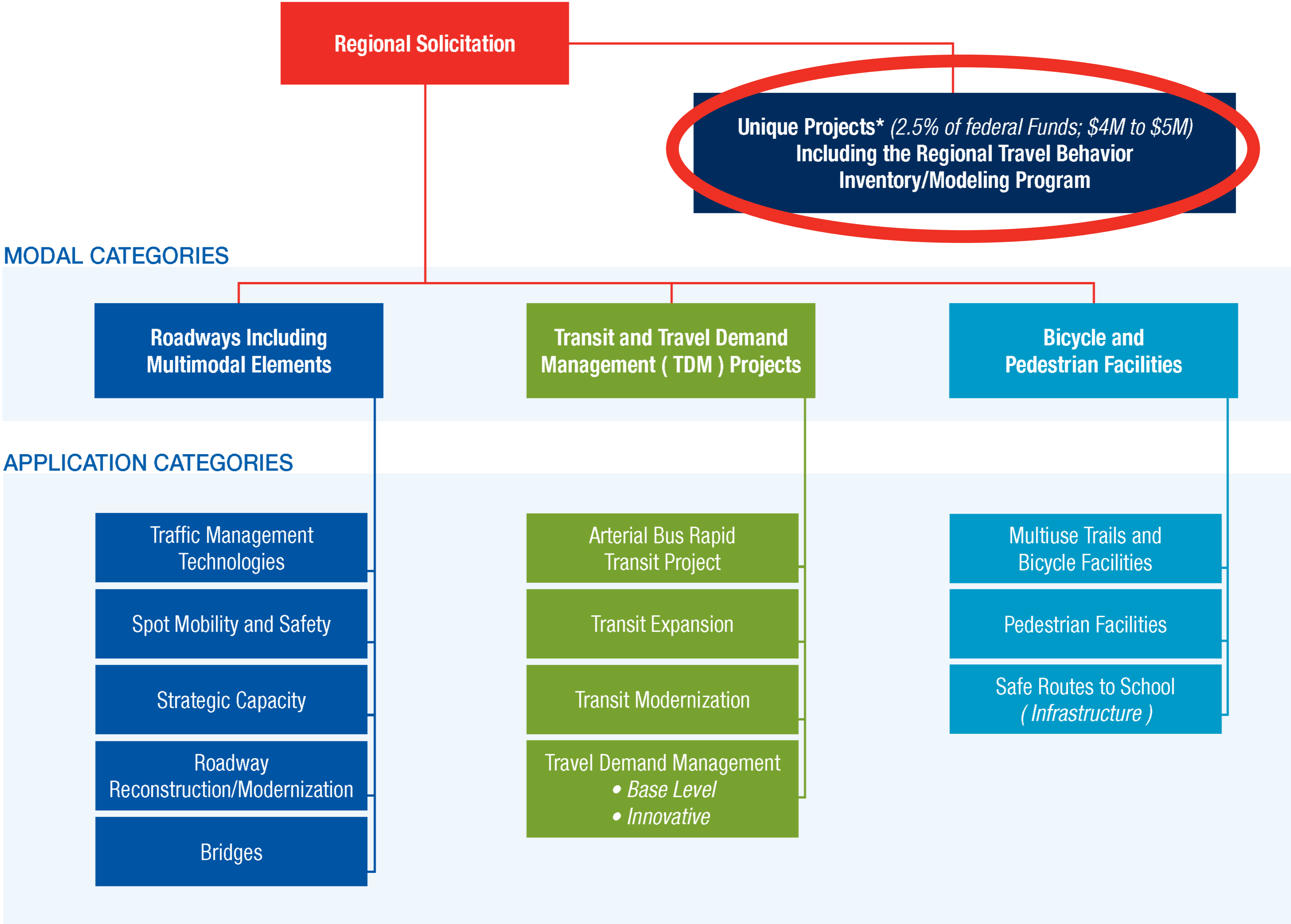
# Unique Project Application Design and Scoring



# Unique Projects History

- Prior to 2014, unique projects funded on a case-by-case basis
- Unique projects application category suggested to be added during 2014 Regional Solicitation evaluation (for 2016 application)
- 2018 St. Paul/Hourcar Mobility Hub Charging Stations
- Adopted recommendations as part of the 2020 Solicitation:
  - Create a Unique Projects application category
  - Set aside 2.5% of total funding in 2020 Solicitation for Unique projects
  - Select Unique projects in the 2022 Solicitation
  - Identify the Unique Projects criteria and evaluation process after the 2020 Solicitation

# 2020 Approved Application Categories





# Regional Solicitation Unique Projects Policy Work Group

- Met five times from April 23 – July 9
- Comprised of TAB volunteers
  - 2 Met Council members
  - 4 County representatives
  - 3 City representatives
  - 5 citizen or modal representatives
- Provided policy direction to technical staff to develop category details

# Unique Projects Policy Work Group Recommendations to TAB



# Project Eligibility

- Staff recommend that we do not make Unique Projects eligibility based on ineligibility in other funding categories
  - Difficult to determine specifically what isn't eligible in each category
  - Two-step application process will help guide applicants
- Allow evaluation criteria to determine whether Unique Project proposals fit the purpose or not
- Unique Projects purpose statement:  
“To fund innovative projects that would not be eligible or competitive in other application categories and that reduce adverse environmental impacts, improve racial equity, and support multimodal communities.”



# Recommendations

## Two-Step Application Process

Unique Projects	Timeframe
Adopt unique projects draft application and release request for initial project interest	September 2021
Regional Solicitation public comment	Sept – Nov 2021
Initial project interest form due	November 2021
Consultation w/ potential applicants	Nov – Jan 2022
Release final Regional Solicitation	February 2022
Applications due	April 2022
Evaluation	May – August 2022
Project selection	Sept – Nov 2022

Overlap public comment period with initial project interest form

# Recommendations (cont.)

## Evaluation Process

- First Step – Applicants provide:
  - Project title and description
  - List of project tasks or elements
  - Approximate budget and potential match sources
  - Description of project location or impacted areas
  - Brief description of how project will advance Unique Project goals: multiple responses with short word limit
- Staff review for eligibility and provide technical feedback to potential applicants
- Possibly share information with Unique Projects Policy Work Group, but otherwise kept confidential



# Recommendations (cont.)

## Evaluation Process

- Second Step – Applicants provide:
  - Detailed description of project, including documented need and approach
  - Detailed list of project elements
  - Line-item budget and confirmed match sources
  - Detailed description of project location and affected populations
  - Responses to criteria and metrics, both qualitative and quantitative
- Staff review for errors and provide technical input to evaluators
- Unique Projects Policy Work Group members evaluate and rank projects

# Recommendations (cont.)

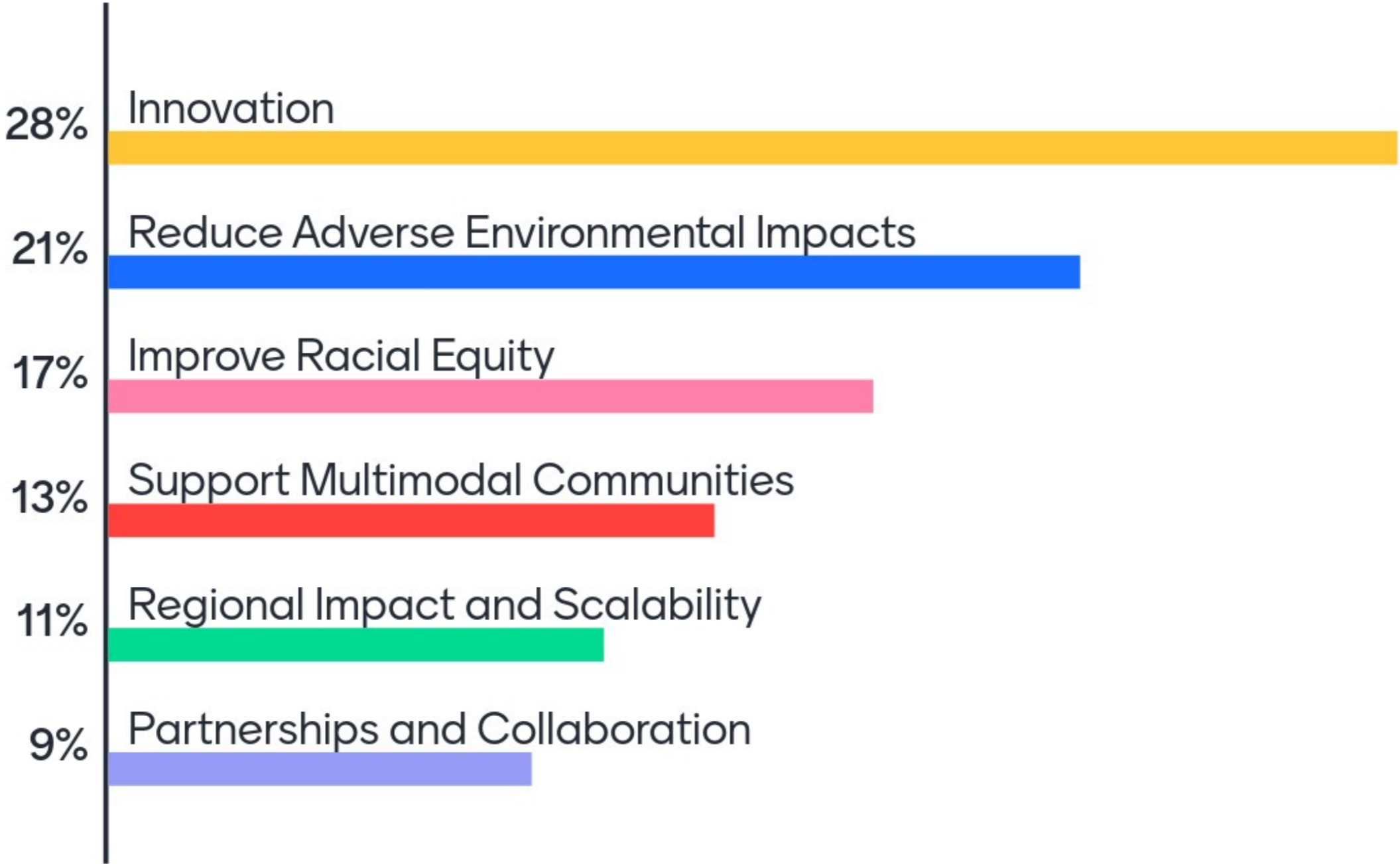
## Evaluation Criteria Questions

- Criteria are the six primary factors used to evaluate projects
  - How is the project **innovative**?
  - How does the project **reduce adverse environmental impacts** of transportation?
  - How does the project **improve racial equity**?
  - How does the project **support multimodal communities**?
  - How does the project have **regional impact** or how **could it be expanded** to more of the region?
  - How does the project **build partnerships or collaboration**?
- Metrics are the more-detailed measures used to evaluate each criteria

# Criteria Weighting Poll Results

Mentimeter

## How would you allocate 100% to weight the criteria?





# Recommendations – Evaluation Metrics

## How is the project innovative?

- New approach to existing and/or emerging challenge(s)

## How does the project reduce adverse environmental impacts of transportation?

- Improve air quality
- Contribution to climate change improvement
- Improve surface or ground water quality and management
- Other environmental improvements

# Recommendations – Evaluation Metrics (cont.)

## How does the project improve racial equity?

- Improve connectivity and access to places and opportunity for BIPOC communities
- Removing barriers for BIPOC communities
- Contributions to quality-of-life improvements for BIPOC communities

## How does the project support multimodal communities?

- Improve multiple non-single-occupant vehicle (SOV) modes within the system (e.g., transit, biking, walking)
- Land use and development strategies that support walkable, bikeable, transit-friendly communities
- Support first and last mile solutions for people connecting to places they need to go

# Recommendations – Evaluation Metrics (cont.)

**How does the project have regional impact or how could it be expanded to more of the region?**

- Regional impact
- Expandability

**How does the project build partnerships or collaboration?**

- Number and diversity of stakeholder groups that helped develop the project
- Match contribution



# Recommendations (cont.)

## Rules

- Minimum and maximum funding limits
  - Maximum Recommendation: no limit for this round, could be revisited for future solicitations
  - Minimum Recommendation: \$500k to ensure cost-effectiveness for federal requirements
- Match requirements
  - Considered as part of scoring for partnerships and collaboration
- TDM innovation funding
  - Recommend keeping pot separate until TDM Study complete in 2023

# Regional Solicitation Technical Feedback

- Information item to Funding and Programming in July and TAC in August
- Feedback from TAC:
  - Technical input in the evaluation of projects will still be important
  - Specific technical experts and other technical staff could do initial review of project applications and provide input to Policymaker Work Group when evaluating applications

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