

Action Transmittal

Transportation Advisory Board



Committee Meeting Date: July 19, 2023

Date: July 12, 2023

Action Transmittal: 2023-37

Insert subject line.

To: Transportation Advisory Board

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Requested Action

Accept the public comments for the 2024 Regional Solicitation.

Recommended Motion

That the Transportation Advisory Board accept the public comments for the 2024 Regional Solicitation.

Background and Purpose

The Regional Solicitation for Federal Transportation Projects is part of the Metropolitan Council's transportation planning process for the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The region selects projects for funding from three federal programs:

- the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program,
- the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, and
- the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program.

Additionally, the Carbon Reduction Program may be included in the Regional Solicitation pending evaluation in the Regional Solicitation Evaluation and direction from the Metropolitan Council.

Following completion of the 2022 Regional Solicitation, staff worked with the Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) Funding & Programming subcommittee, TAC, and the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) on updating measures and scoring guidelines. A draft Regional Solicitation with approved changes was subsequently released for public review. The attached report includes engagement methods, comments received, and the Metropolitan Council's response to the comments.

Relationship to Regional Policy

Transportation Advisory Board bylaws provide for establishing procedures for soliciting and evaluating applications for federal transportation funding.

Staff Analysis

The draft application was released for public comment on May 17, 2023. Comments were accepted through June 23, 2023. Thirteen (13) unique commenters participated, including individuals, local government, and non-profit organizations. Eighteen (18) total comments were received.

Most comments were individual and few common themes emerged:

- 5 commenters (mostly potential applicants) had specific comments regarding the application process, scoring criteria and guidance, and measure methodologies across several categories.
- 3 commenters offered positions on the Regional Solicitation’s investment direction, including support for reducing carbon emissions and for improving safety for active transportation.
- 3 commenters mentioned support or opposition for projects in specific locations or cities.
- 4 additional comments were received on various topics.

The attached report contains a more detailed summary of comments received and general staff responses. Specific text changes based on these public comments will be proposed by staff for consideration at the July TAC Funding & Programming Committee meeting and then to TAC and TAB in August. Most of these changes are minor clarifications and adjustments to applications such as unique projects, bridges, and the multiuse trails applications (i.e., scoring guidance). Other minor edits will be proposed to improve language in the equity scoring measure. Finally, how to align active transportation sales tax funding, the Regional Solicitation, and respond to the public comments to increase this type of project will be proposed.

Routing

To	Action Requested	Date
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Accept	July 19, 2023

