

## **ACTION TRANSMITTAL – 2021-24**

**DATE:** August 25, 2021

**TO:** TAC Planning Committee

**PREPARED BY:** Steven Elmer, Planning Analyst (651) 602-1756

**SUBJECT:** Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) & Regional Bicycle Barrier Updates for Regional Solicitation

**REQUESTED ACTION:** Accept the updated Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) and regional bicycle barriers and recommend their release for public comment with the 2022 Regional Solicitation packet.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** That TAC recommend to the Transportation Advisory Board to accept the updated RBTN and regional bicycle barriers and release for public comment as part of the 2022 Regional Solicitation packet.

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION:**

The Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) was established in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) in 2015 as the region's official prioritized bicycle network for transportation, setting the region's priorities for bicycle planning and investment. The goal of the RBTN is to develop an integrated seamless network of on and off-street bikeways to effectively improve conditions for daily bicycle transportation and to encourage planning and implementation of RBTN bikeways by local and state agencies. Regional bicycle barriers were defined in the Regional Bicycle Barriers Study (2017) as the major physical barriers to bicycle transportation and include the region's freeways, expressways, rail corridors, and streams; these barriers were later adopted into the TPP in 2018. RBTN Tier 1 and Tier 2 priority corridors and alignments have been used in the Regional Solicitation project selection criteria since 2014; regional bicycle barriers were first used as project selection criteria in 2020.

In late April local and state agencies were notified of the opportunity to propose additions or changes to the RBTN or to propose new regional bicycle barriers. A set of new measures recommended by the RBTN Guidelines and Measures Study was posted as the primary criteria to be used in evaluating the proposals. Proposal applications were due on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Staff reviewed the applications and developed recommendations to accept each application as proposed, or to accept with adjustments based on the evaluation. In July, staff presented their recommendations to the Bicycle-Pedestrian Peer Discussion Group (BPPDG), for discussion and feedback, focusing particularly on the proposals that included staff-suggested adjustments which had been discussed with and mutually agreeable to the proposing agency. The BPPDG consists of bicycle planners/engineers from cities, counties, regional park implementing agencies, and MnDOT and have assisted staff in technical study reviews and provided feedback on bicycle and pedestrian policy issues since 2016. All proposals for adding regional bicycle barriers are recommended by staff for acceptance.

The purpose of this action is to: 1) accept the RBTN as updated to include the agency-proposed additions and changes recommended by staff with adjustments, and as reviewed and consented to by the BPPDG, for inclusion in the 2022 Regional Solicitation that is being released for public comment, and 2) accept the regional bicycle barriers as updated to include

new barriers proposed by local agencies for inclusion in the 2022 Regional Solicitation that is being released for public comment.

**RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY:**

The RBTN was established in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan, adopted in January 2015. The RBTN sets the region’s priorities for bicycle planning and investment. Regional bicycle barriers were introduced in the 2018 TPP update, defining the region’s most significant physical barriers to daily bicycle travel. Both the RBTN and regional bicycle barriers are used as selection criteria in the Regional Solicitation. Updates considered in this action will be incorporated into the TPP by early 2022.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:**

Met Council received 27 proposals to add or modify RBTN corridors and/or alignments from six local agencies. The proposals were assessed according to the measures recommended in the RBTN Guidelines and Measures Study (presented to TAC Planning in March 2021) and to their consistency with RBTN goals and intent. Of the 27 requested additions/changes, 18 were accepted as proposed and 9 proposals were accepted with mutually agreeable adjustments. For adjustments that included additions or extensions into adjacent cities of the proposing agencies, city staff were consulted and were in agreement. The BPPDG agreed with all but one staff recommendation which was changed to reflect the group’s preferred alignment.

Local agencies were given the opportunity to propose new regional bicycle barriers and/or newly planned regional bicycle barrier crossing locations. Three proposals were received to add regional bicycle barriers from two agencies; no proposals to add planned barrier crossing locations were submitted. The proposed barrier segments (one rail corridor, one stream, and one expressway) were evaluated based on whether the definitions developed through the Regional Bicycle Barriers Study (RBBS, 2017) and updated in the RBBS Technical Addendum (2019), were met. Based on staff reviews, all of the proposed regional bicycle barriers met those criteria.

**COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION:**

A comment received at the TAC Planning meeting of August 12, 2021, indicated the Crow River was missing as a new stream bicycle barrier. This is noted as an oversight and that the portion of the river running through Carver County has been added to the regional barriers map. Since that meeting, staff discovered there were two additional inadvertent omissions within Carver County: 1) the Twin Cities & Western and Prairie Line rail corridor, and 2) a missing segment of U.S. 212. These barriers also met the definitions for regional bicycle barriers and have been added to the regional bike barriers map (as shown in updated slides #3 and #4 of the TAC Planning presentation). The TAC Planning committee unanimously approved the motion.

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**ROUTING**

<b>TO</b>	<b>ACTION REQUESTED</b>	<b>DATE COMPLETED</b>
TAC Planning	Review & recommend	08/19/2021
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & recommend	09/01/2021
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & release for public comment	
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & adopt	
Transportation Committee	Review & recommend	
Metropolitan Council	Concurrence	

