2022 REGIONAL SOLICITIATON SURVEYS

Overall Themes

1. Modal distribution:
   a. Ranging from less focus directly on mode and more on other goals to more funding for bike/pedestrian, or more funding for highways, etc.
   b. Concern that rules were bent by going above the modal funding range for bike/pedestrian.
2. Geographic distribution:
   a. Ranging from providing more funding to the suburbs to removing the focus on geography in favor of regional goals.
3. More updates (or opportunities for updates outside of the TAB meetings) should be provided to TAB during the various stages of the scoring and scenario development process.
4. Connect funding decisions to regional performance targets and policy goals.
5. Document and incorporate the priorities from each agency into decision-making.
6. Provide more emphasis on safety.
7. Better incorporate climate change.
8. Review the Unique Projects category scoring process.
9. Address whether a rule (or lack thereof) is needed around tied scores.
10. Simplify the process.
11. Consider changes to the pedestrian safety score as it requires a lot of work for its small point value.
12. Simplify how applicants obtain and calculate affordable housing data.
13. Improve measurement of the potential bike/pedestrian usage of a project beyond just the amount of nearby population and jobs. Then, measure the bike/pedestrian usage after projects are constructed.

Contents

SUMMARY OF TAB RESPONSES TO 2022 REGIONAL SOLICITATION SURVEY Fifteen
TAB members replied to the survey.

Themes
- Modal distribution:
  - Prioritize roadways
  - Reduce funding for roadways to address VMT reduction
- Geographic distribution:
  - The suburbs are not getting their fair share
- More aggressive VMT/carbon reduction needed.
- More explanations should be provided to TAB on the scoring process and funding scenario development.
- Concern that rules were bent by going above the modal funding range for bike/pedestrian.
- Parochialism and agency type (e.g., counties vs. cities) divides seem to be increasing.

Replies (15 Respondents)

1. Agency type (check one)

	Responses
County	1
City	4
Citizen representative	4
Modal representative	5
Agency representative	1
Total Respondents	**15**

2. Do you have concerns related to any of the following? (Check all that apply) Total Responses: 14

Distribution of funds between roadways, transit, and bike/ped modal categories	92.3 (13)
Geographic distribution of funds	50.0% (7)
Weighting/distribution of points	28.6% (4)
Number and type of sub-categories within the three modal categories	7.7% (1)
Criteria/measures used to score applications	38.7% (5)
Process to create funding scenarios	28.6% (4)
Other	28.6% (4)

"Other" Responses:
- New to TAB-understanding the three concerns more fully before fully weighing in.
- Somehow simplify the process. Limit applications from 1 county & its cities.
- New to TAB, so concerns are more about learning process than specific issues or concerns.
- Not adhering to the established weighting. The overly political metro based voting that discriminated against valid projects that were submitted by established criteria only to have the criteria thrown out in favor of a political money grab void of the established rules.

3. Please provide specific comments for the items checked in the above question.

| 1 | Met Council needs to develop and start implementing toward VMT reduction goals. Part of this will require meaningful shifting of Regional Solicitation funding away from roadway expansion projects throughout the region. We should be shifting away *now* from the historical funding midpoints and ranges - with increased amounts going to both bike/ped and transit projects. The severity of ongoing and future climate disruption is not currently well reflected in the weighting of points for RS scoring. Small weight is given to pollution reduction, but even this is watered down by being combined with "congestion reduction," which is largely code |

	for building more roads while ignoring Javen's paradox (induced demand). It feels like the weighting of "emissions reductions" could be applied in a far broader set of submission categories than it currently is. We may not currently measure well the emissions reductions that might result from bike-commuting, and increased ability to walk to locations for people's needs, but in walkable and bikable communities, those modes can meaningfully reduce single-occupancy motor vehicle trips and thus contribute meaningfully to emissions reductions. That should be reflected in the scoring to encourage projects that move our region in that direction. I don't necessarily feel that there are fundamental problems with the *process* for creating funding scenarios, but I would very much like for TAB to be included more fully in that process, and much earlier on. In fact, I would very much like if TAB would be apprised with status updates on the Regional Solicitation process at each meeting throughout the year, much as we receive updates from MPCA, MnDOT, and MAC. I would like a notification when applications submissions are completed, with links to access all submissions at that time. I would like TAB to get substantive updates on the scoring process as it proceeds, with time for us to think about and give input. I recognize that a great deal of expertise and a large number of subject matter experts are involved, and I'm not suggesting that TAB interfere with that process, but we cannot be good stewards of the decisions coming out of that process unless we are kept apprised and able to ask questions as the process proceeds.
2	New to TAB-understanding the three concerns more fully before fully weighing in.
3	I believe we should have a regional approach because what happens in the region affects all of us.
4	To ensure support for commercial industry and the growth of the economy for the metro area.
5	I don't think we did our best work this cycle. There was a compromise offered and several members dug in and wanted their way, which resulted in a vote split that none of us should be proud of. We left on the table a hybrid scenario which likely would have resulted in a near unanimous vote and instead ended up with a scenario with a little over half of the members voting in favor. In my years with the TAB this has been the most divided and parochial of any solicitation. I know it is difficult to vote against the self interest of the organization you represent but we have always found a way to put the interests of the region above any particular agency or political viewpoint. I feel disappointed in the result of the vibrant discussion that took place and the way several members conducted themselves.
6	Concern #1 is that as a policy we established funding ranges and then violated them. Concern #2 is that we accepted a recommendation from TAC which violated those ranges and then allowed that TAC recommendation to be the nexus of debate. Concern #3 is that members voiced multiple times that they didn't understand how the numbers worked, yet the process kept moving forward.
7	
8	New to TAB, so concerns are more about learning process than specific issues or concerns.
9	It seems like one of the dynamics around geographic distribution is that Hennepin = public transit/bike/ped and the other counties = roadway expansion. I don't think that's helpful, or going to help the Met Council meet any of its climate change plans. I'm not sure what the role of TAB and TAC is in this, but it's a concern I have. I can't tell if the tension re geographic distribution is actually around geographic distribution (who gets how much) or if it's actually code for "roads versus transit/bike/ped". A lot of times it feels like the latter, and that's not good for any of the counties or parts of the region. Clarity and openness around this might allow for better discussion?
10	Before the next solicitation can we have discussion on the TAB about adjusting the ranges for roadways, transit and bike ped? Our agency would like to emphasize sustainable, carbon-reducing projects and is interested in seeing this reflected in the ranges before projects are scored.
11	For a bunch that's hell bent on bikes and transit not sure a single member biked or took transit to the meeting. Feels a bit discriminatory in nature and hypercritical that folks outside Minneapolis and St Paul have to drive to these meetings to be told the expanded roads needed to get there won't be funded, and no remote option to take those emissions causing cars off the road. For many, it would be a 2-hour one way bike ride to make it to a St Paul meeting while traffic congestion in the suburbs builds.
12	Need to modify modal ratios and criteria to serve the goals of the Climate Action Plan Framework but, of course, CAPF also needs to be enhanced with the addition of VMT reduction metrics, goals or, preferably,

	mandates. EVs alone are not going to get us to effective climate protection.
13	It appears the Option we selected will provide less transit resulting in less people being able to go to jobs, medical appointments, daycare, and certainly disenfranchises the disability community.
14	Funding Scenarios: While setting the midpoint for the 3 core modes is our general practice during the year, we should also opine on the specific allotment within the category for the sub-modes. (i.e. Roads get 50% funding. Of that, 50% strategic, 10% bridges, 25% spot, etc.) Geographic Distribution: As we have explored multiple times over multiple solicitations, we should example "balance" across multiple views, not just "County received $$." Land use and transportation are directly related and we should view the investments against that designation to ensure that not everything is going to urban core. Also seeing this by mode will help to show, Suburban is only getting x% of bike/ped and is not getting a fair investment. Sub-categories: We need to segregate the $6 million+ bike ped projects from the $500k suburban projects; basically a "strategic capacity / bridges" split from modernization and spot like we have in roads. Criteria: Since we know the service shed of any given project, and roads and transit have to provide real numbers (or at least estimates that are based) we should see a "$ per User" investment in ALL areas. Bike/Ped needs to provide more sound usage numbers that are empirically backed as Transit and Roads do. This should be a separate measure, (investment per capita served) to help TAB better determine the efficiency of the dollar investments. This can also be rolled up into the sub-category and mode level to say "$100 MM in roads to serve 1 MM people." Or "$65 MM to serve 300k people in Bike Ped." The population should be based on the APPLICATION service shed, not the population of the city / county where it takes place.
15	I believe that there is too much of a focus on the core counties versus projects in growing communities. I understand the need for more ped and BRT in the core cities, but the outer ring suburbs are hurting.

4. Are there specific changes you would make to the criteria/measures established?

1	If "congestion" must remain a criterion for scoring, it should be separated from "air quality." I would personally like to see separate weights for CO2 from other air quality components, and in combination, the weights for these should be increased to 25% for submission categories of Traffic Mgmt Tech, Spot mobility and safety, Strategic capacity, and Roadway Reconstruction & modernization. The weighting for congestion should be reduced to 5% as a separate score.
2	Not at this time
3	We do not have a region al approach to transit especially commuter and light rail when cities and counties get to change routes not in the best interest of the region.
4	
5	No. We have fine tuned this process over the last 10 years and it is sound
6	One improvement would be to more clearly identify bike/ped funds that are "buried" within road projects. I believe it is likely the final result moved forward actually spends less on bike/ped due to the voting down of large road projects.
7	
8	Not at this time
9	
10	
11	Yes, keep with the criteria that's established and use it instead of allowing a side door to undermine the criteria allowing for past minute departure in favor of a money grab that puts the criteria on the backseat
12	Strong & documented VMT reductions. In other words, if VMT reduction becomes a criterion, RS awards must be tracked after project completion to measure VMT, with clawbacks if not acheived.
13	Can we measure the folks using bike/ped to go to work and errands actually reducing carbon.
14	With all the discussion around safety in all modes, the weighting of safety should be increased by at least 50 points in all application categories (5% aggregate). The Multimodal score of Multiuse should be increased to align with the focus of mobility hubs in the region. This should be on par with Role and Usage (net 500 pts split three ways.) Usage measures for Bike/Ped must have an empirical measurement requirement to align with the requirements for transit and roads. The "role in the economy" score within Multiuse needs to be revised

	or split. Proximity to the RBTN can be a factor but proximity to services, jobs, and/or dense housing should ALSO be a key factor as those are required for a bike/ped project to actually drive the economy. SRTS scoring should be adjusted to better focus on equity and housing measures vs usage (250 -> 200 pts).
15	1. More focus on roads - new and existing expansion options. 2. Understanding the scoring process by TAC. It appears to be very arbitrary.

5. How well did the regional solicitation process reflect regional policy?

1	I think very well. My quibbles are largely with what our regional policies are and how they need to be brought up to date to more adequately reflect the realities of climate disruption and increasingly unsafe conditions in our transportation systems.
2	TBD
3	I believe that is getting too political and will only get worse if the members of TAB are elected. There are over 140 cities represented in the region and over 180 if you add in townships. We do not have full time elected officials as the counties.
4	
5	Fairly well, but I think we could have done better for the region than we did.
6	Somewhat. I am concerned we moved from a wholistic answer to one that became factional. "The Region" really was not part of the discussion when compared to "My County" and "CITY v. Rural".
7	
8	TBD upon further review
9	I think it reflects it fairly well; but I don't know that the full region is on board with the direction of the regional policies!
10	I think current processes are behind current goals for VMT reduction, carbon reduction. We need to adjust processes to get in front of those issues in an aggressive way.
11	It didn't. It represented Minneapolis and St Paul policy and discriminated against rural and suburban needs. If you don't have the votes you don't get the loot - and it screws the areas of growth with a concentration of city based members
12	Better than previously, but "miles to go," especially on climate.
13	Not at all.
14	I feel that the extreme focus on Bike Ped (+6% beyond our original plan) fails to meet the Performance Measures set in Chapter 13 of the 2040 TPP. Bike Ped projects, by Met Council's own studies show that the majority of bike trips are 3 miles or less. When we talk about access to destinations and a competitive economy across 7 counties, 3 miles in a strong winter climate is not a large enough impact for 5 of the 7 counties. As these projects also rarely serve those outside of the locality where they exist, they should be more supported by the local match since that is the community that the project serves.
15	As noted above - I felt there is too much money going into the bike/ped distribution.

6. On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), do you agree with the following?

	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Avg
TAB had adequate time to discuss funding options	1	2	5	4	3	15	3.40
The funding options provided to TAB by TAC made sense	0	2	4	6	3	15	3.67

7. Were there any issues/concerns you raised during the solicitation process that were not addressed? Please provide a brief description of the issue and how the issue(s) was not addressed.

1	No.
2	TBD
3	The executive committee discussion seems to supposed to be a slam dunk for the full TAB. Is that true.?
4	
5	No.
6	Members saying "they don't understand" how the numbers work. We kept moving - maybe rightly so - due to

	time constraints. Mr. Geisler had solid analysis of how the numbers were playing out and what those implications were. I did not feel he had enough airtime to explain. I believe Commissioner Goettel's proposed solution should have been analyzed further and presented officially as a third option.
7	
8	TBD
9	
10	
11	
12	I have concerns that city comp plan review — housed as it is in a different process entirely than TAB's Regional Solicitation — is not integrated or even interfaced with TAB's core work, but did not raise this concern because I knew it could not be addressed anyway at our level. New streets in exurban subdivisions, or expanded/new roads connecting them with no transit on them, have enabled auto-oriented sprawl for decades and still do. RS criteria have little or no relevance or impact on it; we fund transportation in exurban parts of the region with little or no complimentary land use/VMT policy or density that could boost transit ridership while also addressing climate. Highway BRT and land value taxation are two things that could address this but are not prioritized or, in the case of LVT, in state law, even enabled. TAB should have strong input into Met Council legislative agendas and community development programs in order to justify the moneys we approve for transportation serving low density. Last but not least, all of the above facilitates poverty and disparity, resulting as it does in the necessity to have a car or multiple cars per household to cover mobility needs.
13	
14	The resolution of a tie through extra carbon spend was essentially a de facto over-programming decision. TAB explicitly chose to set the overprogramming to 12% at the meeting the tie should have been resolved through a reallocation, a splitting of fuds, or a project waiving their tie.
15	They were discussed, but no real solution was given.

8. What one item would you change about the solicitation above all else?

1	Increase the focus of the solicitation on the need for carbon reduction efforts, including reduced VMT, increased mode-shift to transit and other modes (including modes that separate car ownership from car use).
2	TBD
3	County Commissioners who don't regularly come to meetings showing up to spend time talking and voting.
4	
5	Work harder to get a vote result that is closer to unanimous.
6	Looking forward, we have to address what appears to be a schism forming between city and county, and county to county. Adhering to policy and improving the scoring process should help.
7	We need to do a better job of either committing to the scoring and the downstream funding recommendations and not seek to debate afterwards, or allow far more time for debating funding scenarios closer to the deadline.
8	Nothing to offer for the moment-New member
9	
10	
11	Stick with the rules of the game and don't change them at the 11 o'clock hour if your project or your politics aren't 'above the line' for funding
12	Insert land use as a major scoring criterion for all modes to collapse distance so that transportation spending has much higher ROI. Example: huge low-value privately owned surface parking such as big-box should subtract scoring points from adjacent bike/ped/transit applications and also be linked to our decisions about roadway expansion.
13	I think we need a true picture of the region's bike/ped situation.
14	Funding decisions for the sub-categories MUST be decided before TAB sees a project list. We can safely choose an inter-modal split, regardless of the top mode split well ahead of projects. Spot, Modernization, Strategic, Bridges, Expansion can have their allocations decided at a governance level to avoid the parochial discourse of

	projects. These targets should be a full action and policy should be set to "stick" to those inter-modal ranges.
15	Understanding the scoring process by TAC.

9. Are there any other things you would change about the solicitation?

1	Given the inseparable, bi-directional, complex and non-linear relationships that exist between land-use and transportation systems, I would very much like to see greater attention paid to land-use in the solicitation process. There is frequently a great deal of political jockeying that happens in TAB meetings, with, in particular, reps from largely suburban and exurban counties claiming that we're not doing enough to support the "phenomenal growth" that their regions are experiencing. Yet, as recently documented by Jonathan Schroeder of the Minnesota Population Center While lots of these outer-ring counties *did* experience substantial population growth in the intervals of 1990-2000 and 2000-2010, in the most recent decade, most of those regions *have not* experienced a lot of growth. In fact, the most notable growth in the past decade has been in the core city of Minneapolis! Our deliberations on TAB should be more well-informed by that sort of information!
2	Is there a mechanism to add projects (emergency, critical determination like a system failure like a bridge collapse or are these outside the scope of TAB?)
3	Somehow it needs to be simplified but I am too new to know how.
4	
5	No
6	We should consider setting a minimum score within any category to successfully receive funds.
7	
8	Nothing to offer for the moment-New member
9	
10	
11	Make it accessible for remote participation (if equity and carbon reduction are a priority, a zoom option should be made available)
12	I wish the Climate Action Plan Framework had come before us a year ago so that we could have had a chance to improve it and integrate it with our scoring criteria. Apparently it has nothing to say about VMT — a huge missed opportunity if finalized as is.
13	It seems that the disability community is not considered when scoring projects. When you look at the projects selected it appears that the winners of the solicitation process was people who already have economic stability.
14	TAB should implement a Ranked Choice Voting method for funding scenarios. This would allow for a greater range of options for consideration while still ensuring we do not deadlock in analysis. Allowing members to say, "1) Bike Heavy, 2) Transit Heavy, 3) Midpoint, 4) Road Heavy" should greatly increase the inclusiveness of the projects being considered and allow a much greater flexibility of governance options. This would also avoid the "first vote wins" default that has occurred over the last few cycles.
15	More evenly spread of dollars across the metro area.

Additional comment from one of the above respondents:

I have been through the solicitation for my first time as a member of TAB and am dismayed by what I experienced. I filled out the survey form on a whim expressing my frustration when I first received it. After much thought, I wanted to do a more thoughtful response but am unable to do so because I already had submitted the form. Briefly I want to share my thoughts as I understand it so let me know of any inaccuracies.

All agencies (cities and counties) involved have an approved Met Council Transportation plan. These plans identify our goals/priorities for the next 20 years. Why does the Met Council require a solicitation process that must cost hundreds of thousands of dollars? This whole process must need a full time planning staff and applicants time and cost to update the criteria and bring it back for discussion after discussion, do the scoring of the applications, prioritize the applications

at meetings, review the criteria, recommend changes to the criteria. This does not seem to add value to the projects or improve them. It seems that all of this lead the agencies to submit many applications even when they are not priorities. So, the priorities might not get funded but some other stuff does.

Pre-allocation of the amount of funds in each category mean that projects get funded that should not get funded. It amazed me that projects of 50% and even one at 30% got funded. It seems that the process encourages a bunch of applications, more to score, a waste of time and money to fund poor projects. I am sure in the early years there was funding for new projects and expansion. As we reach full buildout we need maintenance and modernization. The criteria might not need to be changed and we would not have to go thru all of this if we submit projects consistent with our comp plans that have components of highway, trails and transit that make sense. There are many changes in the world and transit needs a frank discussion.

Having said all of this, the region must be the top priority as we work together and not be taken up with everyone getting a share because what is best for the region is good for all of us.

SUMMARY OF TAC/F&PC RESPONSES TO 2020 REGIONAL SOLICITATION SURVEY
Ten TAC and Funding & Programming members/alternates replied to the survey.

Themes
- More direct attention should be given to climate change.
- Try to make funding decisions more outcome-based in addition to needs-based.
- Consider an alternative to using historic midpoints, which lead to the entire discussion being about modes and geographic balance.
  - Listing projects before finalizing modal breakdown also leads to this.

Replies (10 Respondents)

1. Member of (Check one; if on both, check TAC)

	Responses
TAC	7
Funding & Programming	3
Total Respondents	**0**

2. Agency type (check one)

	Responses
State	0
County	5
City	4
Other	1
Total Respondents	**10**

3. **Do you have concerns related to any of the following? (Check all that apply)**

	Responses
Number and type of sub-categories within the three modal categories	0
Modal distribution of funds	71.4% (5)
Weighting/distribution of points	28.6% (2)
Geographic distribution of funds	42.9% (3)
Scoring committee structure	28.6% (2)
Qualifying criteria	14.3% (1)
Process for determining final program of projects	57.1% (4)
Maximum and minimum federal funding award amounts	14.3% (1)
Restrictions (e.g., project bundling)	14.3% (1)
Other (please specify)	42.9% (3)
Total Respondents:	**7**

4. "Other" Responses:
- Modal distribution of funds: The funding ranges are set prior to the release of the Regional Solicitation. The funding scenarios should be developed based upon the middle of said ranges. Funds can be moved between sub-categories within a modal category to balance funds. There may also be a benefit of establishing the funding scenarios before populating them with projects. Once the projects are in the table it seems like the shifting of the funding scenarios is a way to select particular projects for funding. i.e., if we go with this scenario, project A will be funded, or in a different scenario; project B is selected while A isn't. Weighting/distribution of points: the scoring committee members and volunteers do an exceptional job and put a lot of time into scoring each application. The one item that consistently comes up each time is how the weighted "outlier" scoring metrics are determined. We need to develop a uniform way to apply the weighting of scores when significant outliers are

present. Geographic Distribution of funds: respecting the fact that developing and submitting project applications costs time and money, this should be considered when ensuring a fair geographic distribution of funds. One scoring criteria that sees a significant difference between suburban and urban centers is population, students, job opportunities within 1 mile of the project. These numbers vary significantly and can have a huge impact on the score in applicable categories. In many cases, projects are developed to support/encourage growth in each of these areas. Process for determining final program of projects: I think it's worth reaching out to agencies who have submitted multiple projects to gather an understanding of priority/rank for each project application. This could be included in the application or requested via communications with agency prior to release of the draft project funding scenario/list. Maximum and minimum federal funding award amounts: Each solicitation the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facility category maximum funding amount is brought up. If there is a need to provide a maximum amount of $5.5M for larger multiuse trail and bicycle facility projects, there should be consideration to develop a sub-category for smaller scale multi-use trail projects.

- • It would be good to discuss and review of the Spot Mobility and Safety category to see if it's having the intended impact. • The $10M maximum award in Expansion was introduced as a pilot for the 2020 solicitation, but it has never been discussed if the pilot has been a success and should continue. • There should be more transparency in the HSIP review and selection process. It wasn't clear if the recommended scenarios aligned with the metrics being provided at the committees in relation to adopted safety and performance targets. There was little room for discussing the recommendations for the proactive and reactive funding priorities. The Unique Project category was structured in a distinctly different method as compared to the Regional Solicitation, where application development and review is more fluid between applicants and Met Council staff because of the Letter of Interest process in this first round. Project ideas are unique in nature and the spectrum of possibilities was discussed with staff to guide the general scope and breadth of the projects submitted to increase the likelihood that funding was awarded. This process culminates with TAB being directly involved in the review and scoring process, without direct involvement from the TAC, unlike the remainder of the solicitation process. Ultimately the Unique Projects subcommittee/TAB had mixed reactions to the applications, and they expressed a desire to want more unique projects, but were unable to define what that looked like in regard to the applications that were reviewed in 2022. In general, there was a lack of awareness on what constituted a "unique" or "innovative" project, and a general misunderstanding of the state of the practice nationally. The following recommendations are offered to improve the process for the next solicitation: • TAB's role should be policy-driven and less focused on the technical review and direct project evaluation. TAB should be providing clear intention for the category so the set-aside can be developed in advance with clear goals and outcomes for applicants. • Met Council should have a future agenda item or work session with TAC and TAB to highlight projects from across the region and country to offer project examples, successes and challenges of this type of work, and an explanation on the types of funding available and the amount of funding necessary to deliver these kinds of projects. • TAB and Met Council staff should try to establish clear ties to TPP and other adopted plans (e.g., Shared Mobility Action Plan) to tie project selection process to objective policy directives similar to the Regional Solicitation. • TAC and the subcommittees should have a more active role in the Unique Project category, including application development and project review, to limit the role of TAB in screening projects and place that under the purview of the practitioners. • All project reviews and appeals would be discussed at the subcommittees, vetted up through the committee chairs so they are backed and supported as they are presented to TAB.

- Topic #1: Modal distribution of funds Observation: County staff believe the MetCouncil should consider establishing Investment Performance Targets to inform the minimum/maximum allowable distribution of funds across the Roadway, Transit, and Multimodal modal categories. Rationale: This data-driven approach may be useful for TAB's decision-making process when presented with multiple funding scenarios. Topic #2: Weighting/Distribution of points Observation: County staff believe measures should aim to distribute points using a balanced approach that evaluates a project area's needs as well as the anticipated outcomes along the project corridor. Rationale: County staff believe that some measures are too heavily shifted towards a project area's needs rather than the project candidate itself (i.e. the number of jobs within the project area or the roadway's designation on the Regional Truck Corridor Tier). Topic #3: Qualifying Criteria Observation: County staff believe that applicants should not be required to update their respective ADA Transition Plans within the last five years. Rationale: County staff are supportive of requiring applicants to have a completed ADA Transition Plan, however, it's unreasonable to pose a five-year update cycle. As a comparison, cities/counties are only required to update their comprehensive plans on a ten-year cycle. Topic #4: Restrictions Observation #1: County staff believe

that bridges located along roadways classified as Major Collectors and B Minor Arterials should be eligible for the Regional Solicitation. Rationale #1: County staff believe this change would place the Metro Region in a competitive position to efficiently distribute federal funds and take advantage of flexibilities allowed by the FHWA (i.e. converting bridge funds from Off-System to On-System). Topic #4: Restrictions Observation #2: County staff believe that applicants should continue to be permitted to submit the same project in both the HSIP and Regional solicitations; however, applicants should be restricted to only accepting one award. Rationale #2: Although a project may be eligible receive both HSIP and STBG funds, the supplemental award of HSIP funds should not be used as a strategy to circumvent fiscal constraint across programs. In addition, the FHWA defines the primary purpose of HSIP funds is to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries; requiring states to submit annual reports to describe their use of funds (url: https://highways.dot.gov/safety/hsip/reporting).

- We need to see more funding in the Arterial BRT bucket. While this was the most transit, bike, and ped friendly distribution in the history of the Regional Solicitation, we have to compare that with decades of car-centric investment. We need less investment in new high-speed road capacity, Not the scoring committee structure per se, but the lack of standardization on some items led applicants to use different methodologies that leads to widely different scoring. In some cases, projects received a much lower score for having a more conservative/defensible method (e.g., using operational costs and life span consistent with the actual transit system). There should be some sort of check on using unrealistic operational inputs.
- Ideally, modal distributions would be derived from policy priorities more than historical allocations.

5. Are there specific changes you would make to the criteria/measures?

1	Safety for all roadway users is a common sentiment shared by all agencies/committee members. Additional points should be allocated to safety for all applicable application categories.
2	• The affordable housing access question is valuable, but is also challenging and labor intensive to answer. We suggest exploring whether an affordable housing location map can be included as part of the mapping application so applicants can more easily generate the maps and lists to respond to this question in easier and more consistent way across the region. • The Solicitation continues to be silent on Climate Change and it appears the region is falling behind when discussing the importance of the topic related to how the transportation sector is the leading sector in GHG emissions. This topic was largely absent in all conversations at the subcommittees and TAB, largely because it was not a focus in the application process. The emissions measure should be re-evaluated to clearly include climate considerations and how projects may create induced demand for more driving. • Multimodal facilities included in roadway applications should have clear design-based scoring metrics. TAB and committee members have often pointed to Expansion and Modernization projects offering multimodal accommodations when highlighting the need for more roadway funding, but this varies significantly across projects and isn't a clear indicator of progress for mobility, safety, etc. If this is a clear priority for TAB, the scoring should better reflect multimodal priorities that are supported by the project's defined scope.
3	Observation #1: As mentioned in the county's response to Question #4, county staff believe that measures should aim to distribute points using a balanced approach that evaluates a project area's needs as well as anticipated project outcomes. Measures such as "Connection to Total Jobs and Manufacturing/Distribution Jobs" and "Regional Truck Corridor Tiers" solely distribute points based on a project area's needs with no review of a project's expected outcome (both positive and/or negative). Observation #2: The "Affordable Housing Access" measure requires excessive staff time and resources to complete given the current process for obtaining information on affordable housing. More customer friendly resources would promote a number of efficiencies in completing this measure. Alternatively, a workshop for applicants to attend prior to the solicitation may be helpful. Observation #3: Additional consideration should be given to Resiliency as it relates to stormwater management and green streets strategies. Currently, only small portions of the "Geometric, Structural, or Infrastructure Deficiencies" and the "Transit, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Project Elements and Connections" measures distribute points in this area. With the region's growing interest in Complete Streets and Climate Action, resiliency should warrant additional points. Observation #4: The "Pedestrian Crash Reduction" measure requires extensive staff time and resources to complete given the number of qualitative responses. County staff support the heightened acknowledgement of pedestrian safety,

	however, the level of effort necessary to complete this measure is too disproportionate to the number of points assigned to it. Perhaps, technical staff can explore how the recently completed Pedestrian Safety Action Plan and the forthcoming Regional Safety Action Plan can be leveraged for this measure. Observation #5A: Both the "Vehicle Delay Reduced" and the "Kg of Emissions Reduced" measures solely utilize traditional methods to evaluate the before/after conditions for a project. Although these methods provide a fairly accurate representation of people driving, the do not recognize a project's ability to promote active transportation modes such as walking, using transit, and biking. With the region's growing interest in Complete Streets, Climate Action, and VMT Reduction, perhaps these measures could be modified to recognize modal shift opportunities; potentially for the 2026 Regional Solicitation given the relatively significant change in scoring approach. Observation #5B: In addition, MetCouncil staff should consider additional guidance to applicants for completing the "Vehicle Delay Reduced" and the "Kg of Emissions Reduced" measures. The current approach provides too much flexibility in how applicants are permitted to report before/after conditions along the project corridor. County staff would be willing to participate in reviewing these measures as part of the 2024 Regional Solicitation and offer advice/input for potential changes.
4	Develop a more rigorous climate measure, incorporate induced demand for new road infrastructure, incorporate health monetization metrics. Develop more standard inputs or prescribed methodology for calculations on operations and on naturally-occurring affordable housing. We see positive evolution on the mapping standardization over the years; seeing similar efforts on standardization within other criteria would be beneficial to the process.
5	
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9	
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6. On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), do you agree with the following?

	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Avg
TAC F&P and TAC had adequate time to discuss funding options	0	0	2	3	3	8	4.13
The funding options provided to TAC made sense	0	0	3	3	2	8	3.88

7. What one item would you change above all else?

1	The modal (Roadway, Transit, Bike/Ped) funding ranges are set by TAB prior to the solicitation. Prior to this year, TAB has utilized the midpoint scenario. It reflects the middle of the modal funding ranges, as set by the policy makers prior to the solicitation being released. The allocation of funds within the sub-categories could also be predetermined, but I think it's more important that we stick to the middle of the funding ranges to minimize discord between agencies. The committees can move funds between the sub-categories within each modal category to balance the funds available.
2	• Met Council staff need to consider how the scenario development and review can lead to better conversations about policy, regional priorities, and performance-based outcomes. Each cycle the process is distilled down to modal allocation and perceived fairness of funds being distributed across the region. From an objective view, it appears that the primary indicator of success is geographic balance above all else.
3	Observation: County staff continue to urge MetCouncil and TAB to rethink how arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects are programmed by the region. Hennepin County is a strong supporter in the expansion of BRT service, however, the current process for BRT service development is solely focused on the baseline scope necessary to construct BRT platforms; typically resulting in improvements in 2 of the 4 intersection quadrants. Rationale: Local agencies are put into a difficult position for ensuring adequate accessibility, safety, and mobility for all users of the intersection at the time of BRT service inception. Common project elements left out of the baseline scope within non-BRT quadrants include: pedestrian ramp upgrades to current ADA design standards, Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), traffic signal system replacements/upgrades, and proven safety

	strategies (such as curb extensions, raised medians, and pedestrian crossing beacons). Although local agencies have been successful in securing local and external funding to make improvements at non-BRT quadrants, this approach is likely unsustainable given the number of competing priorities and limited availability of funds.
4	More standardization of methodology for operations-focused questions. Methodologies can be substantially different yet still accepted, resulting in meaningful swings in final scores. Without more standardization, the probability applicants "loosen" their methodology over time to boost scores without penalty will increase. This will create unrealistic claims within applications and generally dilute the integrity of the scoring process and decrease project quality over time.
5	Make it clearer how the projects funded meet goals/objectives of regional plans.
6	Have TAB set the modal split before projects are scored.
7	More funding for bike/ped. First ring suburbs are really in need of it and have a greater percentage of residents that rely on it as their only means of getting around.
8	See comment in question 3 above. Allocating federal funds based on a historic regional modal investment percentage or the number of projects submitted in a particular project category is not a regional investment strategy or vision. The current approach is focused on the past and reacting to what is popular. We can and should do much better. The MPO needs to develop a regional investment strategy and vision in the TPP. Regional Solicitation project selection needs to be more data driven and outcome based to advance the regional investment strategy that is identified.
9	Nothing
10	More outcome and data-driven process to determine modal funding distribution (not just project scoring). TPP update may provide better guidance to inform such a process.

8. Are there any other things you would change about the solicitation?

1	When considering regional balance, a lot of effort is put forward to ensure each region/county receives funding through the solicitation. When considering this measure, the number of projects submitted from each agency should be taken into consideration.
2	• The historic mid-point continues to structure the TAB conversation in a manner that makes it very difficult to move from the status quo, irrespective of regional policy goals and meaningful objectives and outcomes. This sets up a conversation to be more about competing modes (cars v. transit v. bike/ped), as compared to tangible outcomes that allow TAB to see the value and impact of the work. Continuing a process of mid-point sets up a confrontational discussion that is very specific to modal allocation of funds. • The Solicitation process needs to offer more context in relation to policy and plan-based performance objectives. Staff and committees started to show this work to TAB at the end of the 2022 solicitation, but it should have been where this work started and more specific to performance targets brought to the committees via other planning efforts throughout the year. • The solicitation process has become so large that it can be very slow to evolve and adapt to changing policies and priorities. At best, these conversations and changes would have to be guided by staff, committee members, and TAB. Some emerging areas include: climate, GHG emissions, changing driving/work trends, reckless driving, surging crash trends, transit ridership, etc.
3	Regarding Question #6 Rationale for 6A "TAC F&P and TAC had adequate time to discuss funding options": County staff generally agree that TAC F&P and TAC had adequate time to discuss funding options. However, county staff observed two challenges as it relates to the discussion of funding options. First, the scheduling of TAC F&P immediately after TAB provides insufficient time to complete and discuss adjustments in response to feedback solicited. Second, it's difficult to solicit input from both TAC F&P and TAC concurrently in advance of TAB meetings. Perhaps, discussions related to funding options should occur at 1 to 3 joint TAC F&P and TAC meetings to increase the likelihood in developing sound recommendations/options for TAB's consideration. Rationale for 6B "The funding options provided to TAC made sense": County staff viewed the three funding options presented to TAC to generally represent options considered in prior solicitations. Overall, the funding options provided opportunity to demonstrate preference towards one or more modal/application category(ies); noting that Option 2A and Option 2B were relatively similar. County staff believe a more data-driven approach should be followed when developing scenarios to assist TAB with understanding outcomes

	across performance targets.
4	Integrate more climate considerations, including how projects could foster unsustainable development patters that exacerbate climate, health, safety, and equity issues. I think some application responses would be considered by a majority of readers to not pass "the smell test." This could be questionable methodology, unfounded ridership projections, or general lack of source material. I don't know how we can formally ask for more info on these applications that don't pass "the smell test," but I believe the standardization of methodology (and providing the time required to scorers) to dig into verifying the numbers used could greatly strengthen applications.
5	
6	
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9	No
10	

SUMMARY OF SCORER/CHAIR RESPONSES TO 2022 REGIONAL SOLICITATION SURVEY
Eighteen scorers/chairs replied to the survey.

Themes
- Application navigation can be difficult. Can question titles be included? PDF bookmarks?
- Consider pre-established scoring rubrics for qualitative questions.
- Clarify if points are/should be given for existing facilities vs. what is being built with the funding applied for. This seemed to be a point of confusion for some applicants. Not sure if scorers were handling differently. Clarify also whether it is a scorer's responsibility to catch replies to other questions.

Responses (18 Respondents)

6. On a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), do you agree with the following?

	1	2	3	4	5	Avg	Total
Information from the applications was easy to find and interpret	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	38.9% (7)	27.8% (5)	3.61	18
The scoring committee structure was effective	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	11.1% (2)	33.3% (6)	33.3% (6)	3.67	18
The way to distribute scores within my measure(s) made sense	27.8% (5)	11.1% (2)	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	44.4% (8)	3.33	18
My scoring methodology was consistent with the scoring guidelines	27.8% (5)	0.0% (0)	5.6% (1)	22.2% (4)	44.4% (8)	3.56	18
The scoring guidelines were useful/understandable	27.8% (5)	5.6% (1)	11.1% (2)	33.3% (6)	22.2% (4)	3.17	18

Scorer Responses

7. Please provide any comments you may have for question number 6

1	My category was a little "hands-off" in a lot of ways. I feel like there's a little more room for interpretation besides just number of connections. ie: not all connections are created equally. I also think transit connections/ridership projections could be weighed more heavily. It seems to be a drop in the bucket compared to some other categories.
2	- The applications can be difficult to navigate quickly and directly to locate the needed info to score, which is even more of an issue if you end up scoring a larger category. Maybe pdf bookmarks could help, or just posting attachments as separate links so it's immediately clear what else is included other than the application answers and faster to get to any needed for the measure being scored. It would be nice to have the original question from the application on there as reference, but it doesn't show up on the pdf application for some reason. - For measures where the best application is supposed to be the highest score and others scaled in comparison, that really only works well with smaller categories. If you score a larger number of applications (more than 10-15), in practice that's really difficult to do because there are so many of them. - Scoring methodology for pedestrian safety in some of the road categories this round was clearer and provided more structure than in the previous round.
3	During the next overhaul, specific rubrics and methodologies should be developed/refined for the measures. The simpler measures do this already - are you on a truck tier, delay reduced, etc. However, the one's that are at the discretion of the scorer can vary widely. This would make it easier for the scorer, allow applicants to better tailor their responses, provide consistency across cycles, and theoretically reduce appeals.
4	The outreach measure needs to be rethought. I expect from an applicant perspective it is somewhat tedious preparing a response to this given the overlap with the engagement measure in the equity criteria. The outreach measure as it is currently written is inflexible and does not effectively assess risk. A project that has one each of a public meeting, a mailing, and discussion with a partner agency specific to the project would score full points, even though this is a pretty low amount of outreach that could still bear project risks. Meanwhile, a project that has been identified through extensive outreach from adjacent projects, general public input processes, or system/master plans may score as low as zero - even if the applicant has clearly demonstrated in the narrative how the project arose from those processes. There were some applications I had to give full points to even though it was clear the outreach was minimal and sought to check the box, while I zeroed out points on some applications that clearly were identified and supported by community but not within the narrow parameters set by this measure. Would be happy to work on tweaking this measure for the next solicitation.
5	
6	Mine were very straight forward and copying values into the spreadsheet.
7	Agencies need training on how to complete B/C Worksheets - especially if they are using multiple CMFs to calculate a combined CMF.
8	
9	
10	The scoring questions were rather open-ended and made for wide range of responses. Difficult to sift-through and score. I don't know if there is a more direct way though with complex targets to meet. Also want to leave each individual scorer flexibility in their interpretation
11	I scored the part 4a in the bicycle barriers section. I created a consistent scoring framework based on the criteria, but overall this section's scoring is not well defined and could benefit from some additional thought on how to score in the future that could then be publicly communicated with the applicants.
12	No comments.
13	
14	
15	
16	I don't think enough weight was given to emission reductions within the scoring process! Too much weight on EV charging stations vs other emission reduction options
17	

| 18 | The scoresheet calculated the scores/distribution for us. Many things were not apparent until our meeting with the entire group, as my usage scores impacted theirs in many cases. |

8. What one thing would you change about Regional Solicitation scoring above all else?

1	Distribute more funds towards transit projects. Most of the projects seemed worthwhile.
2	Clarify and consistently communicate what scorers are responsible for reviewing in determining their score. Just project description and the measure answer? Responsible for reviewing the entire application? This issue was highlighted from seeing a scoring appeal where points were given by the committee based on something else they thought might be in the application but was not in the measure answer the scorer (another scorer) was evaluating. Are scorers responsible for reviewing the entire thing and counting any information from any answer for one measure, whether or not it's actually in the response to the measure being scored? Base any scoring appeals solely on the way the measure was written as a question and how it was answered in the application (also why it's helpful to have the application questions show up on the application, which they don't). Too much additional information was allowed in appeals, which strayed from what was in the application and measure, providing an unfair advantage to agencies who tried this approach.
3	Consistency in scoring like measures across application types.
4	
5	Each solicitation, the outlier scoring discussion comes up. I think it's worth reexamining/discussing the current practices to ensure everyone understands the methodology and rationale. I am interested to hear the groups thoughts.
6	It seems like some of the categories were just based off of regional/census data and didn't leave room for scorers to look into actual context next to the project.
7	Make everyone follow a template so you don't have to search all over for the data you are looking for.
8	
9	
10	Have a clearer/consistent range of scoring i.e. 25-50 pts if applicant only partially responds to question
11	Higher weight towards equity, including category looking at users and not just adjacent demographics
12	The Roadways Category within the 2022 Regional Solicitation included an extensive review of a project's ability to improve Pedestrian Safety. The section felt excessive when comparing the number of points assigned to the measure versus the length of response necessary to secure points.
13	
14	
15	Consistent scorers if possible or templates from previous scorers
16	Give more weight to emission reductions in overall scoring process.
17	
18	It's great. That meeting ends up being a great place to hash things out, and to discuss these applications and their impact on the transportation network both specifically and in general.

9. Are there any other things you would change about Regional Solicitation Scoring?

1	Mapping tool not always the most effective way of gathering data. eg: On-demand transit service.
2	Clarify if points are/should be given for existing facilities vs. what is being built with the funding applied for. This seemed to be a point of confusion for some applicants. Not sure if scorers were handling differently. Applications should be evaluated based on what the funding being applied for will accomplish, not what has already been done.
3	What counts as a facility (do you meet design requirements v. guidance and best practices). Does this project meet the intent of the safe systems approach, provide an all ages and abilities facility, etc. The council should also work with technical staff in its partners to provide specific and detailed information to applicants - Synchro report needs, how to choose CMFs, a scoring rubric for their essays, etc. Appeals should be limited to the information provided in the application and the formal appeal letter. No additional information should be considered during the appeals process.

Scorer Responses

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9	
10	Things have improved, and Met Council staff are responsive to concerns. Continue to tweak things and we will be fine. Nothing significant to address in my opinion
11	This year saw a huge increase in both the number of applications and the funds requested for multimodal projects. Awarded funding for these categories should be consistent with the demand shown by applicants.
12	Measure 4B (geometric, structural, and infrastructure deficiencies) within the Roadway Reconstruction Category currently includes 8 scoring criteria. I believe the number of criteria can be consolidated down to the following 4 criteria; with a character limit increase of 100 characters (from 100 characters to 200 characters). Improved roadway geometrics - measure a project's ability to address known deficiencies, advance complete streets, and better accommodate people walking, using transit, biking, and driving along and across the corridor. Access management enhancements - measure a project's ability to remove/consolidate access points, incorporate intersection control strategies, and minimize negative impacts to people walking and biking when incorporating strategies Water resources - measure a project's ability to address known flooding and erosion issues, satisfy current requirements, and incorporate stormwater BMPs and/or green streets strategies Traffic infrastructure - measure a project's ability to replace/upgrade old/outdated equipment, incorporate ITS strategies, and incorporate new features that specifically benefit people walking, using transit, biking, and driving.
13	
14	
15	Outliers scoring for each criteria should be set up ahead of time.
16	
17	
18	No

10. Please provide any comments you have on your application scoring experience. Please highlight specific issues that can be addressed for the next Regional Solicitation. Examples could include imbalances in score distribution, criteria that are too rigid or lacking in specificity, or lack of clarity in the scoring guidelines.

1	Point allocation for planned Transitways should be reassessed. With the low "total" score given to transit connections as is, pretty heavily skews (or really, requires) a connection to a Planned Transitway. if that's the intention (to guide regional investments to specific areas) then it works well. In some ways, it rewards serving future investments more than current infrastructure.
2	Age doesn't make sense in the equity measure and isn't used in Thrive MSP 2040. Other intersections, such as race or income or disability, should be the core elements and eliminate age. As an example, Safe Routes to School as a national program doesn't talk about equity in terms of age – all the programs serve youth, so they'd all be considered equitable. But this applies across all categories for scoring, not just Safe Routes. Just because someone is older doesn't mean they have a disadvantage – only when race or lower income or a disability come into play. Older people can be affluent and able bodied and not disadvantaged for transportation.
3	
4	Maximum adjustments need to happen consistently across criteria, otherwise it unintentionally more heavily weights criteria that have maximum adjustments by guaranteeing the highest project in that criteria or measure will receive full points.
5	
6	Our team had great communication and good direction! Looking at the final scores it seemed to favor urban

	areas and may be worth looking at the balance to make sure it's regionally focused.
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	See note above about scoring for trails 4A
12	No comments.
13	
14	Thanks for the opportunity to score. It was a great experience and I learned a lot from the other scorers too!
15	Not to do with my scoring measure but I feel the trail usage calculation is the dominant criteria in that category but is simply based on population within a distance of the trail, regardless if another trail or sidewalk is within the offset. This should be looked at based on where the corridor is related to the TPP land use designation.
16	
17	I suggested at the scoring meeting that we incorporate some layout "samples" for different types of work (ie: off road trails) and more clearly define what does not need a layout (ie: resurfacing an existing trail on existing alignment). Also wondering if there is a way for this criterion to populate scores into a spreadsheet somehow, rather than me inputting each individual score. Or if score could be populated for each section of the risk assessment by checking a box, instead of typing in the score? The scores still need to be "reviewed" to ensure they are accurately selecting the proper level of impact/completion... but would be a huge timesaver.
18	I have enjoyed this a great deal.

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT RESPONSES TO 2022 REGIONAL SOLICITATION SURVEY
Seventeen applicants replied to the survey.

Themes
- WebGrants Interface:
  - Pasting text changes some characters.
  - Lacks ability to save response while working.
  - Allows submission of incomplete applications. A reminder would be helpful.
- Railroad agreements difficult to get and lack some clarity in terms of what is needed.
  - Potential inconsistency between qualifying requirements and risk assessment.
- Completing an application is arduous. Simplification is desired.
- Most respondents used consultants with both the consultant and applicant working on the responses. At some agencies, consults and staff both led one or more applications.
- Clarity is needed around when letters of support are needed.
- Mapping sometimes displays the wrong "answers" and other improvements (e.g., ability to draw more than one line or linking the maps within the applications) would be helpful.

Responses (17 Respondents)

1. Agency type (check one)

	Responses
State	1
County	4
City	9
Non-profit	2
Consultant	0
Other	1
Total Respondents	**17**

2. Category you submitted in (Check all that apply)

	Responses
Strategic Capacity	23.5% (4)
Roadway Reconstruction/Modernization	29.4% (5)
Traffic Management Technologies	17.7% (3)
Spot Mobility/Safety	5.9% (1)
Bridges	11.8% (2)
Transit Expansion	0
Transit Modernization	5.9% (1)
Travel Demand Management	11.8% (2)
Multi-use Trails & Bicycle Facilities	53.0% (9)
Pedestrian Facilities	11.8% (2)
Safe Routes to School	29.4% (5)
Unique Projects	11.8% (2)
Total Respondents:	**17**

Note: Total respondents by category is greater than 17 because many respondents applied in multiple categories.

3. Are there specific features of the online application that should be changed?

1	No
2	It would be helpful if attachments made within the criteria items showed up at the end in the attachment list.

	Sometimes attachments were uploaded twice in different areas and this could probably be prevented.
3	Upgrade text entry, current system changes apostrophes to question marks when text is pasted in after text is submitted. Requires repeated proofreading.
4	I thought it worked well
5	The online interface does not accept copy-pasted apostrophes or quotation marks and requires that pre-drafted material be hand-edited to remove substituted question marks. It would be great to have this issue fixed as it is incredibly time consuming to address.
6	- It would be nice to be able to save an application screen/page that is half complete. currently you are required to put information in each text box or you are unable to save. - It would be nice to know that you can make the entry window bigger so you can see your whole response - we did not figure that out until the end of the process! - We can't recall if it had a grammar/spelling editing built in - if not, this is something that is always appreciated. - A live character count would be helpful. - Correct formatting issues. Some characters don't convert correctly when saved as a pdf which we believe is how the reviewer will see the submittal (i.e. apostrophes don't transfer correctly).
7	
8	We had issues with the mapping function. Staff was not aware until I called with issues.
9	
10	It would be nice if you could save the application at various points in the process, not only after completing a full section. Some of the responses are quite involved and it would be nice if it saved as you went along. Of course, applicants can pre-fill out the application an cut/paste, but there are many answers in a section and sometimes you want to start filling it out before you have an answer to every response. I also think it would be nice if the maps automatically uploaded. There seemed to be a few errors on the map application as well (i.e. text saying the bikeway is NOT on a RBTN corridor when it was).
11	
12	Pronoun selection for the applications should either be optional or expanded to include self-identifying/inputted.
13	
14	I can say I may have missed a few steps in the process. However, the form allowed me to submit it without some of the documentation - I would suggest some kind of "reminder" to jog you memory before the final submittal - again I could of even missed that.
15	None that come to mind.
16	Could links be imbedded to the reference documents so applicants wouldn't have to go try and find them on the Met Council website?
17	I encountered and issue when I would copy and paste something from the word document into the online application - certain symbols such as apostrophes were automatically converted into question marks which made it time consuming to fix.

4. Are there changes you would make in the application training (overall regional solicitation information, online application, mapping, MnDOT State Aid information)?

1	No
2	No - good job with the training.
3	
4	I liked the youtube videos.
5	It would be helpful to have all the links for resources websites or map-making tools listed in the guidance. A better description of budget categories for the TDM projects would be helpful. It would also be helpful to have a clarity on which attachments are required for which categories (Transit & TDM has a fair amount of attachments that are not actually relevant to the TDM category.) Elaine is an incredible resource—always prompt and friendly with her e-mails, and clarifying any and all gaps in the guidance. It is truly appreciated!

Applicant Responses

6	- Thanks for offering it! For those of us that have already done, it was hard to stay engaged the whole time. Would be great to have a refresher course for 'old pros' and then one for 'newbies'. The 'old pros' group don't need as much of the history. They want to know how much money is available and what has changed. - Share: past common mistakes so we don't repeat them, the things that make reviewing easier and what makes the project most competitive
7	
8	I would suggest making sure all applications are working prior to the announcement of the grant application
9	
10	
11	
12	I thought it was difficult to find the specific mapping application for population, employment, rbtn, etc. Using the existing training videos didn't help a lot as the application looked different and had different functionality.
13	
14	No
15	No.
16	Training was good.
17	No

5. Are there specific changes you would make to the qualifying criteria/requirements established to determine whether projects are eligible?

1	
2	No.
3	
4	none that I can think of
5	
6	- We found the RR approval to be inconsistent between the qualifying criteria/requirements info and the risk management section of the application. The qualifying criteria/requirements made it seem that RR approval was required where as the risk management section implied that approval was not required. Essentially, it is not practical to have RR approval at this phase as many projects are not going to enter that phase/level of design and coordination until construction funding (the grant request) is secured. - The qualifying criteria/requirements did not say that improvements to existing trails (intersection improvements, striping, wayfinding, similar) were not eligible. We had a few projects where we were going to string together a series of local trails to create a regional trail corridor by fill a series of gaps and improving the local trails to regional trail standards. Two days before the application was due we were told that this was not acceptable. This 'extra'/ineligible work is critical for a 'corridor' to function as a 'corridor' and to provide a seamless, safe user friendly experience with consistent design, wayfinding (a known barrier to many targeted community groups) and safety improvements. We agree that this funding should not be used solely for striping or wayfinding but when combined with a larger project - these improvements and there associated costs are incidental where as the impact of benefit is critical. - Similar to about if a project includes a small amount of pavement maintenance so a greater corridor is in good working order/similar condition at the completion of the project it should allowable. Again, the work and associated cost is incidental to the greater project scope/cost. This could be similar to how landscaping is addressed (small % of the project/incidental/supports to success and outcomes of the main project element). - Is a layout plan required or not? This also seemed inconsistent between what was written in the qualifying criteria/requirements and the application. Additionally, including examples or a list of specific requirements for the different layout point levels would be great.
7	
8	Not at this point. This is our first application.
9	
10	There are a lot of qualifying criteria and some require documentation (like a letter) and other's don't, which is a bit confusing and difficult to track for applicants. For example, there is a requirement to notify affected

	jurisdictions about the project, but you may not need a letter. There is a requirement to maintain all projects in winter, but only a letter required for bike facilities (not ped or SRTS). For MnDOT letters it was unclear whether we needed a letter of support for all projects that touched or crossed their ROW or whether they are just required for projects that make improvements to MnDOT highways/ROW.
11	
12	I think it should be clarified whether an application needs a letter of agency support and/or whether it needs a resolution of support passed by the legislative body. We ended up obtaining the latter because we were unsure of the requirements.
13	
14	Well - it is hard to justify infrastructure improvements using B/C for crashes. Maybe separate the funding and utilize some of it for infrastructure elements and some of it for physical roadway changes.
15	Remove the limit for only one BRT transit line to get funding. This tends to disproportionately affect suburban BRT lines vs. those within Minneapolis/St. Paul proper.
16	
17	No

6. There are several submittals/attachments required with applications. Were any of these difficult to produce or obtain?

1	No
2	For Multiuse Trails on Active Railroad ROW, it was not clear what constitutes an 'agreement' with the railroad. It seems odd that the applicant agency is not required to submit a resolution of support for the project.
3	
4	The affordable housing pieces are still very hard to create. It's way too much work and needs to be adjusted. (I recognize the importance of the affordable housing question.)
5	The affordable housing map is quite time consuming to create for TDM projects, which are more dispersed than many of the capital projects.
6	Yes - several were difficult to produce/obtain: - Railroads approvals/coordination - this really is not feasibility for agencies that can not afford to move a project forward until construction funding is secured. This inadvertently skews funding toward agencies with more resources and that have the staff/luxury to plan and coordinate project components years in advance of funding. This is not obtainable for many cities/agencies. Additionally, the CP railroad contact went on vacation while we were attempting to coordinate with them and we did not receive their feedback until after the submittal deadline. - Some of letters of support from agencies/partners that forward these requests to their council/boards for approval are more difficult to obtain. There is enough time to plan for this, but you need to be ready to hit the ground running as soon as the solicitation opens or start to secure them in advance. - Include more information as to what is included in a layout plan. Specifically lists what are the requirements for each point breakdown. This will better coordination with consultants and design teams. - We appreciate the simplicity of the autogenerated maps. One BIG thing to improve is to be able to have more than one project line when a project is fragmented. Several of our projects were bundled or had project components in different areas. The current multiple map solution is cumbersome and results in double counting of some areas if there is overlay in the 'buffer' area. - For the RTBN maps, the project line often masked the RTBN line if you did not offset your hand drawn project line. This would make it so the reviewer would not be seeing complete, accurate information as you couldn't see what the RTBN category was. Additionally, the RTBN interactive map on the Met Council website had different data (not just how items were displayed) than what was on the autogenerated maps (we found several cases of different tiers or classifications between alignment and corridor).
7	The traffic information ended up being several pages. Is it possible to provide this information as needed vs. submitting with the application.
8	No
9	
10	

11	
12	Obtaining traffic modeling attachments was difficult for the city because we don't own Synchro or similar programs. For that reason alone, we had to hire a consultant to complete an application. Otherwise, we would have filled one out ourselves.
13	
14	See 3 above - I was able to attain them - but after a Met Council reminder that they were needed.
15	Yes. The Letter of Support we requested from Met Transit was never received. The governing body that distributes the Regional Solicitation funding should always provide Letters of Support. This doesn't "look good" when this doesn't happen.
16	No
17	No

7. Do you feel there are any needed changes or improvements to the description and instructions for the scoring measures? Please highlight specific issues that can be addressed.

1	Yes. See below.
2	For the Role in the Regional Transportation System and Economy - Measure A - Congestion on adjacent Parallel Routes: it was difficult to get the map to generate with the desired parallel route information. This may lead to questions during the scoring process.
3	
4	none that I can think of
5	The Innovative Projects attachment that is for data/citations could be better clarified as far as its purpose and how reviewers will use it.
6	- The questions are very long and several were multi faceted (we had to read and reread and reread multiple times to know that the questions really was). It would be helpful if the questions were more concise and separated out (one question per response). For example, the equity questions, asked quite a lot of questions but there really is not enough room to fully address all the questions. It would be helpful to emphasize the most important components the application should touch on. - Embed the mapping application link into the project application. The regional solicitation information and resource links are hard to navigate since they are found on several different Met Council webpages, etc. - There were 2 different word files (application and qualifying info) – this is cumbersome and very confusing and the information is not always consistent. Please combine this into one document and customize it so you only get the information relevant to the funding category you are applying for. Get rid of any extra information that is not needed. The formatting is confusing and difficult to understand. We ended up making our own word document to be more focused and organized be deleting all the information that was not relevant. - Could the scope of work and project description be combined? It is basically the same information. - Not entirely clear what was needed for the layout. - For the Equity questions (3A, 3B and 3C), one of the question components is to compare demographic/housing information against the region. Provide this baseline information so it consistent from one application to the other and easy for the author to obtain the information and explain it. Also, an auto generated map that spits out housing, demographic, etc. would be helpful. Additionally, for this question - simplify it. All three questions had significant overlap. Combine into one question or be more clear about what information goes where.
7	Consideration of rural projects category. It is difficult for rural projects to meet the same requirements as urban corridors.
8	Not at this time. As the process moves forward we will be in a better position to comment.
9	
10	Under deficiencies and safety (4B-Multiuse Trails & Bicycle Facilities) the application notes that "the project that will reduce the most crashes will receive 150 points". This seems very difficult to measure or evaluate without specialized experience in applying CMFs to projects and having adequate CMF data for the specific facility type. Additionally, since bike/ped crashes tend to be sporadic and may not show up in corridors that lack facilities today, this may be especially difficult to measure on corridors with low/no crash problems.

11	
12	The descriptions that describe census tracts in relation to ACPs, Regional Environmental Justice Areas, or otherwise were confusing. It was unclear that it was a tiered system, meaning that ACPs were given the most points and that a tract could only fit in one of the categories instead of meeting higher and higher thresholds. It felt there was significant overlap in expected response content between sections/measures. I feel like I re-described the transit access, housing access, and multimodal benefits many times over the course of the application. In the future, response descriptions could point to other sections of the applications saying "transit-related points should go to section X".
13	
14	No
15	No.
16	Didn't quite understand why we needed a summary cover memo to the application. Just duplicated what was already in the application.
17	No

8. Was the scoring guidance clear and helpful to your understanding the criteria?

1	Yes
2	Yes.
3	
4	yes
5	Yes, though several of the "transit and TDM" questions were difficult to effectively answer for the TDM category as they were clearly more geared toward transit projects and more difficult to answer for geographically dispersed proposals.
6	It was fine but we suggest moving all this information into the scoring table so it is all in one place. We know the intent of putting this information with the question but it made the application word document even more difficult to follow and understand (multiple questions, sub questions, either/or questions, plus scoring info and a text box). We'd prefer for this to be a separate document that we can easily print and reference as we fill out the application. Also - like we previously mentions, some questions (example: equity question) included so many parts or components to each question that it made it hard to know what to emphasize in order to get the best score. Even with clear and concise writing, it was nearly impossible to fit all the necessary details into the responses. - Too much information all at once that it was hard to track on the word doc. Multiple questions, sub questions, either/or questions, plus scoring info and a text box – had to read and reread multiple times to know that the questions really was. Hard to follow and know what was actually wanted. Simplify.
7	Yes
8	Yes
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	Yes
15	Yes.
16	Yes
17	Yes

9. What thing(s) would you change about the solicitation process, criteria, or scoring above all else?

| 1 | To align with the Met Council's stated equity goals, and requirements under Federal law for fair housing, the Met Council should more heavily weight the demographic and socio-economic conditions of a community in deciding what projects to fund and what impact such projects could have, both positively and negatively, within the built and socio-economic environment of the immediate community. Furthermore, those |

	communities who are advancing regional policy goals for equity, particularly in affordable housing preservation and development, should receive more weight in the RS process.
2	With the change to the Pedestrian Safety criteria in the Roadway applications (up to NINE narrative questions), the narrative questions have now doubled and take a substantial amount of time, effort, and cost to develop. Some questions like Equity/Affordable Housing ask multiple questions in one - Part A is ELEVEN questions and is very difficult to decipher what is needed in the 400 word limit. Overall simplification of the narrative sections is needed. I also would not have used 2021 traffic data to measure congestion due to the pandemic's impact on travel patterns and congestion.
3	Would like to see more transparency on Daily Person Throughput criteria. Transit Ridership somewhat of a black box and transit routes turning on/off corridor can be a significant volume difference.
4	Making the affordable housing materials easier to calculate/deliver. I also think there is too much focus on congestion reduction, especially for air pollution calculations. We know that roadway expansion often leads to induced demand, which leads to more traffic and more pollution. The environmental/air pollution approach needs a big rework.
5	Climate impacts of particular project types should more heavily weight in the scoring and category construction as well as evaluation of the full funding portfolio (right now projects that create or increase climate pollution have significant funding, and more than outweigh the impacts of the projects that reduce climate pollution).
6	- Do not overlap with the RAISE grant timeframe/submittal deadline whenever possible - this was confusing asking for multiple letters of support from the same people and very stressful for staff. - Drop RR questions/requirements. - Simplify questions, making them clearer and more concise to simplify responses and make navigating the application easier. - For the MnDOT crash data piece, either make MnDOT crash data available to all agencies for this purpose or reduce the difference in scoring (when you include it vs not) to make it more equitable. MnDOT would not release crash data to our application team putting together the applications since they were not engineers that had been trained on how to interpret the data. We found work arounds in some cases but there were unnecessary barriers that again benefited bigger agencies with more resources. As a team that didn't have direct access to that data, it was unfortunate that we were unable to score to the best of our ability on that question if our local partners did not share the information timely or if they too didn't have immediate access to the data. - As the Council knows, the scoring is skewed so much toward more urban areas that other good projects in lower population/less developed areas are essentially not even eligible for funding. They would score so low that potential applicants don't even both to apply. This is unfortunate and eliminates an agency's ability to proactively plan for and provide facilities to growing areas of the region. We'd appreciate the ability to use this funding source to be proactive not just reactive. It is almost always cheaper and easier to construct trail infrastructure before or during development than trying to retroactively squeeze it in after that fact. - RBTN: every RT should be a tier 1 alignment or corridor. These are the main arteries of the system and should be recognized as such. - For the engagement related questions, if you already have a master plan that was approved by the Met Council (since the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan Update which required this information) you should be awarded full points and not need to rehash the public engagement information as that has already been vetted and approved by the Council. Also, perhaps this information could be reported as a table/matrix (event, participant info, findings, how the project responds to the project) or as a narrative.
7	Consideration of urban, suburban, and rural project categories
8	N/A
9	
10	The penalty for bike/ped projects for not being on the RBTN is significant. Applicants are eligible for between 125 and 200 points for being on or connected to the RBTN and only 50 for being in a local plan. Are there other categories with such a significant point spread for meeting/not meeting criteria?
11	My primary frustration is that it seems like the scoring criteria in the Roadway Modernization category seems inconsistent with the stated purpose of that category. Many aspects of "modernization" includes reducing capacity or right-sizing streets to include multimodal features (e.g. 4-to-3 conversions). However, some of the

	scoring criteria still seems to very much favor projects that expand roadway capacity.
12	Recognition should be made about engagement processes disrupted by COVID-19. While it may be less applicable to the next solicitation cycle, engaging communities may still be very difficult due to the ongoing pandemic.
13	
14	I understand timelines - it felt rushed - but I think that is because of other commitments and not the council's fault - maybe more time between announcement and submittal.
15	As previously stated, remove the limit for only one BRT transit line to get funding. This tends to disproportionately affect suburban BRT lines vs. those within Minneapolis/St. Paul proper.
16	Too much emphasis on using poverty as a criteria
17	None

10. What changes would you make to the Regional Solicitation to simplify the application or other parts of the process?

1	
2	See question 9 - simplification and reduction of the narrative questions is needed. The applications take longer every year to the point it has really gotten to be too much. Consultant cost was way up this year as well due to new/longer applications. Overall, 'location-based' criteria are over-represented versus ranking the merits and impact of a project on the regional transportation system.
3	Would like to see project cost carried between sections.
4	Biggest comment is on needed details for the affordable housing question, which take a lot of time.
5	Reducing the overall length of the application (reducing number of questions, number of attachments) would significantly simplify the process.
6	- Modify questions to be more concise, easier to follow, and separated out. - Could context maps could potentially be automated? - Transit maps (with routes number, stops) could be automated - Provide a place to upload each map from the mapping application within the relevant questions, there was one that didn't have a place to upload and therefore needed to be uploaded at the end (can't remember which one right now – maybe the transit map?), which caused confusion.
7	More fill in the blank or multiple choice questions
8	The only comment would be is to see if the website can be more robust to handle multiple people at a time
9	
10	When filling out the application, it seems like you have to repeat statements/key points several times. I understand this is necessary since different people score different segments. But it does feel repetitive as an applicant.
11	
12	
13	The existing application process is unnecessarily long and very time consuming to prepare. There is too much reliance on narrative responses that can often times be open to broad interpretation depending upon the reviewer. A shorter and simpler form that focuses less on narrative and more check boxes, maps or other similar methods to glean out key facts about a project would be more objective and save everyone involved lots of time.
14	Reminders - Are you sure you have the latest B/C spreadsheet and crash data?
15	Have a clear & easy process for who to request Letters of Support from at Met Council/Transit.
16	
17	None

11. Did the applicant fill out the application on their own or did a consultant participate?

1	Consultant
2	Both.
3	

Applicant Responses

4	I filled out some applications myself and had consultant support on a couple.
5	filled out own application.
6	Both. we had a consultant do some and we did some internally.
7	Consultant assistance on certain items in the application
8	We had some initial conversations on the grant with a consultant but ended up submitting the application ourselves.
9	consultant
10	Our agency had both-- some staff led and others consultant-led.
11	
12	A consultant participated only in providing the city preliminary layouts, cost estimations, and traffic modeling (roadway modernization). I completed the rest of our applications.
13	We prepared three applications in-house and used a consultant to prepare one application.
14	Own
15	Combination of both - in house City staff & consultant.
16	Required both staff and consultants to fill out application
17	applicant