

ACTION TRANSMITTAL No. 2013-47

DATE: October 30, 2013
TO: Technical Advisory Committee
FROM: TAC Funding and Programming Committee
PREPARED BY: Heidi Schallberg, Senior Planner (651-602-1721)
SUBJECT: Solicitation for 2017 Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funds
RECOMMENDED MOTION: Recommend that the Transportation Advisory Board approve the attached application and criteria for the TAP solicitation for 2017 funds and the release of the solicitation.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION: The Regional Solicitation Evaluation (RSE) was originally scheduled to be completed in the spring/early summer of 2013. This timeline would have allowed for a new solicitation design to begin in the summer with a potential late fall 2013/early winter 2014 release of a solicitation package. Due to a number of factors, the Evaluation has been delayed and is now scheduled to be completed in February 2014.

Once completed, the policies and recommendations of the Regional Solicitation Evaluation will then be implemented through the design and release of a new solicitation package. For past solicitations, the complete solicitation process, through amendment of the selected projects into the regional TIP, has taken approximately 20-21 months.

Under a typical solicitation, projects are notified of selection approximately three to four years in advance, i.e. 2015 and 2016 projects were selected in May 2012 (though due to MAP-21 passage they were not amended into the TIP until 2013). This amount of lead time allows adequate time for project development and any required state and federal reviews and approvals. Experience has shown that roadway projects and bikeway/walkway type projects in particular require this amount of lead time.

TAP projects need as much lead time as possible for project development; a 2014/2015 solicitation process will likely not allow enough project development time for TAP type projects, which could lead to project program date extensions and the potential loss of funds. At its September meeting, the TAB directed staff to explore conducting a TAP solicitation in late 2013/early 2014 using the TE application from the 2011 regional solicitation as the base with modifications to include eligibility for Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects and other MAP-21 changes. A proposed TAP solicitation would be presented in the TAC and TAB committee process beginning in October through December for review and approval, with an anticipated release in January 2014. CMAQ and STP funds for 2017 would be addressed at a later date with the TAC and TAB committees.

RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL POLICY: TAB develops and issues a Regional Solicitation for federal funding.

STAFF ANALYSIS: Staff has reviewed the 2011 Transportation Enhancements solicitation and made revisions relating to changes from MAP-21 for the consolidated Transportation Alternatives Program. These changes incorporate the inclusion of Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects in accordance with MnDOT statewide guidance and MAP-21 eligibility changes.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND ACTION: The committee discussed some minor potential changes to the application for Safe Routes to School projects, such as substituting a state program reference for the Transportation Policy Plan question number 5 since all Safe Routes to School projects should inherently help implement the plan. MnDOT Safe Routes to School program staff later provided Metropolitan Council staff with suggested language, which is included in this draft for TAC for question number 5 in the Safe Routes to School category. At its October 17, 2013, meeting, the Funding and Programming Committee unanimously recommended the approval and release of the solicitation.

ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE COMPLETED
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	October 17, 2013
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Adopt	
Metropolitan Council Transportation Committee	Concurrence	
Metropolitan Council	Concurrence	

Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Application

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete and return completed application by uploading it to the Metropolitan Council's FTP site. Please go to Metropolitan Council's website for instructions. For questions contact Heidi Schallberg at Heidi.Schallberg@metc.state.mn.us. Applications must be received by 4:00 PM at the Metropolitan Council FTP site on January 31, 2014.	Office Use Only
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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. APPLICANT:			
2. JURISDICTIONAL AGENCY (IF DIFFERENT):			
3. MAILING ADDRESS:			
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP CODE:	4. COUNTY:
5. CONTACT PERSON:	TITLE:	PHONE NO. ()	
CONTACT E-MAIL ADDRESS:			

II. PROJECT INFORMATION

6. PROJECT NAME:
7. BRIEF PROJECT DESCRIPTION for database (Include location, road name, type of improvement, school(s) for SRTS projects, etc. A more complete description must be submitted later in the application):
8. TAP PROJECT CATEGORY – Check only one project category in which you wish your project to be considered. See X for details. <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle/Pedestrian <input type="checkbox"/> Safe Routes to School Infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental <input type="checkbox"/> Historic/Archaeological <input type="checkbox"/> Streetscape
9. PROJECT LENGTH (in miles)

III. PROJECT FUNDING

10. Are you applying for funds from another source(s) to implement this project? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If yes, please identify the source(s):	
11. FEDERAL AMOUNT: \$	14. SOURCE OF MATCH FUNDS:
12. MATCH AMOUNT: \$	15. MATCH % OF PROJECT TOTAL: (Minimum of 20%)
13. PROJECT TOTAL: \$	16. PROGRAM YEAR: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2017 ONLY

PROJECT INFORMATION FORM

(To be used to assign State Project Number after project is selected)

Please fill in the following information as it pertains to your proposed project. Items that do not apply to your project, please label N/A. **Do not send this form to the State Aid Office. For project solicitation package only.**

COUNTY, CITY, OR LEAD AGENCY _____

FUNCTIONAL CLASS OF ROAD _____

ROAD SYSTEM _____ (TH, CSAH, MSAS, CO. RD., TWP. RD., CITY STREET)

NAME OF ROAD _____ (Example; 1st ST., MAIN AVE)

ZIP CODE WHERE MAJORITY OF WORK IS BEING PERFORMED _____

APPROXIMATE BEGIN CONSTRUCTION DATE (MO/YR)

APPROXIMATE END CONSTRUCTION DATE (MO/YR)

LOCATION: From: _____

To: _____
(DO NOT INCLUDE LEGAL DESCRIPTION)

TYPE OF WORK _____

Examples: GRADE, AGG BASE, BIT BASE, BIT SURF, SIDEWALK, CURB AND GUTTER, STORM SEWER, SIGNALS, LIGHTING, GUARDRAIL, BIKE PATH, PED RAMPS, BRIDGE, PARK AND RIDE, ETC.

BRIDGE/CULVERT PROJECTS

OLD BRIDGE /CULVERT NO. _____

NEW BRIDGE/CULVERT NO. _____

STRUCTURE IS OVER _____

Project Elements and Estimate of Construction Costs

Fill out the scoping sheet below and provide the cost estimate for each element. You may add additional eligible costs (construction costs) that are not accounted for in the blank spaces at the bottom of the table. Applicants may instead use the more exhaustive checklist of the MnDOT scoping sheet in lieu of this checklist. The total cost should match the total cost reported for the project on the first page of this application. Please use 2013 cost estimates; the TAB may apply an inflation factor to awarded projects.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT ELEMENTS/COST ESTIMATES		
Check all that apply	ITEM	COST
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mobilization (approx. 5% of total cost)	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Removals (approx. 5% of total cost)	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Roadway (grading, borrow, etc.)	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Roadway (aggregates and paving)	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Subgrade Correction (muck)	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Storm Sewer	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ponds	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Concrete Items (curb & gutter, sidewalks, median barriers)	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pedestrian Curb Ramps (ADA)	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Path/Trail Construction	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traffic Control	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Striping	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Signing	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lighting	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Turf - Erosion & Landscaping	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bridge	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Retaining Walls	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise Wall	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Traffic Signals	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wetland Mitigation	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Natural and Cultural Resource Protection	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	RR Crossing	\$
<input type="checkbox"/>		\$
<input type="checkbox"/>		\$
<input type="checkbox"/>		\$
<input type="checkbox"/>		\$
<input type="checkbox"/>		\$
<input type="checkbox"/>		\$
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contingencies	\$
	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$

List of Required Attachments

Unless indicated otherwise, all applications must include the following:

1. A map of the project limits. If it is an on-road project, highlight the segment of road on a city or county roadway map. If it is a trail project, highlight the segment of trail to be constructed on a map that includes trails, bikeways or roadways. Applicants may include more than one map if the project impacts both a roadway and trail system.
2. An aerial photograph or photographs that show(s) the location of the project as it is today **OR** a plan view of the existing roadway or trail.
3. Local match documentation: If the applicant expects any other agency to provide part of the local match, the applicant must include a letter or resolution from the other agency agreeing to financially participate.
4. Proof of coordination: Projects must be coordinated with all affected communities and other levels and units of government. Coordination is defined as written communication from the applicant to all affected communities informing them of the project. The applicant must provide a copy of the written communication as proof of coordination.
5. Project Implementation Schedule
6. **For bicycle and pedestrian projects only, including Safe Routes to School projects:** A concept drawing of the proposed improvements that shows any bicycle, pedestrian and transit components upon completion of the project.
7. **For Safe Routes to School projects only:** Applicants must include a letter from MnDOT Safe Routes to School program staff certifying the project meets Safe Routes to School requirements.

A. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECTS – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please provide the following general information about your proposed project.

Describe the opportunity that the proposed project is taking advantage of or the nature of the problem that it aims to address.

Provide a description (no more than one page) of the project. **Include information about how the project is related to surface transportation.** To comply with Federal guidelines for eligibility there are two basic considerations:

- Is the proposed action one of the listed activities in the TAP definition in MAP-21?
- How does the proposed action relate to surface transportation?

The applicant must provide a clear statement describing this linkage. Failure to provide this information will result in the application being disqualified. More information about the relationship to surface transportation is provided in the solicitation instructions.

B. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECTS - QUALIFYING CRITERIA

The applicant must show that the project meets each of the following qualifying criteria to qualify for scoring under the prioritizing criteria. Answer each criterion in a numbered sequence. **Failure to respond to any of the qualifying criteria will result in a recommendation to disqualify your project.**

1. **Qualifying Activities.** The applicant must show that the proposed project falls under at least one of the following list of qualifying activities and must state the specific category(ies) the project qualifies under. The list of qualifying TAP activities provided in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) of MAP-21 is intended to be exclusive, not illustrative. That is, **only** those activities listed therein are eligible as TAP activities.
 - a. Construction of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).
 - b. Construction of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
 - c. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.
 - d. Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.
 - e. Community improvement activities, including—
 - i. inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising;
 - ii. historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities;
 - iii. vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control; and

- iv. archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title.
- f. Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to—
 - i. address storm water management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133 (b)(11), 328 (a), and 329; or
 - ii. reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
- 2. The recreational trails program under section 206 of title 23. *[NOTE: This program is administered through a separate process for the State of Minnesota and is ineligible for funding in this solicitation.]*
- 3. The safe routes to school program eligible projects and activities listed at section 1404(f) of the SAFETEA-LU:
 - i. Infrastructure-related projects.
 - ii. Noninfrastructure-related activities. *[NOTE: This activity is currently administered through a separate funding program for the State of Minnesota and is ineligible for funding in this solicitation.]*
 - iii. Safe Routes to School coordinator. *[NOTE: This activity is currently administered through a separate funding program for the State of Minnesota and is ineligible for funding in this solicitation.]*
- 4.. Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

One or more of these activities must constitute at least 70% of the project cost. Ancillary activities such as paving a parking lot, constructing buildings or providing restrooms must constitute no more than 30% of the total project cost. Applicants whose project is part of a larger transportation project must provide a construction cost summary demonstrating that at least 70% of the project is eligible for TAP funds.

Identify the number of the eligible activity under which your project should qualify.

RESPONSE:

- 2. The funded activities must be accessible to the general public or targeted to a broad segment of the general public and must be ADA-compliant.

RESPONSE: **Check the box to affirm project applicant understanding and acceptance of this requirement.**

- 3. The project must be included in, be part of, or address a transportation problem or need identified in one of the following:
 - a) an approved local or county comprehensive plan found to be consistent with Metropolitan Council plans;
 - b) an approved statewide or regional plan;
 - c) a locally approved capital improvement program;
 - d) an officially adopted corridor study (trunk highway studies must be approved by MnDOT and Metropolitan Council); or
 - e) an official plan or program of the applicant agency (which could include a Safe Routes to School plan).

It also must not conflict with the goals and policies in these adopted regional plans; the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan (amended 2013), the 2030 Regional Framework (amended 2006), and the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan (amended 2013). The applicant must reference the appropriate comprehensive plan, CIP, approved corridor study document, or other plan or program and provide copies of the applicable pages.

RESPONSE:

4. Typically a transportation project involves mitigation, work in addition to immediate construction activities that is negotiated with permitting agencies and local governments as a condition of obtaining permit approval. Activities that are normally part of the mitigation of a transportation project are not eligible, such as required stormwater mitigation or basic bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on bridges to be constructed or reconstructed.

NOT ELIGIBLE – Work that is required as a condition of obtaining a permit or concurrence for a different transportation project is **not eligible** for enhancement funding. For example, a city may require a highway expansion project to include streetscape enhancements in order to gain municipal consent. Federal permitting and authorizing agencies may include the U.S. Forest Service, U. S. Corps of Engineers, and others. State permitting agencies may include the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. Regional agencies may include watershed districts and metropolitan planning organizations. Local agencies may include counties and cities.

RESPONSE (Check the appropriate box):

- Yes, this project involves work that is part of the mitigation of a transportation project. If yes, STOP. Your project will not be eligible under the federal rules for TAP.**
- No, this project does not involve work that is part of the mitigation of a transportation project.**

5. The applicant must assure it will operate and maintain the property and facility of the project for the useful life of the improvement, and not change the use of any right-of-way acquired without prior approval from the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration.

The FHWA requires that states agree to operate and maintain facilities constructed with federal transportation funds for the useful life of the improvement, and not change the use of any right-of-way acquired without prior approval from the FHWA. TAB has determined that this requirement will be applied to the project applicant. FHWA considers most physical constructions and total reconstructions to have a useful design life of 10 years or more, depending on the nature of the project. Bridge constructions and total reconstructions are considered to have useful lives of 50 years. The useful life of the project will be defined in the inter-agency maintenance agreement that must be prepared and signed prior to the project letting.

RESPONSE: ***Check the box to affirm project applicant understanding and acceptance of this requirement.***

6. Projects must have an assured **local (non-federal funds) match of at least 20%** of the estimated total cost of the proposed project. At the time of application, the applicant must assure the local match will be available when the project is authorized in the requested program year. If the applicant expects any other agency to provide part of the local match, the applicant must include a letter or resolution from the other agency agreeing to financially participate. TAB will not award additional points for providing a match in excess of 20%.

The local match can be provided in the form of cash up front “hard dollars” or a “soft match.” A “soft match” may include donated labor or construction materials if adequate documentation of its equivalent dollar value and availability can be provided. Donated labor must have expertise and experience in the type of labor required for the project and valued at rates consistent with rates ordinarily paid for similar work. Some type of time sheet must support donated labor. Donated materials, e.g., railroad ties, asphalt pavement, or wiring necessary to run a street car, must meet all standards and specifications. Caution in using a “soft match” should be taken to ensure the donated materials or labor during actual construction does not fall below the 20% non-federal match required to be able to receive 100% of the federal funds. Applicants wishing to use a soft match should first contact the Minnesota office of the Federal Highway Administration for more information.

RESPONSE:

7. Proposed designs for bikeways and for combined bike/pedestrian facilities must meet MnDOT State Aid standards. Exceptions to the State Aid standards may be granted during final design if warranted based on social, economic or environmental alternatives, **not** through this solicitation process. Failure to meet the standards or justify exemptions will result in the loss of federal funds.

RESPONSE: ***Check the box to affirm project applicant understanding and acceptance of this requirement.***

8. Projects must be coordinated with all affected communities and other levels and units of government. Coordination is defined as written communication from the applicant to all affected communities informing them of the project. The applicant must provide a copy of the written communication as proof of coordination.

RESPONSE: ***Check the box to affirm project applicant understanding and acceptance of this requirement.***

9. **SRTS Projects Only:** Safe Routes to School applicants must include a letter from MnDOT Safe Routes to School program staff in support of the project. For more information about meeting this requirement, please contact one of the following MnDOT SRTS program staff members:

Lisa Austin
Lisa.Austin@state.mn.us
651-366-4193

Nicole Campbell
Nicole.M.Campbell@state.mn.us
651-366-4180

Mao Yang
Mao.Yang@state.mn.us
651-366-3827

TAP PROJECTS – PROJECT CATEGORIES

Categories: All applications must be submitted in one of five categories. Applicants must submit their project under the proper category as outlined below. If prospective applicants are uncertain which category most appropriately includes their project, they should contact Council staff. The MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program Qualifying Activities fall under these five categories as follows:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

- QA 1a Construction of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation
- QA 1b Construction of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs
- QA 1c Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other nonmotorized transportation users

Safe Routes to School Infrastructure

- QA 3a Safe Routes to School infrastructure-related projects

Historic and Archaeological

- QA 1e.ii Community improvement activities, including historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities
- QA 1e.iv Community improvement activities, including archaeological activities relating to impact from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this program

Scenic and Environmental

- QA 1d Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas
- QA 1e.i Community improvement activities, including inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising
- QA 1e.iii Community improvement activities, including vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control
- QA 1f Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to:
 - i. address storm water management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in sections 133 (b)(11), 328 (a), and 329; or
 - ii. reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats

Streetscape/Pedestrian Enhancements

- QA 1b Construction of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs
- QA 1e Community improvement activities (could include streetscaping and corridor landscaping)

C. TAP PROJECTS - PRIORITIZING CRITERIA

Each qualified project will be scored under common category criteria within its TAP project group: urgency; impact; relationship between TAP categories (or, for Safe Routes to School, the relationship between the 5Es of the SRTS program); relationship to intermodal/multimodal transportation; and implementation of the Development Framework. This will allow projects to be scored under these criteria relatively equally across the different categories while addressing the particular attributes of the project type. An explanation of each of the common category criteria and reasons for their inclusion follows:

1. Urgency/Significance. This criterion measures how critical or time-sensitive the problem is that is being addressed by a regionally significant project. Examples might include seizing a timely opportunity to preserve a scarce or endangered resource or addressing a critical need.
2. Impact. This criterion quantifies the benefit from the project, without specifically relating it to how the larger public will benefit.
3. Relationship between Categories. This criterion is being presented under the assumption that the region recognizes that there is a value in having projects that provide more than one of the eligible TAP activities. Examples might include the reconstruction of a bicycle/pedestrian trail leading to a historic transportation structure. *For Safe Routes to School projects*, this section addresses the 5 Es of the program structure (education, enforcement, encouragement, engineering, evaluation).
4. Relationship to Intermodal/Multimodal Transportation System. This criterion measures how the proposed project clearly and credibly relates to the surface transportation system. Surface transportation is defined to include all modes of travel with the exception of aviation and military transportation. Federal TAP guidance states that proximity to a transportation facility alone is not sufficient to establish a relationship.
5. Development Framework. This criterion measures how the proposed project relates to the goals for land use development, resource protection and transportation described in the 2030 Regional Development Framework and 2030 Transportation Policy Plan.
6. Maturity of Project Concept. This criterion measures the number of steps already taken in project development. These steps are outlined in the checklist in the required Project Implementation Schedule.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

(Qualifying Activities 1a, 1b, and 1c)

1. **Urgency/Significance (200 points)** Discuss how the project proposes or addresses each of the following:
 - a. Takes advantage of a time-sensitive opportunity, e.g., a willing landowner, cost savings, affiliation with another project, competing development opportunities.

RESPONSE:

- b. Addresses a significant opportunity, unmet need or problem as relates to the development of an integrated bicycle or pedestrian transportation network; or providing a safe/enjoyable bicycle or pedestrian route.

RESPONSE:

2. **Impact (300 points)** Discuss how the project addresses each element below.
 - a. Fills gaps, overcomes barriers, connects system segments and/or otherwise seizes on a significant opportunity in pedestrian/bicycle network. **The applicant should provide a map showing the location of the project within the context of an existing and planned bicycle or pedestrian network.** If the project is removing a barrier, the applicant should demonstrate the magnitude of the barrier (number of lanes, average daily traffic, posted speed, etc.) and how the proposed project will improve travel across that barrier.

RESPONSE:

- b. Project provides a high-demand facility or program. Relative levels of demand will be determined using population density and connections to significant travel attractors. Metropolitan Council staff will determine population density using the most current available residential population within one mile of the project. The applicant should also list below significant destinations that are near the facility or that the facility provides close connections to. Destinations can be recreation areas such as parks, beaches, rivers, lakes, etc; or commercial or mixed-use districts, major employment areas or other major cultural destinations.

RESPONSE:

- c. Addresses safety concerns. The applicant should describe how the project addresses an identified safety problem.

RESPONSE:

- d. For Applications for Qualifying Activity #1c only: Who owns the railway corridor property, and will there be an agreement to ensure the preservation and protection of the corridor?

RESPONSE:

3. **Relationship between Categories (100 points)** Projects will score higher if they provide multiple benefits toward the purpose of the Transportation Alternatives program. Applicants should review the respective category criteria to determine the extent to which the project relates to the other two categories:
 - a. What is the relationship to the Scenic and Environmental group? For example, how does the bike/ped project provide a natural resource enhancement?

RESPONSE:

- b. What is the relationship to the Historic and Archaeological group? For example, how does the bike/ped project take advantage of or enhance historic and cultural resources or provide orientation/interpretation to users?

RESPONSE:

4. **Relationship to Intermodal/Multimodal Transportation System (100 points)** Discuss how the project will function as a component and/or enhancement of the transportation system:

- a. How will the bicycle or pedestrian facility benefit the experience of users of the transportation system?

RESPONSE:

- b. How will the project benefit multiple modes of transportation? An example of a project that would do this would be a bicycle facility that connects to a transit center or to a mixed-use pedestrian-oriented district, or a pedestrian project that is a component of a transit-oriented development.

RESPONSE:

- c. How does the facility serve trips that could otherwise be made by motor vehicles?

RESPONSE:

5. **Development Framework (100 points)**

- a. If the project is a trail project, does it help to connect to or complete the Metropolitan Council's Regional Trail network? How so? If the project is on part of the Regional Trail system, it must be identified in a Metropolitan Council-approved master plan.

RESPONSE:

- b. Briefly describe how the project implements the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan.

RESPONSE:

6. **Maturity of Project Concept (200 points)** Projects selected through this solicitation will be programmed for construction in 2017. The region must manage the federal funds in each year of the TIP. Projects are expected to be authorized in their program year in accordance with TAB's Regional Program Year Policy. Proposed projects that have already completed some of the work are more likely to be ready for funding authorization in the program year.

Applications involving construction must complete the Project Implementation Schedule form. A detailed schedule of events is expected for all phases of the project. Points under this criterion are assigned based on how many steps have been taken toward implementation of the project. These steps reflect a federally-funded project development path.

TOTAL: 1,000 POINTS

Safe Routes to School Infrastructure (Qualifying Activity 3a)

1. **Urgency/Significance (200 points).** Discuss how the project proposes or addresses each of the following:
 - a. Takes advantage of a time-sensitive opportunity, e.g., a willing landowner, cost savings, affiliation with another project, competing development opportunities.

RESPONSE:

- b. Addresses a significant opportunity, unmet need or problem as relates to the development of an integrated bicycle or pedestrian transportation network or providing a safe bicycle or pedestrian route in support of students traveling to and from schools that serve grades between K-8.

RESPONSE:

2. **Impact (300 points).** Discuss how the project addresses each element below.
 - a. Fills gaps, overcomes barriers, connects system segments and/or otherwise seizes on a significant opportunity in pedestrian/bicycle network. **The applicant should provide a map showing the location of the project within the context of an existing and planned bicycle or pedestrian network serving a school with grades between K-8.** If the project is removing a barrier, the applicant should demonstrate the magnitude of the barrier (number of lanes, average daily traffic, posted speed, etc.) and how the proposed project will improve travel across that barrier.

RESPONSE:

- b. Public involvement process used to include partners and stakeholders (e.g. schools, parents, law enforcement, road authorities, other impacted community members) and build consensus during project development. Describe the process used and the partners involved.

RESPONSE:

- c. Addresses safety concerns. The applicant should describe how the project addresses an identified safety problem.

RESPONSE:

3. **Relationship between SRTS Program Elements (100 points).** Projects will score higher if they consider the 5 Es of the Safe Routes to School program structure (education, enforcement, encouragement, engineering, evaluation).
 - a. Describe how the 5 Es of SRTS programs were considered or are incorporated.

RESPONSE:

4. **Relationship to Intermodal/Multimodal Transportation System (100 points).** Discuss how the project will function as a component and/or enhancement of the transportation system:
 - a. How will the bicycle or pedestrian facility benefit the users of the transportation system for the affected school(s)?

RESPONSE:

b. How will the project benefit multiple modes of transportation?

RESPONSE:

c. How does the facility serve trips that could otherwise be made by motor vehicles?

RESPONSE:

5. Safe Routes to School Program Framework (100 points)

Briefly describe how the project meets the purposes of the Safe Routes to School program of:

- a. enabling and encourage all children to walk and bicycle to school;
- b. making bicycling and walking to school a safer and appealing transportation alternative; and
- c. facilitating the planning, developing, and implementation of projects and activates that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

RESPONSE:

6. Maturity of Project Concept (200 points)

Projects selected through this solicitation will be programmed for construction in 2017. The region must manage the federal funds in each year of the TIP. Projects are expected to be authorized in their program year in accordance with TAB's Regional Program Year Policy. Proposed projects that have already completed some of the work are more likely to be ready for funding authorization in the program year.

Applications involving construction must complete the Project Implementation Schedule. A detailed schedule of events is expected for all phases of the project. Points under this criterion are assigned based on how many steps have been taken toward implementation of the project. These steps reflect a federally-funded project development path.

TOTAL: 1,000 POINTS

Scenic and Environmental Group (Qualifying Activities 1d, 1e.i, 1e.iii, 1f)

1. **Urgency/Significance (200 points)** Discuss if/how the project proposes or addresses each of the following:
 - a. Takes advantage of a time-sensitive opportunity, e.g., a willing landowner, cost savings, affiliation with another project, competing development opportunities.

RESPONSE:

- b. Addresses a significant issue/problem/threat/opportunity associated with contaminated land, erosion, water quality, rare or threatened plant or wildlife species, and/or obstructed or impaired scenic views.

RESPONSE:

2. **Impact (300 points)** Discuss how the project addresses the applicable questions below (respond as appropriate to all questions except those specifically targeted at a different qualifying activity):

- a. For All Applicants: Provides more than a local benefit. An example of a project that provides more than a local benefit includes mitigation of highway water runoff to a river that runs through several communities, or an overlook or viewing area along a regional ("A" Minor or Principal Arterial) highway.

RESPONSE:

- b. For All Applicants: Provides an immediate benefit. Projects that are likely to show immediate results will receive more points over those that are part of a longer-term project.

RESPONSE:

- c. For All Applicants: Provides benefit to significant numbers of people. Staff will determine this by using the population density within one mile of the project area. **Applicants will need to supply a map showing the exact location of the project.** In the case of water pollution due to highway runoff, the location would be the impacted area even if the source of the pollution being addressed is not in the impacted area.

- d. For Qualifying Activity #1d: What is the scenic or historic authenticity and integrity of the highway, and how will these scenic or historic qualities be preserved or enhanced by the project?

RESPONSE:

- e. For Qualifying Activity #1e.i: How many nonconforming, illegal and other off-premise signs are targeted for removal under the proposed project?

RESPONSE:

- f. For Qualifying Activity #1f: If addressing water pollution; what pollutants are in the water, what natural resources do they harm, and how will the proposed project address the source of these pollutants? If the project concerns wildlife mortality and habitat connectivity; how would the project maintain, improve, or restore habitat connectivity, reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality, and what kinds of wildlife will benefit?

RESPONSE:

3. **Relationship between Categories (100 points)** Projects will score higher if they provide multiple benefits toward the purpose of the Transportation Alternatives program. Applicants should review the respective category criteria to determine the extent to which the project relates to other Transportation Alternatives categories:
- a. What is the relationship to the Bicycle and Pedestrian group? For example, how does the scenic/environmental project address bicycle and pedestrian access to the project location?

RESPONSE:

- b. What is the relationship to the Historic and Archaeological group? For example, how does the scenic/environmental project promote people's understanding of transportation in history or protect archaeological resources?

RESPONSE:

4. **Relationship to Intermodal/Multimodal Transportation System (100 points)** Discuss how the project will function as a component and/or enhancement of the transportation system:
- a. How will the project benefit the experience of users of the transportation system?

RESPONSE:

- b. How will the project benefit multiple modes of transportation?

RESPONSE:

5. **Development Framework (100 points)**

Is the environmental project integrated with a larger development plan that will benefit from the improve resource? Describe how it is integrated.

RESPONSE:

6. **Maturity of Project Concept (200 points)**

Projects selected through this solicitation will be programmed for construction in 2017. The region must manage the federal funds in each year of the TIP. Projects are expected to be authorized in their program year in accordance with TAB's Regional Program Year Policy. Proposed projects that have already completed some of the work are more likely to be ready for funding authorization in the program year.

Applications involving construction must complete the Project Implementation Schedule. A detailed schedule of events is expected for all phases of the project. Points under this criterion are assigned based on how many steps have been taken toward implementation of the project. These steps reflect a federally-funded project development path.

TOTAL: 1,000 POINTS

Historic and Archaeological Group (Qualifying Activities 1e.ii and 1e.iv)

1. **Urgency/Significance (200 points)** Discuss if/how the project proposes or addresses each of the following:

- a. Addresses a significant issue/problem/threat/opportunity associated with the preservation/restoration of an endangered historic or archaeological resource.

RESPONSE:

- b. Takes advantage of a time-sensitive opportunity, e.g., a willing landowner, cost savings, affiliation with another project, competing development opportunities.

RESPONSE:

2. **Impact (300 points)** Discuss how the project addresses each applicable element below:
 - a. Protects or enhances a site on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

RESPONSE:

- b. Provides opportunities for users to experience, appreciate, and understand a unique historic or archaeological resource or site.

RESPONSE:

- c. Fits into the community's educational system, e.g., school curriculum, libraries, youth programs, archaeology week, etc.

RESPONSE:

- d. Provides more than a local benefit. Examples of projects that provide more than a local benefit include rehabilitation of an historic transportation structure in a busy state or regional park, or a project to establish a transportation museum that will be visited by people from outside the community where it is located.

RESPONSE:

- e. Provides benefit to significant numbers of people. Metropolitan Council staff will determine this by using the population and employment density within one mile of the project area. Applicants will need to supply a map showing the exact location of the project.

RESPONSE:

- f. Provides an immediate benefit. Projects that show immediate results will receive points over those that are part of a longer-term project.

RESPONSE:

- g. For Applications for Qualifying Activity #1e.iv only: Under the TAP guidance, archaeological activities must relate to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under title 23. How does the work included in this project application meet this requirement?

RESPONSE:

3. **Relationship between Categories (100 points)** Projects will score higher if they provide multiple benefits toward the purpose of the Transportation Alternatives program.

Applicants should review the respective category criteria to determine the extent to which the project relates to the other categories:

- a. What is the relationship to the Scenic and Environmental group? For example, how does the historic/archaeological project provide a natural resource enhancement?

RESPONSE:

- b. What is the relationship to the Bicycle and Pedestrian group? For example, how does the scenic/environmental project address bicycle and pedestrian access to the project location?

RESPONSE:

4. Relationship to Intermodal/Multimodal Transportation System (100 points)

Discuss how the project will function as a component and/or enhancement of the transportation system:

- a. How will the project benefit the experience of users of the transportation system?

RESPONSE:

- b. How will the project be accessible by multiple modes of transportation?

RESPONSE:

- c. How will the project benefit multiple modes of transportation?

RESPONSE:

- d. In what way is the project/program associated with surface transportation through past, present, or future use as a transportation or transportation-related resource?

RESPONSE:

- e. How does the project facilitate an understanding of the relationship of an historic or archaeological resource to the role of surface transportation in significant historic and cultural events, movements, and contexts?

RESPONSE:

5. Development Framework (100 points)

Does the historic preservation project help to improve the immediate area around the project? Is it integrated within a redevelopment plan?

RESPONSE:

6. Maturity of Project Concept (200 points)

Projects selected through this solicitation will be programmed for construction in 2017. The region must manage the federal funds in each year of the TIP. Projects are expected to be authorized in their program year in accordance with TAB's Regional Program Year Policy. Proposed projects that have already completed some of the work are more likely to be ready for funding authorization in the program year.

Applications involving construction must complete the Project Implementation Schedule. A detailed schedule of events is expected for all phases of the project. Points under this criterion are assigned based on how many steps have been taken toward implementation of the project. These steps reflect a federally-funded project development path.

TOTAL: 1,000 POINTS

Streetscape/Pedestrian Enhancements (Qualifying Activities 1b, 1e)

1. **Urgency/Significance (200 points)** Discuss if/how the project proposes or addresses each of the following:
 - a. Takes advantage of a time-sensitive opportunity, e.g., a willing landowner, cost savings, affiliation with another project, competing development opportunities.

RESPONSE:

- b. Addresses a significant opportunity, unmet need or problem as relates to the development of a pedestrian transportation network or providing a safe and pleasant pedestrian route and supporting transit riders.

RESPONSE:

2. **Impact (300 points)** Discuss how the project addresses each element below. Projects will score higher if it is located on an important transit route and significantly improves the pedestrian environment.

- a. Describe the existing conditions for pedestrian safety and circulation along the project segment.

RESPONSE:

- b. Describe all functional improvements to pedestrian safety and circulation that will be included as part of this project (such as sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian countdown signals, etc.).

RESPONSE:

- c. Provides more than a local benefit: What are the number of transit lines and the daily frequency of transit service along the segment of roadway being improved and on any roadways connecting to the segment of roadway being improved?

RESPONSE:

- d. Provides benefit to significant numbers of people: Metropolitan Council staff will determine this by using the population and employment density within one mile of the project area.
 - e. Is the roadway being improved in a business district? If so, describe the business district (number of businesses, nature of businesses, etc.).

RESPONSE:

- f. What pedestrian amenities will be installed with the project (vegetation, benches, wayfinding, pedestrian-scale lighting, etc.)?

RESPONSE:

- g. Describe the design intent for the landscaping improvements being proposed. Provide any visual examples or plans if they are available.

RESPONSE:

3. **Relationship between Categories (100 points)** Projects will score higher if they provide multiple benefits toward the purpose of the Transportation Alternatives program. Applicants should review the respective category criteria to determine the extent to which the project relates to the other categories:

- a. What is the relationship with the Bicycle/Pedestrian Connections group? Does the project include amenities or facilities for bicycles? Does it facilitate any new connections pedestrian or bicycle connections?

RESPONSE:

- b. What is the relationship to the Environmental group? For example, how does the project provide a natural resource enhancement and address environmental mitigation?

RESPONSE:

- c. What is the relationship to the Historic and Archaeological group? For example, how does the project take advantage of or enhance historic and cultural resources or provide orientation/interpretation to users?

RESPONSE:

4. Relationship to Intermodal/Multimodal Transportation System (100 points)

Discuss how the project will function as a component and/or enhancement of the transportation system. How will the project benefit multiple modes of transportation? An example of a project that would do this would be a project connecting to a transit center or on an important transit route or a project that is a component of a transit-oriented development.

RESPONSE:

5. Development Framework (100 points)

How does the project improve the accessibility and ease of use of transit?

RESPONSE:

6. Maturity of Project Concept (200 points)

Projects selected through this solicitation will be programmed for construction in 2017. The region must manage the federal funds in each year of the TIP. Projects are expected to be authorized in their program year in accordance with TAB's Regional Program Year Policy. Proposed projects that have already completed some of the work are more likely to be ready for funding authorization in the program year.

Applications involving construction must complete the Project Implementation Schedule. A detailed schedule of events is expected for all phases of the project. Points under this criterion are assigned based on how many steps have been taken toward implementation of the project. These steps reflect a federally-funded project development path.

TOTAL: 1,000 POINTS

Project Implementation Schedule (REQUIRED for ALL applications)

Please check those that apply and fill in anticipated completion dates

1) Project Scope

- Stakeholders have been identified
- Meetings or contacts with Stakeholders have occurred

2) Layout or Preliminary Plan

- Layout or Preliminary Plan started
 - Layout or Preliminary Plan completed
- Anticipated date or date of completion: _____

3) Environmental Documentation

- EIS EA PM

Document Status

- Document not started
- Document in progress; environmental impacts identified
- Document submitted to State Aid for review (date submitted: _____)
- Document approved (include copy of signed cover sheet)

Anticipated date or date of completion/approval: _____

4) R/W

- No R/W required
- R/W required, parcels not identified
- R/W required, parcels identified
- R/W required, appraisals made
- R/W required, offers made
- R/W has been acquired

Anticipated date or date of acquisition _____

5) Railroad Involvement

- No railroad involvement on project
- Railroad R/W Agreement required; negotiations not begun
- Railroad R/W Agreement required; negotiations have begun
- Railroad R/W Agreement required; Agreement has been initiated
- Railroad R/W Agreement is executed (include signature page)

Anticipated date or date of executed Agreement _____

6) Construction Documents/Plan

- Construction plans have not been started
- Construction plans in progress; at least 30% completion
- Construction plans submitted to State Aid for review
- Construction plans completed/approved (include signed title sheet)

Anticipated date or date of completion: _____

7) Letting

Anticipated Letting Date: _____

**SOLICITATION FOR
FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION
ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)
FUNDING FOR 2017**

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL METROPOLITAN AREA, MINNESOTA



INTRODUCTION

This regional solicitation for federal transportation project funding is part of the Metropolitan Council's federally -required continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The funding program and related rules and requirements are established by the U.S. Department of Transportation and administered locally through collaboration with the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

I. FEDERAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) was authorized by the most recent Federal transportation funding act, **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)**, that was signed into law on July 6, 2012. The Transportation Alternatives Program redefines the former Transportation Enhancements activities and consolidates these eligibilities with the Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails Programs. The Transportation Enhancements (TE) program was originally authorized in the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and continued through two successive laws, TEA-21 and the **Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU)**. The Transportation Alternatives program builds upon the legacy of the TE program by funding community-based projects that expand travel choices and improve the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, and environmental aspects of our transportation infrastructure.

II. LOCAL OVERVIEW

The Twin Cities Metropolitan Area selects projects for funding from three federal programs: Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), and Transportation Alternatives (TAP). This solicitation is only for Transportation Alternatives Program funds to be programmed for 2017.

In accordance with Metropolitan Council policy, these funds are to be invested to help implement the Regional Development Framework and the regional growth strategy, as well as to support the region's economic vitality and quality of life.

The regional Transportation Policy Plan sets the broad framework for transportation actions consistent with the Regional Development Framework and the regional growth strategy. Implementation plans are developed within this framework to address various problems. On the local level, comprehensive plans articulate transportation problems and solutions unique to the community. Large-scale corridor studies bring together local and regional concerns. The materials contained in this solicitation package have been developed in such a manner as to promote and select projects and programs consistent with regional plans and solve problems in accordance with these various implementation plans.

The solicitation process uses a set of qualifying criteria to determine if a proposed project or program meets the broadest policy directions and program federal requirements and follows regionally adopted procedures. For example, the proposed projects must be consistent with the Regional Development Framework and the Transportation Policy Plan, as well as implement a solution to a transportation

problem discussed in a local plan.

Prioritizing criteria are based on policies in either the Regional Development Framework or the Transportation Policy Plan, or they may address various operational issues.

III. FUNDING

1. FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

The announcement of funding availability is published in the State Register, posted on the Metropolitan Council website's homepage, and emailed to local stakeholders.

2. AVAILABLE FUNDING

A total of \$6 million in federal TAP funds for 2017 is anticipated to be available in this solicitation.

3. LOCAL SHARE AND LOCAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Projects must have an assured local (non-federal funds) match of at least 20% of the estimated total cost of the proposed project. At the time of application, the applicant must assure the local match will be available when the project is authorized in the requested program year. If the applicant expects any other agency to provide part of the local match, the applicant must include a letter or resolution from the other agency agreeing to financially participate. TAB will not award additional points for providing a match in excess of 20%.

IV. ELIGIBILITY

1. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

All projects must be located within the seven-county metropolitan region of Minneapolis-St. Paul, including the counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington.

Under 23 U.S.C. 213(c)(4)(B), the **Eligible Entities** to receive TAP funds are:

- Local governments (includes any unit of local government below a State government agency, except for a metropolitan planning organization. Examples include city, town, township, village, borough, parish, or county agencies.)
- Regional transportation authorities;
- Transit agencies;
- Natural resource or public land agencies;
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools (may include any public or nonprofit private school. Projects should benefit the general public and not only a private entity);
- Tribal governments; and
- Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails (other than a metropolitan planning organization or a State

agency) that the State determines to be eligible, consistent with the goals of subsection (c) of section 213 of title 23.

State DOTs and metropolitan planning organizations are not eligible entities as defined under 213(c)(4)(B) and therefore are not eligible project sponsors for TAP funds. However, State DOTs and metropolitan planning organizations may partner with an eligible entity project sponsor to carry out a project.

Although many organizations may apply for TAP funds through the regional solicitation, only certain ones can enter into an Agency Agreement and set up an account to spend TAP funds to implement the project. The seven metro area counties and cities with population over 5,000 may be approved by the District State Aid Engineer (DSAE) to enter into an Agency Agreement directly with MnDOT. All other applicants must contact the Metro State Aid Office prior to submitting their application to determine if a public agency sponsor is required.

The public agency sponsor is the local unit of government of record and is responsible for working with the applicant to ensure that all project requirements are met. An Agency Agreement is written between MnDOT and the local unit of government of record. The local unit of government will administer the project using the MnDOT State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT) Delegated Contract Process (DCP) for federal aid projects.

2. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Projects must be eligible for funding under the federal TAP guidance. Projects must also be consistent with the Metropolitan Council's Development Framework and Transportation Policy Plan.

1. The list of qualifying TAP activities provided in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) of MAP-21 is intended to be exclusive, not illustrative. That is, **only** those activities listed therein are eligible as TAP activities.
 - a. Construction of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation, including sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).
 - b. Construction of infrastructure-related projects and systems that will provide safe routes for non-drivers, including children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities to access daily needs.
 - c. Conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for trails for pedestrians, bicyclists, or other non-motorized transportation users.
 - d. Construction of turnouts, overlooks, and viewing areas.
 - e. Community improvement activities, including—
 - i. inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising;
 - ii. historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities;
 - iii. vegetation management practices in transportation rights-of-way to improve roadway safety, prevent against invasive species, and provide erosion control; and
 - iv. archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible under this title.
 - f. Any environmental mitigation activity, including pollution prevention and pollution abatement activities and mitigation to—
 - i. address storm water management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, including activities described in

- sections 133 (b)(11), 328 (a), and 329; or
 - ii. reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
2. The recreational trails program under section 206 of title 23. *[NOTE: This program is administered through a separate process for the State of Minnesota and is not eligible for this solicitation.]*
 3. The safe routes to school program eligible projects and activities listed at section 1404(f) of the SAFETEA-LU:
 - i. Infrastructure-related projects.
 - ii. Noninfrastructure-related activities. *[NOTE: This activity is currently administered through a separate funding program for the State of Minnesota and is not eligible for this solicitation.]*
 - iii. Safe Routes to School coordinator. *[NOTE: This activity is currently administered through a separate funding program for the State of Minnesota and is not eligible for this solicitation.]*
 4. Planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

3. RELATIONSHIP TO SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

Projects must relate to surface transportation. For TAP, a relationship to surface transportation is defined as primarily serving a commuting purpose and/or that connect two destination points. A facility may serve both a transportation purpose and a recreational purpose; a facility that connects people to recreational destinations may be considered to have a transportation purpose.

Proximity to a highway or transportation facility alone is not sufficient to establish a relationship to surface transportation. Additional discussion, beyond proximity, is needed in the TAP project proposal to establish the relationship to transportation. For example, a historic barn that happened to be adjacent to a particular highway facility would not automatically be considered eligible for TAP funds simply because of its location; visibility to the traveler in a way that substantially enhances the traveling experience could qualify.

4. ELIGIBLE COSTS

Generally, for projects that involve the construction of facilities, the TAB will provide TAP funds for project construction and materials, right of way, and land acquisition. If TAP funds will be used for right-of-way acquisition, the breakdown of federal funding and total costs must be identified in the application. **TAB will not provide TAP funds for study completion, preliminary engineering, design, construction engineering, or other similar costs.**

The Transportation Alternatives program is a part of the Federal-aid Highway Program. Although the program is a “grant” program under Federal regulation, it is not an “up-front” grant program and funds are available **only on a reimbursement basis**. Costs become eligible for reimbursement only after a project has been approved by MnDOT, the TAB/Metropolitan Council, and the FHWA division office. This means project sponsors must incur the cost of the project prior to being repaid. Costs must be incurred after FHWA division office project approval or they are not eligible for reimbursement.

5. FEDERAL FUNDING LIMITS

Each application submitted must be for a federal dollar amount between a minimum of **\$100,000** and a maximum of **\$1,000,000**. TAB reserves the right to partially fund any project. Project applicants can “bundle” projects together to meet this minimum. (Example: Bundled projects could consist of signing and lighting a number of bike trails in several cities.) Communities may want to consider using joint powers agreements for implementing bundled projects.

V. REGIONAL SOLICITATION PROCESS

1. PROJECT EVALUATION

Metropolitan Council staff will determine project eligibility during the selection process, subject to review by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). All projects must be consistent with the [Transportation Policy Plan](#) and [Regional Development Framework](#).

The applicant must show that the project meets all the qualifying criteria to be scored and ranked against other qualifying projects. Applicants whose projects are recommended to be disqualified may appeal the recommendation and participate in the review and determination of eligibility at the TAC Funding & Programming Committee meeting. A set of prioritizing criteria with a range of points assigned is provided. The criteria describe important factors that will be used to assign individual points. The applicant must respond directly to each prioritizing criterion in order for it to be scored and receive points. Projects are scored based on how well the response meets the requirements of the prioritizing criteria and how well the responses compare to those of other qualifying applications in the same project category. Applicants may challenge the scores given to individual criteria responses through the process recorded in Appendix S. Projects that are recommended for funding through this solicitation process will be programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for funding authorization in the year 2017.

Members of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee or other designees will evaluate the applications and prepare a ranked list of projects by category based on a total score of all the prioritizing criteria. The TAC will forward the ranked list of projects with funding proposals to the TAB, which may also develop its own funding options. TAB may or may not choose to fund projects submitted from each category. TAB will then recommend a list of projects to be included in the region's Transportation Improvement Program and receive federal funds. TAB then submits the list of recommended projects to the Metropolitan Council for concurrence.

The TAP project selection criteria will consist of the follow areas of focus:

1. Urgency/Significance – 20% of total
2. Impact – 30% of total
3. Relationship between Categories (*For Safe Routes to School: Relationship between Program Elements*) – 10% of total
4. Relationship to Intermodal/Multimodal Transportation System – 10% of total
5. Development Framework – 10% of total
6. Maturity of Project Concept – 20% of total

2. GENERAL TAB POLICIES

The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) is responsible for the selection of projects that are to be financed in part with TAP funds made available to the seven-county region. To implement this responsibility, the TAB has developed policies to define eligibility and prioritize eligible projects.

1. Generally, TAP funds are available for the eligible activities listed under Section IV.2 of this document and incidental activities associated with them if the incidental work does not constitute more than 30% of the project costs. One or more of these eligible activities must constitute at least 70% of the project cost. Ancillary activities such as paving a parking lot, constructing buildings or providing restrooms must constitute no more than 30% of the total project cost. Applicants whose project is part of a larger transportation project must provide a construction cost summary demonstrating that at least 70% of the project is eligible for TAP funds.
2. A TAP construction or reconstruction project must be a permanent improvement having independent utility. Temporary construction is defined as work that must be essentially replaced in the immediate future (within five years). Staged construction is considered permanent rather than temporary so long as future stages build on, rather than replace, previous work. All projects must comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reconstruction of a bikeway/walkway facility is eligible as long as the facility is beyond its useful life.
3. **A TAP project will be removed from the program if it does not meet its program year.** The program year is July 1st to June 30th of the year in which the project is originally programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Projects selected from this solicitation will be programmed in 2017. The Regional Program Year Policy, which was adopted by TAB in early 2013, includes additional information on this requirement, as well as a process to request a one-time program year extension.
4. TAB will base the fundable amount of a project on the original submittal. The TAB must approve any change in the scope of an approved project. The federal fund participation for each project will be based on an inflation adjustment set by the TAB upon inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program.
5. Projects will be added to the TIP only as a result of the TAB approval in response to this and subsequent solicitations.
6. Projects listed in the region's draft or adopted TIP are assumed to be fully-funded and to have independent utility from other projects. TAB will not consider projects already listed in the draft or adopted TIP, nor the payback of Advanced Construction funds for those projects, for funding through the solicitation process. Projects submitted that are related to projects listed in the draft or adopted TIP but that have independent utility from those projects are eligible for consideration.
7. If a project is added to the TIP, the entire project is included even though a portion of that work extends beyond the period for which submittals were requested provided that a significant portion of the work is scheduled for letting within the request period.
8. TAB will not fund a Transportation Alternatives project for which the pedestrian, bicycle or environmental components and benefits have been claimed in a related STP or CMAQ project that was funded in a previous solicitation.

9. The Technical Advisory Committee shall prepare an annual report on the implementation of regionally solicited TAP projects for the review and approval of the TAB. This report, the Annual Implementation Report shall include updated program, system and project information. The TAC shall include such findings, recommendations and additional information, as it deems appropriate.

3. PROPOSED SCHEDULE

Date	Action
October 17, 2013	Funding & Programming Committee (F&P) review and recommendation of solicitation package
November 6, 2013	Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) review and recommendation of solicitation package
November 20, 2013	Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) review and approval of solicitation package and release
December 9, 2013	Transportation Committee review and recommendation of concurrence of solicitation release
December 11, 2013	Council concurrence for solicitation release
December 13, 2013	TAP solicitation release
January 31, 2014	Application deadline
February 7, 2014	Qualifying review completed
February 10, 2014	Scoring review begins with scoring groups
February 20, 2014	F&P Committee meeting: Qualifying appeals heard
March 7, 2014	Scoring completed
March 10, 2014	Scores distributed to applicants and F&P; one-week appeal period begins
March 14, 2014	Scoring appeal deadline
March 20, 2014	F&P Committee meeting: Scoring appeals reviewed, funding options developed
April 2, 2014	TAC review of funding options and recommendation to TAB
April 16, 2014	TAB reviewing of funding options
May 21, 2014	TAB approval of funding recommendations
May 26, 2014	Transportation Committee review and recommendation of concurrence
May 28, 2014	Council concurrence with TAB funding selection
June 2014	Inclusion in draft 2015-2018 TIP

The portion of the schedule after the application deadline may be subject to change.

4. CONTACT

For questions about this solicitation, please contact:

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