ACTION TRANSMITTAL – 2019-62

DATE:	November 14, 2019
TO:	TAC Funding & Programming Committee
PREPARED BY:	Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator (651-602-1717) Steve Peterson, Manager of Highway Planning and TAC/TAC Process (651-602-1819) David Burns, Senior Planning (651-602-1887)
SUBJECT:	2020 Regional Solicitation Public Comment Report
REQUESTED ACTION:	Recommend the acceptance of the public comments for the 2020 Regional Solicitation for Transportation Projects.
RECOMMENDED MOTION:	That the Transportation Advisory Board accept the public comments for the 2018 Regional Solicitation for Transportation projects.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF ACTION: Following completion of the 2018 Regional Solicitation, staff worked with the TAC Funding & Programming Committee, TAC, and TAB on updating measures and scoring guidelines for the 2020 Regional Solicitation. A draft Solicitation with approved changes was subsequently released for public review. Comments were received from 11 respondents in response to the public review period, which ended on November 8, 2019. The comments are attached to this item. Comment letters were received from 11 commenters:

1. Minnesota Valley Transit Association
2. City of Apply Valley
3. Carver County
4. Scott County
5. Washington County
6. East Metro Strong
7. Metro Transit
8. City of Minneapolis
9. City of Burnsville
10. Anoka County
11. City of Eagan

Committee members should review the comments and determine whether any changes should be made, based on the recommendations in the comments.

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

ROUTING

TO	ACTION REQUESTED	DATE COMPLETED
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Accept	

2020 REGIONAL SOLICITATION APPLICATION UPDATE

Public Comment Report

November 2019

Overview

This public comment report summarizes the comments received for the proposed changes to the 2020 Regional Solicitation application. The draft document was released for public comment on September 18, 2019, and comments were accepted through November 8, 2019. During this time, the document was available on the Metropolitan Council's website and through printed copies as requested.

Eleven commenters, including representatives of partner agencies provided feedback on the draft 2020 Regional Solicitation application. The comments from the 11 partner agencies are referenced in the tables on the following pages by the corresponding number shown below:

People engaged	Nearly 900
Communities and interest groups engaged	1. Minnesota Valley Transit Association (MVTA) – 6 comments 2. The City of Apple Valley – 5 comments 3. Carver County – 4 comments 4. Scott County – 8 comments 5. Washington County – 3 comments 6. East Metro Strong – 4 comments 7. Metro Transit – 3 comments 8. The City of Minneapolis – 9 comments 9. The City of Burnsville – 4 comments 10. Anoka County – 4 comments 11. City of Eagan – 5 comments
Methods used	Web announcement and web page notice GovDelivery email announcement Newsletter story Facebook Twitter
Comments received through	Email Mail

This report includes a table, categorized by the Regional Solicitation topic or proposed change, that summarizes each comment received, and for each, identifies the person/organization(s) who made the comment.

The full text of the comment letters received during the public comment period are attached after the summary table.

Comments Related to Modal Funding Ranges and Unique Project Funding

The Regional Solicitation was released for public comment with the following changes proposed related to Modal Funding Ranges, including the creation of a Unique Projects category with a 2.5% funding set-aside for the 2022 Solicitation:

	Roadways	Transit / TDM	Bicycle / Ped	Total
Modal Funding Levels	~~Range of 48%-68%~~ Range of 46%-65% ~~Range of $86M-$122M~~ Range of $83M-$117M Midpoint $100M	~~Range of 22%-32%~~ Range of 25%-35% ~~Range of $40M-$58M~~ Range of $45M-$63M Midpoint $54M	~~Range of 10%-20%~~ Range of 9%-20% ~~Range of $18M-$36M~~ Range of $16M-$36M Midpoint $26M	100% $180M (Est)*

*Includes a $2.5% unique projects set-aside, which amounts to $4M-$5M

Comments received on modal funding ranges and Unique Project funding:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
1	Increase roadway modal category by $4 million and the bicycle/pedestrian modal category by $1 million, bringing them back to their traditional proportions.	2, 3, 4, 10
2	Support the proposed additional regional funding to transit, whether through an increase to the modal funding range of transit projects or by over-programming across all modes.	1, 2, 11
3	Eliminate the proposed 2.5% set-aside for the Unique Projects category.	3
4	Supports the creation of the Unique Projects category.	2, 7
5	Redirect the $5 million proposed for Unique projects to restore roadway and bike/pedestrian amounts; then backfill Unique projects as additional funds become available.	2
6	Recommend that highways receive a minimum of 60% of available funding, consistent with historical levels.	4

Minimum and Maximum Awards

The Regional Solicitation was released for public comment with the following changes proposed related to minimum and maximum awards:

Mode	Application Categories	Minimum Federal Award	Maximum Federal Award
Roadways	Traffic Management Technologies	$250,000	~~$7,000,000~~ $3,500,000
	Spot Mobility and Safety	$1,000,000	$3,500,000
	Strategic Capacity (Roadway Expansion)	$1,000,000	~~$7,000,000~~ $10,000,000
	Roadway Reconstruction/ Modernization	$1,000,000	$7,000,000
	Bridge Rehabilitation/Replacement	$1,000,000	$7,000,000
Transit / TDM	Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Project	N/A	$25,000,000
	Transit Expansion	$500,000	$7,000,000
	Transit Modernization	~~$100,000~~ $500,000	$7,000,000
	Travel Demand Management	~~$75,000~~ $100,000	$500,000
Bicycle / Ped	Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities	$250,000	~~$5,500,000~~ $4,000,000
	Pedestrian Facilities	$250,000	$1,000,000
	Safe Routes to School	$250,000	$1,000,000

Comments received on funding minimums and maximums:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
7	The proposed adjustments to the minimum and maximum project awards will have a positive impact.	10
8	The increase to the $10 M for Roadway Expansion is inconsistent with the other categories – all categories are experiencing inflation.	8
9	One or more projects should be eligible for a $5.5 million max in the multiuse trail application category.	2, 8
10	Support a $10 M million maximum for bridge projects.	4

Bridge Funding Category Minimum

The Regional Solicitation was released for public comment with the $10 million minimum set-aside for the Bridge category in total removed. The maximum award for a bridge project remains at $7 million. Comment received on bridge funding:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
11	Support keeping the $10 million minimum set-aside for the Bridge application category	4

Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Program and Transit New Market Guarantee

The Regional Solicitation was released for public comment with a new "Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Program" with up to $25 million to fund large-scale regional transit projects and a total bus rapid transit funding maximum of $32 million across all transit categories. Along with these changes, a "transit new market guarantee" was created to fund at least one project that is outside of Transit Market Areas 1 and 2 for at least one end of the project. Comments received related to the ABRT program and new market guarantee:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
12	The creation of a new category specifically for Arterial Bus Rapid Transit precludes other agencies to compete for these funds. Support a broader interpretation of Bus Rapid Transit, which would allow multiple agencies to compete in this new category.	1, 4, 5, 9, 11
13	Supports the proposed Arterial BRT category.	6, 7, 8
14	The proposed $25 million maximum for Arterial BRT projects and up to $7 million for an additional BRT project selected through Transit Expansion of Transit Modernization categories leaves little funding for fixed route services.	1, 9, 11
15	The addition of the Arterial BRT category will reduce funding in other modal categories and limit the ability to improve the A-minor arterial roadway system, which is the primary system used by buses.	4, 10
16	Support creation of a Transit New Market guarantee.	1, 7, 8, 9, 11
17	If broader BRT is not feasible, award at least one project in Transit Expansion and at least one project in Transit Modernization to a Suburban Transit Association provider.	1, 4, 11

Long-Term Transit Operations

The Regional Solicitation was released for public comment with the following change in the qualifying requirements: "*The applicant must have the capital and operating funds necessary to implement the entire project ~~and commit to continuing the service or facility project beyond the initial three-year funding period for transit operating funds~~*." Comments received related to long-term transit operations:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
18	Reinstate the requirement that transit applicants must demonstrate financial capacity to operate projects beyond the life of awarded projects.	1, 9

Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities Measures

The Regional Solicitation was released for public comment with the two changes related to scoring measures for Multiuse Trail and Bicycle Facilities:

- New Measure: In Measure 4A Deficiencies and Safety, points are awarded based on a project's place in the Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossing Study or status as a Major River Bicycle Barrier Crossing. This includes bonus points for multiple Tier 1 and 2 Crossings.
- Measure 2A Potential Usage: 50 points were shifted to the Potential Usage measure, bringing the measure up to 200 points. In the 2018 Solicitation, 50 points were given for a new measure on snow and ice control. This measure is proposed to be eliminated for 2020 and instead making snow and ice control a qualifying requirement. The 50 points are proposed to be shifted back to Potential Usage as in the 2014 and 2016 Solicitations point distribution.

Comments received related to Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
19	Revise the new bonus point scoring added to criterion 4A (Deficiencies and Safety). Remove Part 2 scoring and bonus point option.	3
20	Revise and redistribute the 50 additional points proposed for criterion 2A Potential Usage to other measures. This measure of population and employment within 1-mile does not accurately capture facility usage in rural or rural center communities or for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that serve as the primary connection between communities.	3
21	Develop a process to update the RBTN map.	5, 6
22	Give multiuse trails that connect to an existing or future transitway station the full 200 points in the RBTN criteria.	5,6

Roadways and Spot Mobility Categories and Measures

The Regional Solicitation was released for public comment with a new "Spot Mobility" funding category meant to fund low-cost intersection improvement projects. In addition, changes were made to some of the scoring measures within the Roadways categories. Comments received related to the Roadway categories and measures:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
23	The Spot Mobility category will be beneficial in allocating funding to small improvement projects that will provide significant value at lower costs	10
24	Support new emphasis given to pedestrian safety. However, 41% of scoring is still related to existing congestion and mitigation, which may counteract potential safety improvements.	6, 8
25	Safety scores based on travel speeds is counter-intuitive and has inverse relationship with crash severity and lacks context sensitivity with new state law allowing cities to set speed limits.	8
26	Consider the addition of negative points for projects that negatively impact non-motorized travel.	8
27	Scoring should be based upon new/improved pedestrian facilities, not for upgrading facilities to ADA standards.	8
28	Measures A and B in the roadway modernization/reconstruction category should both use daily person throughput	8
29	The measures have a continued focus on congestion, vehicle mobility, capacity expansion and highway investment which is counter to regional policy, climate change and greenhouse gas reduction.	8
30	There is a new roadway measure for pedestrian safety, however, most of the measures and points continue to emphasize travel time and congestion displacement.	8

General Comments

The Regional solicitation uses the results of regional studies in some of its scoring criteria and measures. General comments received, including comments related to the use of these studies and the process:

Comment	Comment Summary	Commenter
31	Completed Council-led studies are used in the scoring criteria, but the results of these studies, in particular the maps, are often out-of-date. With no process to update these maps and rankings to reflect changing demographics, potential projects are unable to be considered for funding. 1. Add an option to allocate points for projects that meet the intent of the study map or used in the scoring criteria, specifically: a. Give the at-grade intersection with the highest traffic volumes on Highway 36 the full 80 points from the PAICS and b. Roadways with a heavy commercial vehicle volume of 1,000 should receive the full 80 points from the Truck Freight Corridor study map. 2. Develop a process to update maps and investment rankings prior to each future regional solicitation, specifically including the RBTN map, Principal Arterial Intersection Conversion Study rankings, and Truck Freight Corridor Study map	5
32	Support inclusion of the Bike Barriers Study results into the scoring	6
33	The 2020 Regional Solicitation process circumvented the role of technical committees.	4, 5

Minnesota Valley Transit Authority

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October 30, 2019

Metropolitan Council
Transportation Advisory Board
Mayor James Hovland, TAB Chair
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101

RE: 2020 Regional Solicitation Public Comment

Dear Chair Hovland and TAB Members:

As a partner in the regional transit system, the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) has grown to be the second largest provider in the state, with nearly three million rides annually. We are proud of our history and ability to use collaborative efforts to continue growing transit.

In coordination with the Suburban Transit Association, MVTA has been successful in lobbying for additional regional transit funding. We hope that our projects continue to be supported by the Metropolitan Council-led Regional Solicitation process as well. The Solicitation provides one of the only ways for suburban providers to meet growth projections of the Transportation Policy Plan – specifically employment growth of 50% by 2040 in the Suburban Transit Association service area (compared to 36% region-wide) and population growth of 36% (compared to 29% region-wide).

The proposed 2020 Regional Solicitation changes leave little room for fixed route, regular bus service to compete. The following bullets identify concerns with the draft Solicitation program, suggested revisions to the final 2020 application package, and areas of support.

- **Concern:** Creation of a category, specifically Arterial BRT, that is managed by one agency/transit provider is unprecedented.
  Suggested revision: MVTA favors a broader interpretation of BRT that allows multiple agencies to compete for funds. If this is not feasible, MVTA requests TAB take a similar approach for suburban providers by awarding at least one project in Transit Expansion and at least one project in Transit Modernization to a Suburban Transit Association provider.

- **Concern:** The proposed $25 million maximum for Arterial BRT projects and up to $7 million for an additional BRT project selected through Transit Expansion or Transit Modernization categories (for a total of up to $32 million to BRT projects) leaves little funding for fixed route, regular bus service. Based on historical distributions a little as $8 million could remain for non-BRT projects.
  Suggested revision: MVTA favors a broader interpretation of BRT that is inclusive of multiple providers, geographies, and a definition that satisfies the service intent of BRT (such as speed, reliability, use of transit advantages) so suburban transit providers could compete for the up to $32 million set-aside to ABRT/BRT projects. MVTA also encourages TAB to reinstate the requirement that transit applicants must demonstrate financial capacity to operate projects beyond the life of awarded funds.
- **Support:** MVTA supports additional regional funding to transit whether through the proposal to increase the modal funding range of transit projects or to take an approach of over programming across all modes.
- **Support:** MVTA supports the creation of a Transit New Market guarantee.

MVTA looks forward to continuing to work together to grow and improve transit in the region. We encourage TAB to address the issues identified above in the final 2020 Regional Solicitation application package.

Respectfully,

Mayor William Droste
MVTA Board of Directors, Chair

C: Lisa Freese, TAC Chair
Paul Oehme, TAC Funding & Programming Chair
Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator

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October 24, 2019

Mayor James Hovland, TAB Chair
Transportation Advisory Board
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1805

Subject: TAB Regional Solicitation BRT Program Feedback

Dear Chair Hovland and TAB Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the upcoming 2020 Regional Solicitation program. The Regional Solicitation Policy Work Group (PWG) discussed a number of complicated technical issues and was able to collaboratively and creatively fine-tune the Regional Solicitation program to best address the Region's needs in 2020. I would like to thank the members of the Policy Work Group, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the TAC Funding and Programming Committee and the staff for their efforts.

1. We support increasing the Transit Category funding by $5 million, while maintaining the existing funding ranges of the Roadway and Bike/Pedestrian categories.

    - We propose restoring the Roadway category by $4 million and the Bike/Pedestrian category by $1 million.

        - Our strategic solution to increase the Transit funding category by $5 million, is to redirect $5 million from the Unique Projects Category for the 2020 Solicitation.

        - The 2020 Unique Projects funding category would be restored from previously allocated and unused regional solicitation project funds until fully replaced. We remain committed to the regional opportunities provided by the Unique Projects category.

2. We support a $4.0 million cap award on the Bicycle and Pedestrian category to enhance regional balance and expand the number of funded projects.

    - TAB is encouraged to include in the regional solicitation policy $5.5 million for one large regionally significant project that scores over 800 points.

Sincerely,

CITY OF APPLE VALLEY

Mayor Mary Hamann-Roland
TAB Vice Chair

Randy Maluchnik
Office of County Commissioner
Carver County Government Center
Human Services Building
602 East Fourth Street
Chaska, MN 55318-1202
Phone: 952 361-1510
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November 5, 2019

Mayor James Hovland, Chair
Transportation Advisory Board
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1805

SUBJECT: 2020 Regional Solicitation Public Comments

Dear Chair Hovland and TAB Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the 2020 Regional Solicitation application language and funding guidance for the distribution of federal transportation funds to local initiated projects for regional transportation needs. Carver County recognizes and appreciates the work put in by the members of the Policy Work Group, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the TAC Funding and Programming Committee, and the Metropolitan Council staff in this important area.

Carver County reviewed the proposed major changes, recognizes the potential critical impact of these changes on future funding awards, and respectfully requests consideration of the following for incorporation into the 2020 Regional Solicitation application language and funding guidance:

1. Maintain the mid-point funding ranges for the Road & Bridge Category and Bicycle and Pedestrian Category instead of decreasing the ranges for these categories by $4 million and $1 million, respectively. Needs in all transportation funding categories are increasing, and this change will likely eliminate funding for at least one project from each of the aforementioned categories.

2. Eliminate the 2.5% setaside for the Unique Project category. The Unique Project category bypasses the technical standards and regional vetting process developed and required as part of the regular Regional Solicitation process based on Transportation Policy Plan guidance.

3. Revise the new two-part and bonus point scoring system added to Criterion 4A. Deficiencies and Safety for the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities Category. Remove Part 2: Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossing Improvements and Major River Bicycle Barrier Crossings scoring and bonus point option. Review and consider the recommendation from the Regional Bicycle Barrier Study work group and TAC Funding & Programming.

4. Revise and redistribute the allocation of 50 additional points to Criterion 2A. Potential Usage – Existing population and employment within 1-mile in the Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities Category. This measure does not accurately capture facility usage in Rural or Rural Center communities or for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that serve as the primary connection between communities. Allocating additional points to this category further disadvantages applicants outside Urban Center communities.

Sincerely,

Randy Maluchnik
Carver County Board Chair

cc: Lyndon Robjent, P.E., Public Works Director/County Engineer
Elaine Koutsoukos, Metropolitan Council, TAB Coordinator

SCOTT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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JON ULRICH, DISTRICT 5

November 5, 2019

Mayor James Hovland, Chair
Transportation Advisory Board
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street
Saint Paul MN 55101

RE: 2020 Regional Solicitation Criteria Comments

Dear Chair Hovland and Members of the Transportation Advisory Board:

We appreciate the opportunity to be involved in the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and to be able to comment on the criteria for the 2020 regional solicitation. We have comments in two areas (shift in funds and the process utilized) that we wish to share with the Transportation Advisory Board:

1. **Shifting of funds in two major categories:**

   A. **Shifting funding away from highways and bridges which is the primary mode of travel in the region.**

      i. The proposed shift of $4 million from highways to transit is concerning. The highway system is the backbone of the overall transportation system in this region. It provides:

         1. Critical access to jobs in our region
         2. Movement of freight which keeps our economy thriving
         3. Provides access for the bus system in our region
         4. Provides the right of way for trail and walk construction increasing the pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure

      Recent data shows that as our economy continues to grow, so does congestion. This demand on our highways greatly increases the needs for our stagnant regional highway system. Besides the overall metro area growth, there are still large parts of the region where vehicle travel is the only option for our residents and businesses. The Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) notes that the Regional Highway System makes up only 2,700 of the region's 17,700 miles (15%), but carries most of the region's motor vehicle traffic (80% of average daily vehicle miles traveled), and 53% of all bus miles traveled.

The regional solicitation is a key tool to leveraging funds for MnDOT, Cities and Counties to fund impactful projects on the regional system which as noted above carries the majority of our regional trips. We would request that highways receive a minimum of 60 percent of the funding available in the 2020 regional solicitation. This would be consistent with historical funding levels.

ii. Bridges are critical elements of the regional and overall transportation system in the metro area. This region was built on rivers and to sustain our standard of living, it is critical that these bridges receive federal funds. Several of the regional bridges, especially large ones owned by Counties, are in need of replacement. We support continuing the $10 million minimum and increasing the per project max up to $10 million to assist local governments that have budget buster bridges in need of replacement. This would help provide sufficient funding to these large regional bridges and take pressure off the legislature to earmark funding in the local bridge replacement program, which has a current back log of deficient bridges statewide totaling $90 million with over half of those bridges in the 7 county metropolitan area.

B. Development of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) program focused on Arterial BRT development resulting in the exclusion of some BRT lines in the Transportation Policy Plan from eligibility.

i. We have concern about the ABRT program that emerged into the criteria. We feel that all BRT systems should be eligible for this program. The proposed restriction of those BRT projects, under the Met Council staff recommendation not allowing projects that have met eligibility under the new starts and small starts programs; leads to the development of the current proposal which results in an entitlement program for the Metro Transit ABRT program. We support Met Council's ABRT program to modernize existing high productivity transit routes with new technology, improved bus stops and limited stops to promote faster service.

The intent of the staff's recommendation to have access to a larger pot of money is understandable, but it should not be exclusive to only a limited set of ABRT lines. All BRT lines that are in the TPP should be able to compete for funding provided under this category, regardless of whether they are eligible for new starts or small starts funding.

ii. There should continue to be a way for suburban bus routes to compete for new transit funding for express and fixed route service to meet demands generated by population and job growth. We support the concept of a suburban allocation. With several congested river crossing barriers, transit helps relieve conguestion and assists in improving access to suburban jobs which are often sought by lower income residents, living in the central cities and first ring suburbs. While not under the purview of the TAB, we think for the suburban transit system to grow, it would be beneficial for the regionally allocated-MVST to be structured so that suburban areas are allocated a share based on population growth.

2. Process utilized in the development of the Regional Solicitation Application criteria

A. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has been set up to assist the TAB in the development of policy. TAC's membership includes City, County, Met Council, and state agencies, including representation from both Metro Transit and the suburban transit providers. These agency staff are accustomed to providing policy alternatives for their elected boards and are expected to play that role as part of the 3C process to develop policy alternatives for the Transportation Advisory Board.

Recommendations on the Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Program were taken by Metropolitan Council staff directly to TAB rather than brought through the Technical Advisory Committee process for consideration and input. As both the planning agency and the largest operating agency for the region, we see this direct communication by the Council's transportation staff as a conflict of interest and a disregard of the technical committee's role in the process. The TAC/TAB process has a long standing history at the Metropolitan Council. When staff experts of all agencies on the TAC are engaged in the process of helping the TAB develop policy, we often find a better balance.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment. The work of the Transportation Advisory Board is critical to meeting the requirements of the Metropolitan Area in distributing this nearly $180 million of funding in 2024 and 2025. This funding has historically been put to good use by all of the recipient agencies in building a better integrated transportation system, but the process continues to become more complicated, expensive to apply, and ultimately more costly to develop and deliver federal projects for all agencies. We would offer that a major overhaul should be considered prior to the next solicitation that focuses funding into integrated regional transportation projects based on the 2040 Comprehensive Plans that are required by the Metropolitan Council.

Sincerely,

Barb Weckman Brekke

County Commissioner Barb Weckman Brekke, Chair
District 1

County Commissioner Thomas Wolf
District 2

County Commissioner Michael Beard
District 3

County Commissioner Dave Beer
District 4

Jon Ulrich

County Commissioner Jon Ulrich
District 5

Washington County

November 6, 2019

Metropolitan Council, Transportation Advisory Board
Mayor James Hovland, TAB Chair
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101

RE: 2020 Regional Solicitation Public Comment

Dear Chair Hovland and TAB Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on proposed updates to the 2020 Regional Solicitation application and scoring criteria. I am responding as Chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners and the Washington County Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) representative.

The Regional Solicitation is an important source of funding for Washington County to improve and maintain components of the regional transportation system that are within its borders. We appreciate the Transportation Advisory Board's commitment to distributing funds across the region within the guidance of Thrive MSP 2040.

Our comments on the solicitation center around three themes: process, the new arterial bus rapid transit program, and the limitations placed on projects not found on Metropolitan Council study maps.

Process

TAB has a long history of developing its policies and funding criteria around sound technical input. As an elected official I often turn to experts in the field for technical recommendations. Over the last year, I have witnessed TAB circumvent its longstanding technical committees. For example, most recommendations brought to the Regional Solicitation Policymaker Workgroup were developed and presented directly to TAB by Metropolitan Council staff without any technical or outside input, which disregards the technical committee's role in the TAB process. The Regional Solicitation process is better served when the technical committees are engaged. I would like to see all future changes to the Regional Solicitation brought through the technical committees that we have historically relied on for recommendations.

Bus Rapid Transit

The creation of a bus rapid transit funding program within the Regional Solicitation is an exciting opportunity for the region to tackle major transit investments. Washington County supports this initiative, but requests that all bus rapid transit projects be allowed to participate regardless of whether they are arterial, highway or dedicated guideway. Other regional transit projects have received significant funding through the Regional Solicitation process. For example, the Green Line Extension has received over $20 million in Regional Solicitation funds. This is the first year that Gold Line will be eligible for Regional Solicitation funds, and Washington County is disappointed that it will not have the same opportunity simply because it will be built in a dedicated guideway rather than within an arterial road.

Technical Comments on Funding Criteria

Washington County has several technical comments on specific funding criteria. I directed staff to summarize these comments and the requested changes in the attachment. In general, the comments convey concern over how Metropolitan Council studies are being incorporated into the Regional Solicitation. The maps produced by these studies are used in the scoring criteria and have a significant impact on a project's ability to compete. However, there is currently no process to update these maps to reflect changing demographics, recent and planned investments, and new data. Washington County has made multiple requests to update the maps used in the Regional Solicitation. All requests have been denied citing the lack of process to do so. As a result, TAB is using maps created in 2017 (with data that is even older) to make 2025 transportation investment decisions. Without a process in place to update these maps prior to each solicitation, the solicitation's impact on the regional transportation system is being diminished. To remedy this situation, we have the following request with additional details provided in the attachment authored by staff.

1. Add an option to allocate points for projects that meet the intent of the study map used in scoring criteria, but were not included on the map due to study limitations or changing circumstances.

2. Develop a process to update study maps and investment rankings prior to each future regional solicitation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to the 2020 regional solicitation.

Sincerely,

Stan Karwoski, Washington County Board Chair

Regional Bicycle Trail Network (RBTN) Map (2017)

Concern

The Regional Bicycle Trail Network (RBTN) is worth up to 200 points or 20% of the possible points in the multiuse trail funding category. Since the RBTN adoption in 2017, Washington County has requested a process for updating the RBTN based on changing demographics, recent and planned investments, and new data. Most recently, in June 2019, Washington County requested an addition to the RBTN, a new Tier 1 Alignment that parallels the Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit corridor. This new alignment would provide important bicycle connections between major activity centers and station locations. The request was denied, noting there is no process for updating the RBTN.

There are three RBTN Tier 1 alignments in Washington County, two of which are already constructed with local funds before the RBTN was adopted. The third Tier 1 alignment is a trail along County State Aid Highway (CSAH 12). It was submitted as a candidate project in the multi-use trail category through the 2018 regional solicitation. It was not selected for funding.

The majority of the RBTN in Washington County is Tier 2 alignments. Many of these alignments are under MnDOT jurisdiction. More importantly, there are no RBTN Tier 2 alignments in Washington County in population and employment centers large enough to compete with Minneapolis and Saint Paul, which is also 20% of the funding criteria.

Without a process to add/update alignments to the RBTN, Washington County cannot compete in the multi-use trail category in the regional solicitation. No project on the current map can win based on the current funding criteria and the 2017 map**. It is critical that prior to each solicitation, any map used to score and rank projects is updated with local input.**

Request

1. Washington County requests that multiuse trail projects connecting to an existing or future transitway station receive the full 200 points in the RBTN criteria.

2. Washington County requests a process for updating the RBTN map before the 2022 Regional Solicitation.

Principal Arterial Intersection Conversion Map (2017)

Concern

The map of intersection grade-separation priorities is used to score and rank projects in the regional solicitation with up to 80 points for a high priority intersection, nearly 10% of the possible points. There were 4 intersections in Washington County included in the study, all along Highway 36, none are ranked high priority. Congestion, truck traffic, and safety hazards on Highway 36 have increased significantly since the opening of the Saint Croix River Crossing in late 2017. At the time the intersection grade-separation priority map was adopted in February 2017, the bridge had not yet opened and data was not available to capture its impact. Washington County has requested that Metropolitan Council update the intersection ranking map to include the growing impact of the Saint Croix River Crossing. This request was denied, noting there is no process for updating the map. **It is**

critical that prior to each solicitation, any map used to score and rank projects is updated with local input.

Request

1. Given the unique situation of the Saint Croix River Crossing opening post study, Washington County requests that the at-grade-intersection on Highway 36 under Washington County jurisdiction with the highest traffic volumes be given the full 80 points made possible by the Principal Arterial Intersection Conversion Study.

2. Washington County requests a process for updating the rankings in the Principal Arterial Intersection Conversion Study before the 2022 Regional Solicitation.

Truck Freight Corridor Map (2017)

Concern

The Truck Freight Corridor Study was completed in 2017 with the intent to prioritize the most significant regional truck highway corridors in the region. This study was adopted into the Metropolitan Council's 2018 Transportation Policy Plan update. A map of truck corridors from the study is used to score and rank projects in the regional solicitation, with 80, 60 and 40 points possible for projects along Tier 1, 2 or 3 truck corridors respectively. Ten points are awarded for projects that intersect a corridor, and zero points are awarded for projects not along nor intersecting a truck corridor. All roadway expansion and modernization projects funded in the Regional Solicitation in 2018 received full or partial truck corridor points with the exception of the Helmo-Bielenberg Bridge, which was funded after Washington County appealed.

There are five truck corridors in Washington County, all under MnDOT jurisdiction – I-94, I-694, I-494, and Highways 8, 36 and 61. Washington County has no plans to make improvements to these MnDOT investments beyond an interchange at Manning Ave. at this time.

Washington County requested that a few hundred yards of Century Ave. that connect I-694 to a major Fed Ex shipping distribution center to I-694 be added to the map as a truck corridor so that Century Ave improvements could compete for funding. This request was denied, noting there is no process for updating the map. At the time of its adoption there was no indication that the map would be used so rigidly for scoring such that short segments not included on the map would eliminate a project's competitiveness. **It is critical that prior to each solicitation, any map used to score and rank projects is updated with local input.**

Request

1. Washington County requests that roadways with a Heavy Commercial Annual Average Daily Traffic (HCAADT) of 1,000 or more be eligible for the full 80 points allocated to projects on the Truck Freight Corridor Study map.

2. Washington County requests a process for updating the Truck Freight Corridor Study map before the 2022 Regional Solicitation.

November 6, 2019

Metropolitan Council
Transportation Advisory Board
Mayor James Hovland, TAB Chair
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101

RE: 2020 Regional Solicitation Public Comment

Dear Chair Hovland and TAB Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on proposed updates to the 2020 Regional Solicitation application and scoring criteria.

East Metro Strong is a partnership between Ramsey and Washington Counties, six east metro cities, and regional employers, working to improve transit and transportation choices in the east metro. Like the Metropolitan Council, we see transit not only as transportation, but as a foundation of a healthy, connected community.

The goal of the Regional Solicitation is "to meet regional transportation needs." Those needs, of course, change over time, and we appreciate the Transportation Advisory Board's work to update funding categories and criteria as needs change, and as we gain a better understanding of ongoing needs.

We particularly applaud the proposed new emphasis on improving pedestrian safety (Add a new pedestrian safety measure in the roadway funding categories) and overcoming barriers to bicycle connectivity (Integrate the Regional Bicycle Barriers Study).

As the TAB reviews changes to the solicitation, our primary request is that the Solicitation and its criteria fairly evaluate projects that respond to new regional needs and opportunities. We understand that the region has an interest in advancing projects related to existing Metropolitan Council 'anticipated system' maps. However, by their nature, these maps do not necessarily reflect changing demographics, recent and planned investments, and new data. Under current and proposed criteria, the Metropolitan Council would use maps created in 2017 (with much older data) to make 2025 investment decisions.

We highlight one negative impact of this approach—to bicycle connections to transit—in particular, and also ask that the TAB consider a broader concern with the proposed new arterial BRT category.

Regional Bicycle Trail Network Map

The Regional Bicycle Trail Network (RBTN) map is worth 20% of the possible points in the multiuse trail funding category. Since the RBTN adoption in 2017:

- The Metropolitan Council has added the Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to the regional Transportation Policy Plan, and

- Washington County has developed a new important new bicycle facility that serves the Gold Line corridor. The new alignment would provide important bicycle connections between major activity centers and station locations.

Given those changes, Washington County requested a process for updating the RBTN that would recognize those planned investments. The request was denied, noting there is no process for updating the RBTN.

Without a process to add/update alignments to the RBTN, the RBTN cannot perform its intended function in helping guide regional investments. In particular, although it is an adopted regional priority to use bicycles to connect to regional transit, these rules mean that bicycle facilities in the Gold Line corridor simply cannot compete in the multi-use trail category in the regional solicitation.

This is clearly contrary to the goals of Thrive 2040 overall, the goals of the Regional Solicitation in general, and the goals of the proposed changes to the Regional Solicitation in particular.

Suggestion/request

1. Multiuse trail projects connecting to an existing or future transitway station receive the full 200 points in the RBTN criteria.

2. Update the RBTN map before the 2022 Regional Solicitation.

Arterial BRT Map

We support the proposed new "arterial bus rapid transit project" funding category. Arterial Bus Rapid Transit has proven to be a cost-effective way to provide high-quality service to more people, which then leads to substantial increases in ridership.

Metro Transit plans to update its current planned aBRT system map. While that update will not be complete before the 2020 solicitation, we want to ensure that it is complete in time for the 2022 solicitation, and that a variety of potential types and locations of corridors are examined. These should include, for example, Century Avenue.

Thank you for your work, and for the opportunity to comment. We look forward to the 2020 Regional Solicitation.

Sincerely,

Will Schroeer
Executive Director

Metro Transit

November 6, 2019

Mayor James Hovland, Chair
Transportation Advisory Board
C/O Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street N.
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Dear Chair Hovland:

Metro Transit appreciates the work of the Transportation Advisory Board to develop a Regional Solicitation that furthers the region's goals for transit.

Metro Transit supports the transit changes in the public comment draft, including the creation of the arterial bus rapid transit (ABRT) category which allows up to $25 million dedicated for ABRT, up to $7 million for other BRT projects, and the New Market Guarantee. Our experience with the METRO A Line and C Line is that speed, reliability and amenities attract new riders; we have experienced over 30 percent ridership growth in the METRO A Line corridor since its inception. This change will allow Metro Transit to continue investing in our ABRT program, which in turn strengthens our region's transit network.

The proposal to create an ABRT category will improve funding predictability, supporting growth in the ABRT network across our region. This is a significant improvement over the current process. The current process provides for limited and specific transit expansion or modernization improvements in ABRT corridors (e.g., buses, technology, bus stops, service) across multiple categories and multiple years. This means the funding becomes fragmented over projects and years. This creates uncertainty in both funding and project development/implementation timing.

The new ABRT category will allow Metro Transit to more effectively advance our ABRT program and will also provide expansion and modernization transit projects and new market projects more opportunities to secure funding. Overall, we believe this new approach will improve regional balance in transit investment throughout the metro.

Metro Transit also supports the creation of a new unique projects funding category to capture the new and evolving transportation services and facilities that support regional goals but do not fit into the existing categories of Transit Expansion, Transit Modernization or Travel Demand Management. Shared mobility services and strategic capital facility projects supporting shared mobility will reduce demand for single-occupant vehicle trips and expand transportation options for those without reliable access to automobiles.

Regional investment in these unique projects is essential to their success. These projects often rely on multi-agency coordination and/or public-private partnerships. The broad support that is reflected through Regional Solicitation funding is a great marker for innovative projects that have a high likelihood for success.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment on these important changes.

Sincerely,

Wes Kooistra
General Manager

Minneapolis
City of Lakes

Public Works
350 S. Fifth St. - Room 239
Minneapolis, MN 55415
TEL 612.673.3000
www.minneapolismn.gov

November 6, 2019

Elaine Koutsoukos
TAB Coordinator
390 Robert St
St Paul MN 55101

Ms. Koutsoukos,

Please find attached staff level comments from the City of Minneapolis on the proposed 2020 Regional Solicitation. The City of Minneapolis welcomes the opportunity to comment on how federal transportation funds are allocated to local projects throughout the region and we appreciate the opportunity to work with Metropolitan Council staff and local partner agencies across the region to guide the Regional Solicitation process. We value the time and effort that staff from the Metropolitan Council and local partner agencies have spent attending both regular committee meetings and the policy workgroups. This work will help address deficiencies in the process, refine a process to integrate equity more directly into the application process, provide new funding opportunities, and adapt to changing transportation needs across the region.

As we submit these comments to you, we would like to call out one area of which Minneapolis is particularly supportive. We are very supportive of the proposed ABRT funding category. This new category is forward thinking and will help the region to advance rapid transit service in a reliable and systematic way. Transit moves the most people in the most efficient way possible and must be at the core of any strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to transportation.

The rest of the solicitation package offers new scoring opportunities that seem counter to previous solicitation packages and to regional policy. We generally feel that awarding multimodal points for upgrading facilities to ADA standards, which is required by law, is a low threshold for measuring improvements. We are also concerned that the proposed Spot Mobility category is taking a very narrow view as compared to a system-wide perspective and related scoring methodology. And lastly, it can't be overstated that construction costs are rising for all projects not only for expansion projects.

Our detailed comments are attached and if you have any questions on these, please contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Jenifer Hager

Jenifer Hager
Director of Transportation Planning and Programming
Minneapolis Public Works

cc: Council Member Kevin Reich, TAB Member and Robin Hutcheson, Director of Minneapolis Public Works

Attachment: Minneapolis Regional Solicitation Comments – 2020.docx

Regional Solicitation 2024-2025

Roadways

1. **Traffic Management Technologies**

- None.

2. **Spot Mobility**

- 41% of the scoring is related to existing congestion and mitigation, which may counteract potential safety improvements, which is counter to added emphasis on pedestrian safety
- Being scored on travel speeds for safety is counter-intuitive and has an inverse relationship with crash severity and lacks context sensitivity with new state law that allows cities to set speed limits
- If a project decreases localized congestion and displaces it nearby, how is that considered? Expansion projects often induce regional VMT, regional emissions, displace congestion to other pinchpoints, etc.
- Consider negative points for projects creating and/or exacerbating barriers for non-motorized users. Some projects could trigger need for future solicitation application to mitigate expansion projects? (See equity scoring example)
- Projects should not be awarded multimodal points for upgrading facilities to ADA standards, that is required by law and is a low threshold for measuring improvements. Points should be focused on new and/or improved facilities, such as trails, medians, bumpouts, traffic control devices, etc.

3. **Strategic Capacity / Expansion**

- $10M max award is inconsistent with funding in other categories. **Construction costs are increasing across all funding categories**.
- Mn GO: Build to a maintainable scale and don't overbuild. Make transportation decisions that minimize and reduce total greenhouse gas emissions. 30% reduction by 2025.
- MnDOT Transportation Asset Management Plan (2019):
  - MnDOT also expects construction costs to grow faster than revenue, resulting in lower purchasing power for the state
  - MnDOT is shifting from a builder to a maintainer of the system
  - Per capita VMT is projected to remain flat
- If a project decreases localized congestion and displaces it nearby, how is that considered? Expansion projects often induce regional VMT, regional emissions, displace congestion to other pinchpoints, etc.
- Consider negative points for projects creating and/or exacerbating barriers for non-motorized users. Some projects could trigger need for future solicitation application to mitigate expansion projects? (See equity scoring example)
- Projects should not be awarded multimodal points for upgrading facilities to ADA standards, that is required by law and is a low threshold for measuring improvements. Points should be focused on new and/or improved facilities, such as trails, medians, bumpouts, traffic control devices, etc.

4. **Reconstruction/Modernization**

- Usage – Measures A and B should both use daily person throughput.
- Projects should not be awarded multimodal points for upgrading facilities to ADA standards, that is required by law and is a low threshold for measuring improvements. Points should be focused on new and/or improved facilities, such as trails, medians, bumpouts, traffic control devices, etc.

5. **Bridges**

- None

Transit

1. **Arterial Bus Rapid Transit**

- Current process allows specific transit expansion or modernization improvements in ABRT corridors (i.e. buses, technology, bus stops, service) across multiple categories, and multiple years and is typically not enough resource to build ABRT. This new category creates more certainty for funding, project development, and implementation.
- A Line and C Line have very high growth in ridership and proven very popular with customers and the neighborhoods they serve.
- Removes over-competing for limited funds for transit improvements along ABRT corridors, and provides confidence to other transit projects that there are competitive categories for them to win funding.
- ABRT corridors will be guided by Network Next https://www.metrotransit.org/network-next in a comprehensive and public way.
- Allows for regional balance and opportunity for a variety of transit investments, with at least one transit project in a "new transit market"

2. **Transit Expansion**

- Allows up to $7 million for Highway and Dedicated Guideway BRT projects throughout the region.

3. **Transit Modernization**

- Allows up to $7 million for Highway and Dedicated Guideway BRT projects throughout the region.

4. **Travel Demand Management**

- none

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

1. **Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities**

- Decreases max from $5.5M to $4M, in the same cycle Capacity Expansion is increased to $10M
- Certain projects should be eligible for $5.5M award that are critical regional barriers and/or score above a certain percentile

2. **Pedestrian Facilities**

- None

3. **Safe Routes to School**

- None

Other Notes:

- Continued focus on congestion, vehicle mobility, capacity expansion, and highway investments. Many of these are counter to regional policy, climate change, greenhouse gas reduction targets, and focus on vehicles as compared to a strong transportation system promoting transit and non-motorized connectivity.
- There was an emphasis to add a new pedestrian safety measure in the roadway funding categories to emphasize the regional need for improved pedestrian safety. However, if most of the scoring is still rewarding localized travel times and congestion displacement applicants are still compelled to scope projects that will receive funding.

Regional Solicitation 2024-2025

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2. **Pedestrian Facilities**

- None

3. **Safe Routes to School**

- None

Other Notes:

- Continued focus on congestion, vehicle mobility, capacity expansion, and highway investments. Many of these are counter to regional policy, climate change, greenhouse gas reduction targets, and focus on vehicles as compared to a strong transportation system promoting transit and non-motorized connectivity.
- There was an emphasis to add a new pedestrian safety measure in the roadway funding categories to emphasize the regional need for improved pedestrian safety. However, if most of the scoring is still rewarding localized travel times and congestion displacement applicants are still compelled to scope projects that will receive funding.

City Of Burnsville
952-895-4400
100 Civic Center Parkway • Burnsville, Minnesota 55337-3817
www.burnsvillemn.gov

November 8, 2019

Metropolitan Council
Transportation Advisory Board
Mayor James Hovland, TAB Chair
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101

RE: 2020 Regional Solicitation Public Comment

Dear Chair Hovland and TAB Members:

As a partner in the regional transit system, the Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) has grown to be the second largest provider in the state, with nearly three million rides annually. We are proud of the collaboration for transit that this organization has brought south of the river.

In coordination with Suburban Transit Association, MVTA has been successful in lobbying for additional regional transit funding. We hope that their projects continue to be supported by the Metropolitan Council-led Regional Solicitation process as well. The Solicitation provides one of the only ways for suburban providers to meet growth projections of the Transportation Policy Plan – specifically employment growth of 50% by 2040 in the Suburban Transit Association service area (compared to 36% region-wide) and population growth of 36% (compared to 29% region-wide).

The proposed 2020 Regional Solicitation changes leave little room for fixed route, regular bus service to compete. The following bullets identify concerns with the draft Solicitation program as raised by MVTA and supported by the City of Burnsville. Suggested revisions to the final 2020 application package and areas of support are as follows:

- **Concern:** Creation of a category, specifically Arterial BRT, that is managed by one agency/transit provider is unprecedented.
  Suggested revision: The City of Burnsville favors a broader interpretation of BRT that allows multiple agencies to compete for funds. If this is not feasible, it is requested that the TAB take a similar approach for suburban providers by awarding at least one project in Transit Expansion and at least one project in Transit Modernization to a Suburban Transit Association provider.

- **Concern:** The proposed $25 million maximum for Arterial BRT projects and up to $7 million for an additional BRT project selected through Transit Expansion or Transit Modernization categories (for a total of up to $32 million to BRT projects) leaves little funding for fixed route, regular bus service. Based on historical distributions as little as $8 million could remain for non-BRT projects.
  Suggested revision: The City of Burnsville favors a broader interpretation of BRT that is inclusive of multiple providers, geographies, and a definition that satisfies the service intent of BRT (such as speed, reliability, use of transit advantages) so suburban transit providers could compete for up to $32 million set-aside to ABRT/BRT projects. The City of Burnsville also encourages TAB to reinstate the requirement that transit applicants must demonstrate financial capacity to operate projects beyond the life of awarded funds.
- **Support:** The City of Burnsville supports additional regional funding to transit whether through the proposal to increase the modal funding range of transit projects or to take an approach of over programming across all modes.
- **Support:** The City of Burnsville supports the creation of a Transit New Market guarantee.

The City of Burnsville, along with our transit provider MVTA, looks forward to continuing to work together to grow and improve transit in the region. We encourage TAB to address the issues identified above in the final 2020 Regional Solicitation application package.

Respectfully,

Melanie Mesko Lee
Burnsville City Manager

C: Lisa Freese, TAC Chair
Paul Oehme, TAC Funding & Programming Chair
Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator

November 8, 2019

Ms. Molly Cummings, Interim Chair
Metropolitan Council
390 Robert Street North
St. Paul, MN 55101

Re: DRAFT 2020 Regional Solicitation

Dear Ms. Cummings:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft application, instructions and qualifying criteria documents for the upcoming 2020 Regional Solicitation. As you know, federal funding secured through this program is a critical component of Anoka County's highway improvement program.

First, I would like to call attention to several of the constructive and positive revisions being proposed. One of the proposed changes that will have a significant positive impact on projects in the region is the adjustment of the minimum and maximum funding amounts for each modal category. We feel Met Council staff, members of TAB and TAC, and the several subcommittees involved in the update process took a thorough look at past project applications, funding trends and current construction costs in determining the proper thresholds. We agree with proposed funding ranges.

Another item that warrants acknowledgement is the introduction of the Spot Mobility category. In the past, at-grade spot improvement projects have been overshadowed by large, glamorous interchange improvement projects. While we strongly support allocating funding to projects that address the highest needs, this new category will help allocate funding toward small improvement projects that maximize safety and operational benefits at lower costs. We are in support of the proposed changes within the Roadway category (see Table 3 below), including the renamed Roadway Expansion category (now Strategic Capacity), which now has an increased maximum award of $10M per project.

Table 3: Regional Solicitation Funding Award Minimums and Maximums

Modal Categories	Regional Solicitation Application Categories	Minimum Federal Award	Maximum Federal Award
Roadways Including Multimodal Elements	Traffic Management Technologies (Roadway System Management)	$250,000	$~~7,0~~3,500,000
	Spot Mobility and Safety	$1,000,000	$3,500,000
	Strategic Capacity (Roadway Expansion)	$1,000,000	$~~7~~10,000,000
	Roadway Reconstruction/ Modernization ~~and Spot Mobility~~	$1,000,000	$7,000,000
	Bridge Rehabilitation/Replacement	$1,000,000	$7,000,000
Transit and TDM Projects	Arterial Bus Rapid Transit Project	N/A	$25,000,000
	Transit Expansion	$500,000	$7,000,000
	Transit Modernization	$~~100~~500,000	$7,000,000
	Travel Demand Management (TDM)	$~~75~~100,000	$500,000
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities	$250,000	$~~5,5~~4,000,000
	Pedestrian Facilities	$250,000	$1,000,000
	Safe Routes to School (Infrastructure Projects)	$250,000	$1,000,000

One proposed change that we are very concerned about is the proposal to reduce funding in the Roadway and Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement categories to fund the new Arterial Bus Rapid Transit application category as shown in Table 2 (below) of the draft solicitation.

Table 2: Modal Funding Levels*

	Roadways Including Multimodal Elements	Transit and TDM	Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities	Total
Modal Funding Levels	Range of ~~48~~46%-~~68~~65% Range of $~~86M~~83M-$~~122M~~117M Midpoint $100M	Range of ~~22~~25%-~~32~~35% Range of $~~40M~~45M-$~~58M~~63M Midpoint $54M	Range of ~~10~~9%-20% Range of $~~18M~~16M-$36M Midpoint $26M	100% $180M (Est)*

** 2.5% ($4M-$5M) will be set aside for unique projects out of the total funds available, leaving the remaining funds to be distributed to the above modes within the percentage ranges shown. Amounts shown assume that some level of overprogramming will occur, but TAB will determine the exact amount as part of project selection.*

This proposed reallocation will limit our ability to improve the A Minor Arterial system, which is, as should be pointed out, the primary roadway system used by Metro Transit to provide service. It is referenced in material for the draft solicitation that the rationale for the allocation shift is to provide additional funding to the Transit and TDM to achieve more projects (i.e., $7M for non-BRT, $25M for ABRT, etc.). We feel this is inherently unfair. We request that the funding ranges and midpoints for each modal category remain the same as those developed in past solicitations.

We hope that you find these comments constructive and make appropriate modifications to the selection process as necessary. If you have any questions on our comments, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Scott Schulte, Chair
Anoka County Board of Commissioners

cc: Reva Chamblis, Met Council District 2 Member
Raymond Zeran, Met Council District 9 Member
Peter Lindstrom, Met Council District 10 Member
Susan Vento, Met Council District 11 Member

EAGAN
ESTABLISHED 1860

November 4, 2019

Mayor James Hovland, TAB Chair
Transportation Advisory Board
390 Robert Street North
Saint Paul, MN 55101-1805

RE: 2020 Regional Solicitation Public Comment

Dear Chair Hovland and TAB Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2020 Regional Solicitation program. As a Minnesota Valley Transit Authority Joint Powers Agreement member, the City of Eagan supports efforts to secure needed funding for regional transit service. The Regional Solicitation process provides an opportunity for suburban transit providers to meet the needs of greater population and employment growth projections in suburban transit providers' service areas than in the overall region as reflected in the Transportation Policy Plan.

We are concerned that the 2020 Regional Solicitation does not allow for fixed route, regular bus service to compete for adequate funding. The primary issue is the creation of an Arterial BRT category that excludes the possibility of funding projects outside of the Metropolitan core area. We support a broader interpretation of BRT that will allow multiple service providers to more equitably compete for funds. Alternatively, we support providing the opportunity to award at least one Transit Expansion project and one Transit Modernization project to a suburban transit provider.

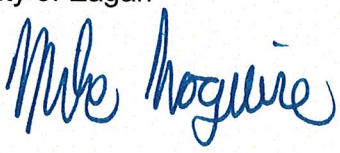
We also are concerned about the limited availability of funds for Arterial BRT projects and an additional BRT project selected under the Transit Expansion or Transit Modernization categories. Again, we favor a broader interpretation of BRT that would enable multiple transit providers to compete for project funding.

Finally, we support additional funding through increasing the modal funding range for transit projects or over-programming across all modes, as well as the creation of a Transit New Market guarantee.

We appreciate your consideration of these concerns and proposals. We encourage the formulation of strategies through the Regional Solicitation program that will promote continued growth and improvement in the regional transit system.

Respectfully,

City of Eagan



Mayor Mike Maguire