

Agenda

TAC Funding and Programming Committee



Meeting date: May 15, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Public participation:

This meeting will be streamed and recorded.

[Watch the meeting online.](#)

If you have comments, we encourage members of the public to email us at public.info@metc.state.mn.us.

You may pre-register to speak at a virtual public meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee by emailing us at public.info@metc.state.mn.us.

Call to order

1. Roll call
2. Approval of the agenda
3. Approval of March 20, 2025, TAC Funding and Programming Committee minutes – roll call

Public comment on committee business

TAB report

Business

1. **2025-18:** Scope Change Request – Minnesota Valley Transit Authority's Technology and ADA Enhancements Project (Joe Barbeau, MTS)
2. **2025-19:** Adoption of the Draft 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), pending public comment (Joe Barbeau, MTS) – roll call
3. **2025-20:** Corridors of Commerce Local Recommendation: City of Anoka's Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing Project (Steve Peterson, MTS)

Information

1. Regional Safety Action Plan (Heidi Schallberg, MTS)
2. Regional Transportation and Climate Change Multimodal Measures Study (Tony Fischer, MTS)

Other business

Adjournment

Council contact:

Robbie King, Senior Planner
robbie.king@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1380

Minutes

TAC Funding and Programming Committee



Meeting date: March 20, 2025,

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eden Prairie – Robert Ellis | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Metro District –Jody Carr | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anoka Co. – Jerry Auge |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fridley – Jim Kosluchar (Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Metro District State Aid – Colleen Brown | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carver Co. – Darin Mielke |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lakeville – Paul Oehme (Vice Chair) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MnDOT Bike/Ped – Mackenzie Turner Bargaen | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dakota Co. – Jacob Chapek |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eagan – Russ Matthys | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MPCA – Lauren Dickerson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hennepin Co. – Emily Buell |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minneapolis – Nathan Koster | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DNR – Nancy Spooner-Walsh | <input type="checkbox"/> Ramsey Co. – Kevin Roggenbuck |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plymouth – Michael Thompson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suburban Transit Assoc. – Heidi Scholl | <input type="checkbox"/> Scott Co. – Adam Jessen |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> St. Paul – Anne Weber | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wash Co. – Madeline Dahlheimer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met Council – Steve Peterson | | <input type="checkbox"/> = present, E = excused |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metro Transit – Scott Janowiak | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TAB Coordinator – Elaine Koutsoukos | | |

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Kosluchar called the regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee to order at 1:02 p.m.

Agenda approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. Therefore, a vote was not needed for approval.

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Nancy Spooner Walsh, DNR, seconded by Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, to approve the minutes of January 23, 2025, regular meeting of the TAC Funding and Programming Committee. **Motion carried**

Public comment on committee business

TAB report

Business

1. **2025-10:** Program Year Extension – Washington County CR 19A Realignment Project (Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning)

Joe Barbeau, MTS Planning, presented. Jerry Auge, Anoka Co., asked if the bridge part of this over the railroad is currently at -grade crossing and if it's going to be an overpass. Madeline Dahlheimer confirmed stating it's currently an at grade rail crossing and the project includes adding that grade-separated crossing.

It was moved by Colleen Brown, MNDOT State Aid, and seconded by Auge, that the Funding and Programming Committee recommend approval of Washington County's program year extension request for its County Road 19A (Keats Avenue) realignment from 2026 to 2027.

Motion carried.

Information

1. Regional Solicitation Evaluation: Base Application Structure (Steve Peterson, MTS Planning and Molly Stewart SRF)

Steve Peterson, MTS Planning, presented. Kosluchar asked whether enough people have volunteered for the special issue working groups. Peterson replied that an adequate number have volunteered.

Scott Janowiak, Metro Transit, asked if the transit customer experience language would functionally replace transit modernization and if it could preserve eligibility for support facilities-based projects, like bus garages. Peterson responded that the transit customer experience language would likely be equivalent to transit modernization. He noted that the Transit Technical Working Group still needs to clarify whether projects should be focused on customer-side improvements (e.g., upgrading bus stops) or support facilities (e.g., bus garages). He also mentioned that operations-related projects are eligible.

Emily Buell, Hennepin Co., raised the point that Safe Routes to School projects might score better under the local pedestrian network category than the safety category, as they generally focus on improving access rather than reducing fatalities or serious crashes. Peterson agreed, explaining that Safe Routes to School projects are often aimed at providing safer access for students rather than directly addressing crash reduction. He suggested these projects would likely fall under the "local pedestrian" and "local bike network gaps and barriers" categories.

Buell inquired about the status of bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects under the current funding structure. Peterson stated that while the eligibility for bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects has not been fully discussed, he assumed both would be included in the new structure, though this will be something for the special issue working group to discuss. He noted that previously, federal funding for such projects required meeting minimum standards.

Eyoh asked whether there may be some change in how to approach funding within functional classifications. Peterson said that roadway projects used to be funded based on functional classification. He said that after moving away from that a rule was established that at least one project within each functional classification must be funded; a rule that could be retained. He added that collectors could be funded as they're federally eligible, even though TAB has

chosen not to fund them. This is also the case with freeways. Kosluchar whether this would be considered as an overall issue or by smaller groups. Peterson said that given the variation of categories this should be a matter for the Technical Steering Committee to address, with input from special issue working groups.

Buell raised concerns about the language used to describe equity and climate action in funding proposals, given the new federal direction. She wanted to ensure that the language used would not jeopardize funding eligibility. Peterson said that language changes have been made to align with federal guidelines, such as combining climate and natural systems under the "environment" category. He emphasized that equity and community connections are still a focus and will be carefully considered moving forward.

Nathan Koster, Minneapolis, suggested going back to aligning with the original goals such as simplification, given how many variables can change moving ahead. Kosluchar suggested providing participants with summaries of the goals. Peterson said that staff will remind members of the special interest working groups of the goals.

Michael Thompson, Plymouth, asked if funding for the Travel Behavior Inventory and unique projects would continue under the new structure. Peterson clarified that while there was no dedicated funding for unique projects in the last cycle, the Travel Behavior Inventory is a long-standing commitment, with funding contributions from the Met Council and MnDOT. He suggested that unique projects may not need separate funding under the new structure if they fit into the broader application categories. Thompson expressed support for the Travel Behavior Inventory, emphasizing the importance of good data but voiced concerns about the unique projects category, which he felt was unclear. Kosluchar agreed with Thompson, suggesting that the previous structure for unique projects was cumbersome, and he prefers a more flexible approach under the new framework.

Peterson reminded attendees of the upcoming in-person meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on April 2. He noted that this meeting would include further discussion on these topics and would help refine the proposals moving forward.

Other Business

Koutsoukos shared an update from the Federal Highway Administration regarding projects funded through formula funds, stating that these projects will continue as planned. She clarified that discretionary funds are at risk due to the federal funding pause.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Council contact:

Robbie King, Senior Planner
Robbie.King@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1380



Action Transmittal

Transportation Advisory Board



Committee meeting date: May 15, 2025

Date: April 18, 2025

Action Transmittal: 2025-18

Scope Change Request – Minnesota Valley Transit Authority's Technology and ADA Enhancements Project

To: TAC Funding and Programming Committee

Prepared by: Joe Barbeau, Planning Analyst, 651-602-1705
Robbie King, Senior Planner, 651-602-1380

Requested action

Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) requests a scope change to replace generalized improvements at 53 bus stops and shelters with enhanced improvements for eight stations in its technology and ADA enhancements project.

Recommended motion

That the TAC Funding and Programming Committee recommend that TAC recommend approval of MVTA's scope change request to replace e-paper and real time signage improvements at 53 bus stops and shelters with enhanced improvements for eight stations in its technology and ADA enhancements project (SP# TRS-TCMT-24K) with no reduction in federal funds.

Background and purpose

Minnesota Valley Transit Authority was awarded \$500,000 in Surface Transportation Program Block Grant Program (STBGP) funds in the Transit Modernization category of the 2022 Regional Solicitation. [The application](#) was awarded to fund elements such as e-paper signage and real-time signage at 53 stops and shelters, indoor interactive kiosks at four MVTA transit hubs, platform displays at three sites, and the implementation of bus stop beacons, smart lighting, text-to-speech buttons, and annunciators.

MVTA reports logistical challenges and high electrical costs associated with upgrading all 53 proposed bus stops and shelters. Additionally, the proposed use of e-paper for real time signage at bus stops has not undergone enough testing to discern whether the technology can perform well in cold weather. As a result, MVTA requests a shift towards focusing on enhancing four park-and-ride locations, three bus stops, and one high-priority bus shelter. MVTA requests retention of its full federal funding amount, because the overall project cost remains unchanged and elements being implemented are being constructed in facilities with a larger footprint, therefore high cost per implementation.

Relationship to regional policy

Projects that receive funding through the Regional Solicitation and HSIP Solicitation processes are subject to the regional scope change policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the project is designed and constructed according to the plans and intent described in the original application.

The scope change policy allows project sponsors to adjust their projects as needed while still providing substantially the same benefits described in their original project applications

Staff analysis

Approval/Denial of the Scope Change: The improvements intended to be made at lower-profile bus stops are fairly minor. MVTa recognizes two unforeseen events that precipitate this scope change; unanticipated high electrical costs and that the proposition to use e-paper for real time signage was not properly tested for cold weather environments. As a result, maximum impact of the funds awarded will be best realized by targeting eight higher priority facilities.

Scoring is a non-issue as all eligible projects in the Transit Modernization category were funded. (Note that one project was unfunded due to the limit on funding bus rapid transit projects.)

Funding: The original application budget is displayed in Table 1 below. The requested scope change elements and their associated cost estimates are shown in Table 2 below:

Table 1: Original Application Budget

Project Element	Estimated Cost
Wayfinding	\$250,000
Transit Systems	\$375,000
Federal Funding Amount	\$500,000
Local Match	\$125,000
Total Project Cost	\$625,000

Table 2: Requested Change to Project Elements

Location	Estimated Cost
Minnesota Zoo Shelter	\$60,000
Palomino Park & Ride	\$70,000
Southbridge Crossings Park & Ride	\$70,000
Savage Park & Ride	\$70,000
Blackhawk Park & Ride	\$70,000
Burnsville Transit Station	\$165,000
Rosemount Transit Station	\$60,000
157th Street Station	\$60,000
Total	\$625,000

MVTa requests retention of their full funding. Given the original application's lack of specifics in assigning funds to individual project elements, it is difficult to attempt to suggest specific reductions. Therefore, staff recommends no funding change.

Routing

To	Action Requested	Date Completed (Date Scheduled)
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review and recommend	May 15, 2025
Technical Advisory Committee	Review and recommend	June 4, 2025
Transportation Advisory Board	Review and Adopt	June 18, 2025



ATTACHMENT 1: FUNDING DATA FOR SCOPE CHANGE REQUEST

Original Application:

Regional Solicitation Year	2022
Application Funding Category	STBG
HSIP Solicitation?	Yes No
Application Total Project Cost	\$625,000
TAB Award	\$500,000
Application Federal Percentage of Total Project Cost	80%

Project Elements Being Removed:	Original Application Cost
53 bus stops and shelters: Preliminary project design has identified significant logistical challenges and high electrical costs associated with upgrading all 53 proposed bus stops and shelters; therefore, MVTa is requesting to reallocate this funding to maximize its impact by focusing on enhancing and updating four park-and-ride locations, three key bus stops, and one high-priority bus shelter.	\$625,000
E-Paper: This technology has not undergone as much testing as MVTa had initially anticipated. As a result, we currently lack sufficient data, particularly related to performance in a cold, winter climate, to move forward with it.	

Scope Change Policy

TAB Adopted: February 19, 2025

New Project Elements:	Cost (Based on Year of Costs in Original Application)
<p>The proposed new locations are listed below.</p> <p>The workplan remains the same as awarded, including the purchase, replacement and installation of real-time signage, indoor interactive kiosks, digital platform displays, text-to-speech buttons, annunciators, LED lighting and upgraded wayfinding technology.</p> <p>The technology and ADA upgrades at each location will be based upon ridership, customer gathering frequency, existing customer amenities, etc.</p>	
Minnesota Zoo Shelter	\$60,000
Palomino Park & Ride 7510 Palomino Drive, Apple Valley, MN 55124	\$70,000
Southbridge Crossings Park & Ride 1401 Crossings Blvd., Shakopee, MN 55379	\$70,000
Savage Park & Ride 14121 Huntington Avenue, Savage, MN 55378	\$70,000
Blackhawk Park & Ride 4565 Blackhawk Road, Eagan, MN 55122	\$70,000
Burnsville Transit Station 100 East Highway 13, Burnsville, MN 55337	\$165,000
Rosemount Transit Station 14550 Burnley Avenue South, Rosemount, MN 55068	\$60,000
157 th Street Station 15865 Pilot Knob Road, Apple Valley, MN 55124	\$60,000
Project Total	\$625,000 \$500,000 Funded \$125,000 Local Match

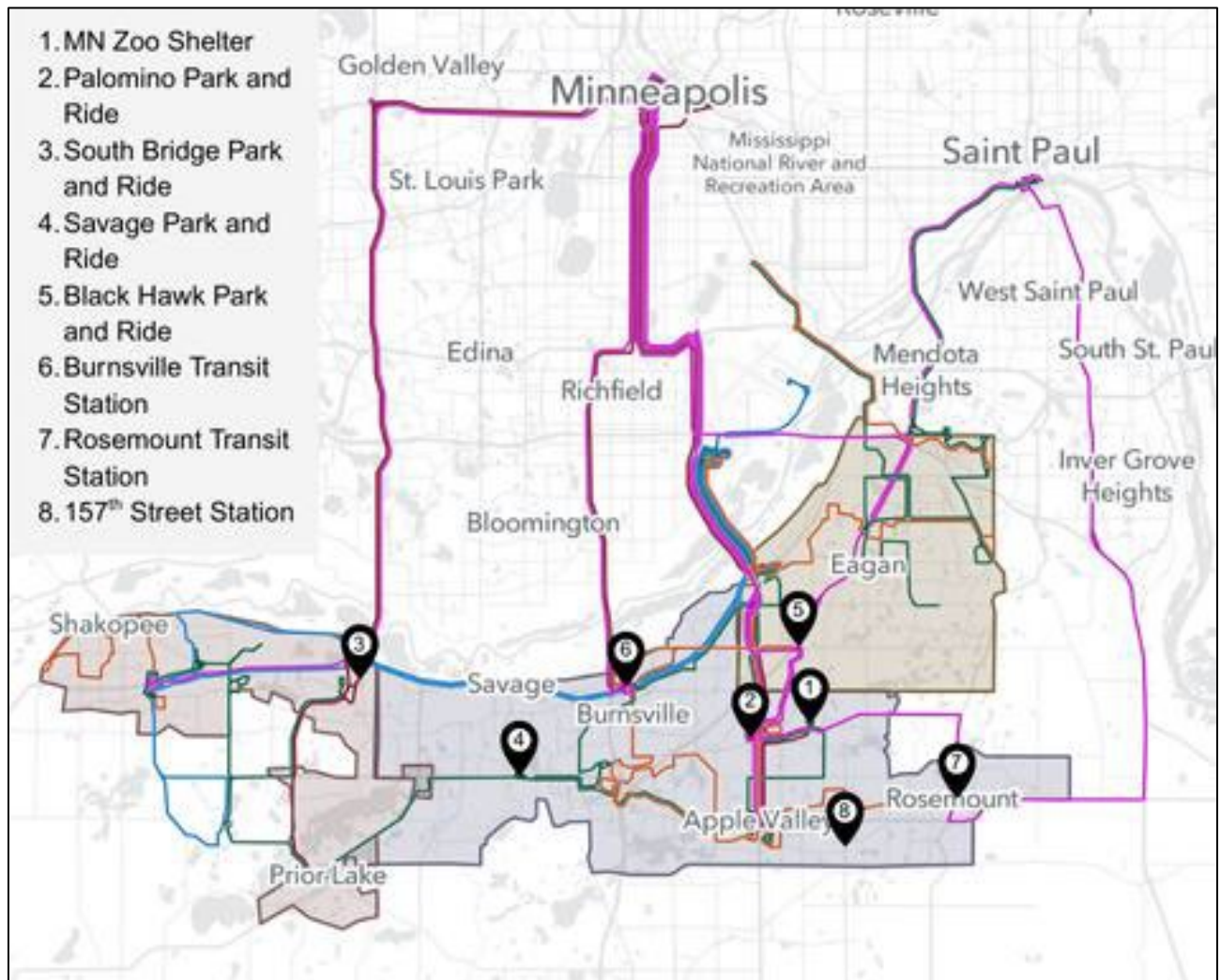
Revised Project Scope

The scope and priorities of the project remain the same: to implement, upgrade and expand innovative technology and ADA elements across MVRTA's service area that remove barriers for transit riders of all abilities and resource levels, allowing them to access and navigate public transportation effectively and confidently. The original scope proposed improvements at 53 bus shelters and stops throughout the MVRTA service area. However, preliminary project design has shown significant logistical challenges and high electrical costs associated with upgrading all 53 locations. Therefore, MVRTA is proposing a more targeted approach to implementing the original scope. The revised plan concentrates efforts on four park-and-ride locations, three key bus stations, and one high-priority bus shelter: see updated location map below. This strategic adjustment allows MVRTA to implement ADA and technology enhancements more efficiently and effectively in high-impact areas where the need is greatest.

MVRTA prioritizes local service and microtransit expansion. By investing in park-and-ride facilities that support all three service types, fixed-route, local and microtransit, MVRTA can create a more meaningful and efficient improvement for riders. The four park-and-ride locations, three key bus stops, and one high-priority bus shelter also serve as key customer touchpoints, with the highest levels of rider activity and engagement.

While the number of locations has been reduced and select technology updates have been modified to better accommodate MVRTA's facilities, the overall project cost remains unchanged. Due to site-specific complexities and larger site footprints, which require more extensive implementation efforts the cost per implementation site is higher. This work is focused on updates and replacements at existing sites; therefore, we do not anticipate heavy ground disruption.

Updated Project Locations



Action Transmittal

Transportation Advisory Board



Meeting Date: May 15, 2025

Date: May 7, 2025

Action Transmittal: 2025-19

Adoption of the Draft 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), pending public comment

To: TAC Funding & Programming Committee

Prepared By: Joe Barbeau, Planning Analyst, 651-602-1705

Requested Action

The Metropolitan Council staff requests adoption of the draft 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Recommended Motion

That the TAC Funding & Programming Committee recommend that TAC recommend adoption of the draft 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Summary

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a four-year list of federally funded transportation projects required for all metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). The TIP must include all projects funded with federal transportation funds along with all regionally significant projects. Federal regulations require that a TIP be developed at least every four years. The Metropolitan Council revises its TIP every year in conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The draft 2026-2029 TIP and its development process will meet applicable federal requirements once the public input process is complete. The public comment period is scheduled to run from May 24 to July 7.

The 2026-2029 TIP approval schedule is as follows:

- May 21, 2025 – TAB releases draft TIP for public review
- June 17, 2025 – Virtual public meeting
- July 7, 2025 – Public review/comment period ends
- August 20, 2025 – TAB considers public comments, recommends potential changes in response to the comments and recommends approval of the final TIP to the Metropolitan Council
- August 25, 2025 – Transportation Committee recommends approval of the TIP to the Metropolitan Council
- September 10, 2025 – Metropolitan Council approves the TIP
- September/October 2025 – MnDOT inclusion of metro area TIP into State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)
- November 2025 – USDOT approves Minnesota STIP

The 2026-2029 TIP includes projects valued at approximately \$6.4 billion for highway, freight transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects. Roughly 18% of federal funding is from the Regional Solicitation (including HSIP Solicitation). The sources of funds over the four years are summarized as follows:

- Total – \$6.4 Billion
 - Federal Highway – \$1.8 Billion
 - Federal Transit – \$1.2 Billion
 - Property Tax and State Taxes – \$2.5 Billion
 - Trunk Highway Funds – \$884 Million

Relationship to Regional Policy

Federal law requires that all transportation projects that will be partially- or fully funded with federal funds must be in an approved Transportation Improvement Program and meet the following four tests: fiscal constraint; consistency with the adopted regional transportation plan; air quality conformity; and opportunity for public input. It is the Metropolitan Council's responsibility to adopt and amend the TIP according to these four requirements.

Routing

To	Action Requested	Date <i>Scheduled / Completed</i>
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	5/15/2025
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	6/4/2025
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Recommend	8/20/2025
Transportation Committee	Review & Recommend	8/25/2025
Metropolitan Council	Review & Adopt	9/10/2025



Action Transmittal

Transportation Advisory Board



Committee meeting date: May 15, 2025

Date: May 7, 2025

Action Transmittal: 2025-20

Corridors of Commerce Local Screening and Recommendation: City of Anoka's Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing Project

To: TAC Funding & Programming Committee

Prepared by: Steve Peterson, Senior Manager, 651-602-1819

Bethany Brandt-Sargent, Planning Analyst, 651-602-1725

Requested action

Metropolitan Council staff requests a recommendation of the City of Anoka's Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing Project to allow MnDOT to score the project as part of the Corridors of Commerce Readiness Advancement solicitation .

Recommended motion

That the TAC Funding & Programming Committee recommend that that the Metropolitan Council recommend the City of Anoka's Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing Project to MnDOT for scoring consideration in the Corridors of Commerce Readiness Advancement solicitation.

Background and purpose

The Corridors of Commerce program includes funds for readiness advancement activities including planning, scoping, predesign, preliminary engineering, and environmental analysis. Eligible projects must be consistent with the Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan and be on the Trunk Highway System. For 2025, funds are only expected to be available for projects outside of the area bounded by Interstates 494 and 694 based on regional balance requirements within Minnesota Statute 161.088.

The Project Selection Process is five phases that began in March and is anticipated to be completed by October 1, 2025.

- Phase 1: Project Solicitation – any interested party (individual, business, local unit of government, corridor group, or interest group) can submit a future project for consideration.
- Phase 2: Local Screening & Recommendations – MnDOT distributes nominations received to local screening entities to recommend up to two projects for scoring. The Metropolitan Council in consultation with the Transportation Advisory Board along with select counties (Anoka, Carver, Chisago, Dakota, Hennepin, Isanti, Ramsey, Scott, Sherburne, Washington, and Wright) are identified as local screening entities.
- Phase 3: Project Scoring – MnDOT will score recommended projects based on eight criteria (return on investment, economic competitiveness, freight efficiency, safety, regional connections, policy objectives, community consensus, and project deliverability).
- Phase 4: Project Ranking Selection – MnDOT will develop ranked lists based on the total scores.

- Phase 5: Public Information – MnDOT will notify project sponsors and publish the selected projects and scoring process results.

Projects Submitted During Phase 1

During the project solicitation process, seven projects were submitted within the Metropolitan Council's Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) with a total request of \$19.635 million:

1. Anoka County: Trunk Highway 65 and Trunk Highway 10
2. Anoka County: Trunk Highway 47 and 85th Street
3. City of Anoka: Trunk Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing
4. Carver County: Trunk Highway 5
5. Dakota County: Trunk Highway 3 and County State Aid Highway 42
6. City of Elko New Market (Scott County): I-35 and County State Aid Highway 2
7. City of Elk River (Sherburne County): Trunk Highway 10

Because three projects were submitted within Anoka County, staff are recommending the Council forward the City of Anoka's Trunk Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing project to MnDOT for scoring. All other projects within the metro have recommendations from their respective county.

As part of the third phase of the process (project scoring), projects will receive 45 points if they have a letter of support from the Metropolitan Planning Organization. The Met Council will provide a letter of support for all seven submittals.

Trunk Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing

The City of Anoka requested \$4.235 million in Corridors of Commerce readiness funds to complete the funding gap needed to further study, engage with the community and stakeholders, and ultimately design and construct improvements on a 1.3-mile stretch of Highway 47 between Highway 10 and Bunker Lake Boulevard in Anoka. This includes grade-separating the Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing, the busiest and most dangerous at-grade rail crossings in the State of Minnesota (MnDOT) and a top need in the Midwest. More details on the readiness activities are provided at the end of this transmittal.

The City of Anoka has received nearly \$12 million through the 2022 and 2024 Regional Solicitations.

As required in the solicitation, Council staff have reached out to Senator Jim Abeler and Representative Zack Stephenson for comments and approval or disapproval. This section will be updated when available.

Relationship to regional policy

The City of Anoka's Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing project is consistent with the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan and Imagine 2050. It will improve railroad crossing safety at the most dangerous at-grade rail crossing in the state advancing transportation safety; alleviate freight bottlenecks and improve freight movements on a Tier 3 Regional Truck Corridor, and provide multimodal transportation facilities, all advancing transportation mobility and choice. This project is included in the 2025-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Staff analysis

This project is consistent with Imagine 2050, the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan, is included in the 2025-2027 TIP, and should be forwarded to MnDOT for consideration for the Corridors of Commerce Readiness Advancement solicitation.



Routing

To	Action Requested	Date Completed
TAC Funding & Programming Committee	Review & Recommend	5/15/2025
Technical Advisory Committee	Review & Recommend	6/4/2025
Transportation Advisory Board	Review & Recommend	6/18/2025
Transportation Committee	Review & Recommend	6/23/2025
Metropolitan Council	Adopt	6/25/2025



Readiness Advancement Activity Description (Provided by the City of Anoka)

The City of Anoka requests \$4.235 million in Corridors of Commerce readiness funds to complete the funding gap needed to further study, engage with the community and stakeholders, and ultimately design and construct improvements on a 1.3-mile stretch of Highway 47 between Highway 10 and Bunker Lake Boulevard in Anoka. This includes grade-separating the Highway 47/BNSF Railway Crossing, the busiest and most dangerous at-grade rail crossings in the State of Minnesota (MnDOT) and a top need in the Midwest.

Transportation Safety

September 26, 2023 marked the 20th anniversary of one of the most tragic train-vehicle accidents in state history. In 2003, a high-speed freight train crossing Highway 47 collided with a vehicle carrying four young adults, killing all four. Additionally, a 5-year (2019-2023) crash history recorded 70 crashes along the S-curve of the corridor between north of Garfield Street at the start of the S-curve and Pleasant Street (CSAH 30). The segment observed crash rate is 3.348, which is nearly three times the statewide average of 1.220. This results in a segment with a critical index of 1.79, which means the roadway segment is operating outside of the normal range when compared to similar roadways statewide. Nearly half (49%) of the 70 recorded crashes were rear-end crashes, with 21% of those rear-end crashes resulting in personal injury. Angle crashes accounted for 17% of the total crashes in the five years covered by the study. The nature of the railroad crossing and the curvature of the roadway in this portion of Highway 47 likely contributes to the high percentage of rear-end and angle crashes as vehicles stop for a train crossing. The northern project area, from McKinley St to Bunker Lk Blvd (CSAH116), runs through a densely populated residential area. There are 10 public and 31 private driveway access points on Highway 47 causing many angle crashes. Residents face side street wait times of up to two minutes during peak traffic hours. Lacking pedestrian facilities resulted in a twelve-year-old child being hit by a car while attempting to cross the highway with his bicycle.

System Stewardship

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation Railroad Administration and MnDOT, the Highway 47 at BNSF railroad crossing has the highest needs for improvement in the State of Minnesota and is a top need across the Midwest. Every project partner and documented analysis agrees that grade separation of this railway crossing is necessary. Public safety concern is very high, with 40 to 80 trains per day, at speeds up to 75 mph, interacting with 18,000 vehicles per day (450 heavy commercial) on Highway 47.

With the implementation of a bridge carrying Highway 47 over the BNSF railway, we know that rear end crashes on the corridor will be significantly reduced. Additionally, a regional mobility bottleneck will be removed eliminating the extensive backups that occur due to the two to three hours of down gate arm time each day.

Finally, the Highway 47 corridor has not been improved since 1930 and is long overdue for reinvestment to address significant safety concerns and the mobility needs of the northwest metro which has grown significantly since the roadway was first constructed.

Critical Connections

Today, the Highway 47 corridor does not meet the modern safety and mobility needs of its travelers and businesses. Highway 47 is a two-lane undivided minor arterial that carries over 18,000 vehicles, including 450 heavy trucks each day and far exceeding its design capacity. Highway 47 plays an integral role in moving people and goods north of U.S. Highway 10/169 and accessing Anoka's industrial park, home to over 15,000 jobs. It has been estimated that over 4,000 heavy trucks travel to and from the Anoka industrial park each day. Unfortunately, the railway is a major barrier for freight movement to and from several freight-generating areas near the project area. Highway 47 is also a Tier 3 Regional Truck Corridor, as designated by the Metropolitan Council. The highway connects directly to U.S. Highway 10/169 to the south, both of which are Tier 1 Regional Truck Corridors. Regular train events cause backups, far beyond the BNSF railway crossing, and over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile south to Downtown Anoka and it takes up to 20 minutes for traffic flow and system mobility to fully recover.

At both the northern and southern extents of the project area, recent highway capacity investments will increase the flow of traffic onto Highway 47 which will remain a bottleneck and a continued safety concern until improvements are made. To the north, Bunker Lake Blvd (CSAH 116), was reconstructed to increase capacity at its intersection with Highway 47. To the south US Highway 10/169 was recently reconstructed with new interchanges and overpasses moving traffic quickly through the area.

In addition, the Metro Transit currently operates four Northstar Commuter Rail trains per day that use the railway. This includes two trains in the morning peak hour and two in the afternoon peak hour. The Northstar Commuter Rail Anoka Station is just east of the project area at 4th Avenue (CSAH 31). The National Railroad Passenger Corporation also currently operates Amtrak's Empire Builder daily on the railway, which could potentially become busier if Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha route continues to move forward.

Climate Action

The adjacent Rum River is one of six designated Wild, Scenic, and Recreational rivers in Minnesota and is a tributary to the Mississippi River. The segment of Highway 47 near the BNSF railway crossing is only one hundred feet from the bank of the Rum River and in violation of a state statute protecting our waterways. Exhaust emissions from vehicles idling in the regular backups pump pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide into the atmosphere and run off pollutants into the river.

Transportation is just one of the contributing factors for environmental pollutants in the project area. Some adjacent land uses, such as a metal recycling facility on the northwest quadrant of the BNSF and Highway 47 intersection, have contributed to significant public health and environmental impact concerns. This facility has outdated equipment and practices that have been grandfathered in to continue to allow their operations. A common practice is the crushing of vehicles with an outdated compactor. Pollutant runoff has led to a well-documented history of water plume pollution that has resulted in the MPCA permanently shutting down a city well within the project area. Additionally, the Anoka-Hennepin School District building experiences regular vibrations during crushing activities and staff members have experienced health impacts causing them to no longer utilize the third floor of the building. School district staff have also found metal shaving dusting covering the daycare playground equipment.

Healthy Equitable Communities

The project area's significant environmental concerns impact many of the city's residents and vulnerable populations. The City of Anoka is small in terms of land area, approximately seven square miles. The proposed project area is in the physical center of the city. Of the 18,000 residents in Anoka, 44% (7,900) live within 1-mile of the Highway 47 corridor and project area. The project area has high multi-modal demand with a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, open space, and park land uses adjacent to the highway corridor.

According to the Metropolitan Council, the project area contains census tracts with a population in poverty or population of color above the regional average. The demand for affordable transportation access is high with 20.4% of nearby residents making less than \$35k a year, compared to 14% county-wide and 10.4% of households have no vehicle. At the southern end of the project is the Pleasant Street intersection which is an important pedestrian and bike access point that connects east across the Rum River to 4th Avenue. This intersection provides access to multiple transit stops, including the North Star Light Rail and Amtrak stations, as well as all-day express, rush hour, and local bus routes.

According to the Metropolitan Council's January 2023 Housing Assessment, of the 7,846 total housing units in the area, 42 percent (3,136) are affordable to households at or below 50 percent of the AMI; 2,480 units (33 percent) are affordable to households between 51 percent to 80 percent of the AMI. Additionally, there are 438 publicly subsidized rental housing units located in census tracts within a half mile of the project area and 374 within the city limits.



Open Decision Making

Safety and mobility concerns at the Highway 47/BNSF railroad crossing and along the highway corridor have been long-standing with communities surrounding the project area. These issues and planning efforts to mitigate them. The 2016 Rail Grade Crossing Safety Report (MnDOT), 2016 Railroad Separation at Highway 47 (Ferry St.) Feasibility Study (MnDOT), 2018 Anoka 2040 Comprehensive Plan update, 2022 Minnesota Rail Crossing Safety Action Plan (MnDOT), 2021-2023 Highway 47 and BNSF Railroad Crossing Study (MnDOT) all document and confirm that this railway crossing is the most dangerous in the State of Minnesota and requires grade separation.

In 2019, Governor Tim Walz and Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan visited the site of the Highway 47 and BNSF railway crossing to highlight the most significant railway crossing improvement needed in the State of Minnesota. Governor Walz quoted "At the intersection we visited today, there were seventeen car accidents in four years. We're talking about seventeen car accidents in just 150 feet. That's no coincidence. This is not safe". As a result, the 2020 Minnesota State Bonding included funding allocations to make enhance safety improvements at priority railway crossings, including this one.

The 2021-2023 Highway 47 and BNSF Railroad Crossing Study (MnDOT) identified a concept and cost for grade separating Highway 47 over the BNSF railway. However, the study did not address Highway 47 safety needs associated with the S-Curve north of the railway and excess highway access points in the neighborhood section between McKinley Street and Bunker Lake Boulevard (CSAH 116). To address community concerns along the Highway 47 corridor, the City of Anoka led a 2019 study that resulted in recommendations for the section from McKinley Street to Bunker Lake Boulevard (CSAH 116) that serves a large established neighborhood. In recognition of additional needs along the Highway 47 corridor, in 2024 MnDOT and the City of Anoka reached an agreement that the city would take over of the project. This shift in leadership aimed to ensure comprehensive goals addressing safety, mobility, and environmental needs throughout the entire Highway 47 corridor from Pleasant Street to Bunker Lake Boulevard (CSAH 116) would be met.

Economic Competitiveness

The railway that crosses Highway 47 in the project area, is the BNSF's busiest line carrying materials from the Bakken Oil Field in North Dakota and Montana. During the past decade, the Minneapolis-St. Paul area has seen a spike in rail traffic from the oil fields travelling to Chicago and farther east destinations. Today, more than two-thirds of the Bakken Oil Field's daily production of 1.2 million barrels is shipped by rail, with most of it moving through Minnesota into Minneapolis-St. Paul and on to Wisconsin for delivery to the East Coast and Gulf Coast. During past coordination associated with the U.S. Highway 10/169 Improvement Project, BNSF railway communicated the high possibility of adding a third track in the project area in the near future.

The Metropolitan Council designated Highway 47 as a Tier 3 Regional Truck Corridor because of the truck volumes it carries daily (450) to the adjacent industrial park (home to over 15,000 jobs) and throughout the region via its direct connection to U.S. Highway 10/169 to the south and CSAH 116 (Bunker Lake Boulevard) to the north. It is estimated that over 4,000 heavy commercial vehicles are traveling to and from the industrial park in a given day placing significant demand on this surrounding highway system. U.S. Highway 10/169 is a Tier 1 Regional Truck Corridor carrying approximately 1,400 to 2,300 HCAADT daily, which will likely increase with safety and capacity improvements made with the recently completed City of Anoka Highway 10 project.

