

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: February 12, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of February 28, 2018

**Subject:** Release of the 2018 Regional Solicitation for Transportation Projects

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** TAB Action

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director, Finance & Planning (651-602-1508)  
Steve Peterson, Manager of Highway Planning and TAB/TAC Process (651-602-1819)  
Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator (651-602-1717)

**Division/Department:** Transportation / Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to approve the attached Regional Solicitation package for 2022-2023 funding (2020-2021 funding for TDM projects) and to release the solicitation.

### Background

The Regional Solicitation for federal transportation project funding is part of the Metropolitan Council's federally required continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. The Twin Cities Metropolitan Area selects projects for funding from two federal programs: the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Program and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. Following the previous Regional Solicitation, Council staff worked with applicants, scorers, the Technical Advisory Committee, and TAB to update the Regional Solicitation. The attached Regional Solicitation package includes the 10 applications, criteria, and associated weightings for the updated Regional Solicitation. TAB received comments from a Shakopee City Council Member, the Director of Public Works / City Engineer at the City of Maple Grove, and two members of the Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) as part of the recent public comment period. The Solicitation application period is expected to last from mid-May 2018 to mid-July 2018, with TAB action to select projects in early 2019.

### Rationale

TAB develops and issues a Regional Solicitation for federal funding that is intended to implement regional policy and address regional and local transportation needs. The Council concurs with TAB actions.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

This action promotes all outcomes highlighted in Thrive MSP 2040, as the scoring criteria and measures are derivative of that plan. Examples include the cost effectiveness measure (stewardship), usage measures (prosperity), the equity measure (equity), safety measures (livability), and air quality measures (sustainability)

**Funding**

The 2018 Regional Solicitation will be funded by approximately \$200 million in federal STBG Program and CMAQ Program funds. Local sponsors match those funds at a minimum of 20 percent.

**Known Support / Opposition**

No known opposition.

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON REGIONAL SOLICITATION RECEIVED

### First Comment:

- Comment: Desperately need increased river crossing roadway capacity in the southwest metro to accommodate growth and economic growth.
- Submitted by: Matt Lehman, Shakopee City Council.
- Staff response: TAB voted to include at least \$10M in bridge funding in the 2018 Regional Solicitation as part of the draft application package that was released for public review. As part of the scoring, bridge projects that are further away from other bridges get more points because of the lack of crossings in the immediate area. Agencies across the region are encouraged to apply for the bridge funding to meet the needs they have identified.

### Second Comment:

- Comment: I want to add some emphasis that we're beyond people substantially working towards developing an ADA plan. Their plans were due 27 years ago. For entities just barely getting around to it now, they are so far out of compliance it's not even funny. I applaud the Council for blending this into eligibility requirements for funding moving forward, but I think this needs to be more rigid. These plans were due almost three decades ago. To not have them, they should be severely penalized for their lack of action. To be able to make them ineligible to apply for these funds is the least we could be doing to help them do what they need to do.
- Submitted by: Ken Rodgers, Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC).
- Staff response: While it's true that this is a long-standing requirement, this is the first instance of the MPO implementing a requirement before applicants can even apply for the federal funds. Making this a requirement is a major step forward for the region. The intent of this qualifying criterion is to assure that those applicants deficient in creation of these plans are moving in the right direction. The MPO will also be surveying agencies to gauge their progress on the ADA Transitions Plans in the coming months. The Federal Highway Administration has indicated that all agencies must be making progress for their Plans in the near future for their projects to be approved in the Transportation Improvement Program. This issue can be revisited for the next Regional Solicitation with consideration toward more rigid language in the qualifying requirement.

### Third Comment:

- Comment: I would like to see the language tightened up that applicants must have a plan in place. They could be updating that plan, but not just working towards one. They really should have them. What does it mean to be substantially working towards and how will we measure it? How will that be defined? Could we ask for deadlines, time completed, when anticipated done by to have that documentation in place?
- Submitted by: Margot Imdieke-Cross, Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC).
- Staff response: As discussed in the response to the second comment, the intent of this qualifying criterion is to assure that those applicants deficient in creation of these plans are moving in the right direction. This is an opportunity to gauge where our region's agencies stand regarding this requirement and, if needed, to provide stronger enforcement in the future. For the 2018 Regional Solicitation, substantially working towards completion of the plan means that work has been started on a plan and that a reasonable completion date is established. The on-line Solicitation application will ask for the date the plans have been completed along with the start date and anticipated completion date of in-progress plans. This will help the Council understand the needs and should help direct enforcement moving forward.

Fourth Comment:

- Summary of comments (full comment letter attached):
  - The City supports increased weighting of Role in the Transportation System and Economy in the Roadway Expansion category. However, revised scoring measures for Role in the Transportation System and Economy in the Roadway Expansion category disadvantages new corridors, which were not incorporated into the studies highlighted in measures A and C.
  - Projected growth will lead to the need for new regional corridors within the suburban edge and emerging suburban. However, the criteria and measures favor management of existing corridors.
- Submitted by: Ken Ashfeld, City of Maple Grove Director of Public Works / City Engineer.
- Staff response: Given the high demand and limited supply for Regional Solicitation funds, approved scoring measures largely focus on existing, as opposed to future, problems. Regarding the scoring measure that includes the Principal Arterial Intersection Conversion Study, applicants will score points either on the results of this study or on the level of congestion on parallel routes, whichever method gives the applicant the most points. As such, new roadways would be awarded points based on congestion on parallel routes. With regard to the Regional Truck Corridor Study scoring measure, new roadways would be eligible for 10 of the 80 points if they directly connect to a Tier 1, 2, or 3 freight corridor. The technical committees may want to consider whether a new roadway should be awarded points based on the freight tier of the roadway on which it will connect to once built.

## Technical Advisory Committee Recommendations

### Application: Roadway Expansion Measure: Congestion Reduction

**MEASURE:** Conduct a capacity analysis at one or more of the intersections (or rail crossings) being improved by the roadway project using existing turning movement counts (collected within the last three years) in the weekday a.m. or p.m. peak hour and Synchro or HCM software. The analysis must include build and no build conditions (with and without the project improvements). The applicant must show the current total peak hour delay at one or more intersections (or rail crossings) and the reduction in total peak hour intersection delay at these intersections (or rail crossings) in seconds, due to the project. If more than one intersection is examined, then the delay reduced by each intersection (or rail crossing) can be added together to determine the total delay reduced by the project.

- For new roadways, identify the key intersection(s) on any parallel roadway(s) that will experience reduced delay as a result of traffic diverting to the new roadway. If more than one intersection is examined, then the delay reduced by each intersection can be added together.
- For roadway projects that include a railroad crossing, the applicant should conduct fieldwork during either the a.m. or p.m. peak hour to determine the total peak hour delay reduced by the project. Applicants can also add together intersection delay reduced and railroad delay reduced, if they both will be improved by the project.

The applicant should include the appropriate Synchro or HCM reports (including the Timing Page Report) that support the improvement in total peak hour delay and should conduct the analysis using the following:

- Under the network settings, all defaults should be used for lanes, saturation flow rates, volumes, ~~phases~~ and simulation
- Use Synchro's automatic optimization to determine cycle, offset and splits (for traffic signals). Use this setting when assessing delay both with and without the project. This methodology will ensure that all applicants start with their signal systems optimized when determining existing delay.
- Project improvements assumed in the build condition should be reflected in the total project cost, such as additional through or turn lanes and protective left-turn phasing
- Roadway lengths for intersection approaches must be the same length for before and after scenarios
- An average weekday should be used for the existing conditions instead of a weekend, peak holiday, or special event time period that is not representative of the corridor for most of the year

Total Peak Hour Delay Reduced (Seconds) = Total Peak Hour Delay Per Vehicle x Vehicles Per Hour

#### RESPONSE (Calculation):

- Total Peak Hour Delay/Vehicle without the Project (Seconds/Vehicle): \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Peak Hour Delay/Vehicle with the Project (Seconds/Vehicle): \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Peak Hour Delay/Vehicle Reduced by the Project (Seconds/Vehicle): \_\_\_\_\_
- Volume (Vehicles Per Hour): \_\_\_\_\_
- Total Peak Hour Delay Reduced by the Project (Seconds): \_\_\_\_\_
- EXPLANATION of methodology used to calculate railroad crossing delay, if applicable, or date of last signal retiming for signalized corridors (Limit 1,400 characters; approximately 200 words):

#### SCORING GUIDANCE (100 Points)

The applicant with the most peak hour vehicle delay reduced by the project improvement will receive the full points for the measure. Remaining projects will receive a proportionate share of the points. For example, if the application being scored reduced delay by 5,000 seconds and the top project reduced delay by 25,000 seconds, this applicant would receive  $(5,000/25,000)*100$  points, or 20 points.

### Expenses Eligible for Federal Funding

Remove right-of-way expenses as eligible for funding in the Multiuse Trails and Pedestrian applications, making them the same as Roadway applications.