

# 2020 Federal MPO Certification Review

Transportation Committee 4/26/2021



# Federal Planning Requirements

- Under federal law, Council serves as the regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and is a designated Transportation Management Area (TMA - areas with population in excess of 200,000)
- MPOs/TMAs are required to facilitate a regional transportation planning process and develop/update four primary documents:
  - Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Transportation Policy Plan)
  - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
  - Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
  - Transportation Public Participation Plan (PPP)
- Federal review and certification of the process and documents is required every four years

# Review and Certification Process

- Certification is led by FHWA regional staff with participation by FTA and USDOT specialty office staff
- Council, Metro Transit, MnDOT and MPCA staff
- Held over two-half days in late 2020, Final Report received March 2021
- Focus is on selected topics, this review included public participation processes, preparation of the planning work program, transit collaboration and environmental mitigation
- Potential outcomes are Commendations, Recommendations and Corrective Actions
- Review resulted in 4 Commendations, 12 Recommendations and no Corrective Actions

# Commendations

- TPP and TIP public comment review and response process
- Travel Behavior Inventory travel survey and data analysis program
- Covid-19 special travel survey and travel impacts analysis work
- Regional bicycle planning work including the creation of the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network and Regional Bicycle Barriers study

# Recommendations

- Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
  - Clarify the source and use of local overmatch funds
  - Provide consistency in naming of planning studies across documents
  - Improve cost estimates for planning studies (between UPWP estimate and actual)
- Transit Planning
  - Improve coordination with all providers and create a regional transit providers working group that meets regularly to discuss transit planning issues
  - Execute an agreement with providers establishing federal planning roles and responsibilities
  - Provide links to transit providers on the Council website
  - Clarify how federal formula funds are distributed and include language in the TIP

# Recommendations cont.

- Transportation Public Participation
  - Update the evaluation metrics in the Transportation Public Participation Plan (PPP) and evaluate public participation activities on an ongoing basis
  - Update the TPPP to include specific tribal consultation strategies
  - Identify an update cycle for the PPP
- Environmental Mitigation
  - Provide more detailed discussion in the long-range plan on strategies to avoid, minimize and mitigate transportation impacts on natural and cultural resources

# Council Response

- Appreciative of the commendations on existing planning work
- Generally, agree with recommendations and have assigned staff to coordinate work to accomplish
  - Recommendations for UPWP will be accomplished with preparation of 2022 UPWP adopted by November 2021
  - Transit Work Group will begin meeting in June and roles and responsibilities reflected in TAC Bylaws and/or Planning and Programming Guide by year-end
  - Transportation Public Participation Plan changes and update will be accomplished by early 2022
  - Environmental mitigation discussion will appear in 2024 TPP update and an interagency work group formed to discuss related issues

# Questions?