

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: December 13, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of December 22, 2021

**Subject:** Release of the 2022 Regional Solicitation and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) for Transportation Projects

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

**Policy/Legal Reference:** TAB Action

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director MTS, 651-602-1508

Steve Peterson, Highway Planning Manager, 651-602-1819

Elaine Koutsoukos, TAB Coordinator, 651-602-1717

**Division/Department:** Transportation / Metropolitan Transportation Services

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council concur with the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) action to approve the attached Regional Solicitation package, including the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Solicitation for 2026-2027 funding (2024-2025 funding for Travel Demand Management and Unique 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 Program and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality 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 includes the 12 applications, criteria, and associated weightings for the updated Regional Solicitation. TAB received 92 comments during the recent public comment period. These comments came from 58 unique commentors including counties, cities, stakeholder groups and individuals. Major themes within the comments within attached public comment report are:

- 40 comments related to modal funding ranges with 35 of these requesting that investment be shifted away from roadway expansion (Strategic Capacity) to investments in transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Five of the modal funding comments supported increased investment in roadways.
- Most of the modal funding comments also commented on the need to reduce the impacts of climate change by reducing our investment in roads and reliance on the automobile.
- Eight comments specifically related to investing in safety such as safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities and intersection improvements.
- Four comments related to simplifying the Solicitation application process.
- A number of comments supporting specific projects within the region.

The Solicitation application period is expected to last from mid-February 2022 to mid-April 2022, with TAB action to select projects in late 2022.

Also included is the HSIP Solicitation. This solicitation funds smaller safety-focused projects and is administered by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

### **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 regarding the Regional Solicitation.

### **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), the equity measure (equity), safety measures (livability), usage measures (prosperity), and air quality measures (sustainability).

### **Funding**

The 2022 Regional Solicitation will be funded with approximately \$180 million in federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program funds. Local sponsors match the federal funds at a minimum of 20 percent. The 2022 HSIP Solicitation will be funded with up to \$24 million in federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funds and requires a local match of at least 10 percent.

### **Small Business Inclusion**

All selected projects will be subject to Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

No known opposition.