

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: September 27, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 11, 2021

Subject: 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

District(s), Member(s): All

Policy/Legal Reference: MAP-21, FAST Act

Staff Prepared/Presented:

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Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

- Adopt the proposed 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with a budget of \$6,210,999;
- Authorize the Regional Administrator to enter into an agreement with the State of Minnesota, Department of Transportation, for distribution of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) planning funds.

Background

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) serves as the Council's application for USDOT transportation planning funds. It is required that every metropolitan planning organization (MPO) submit the UPWP for consideration by the USDOT. The UPWP is prepared annually and describes the transportation planning activities that the Council will conduct for the coming year. Participants in the UPWP include the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Metropolitan Airports Commission, and local cities, counties, and other stakeholders.

The UPWP includes activities required by federal regulation that address planning priorities of the metropolitan area. The document identifies budgeted expenditures, funding sources, and allocation of staff resources for transportation planning activities of the MPO. Projects with Metropolitan Council participation include staff hours and consultant costs that detail how the estimated \$4.4 million of federal planning money will be spent, along with a required 20 percent local match to the federal funds. In 2022, the Council is committing the use of the federal funds and local match to support the transportation planning program and begin to prepare for the 2024 update to the 2050 Regional Development Guide and 2050 Transportation Policy Plan.

Many of the tasks described are required by state or federal law and are ongoing activities, such as the TAC/TAB committee process, or repeat on an annual or biennial cycle, such as the preparation of the TIP and the Regional Solicitation. Other tasks include studies that help to inform the region's transportation policies and improve processes.

The 2022 draft UPWP was open for public comment from August 17, 2021 to September 3, 2021. Additionally, comments were submitted by both the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. Attached to this business item is a Public Comment Report that summarizes the input received during the public comment period.

Rationale

The Metropolitan Council may enter into agreements with other governments and organizations which provide income/grants to the Council which are consistent with the Council's mission and priorities. Policy 3-2-2 requires Council approval for grants exceeding \$500,000.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This item supports all of the Goals and Outcomes of *Thrive MSP 2040*, as it includes work tasks associated with each goal and outcome. The 2022 UPWP includes work items that focus on furthering engagement with historically disadvantaged populations and increasing equity in transportation planning and investment processes. Planned work also includes studies that will develop measures to help evaluate the impact that transportation projects have on greenhouse gas emissions (climate change) and work supporting the 2024 update to the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan.

Funding

The proposed planning work is funded with approximately \$4.4 million in federal planning grant funds distributed through MnDOT and \$1.8 million in Council match funds.

Known Support / Opposition

The item was presented to the TAC Planning Committee at its August 12, 2021 meeting. The Committee commented that partner agencies are still reviewing the document and requested that these changes be incorporated into the draft document as it moves through the approval process. The updated draft UPWP reflects these changes. The motion to recommend approval of the 2022 Unified Planning Work Program with the understanding that changes will be made as comments from partner agencies and the public roll in was approved.

At its September 1, 2021 meeting, the Technical Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend TAB adoption of the 2022 Unified Planning Work Program.

The TAB voted unanimously to recommended approval of the 2022 UPWP on its September 15, 2021. There is no known opposition.