

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: January 24, 2022

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of January 26, 2022

**Subject:** Administrative Modification #1 to the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) to Incorporate Three Modal Network Updates and the Associated Public Comment Report

District(s), Member(s): All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and federal and state transportation planning law

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Charles Carlson, Director of MTS, 651-602-1754

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**Division/Department:** Metropolitan Transportation Services

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

- 1) Approve Administrative Modification #1 to the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (Attachment 1) to incorporate the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN), Regional Bicycle Barriers, and Regional Truck Freight Corridors networks, as revised through the 2021 update process; and
- 2) Accept the associated Public Comment Report (Attachment 2)

### Background

Under federal transportation planning law, the Council is required to develop a long-range transportation plan that is updated at least every five years. The plan must be multimodal and identify transportation system goals and investment priorities over at least a 20-year period. The plan is required to identify regionally significant transportation investments that will be implemented within the timeframe of the plan and must maintain fiscal balance between anticipated project costs and projected available funding. The current 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) was adopted on November 18, 2020.

In 2021, multiple formal update processes were initiated to afford local government agencies the opportunity to propose updates to three transportation modal networks established in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP): the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN), Regional Bicycle Barriers, and Regional Truck Freight Corridors. Each of these networks are applied as one in a series of criteria used to prioritize projects in the Regional Solicitation process for distributing federal transportation funds, and in some cases, to qualify and/or prioritize projects for state funding programs led by MnDOT. In addition, the networks are also used in the development of local and state transportation and mode-specific plans within the Twin Cities region.

All of the network updates were reviewed by technical practitioners from local agency partners and MnDOT and all were approved by the Transportation Advisory Board for use in the 2022 Regional Solicitation. Details about each of these networks, their specific update processes and results, and maps displaying the network changes

and cumulative updated networks to be incorporated in the 2040 TPP through this Administrative Modification are provided in the attached TPP Administrative Modification #1 (see Attachment 1). Although not required for plan changes considered in an administrative modification, the public were invited to review and comment on the draft updated RBTN and Regional Bicycle Barriers maps posted on the Metropolitan Council web site. All comments received and their responses can be reviewed in the associated Public Comment Report (see Attachment 2).

## **Rationale**

The purpose of this Administrative Modification #1 is to incorporate recent changes to the three transportation modal networks based on the results of formal update processes undertaken in 2021. These modal networks need to be updated on a regular basis due to the availability of more recent background data, changes or additions resulting from recent updates to local agency transportation and mode-specific plans, impacts of recent transportation project investments, and/or corrections to previous data errors or oversights.

An administrative modification is a minor revision to a long-range regional transportation plan that is different than a transportation plan amendment in that it does not change the list of funded projects or make major changes to funded projects in the Plan. As a result, an administrative modification does not require a reassessment of fiscal constraint, a new determination of conformity for air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas, or an official public process for review and comment. It can only include minor changes to projects already in the list of major funded projects in the Plan. Because none of network changes considered in this action will directly affect funded projects listed in the current TPP that collectively are subject to the fiscal constraint requirement for the overall plan, an administrative modification is the appropriate mechanism for effecting these changes.

## **Thrive Lens Analysis**

Implementation of the RBTN and improved crossings of regional bicycle barriers has very positive impacts on all of the Thrive Outcomes as summarized below.

Stewardship: A basic purpose of having a prioritized RBTN and regional bicycle barriers network is to establish regional priorities that help the region invest strategically in bicycle infrastructure through the Regional Solicitation, thereby “responsibly managing the region’s....financial resources and making strategic investments in our region’s future.”

Prosperity and Livability: The very nature of bicycle facility investments that expand the RBTN and improve its connectivity between regional destinations, regional transit, and local bikeway networks directly “enhances the quality of life that makes our region a great place to live” and serves to add accumulating value in a way that “creates regional economic competitiveness...(by) attracting and retaining successful businesses (and) a talented workforce...”

Equity: Social and economic equity was a major factor in developing the initial RBTN and was used as a measure in evaluating proposed changes to the RBTN through the 2021 update process. Implementation of the RBTN will ensure better connections to job and social opportunities for disadvantaged populations. Regional bicycle barriers were also considered through the application of the equity measure during the evaluation of corridor-specific proposals.

Sustainability: The provision of bicycle facility investments guided by the RBTN and regional bicycle barriers facilitates opportunities for the region’s residents to commute and recreate more often and for longer distances by bicycle. This has direct benefits to environmental sustainability by reducing travel

by carbon-emitting vehicles and thereby "...preserving our capacity to maintain and support our region's well-being and productivity over the long term."

### **Funding**

The proposed action will not add, change, or remove funded projects in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan and, thus, will have no impact on the federal requirement for a fiscally-constrained long range plan. This Action also has no impact on Council operating or capital budgets.

### **Small Business Inclusion**

There are no impacts to small business inclusion.

### **Known Support/Opposition**

There is no known opposition to the proposed action. The 2021 updates to the three modal networks were reviewed and approved by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) for the 2022 Regional Solicitation. Through that process, the updates were reviewed and supported by the TAB's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), TAC Planning, and two technical review teams of local/state staff engaged in bicycle planning and highway/freight planning within the Twin Cities region.

# 2040 TRANSPORTATION POLICY PLAN ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION #1

## 2021 Updates to Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN), Regional Bicycle Barriers, and Regional Truck Freight Corridors

### Overview

#### Definition and Purpose

An administrative modification is a minor revision to a long-range regional transportation plan that is different than a transportation plan amendment in that it does not change the list of funded projects or make major changes to funded projects in the Plan. As a result, an administrative modification does not require a reassessment of fiscal constraint, a new determination of conformity for air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas, or an official public process for review and comment. It can only include minor changes to projects already in the list of major funded projects in the Plan.

The purpose of this Administrative Modification #1 is to incorporate recent changes to three transportation modal networks already established in the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) resulting from a formal update process undertaken in 2021. None of these changes will directly affect the funded highway and transit projects listed in the current TPP that collectively are subject to the fiscal constraint requirement for the overall plan, thus, an administrative modification is the appropriate mechanism for effecting these changes.

#### Policy Basis

The transportation modal networks considered in this document were adopted into the 2040 TPP within a year after completing each of three regional studies used to develop the recommended regional network:

- Regional Bicycle System Study (for the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network, completed in 2014)
- Regional Bicycle Barriers Study (2018) and Technical Addendum (2019)
- Regional Truck Highway Corridor Study (2017)

Each of the networks are applied as one in a series of criteria used to prioritize projects in the Regional Solicitation process for distributing federal transportation funds and, in some cases, to qualify and/or prioritize projects for state funding programs led by MnDOT. In addition, the networks are also used in the development of local and state transportation and mode-specific plans within the Twin Cities region.

Although not required for an administrative modification, a notice was posted and advertised on September 16, 2021, inviting the general public to review and comment on the draft updated Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) and Regional Bicycle Barriers. The results of the month-long public comment process can be reviewed in the “Regional Bicycle Transportation Network and

Regional Bicycle Barriers 2021 Updates, Public Comment Report.” Due to timing issues relating to the Regional Solicitation process and the highly technical nature of the regional truck freight corridors updates, public review was not sought for this third modal network. All the network updates were reviewed by teams of technical practitioners from local agency partners and MnDOT and all were approved by the Transportation Advisory Board for use in the 2022 Regional Solicitation.

## Modal Network Updates

In 2021, a formal update process was initiated to provide local government agencies the opportunity to propose updates to three transportation modal networks established in the TPP including the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network, Regional Bicycle Barriers, and Regional Truck Freight Corridors. This section provides details about each of the networks, their update process and results, and maps displaying the network changes and cumulative updated networks to be incorporated in the 2040 TPP through this Administrative Modification.

### Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN)

#### Purpose

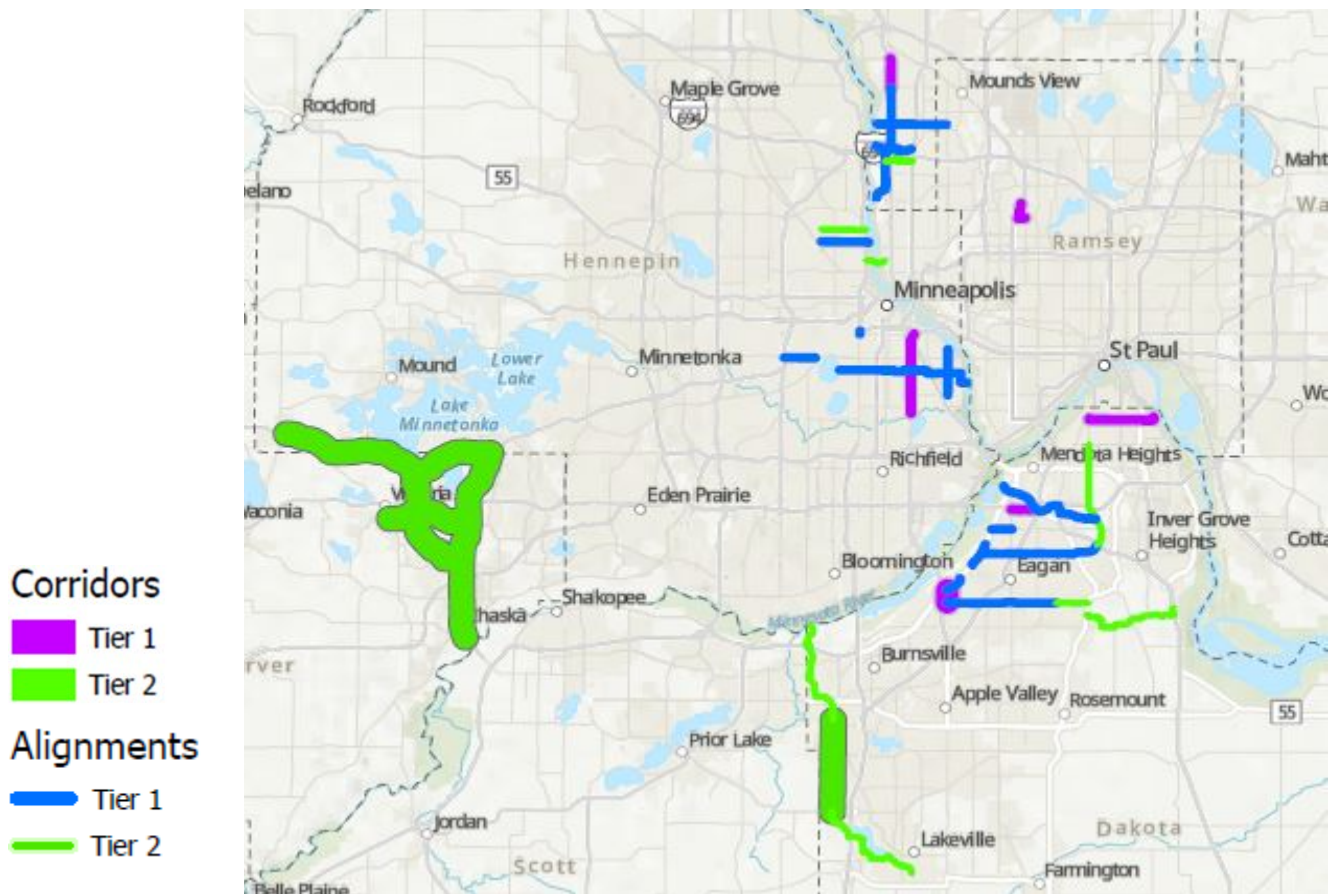
The Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) was established in the 2014 TPP Update and consists of a set of existing and planned on-street bicycle facilities and off-street trails. The purpose of the RBTN is to provide a “backbone” arterial network of bicycle transportation corridors that accommodate daily bicycle trips by connecting between designated regional destinations, the regional transit system and local bicycle networks. It establishes the region’s priority vision for bicycle planning and investment. The RBTN is being updated so that it accounts for recent changes in local bicycle, transportation, and capital improvement plans, including the addition of key transportation corridors, improved connections between regional destinations and other major development nodes, and shifts in planned alignments resulting from facility planning and design processes.

#### Network Update Process and Results

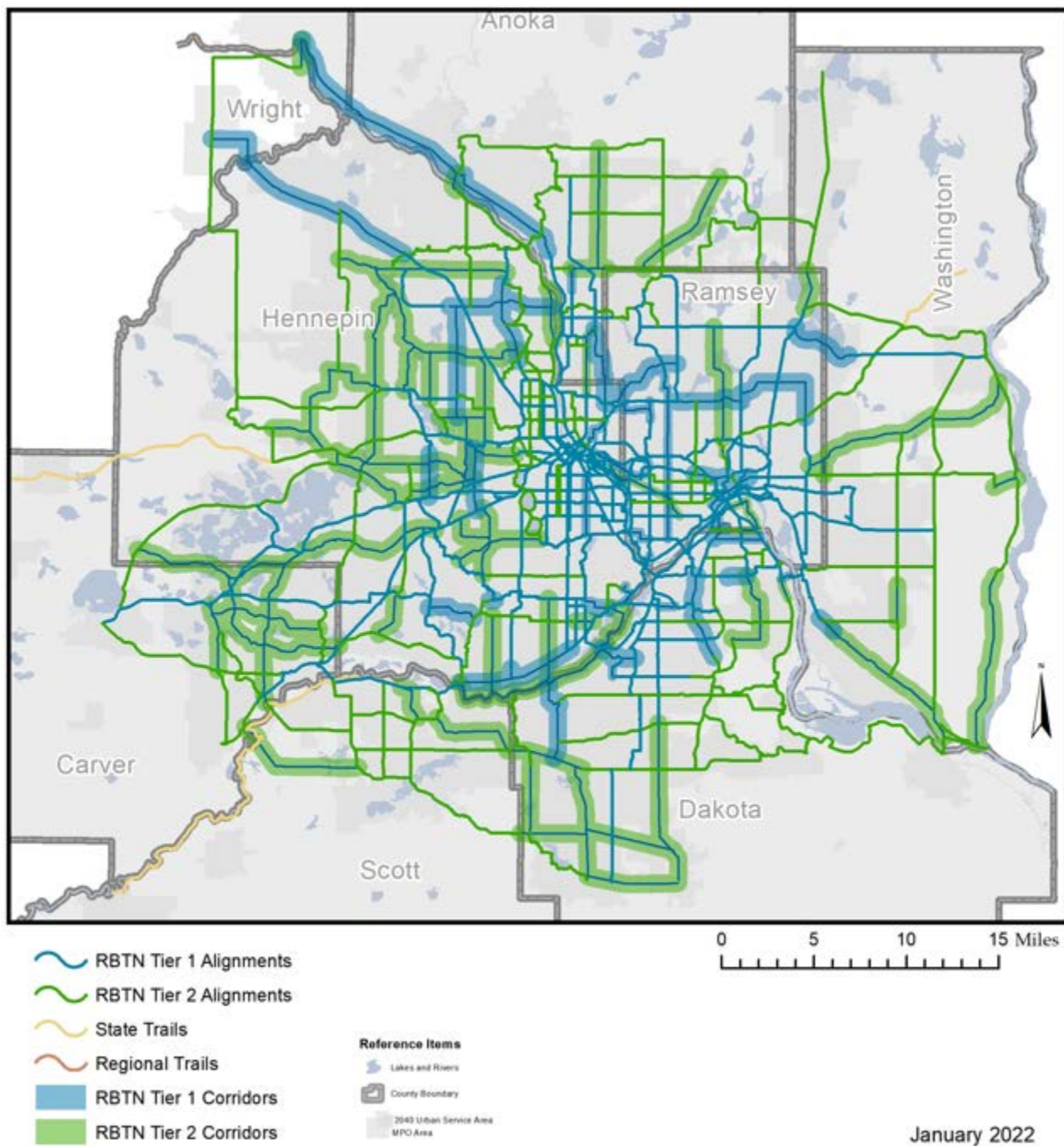
In May 2021, the Council held a formal open process for local governments to propose changes to the RBTN based on existing or updated local plans. Local government staff could propose new RBTN routes, extensions of existing routes, and/or shifts to existing routes. More details about this process and how the proposed changes are evaluated can be found in [TPP Chapter 7](#) (see section on “Updating the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network”) and on the [RBTN Updates](#) web page.

Through the 2021 update process, 27 proposed changes were submitted from 6 local agencies including 22 proposed new routes, three route extensions, and one route shift. Of the 27 proposals, 18 were approved by the Transportation Advisory Board for use in the 2022 Regional Solicitation, and nine were approved with agreeable adjustments worked out with proposing agency staff. In addition, one proposed route was corrected in Scott County in response to a comment received that noted an error in the planned alignment. The final approved changes to the RBTN are displayed in Figure 1 and the fully updated RBTN map is shown in Figure 2, which updates and replaces Figure 7-1 in the [TPP Chapter 7](#).

Figure 1: Approved Regional Bicycle Transportation Network 2021 Updates



**Figure 2: 2022 Updated Regional Bicycle Transportation Network**



## Regional Bicycle Barriers

### Purpose

Regional Bicycle Barriers were designated in the 2040 TPP during the 2018 update process as the region’s most significant physical barriers to bicycle transportation. They were later updated in the 2020 update to the 2040 TPP. The Regional Bicycle Barriers include freeways and expressways, railroad corridors, and secondary rivers and streams. Crossing opportunities for the region’s major river barriers are addressed separately. The Regional Bicycle Barriers are used to plan and prioritize barrier crossing locations for future bicycle facility improvements. The barriers are updated to account for any highway conversions to expressways (i.e., expansions to 4 or more lanes with divided medians) as well as additions of noted rail corridors or stream segments that may have been missing from the original database or outside the original study area.

### Network Update Process and Results

In May 2021, the Council held a formal open process for local governments to propose additions or corrections to regional bicycle barriers. This process ran concurrently with the RBTN update process.

More details about regional bicycle barriers and how they were developed can be found in [TPP Chapter 7](#) (see sections on “Regional Bicycle Barriers Study” and under “Regional Solicitation”) and on the [Regional Bicycle Barriers Study](#) web page.

Through the 2021 update process, five proposed changes to regional bicycle barriers were received from two local agencies. The proposals included one new expressway barrier, one new rail corridor barrier, one rail corridor correction, and two new stream barriers. All the proposed barrier additions and correction were approved by the Transportation Advisory Board for use in the 2022 Regional Solicitation. The approved changes to Regional Bicycle Barriers are displayed in Figure 3 and the fully updated map of Regional Bicycle Barriers is shown in Figure 4, which updates and replaces Figure 7-3 in [TPP Chapter 7](#).



Figure 3: Approved Regional Bicycle Barrier 2021 Updates

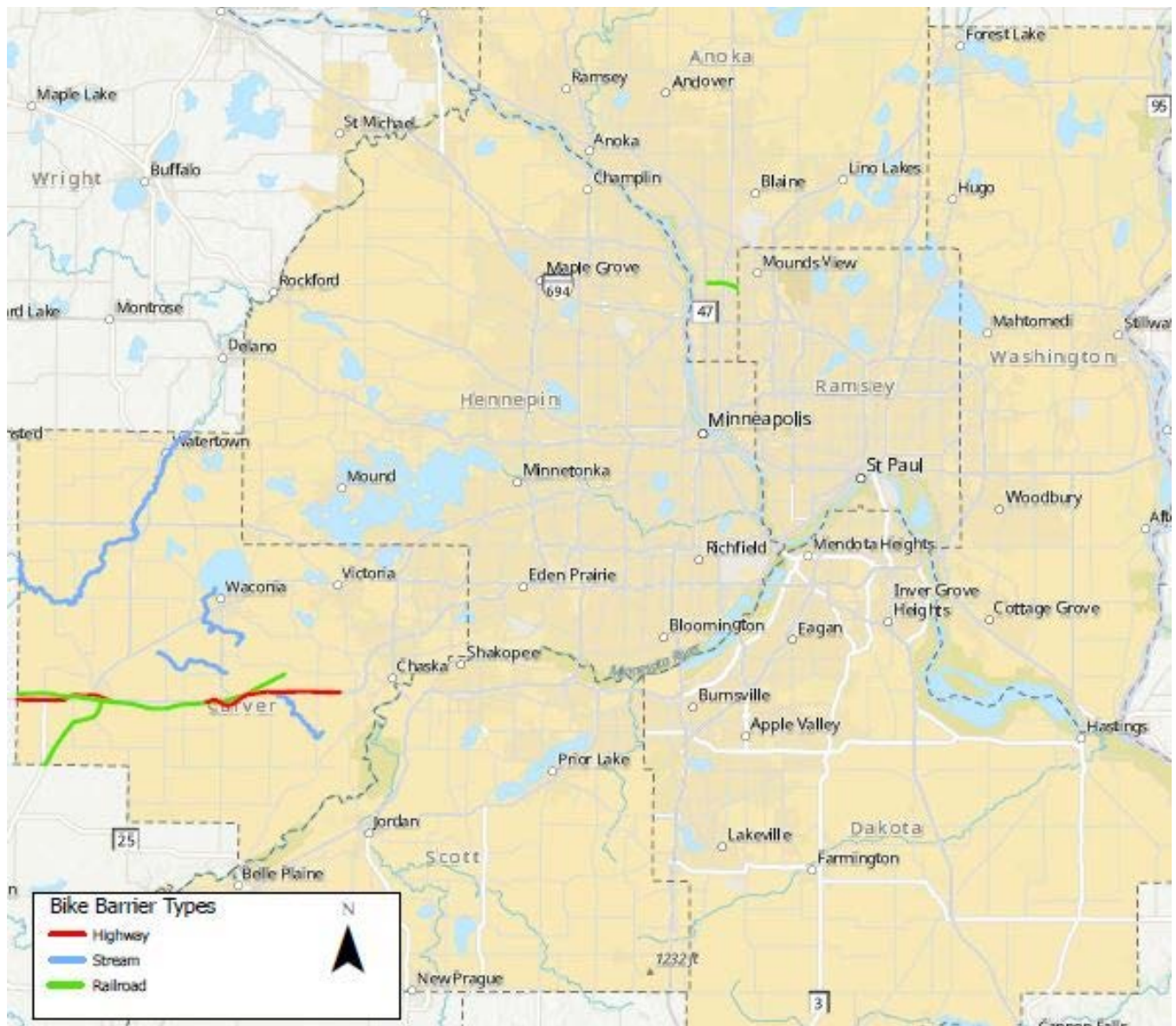
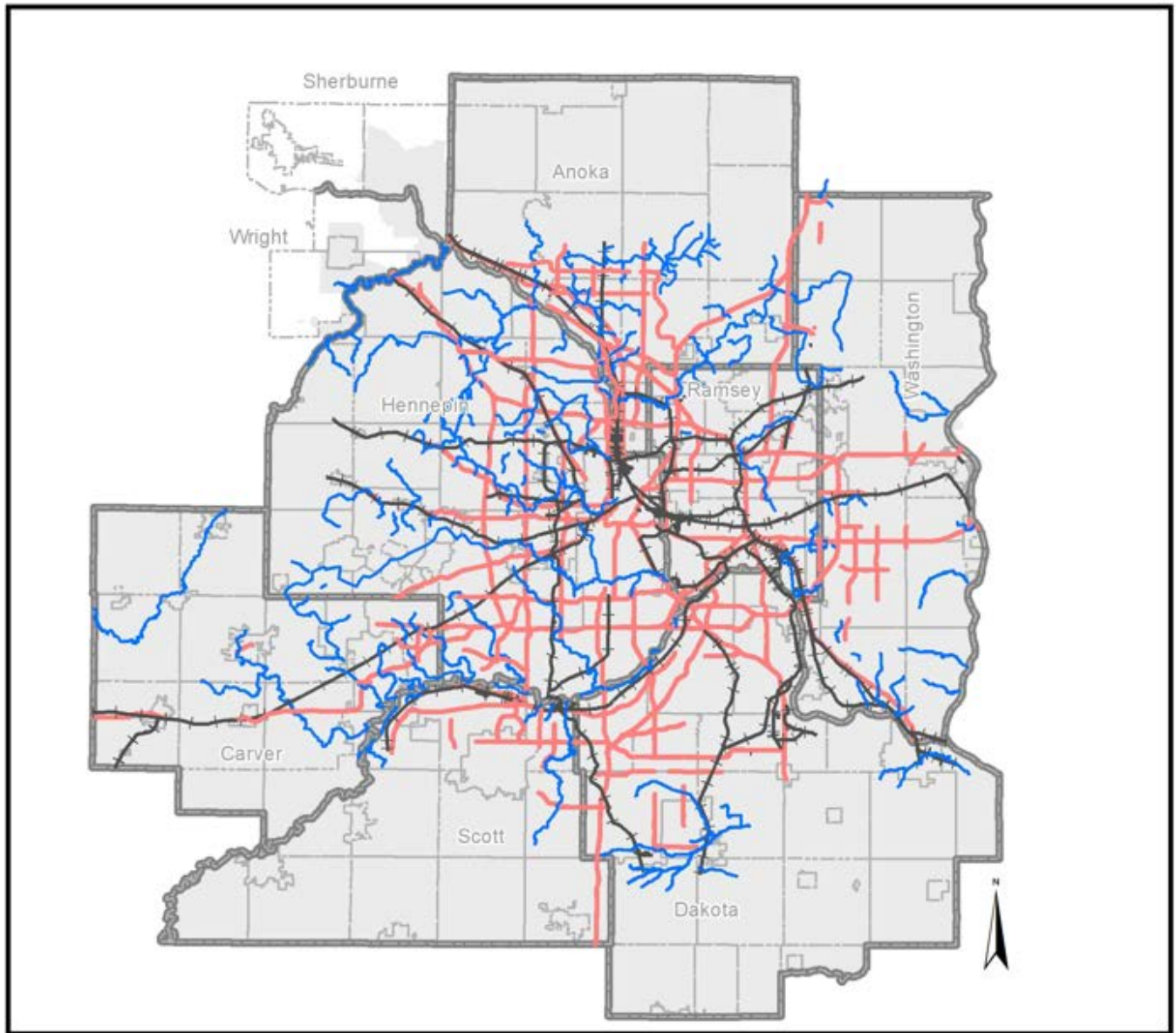


Figure 4: 2022 Updated Regional Bicycle Barriers



0 5 10 20 Miles January 2022

- Barrier Type**
- Freeways/Expressways
  - Railroads
  - Streams

## Regional Truck Freight Corridors

### Purpose

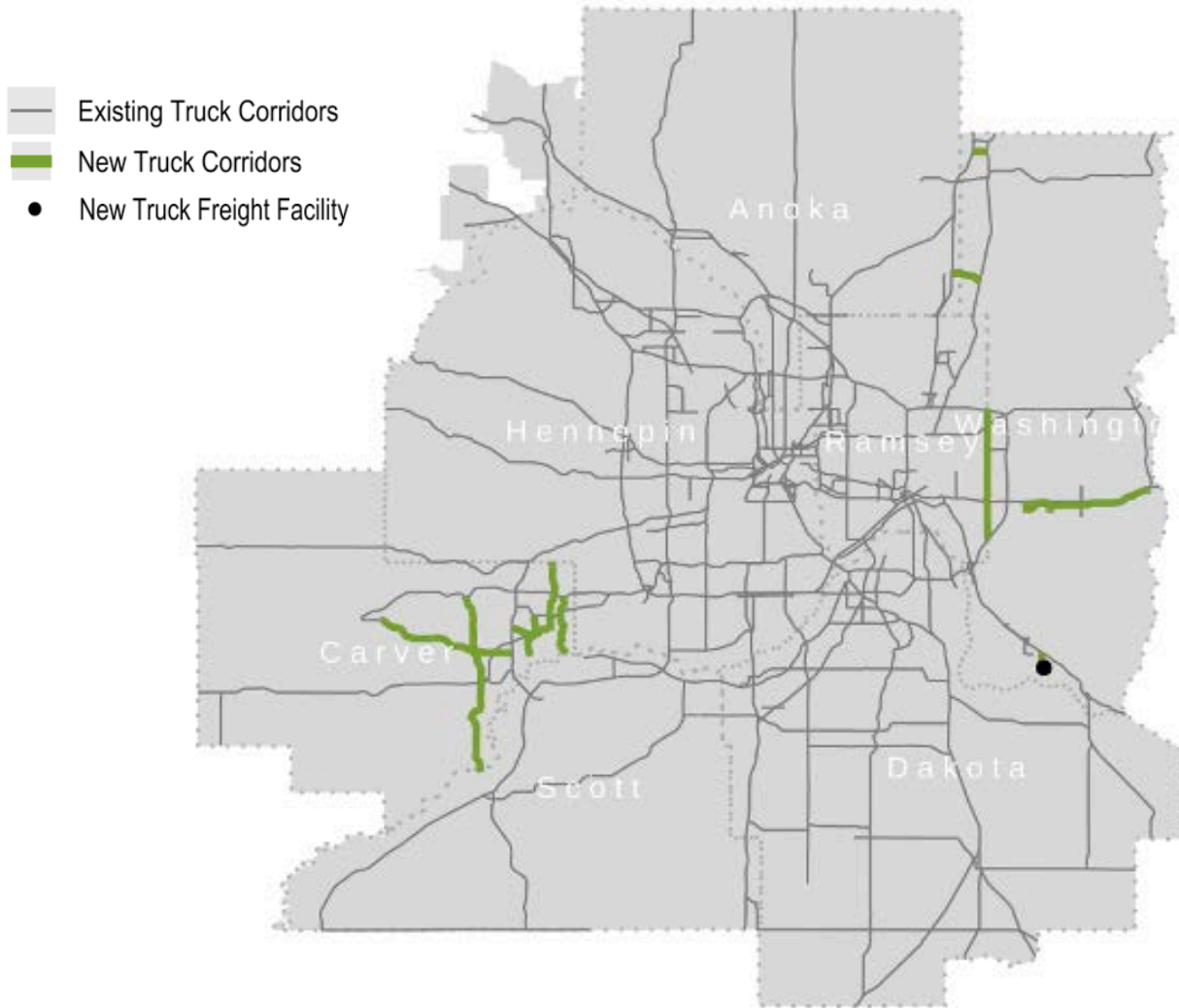
Regional Truck Freight Corridors were developed through the Regional Truck Highway Corridors Study and adopted in the 2018 update to the 2040 TPP. They are defined as the set of Twin Cities metro area highways that are most heavily relied upon by the trucking industry for delivering the region's freight and goods. These truck corridors are used to plan and prioritize highway improvement projects and are used as criteria in the Regional Solicitation project selection process. Related to regional truck corridors are regional freight terminals which are a component of the Metropolitan Freight System as defined in the TPP and are one of the criteria used in the corridors prioritization process. Regional truck corridors and freight terminal facilities are updated to make use of the most recently available truck volume data from MnDOT and other sources.

### Network Update Process and Results

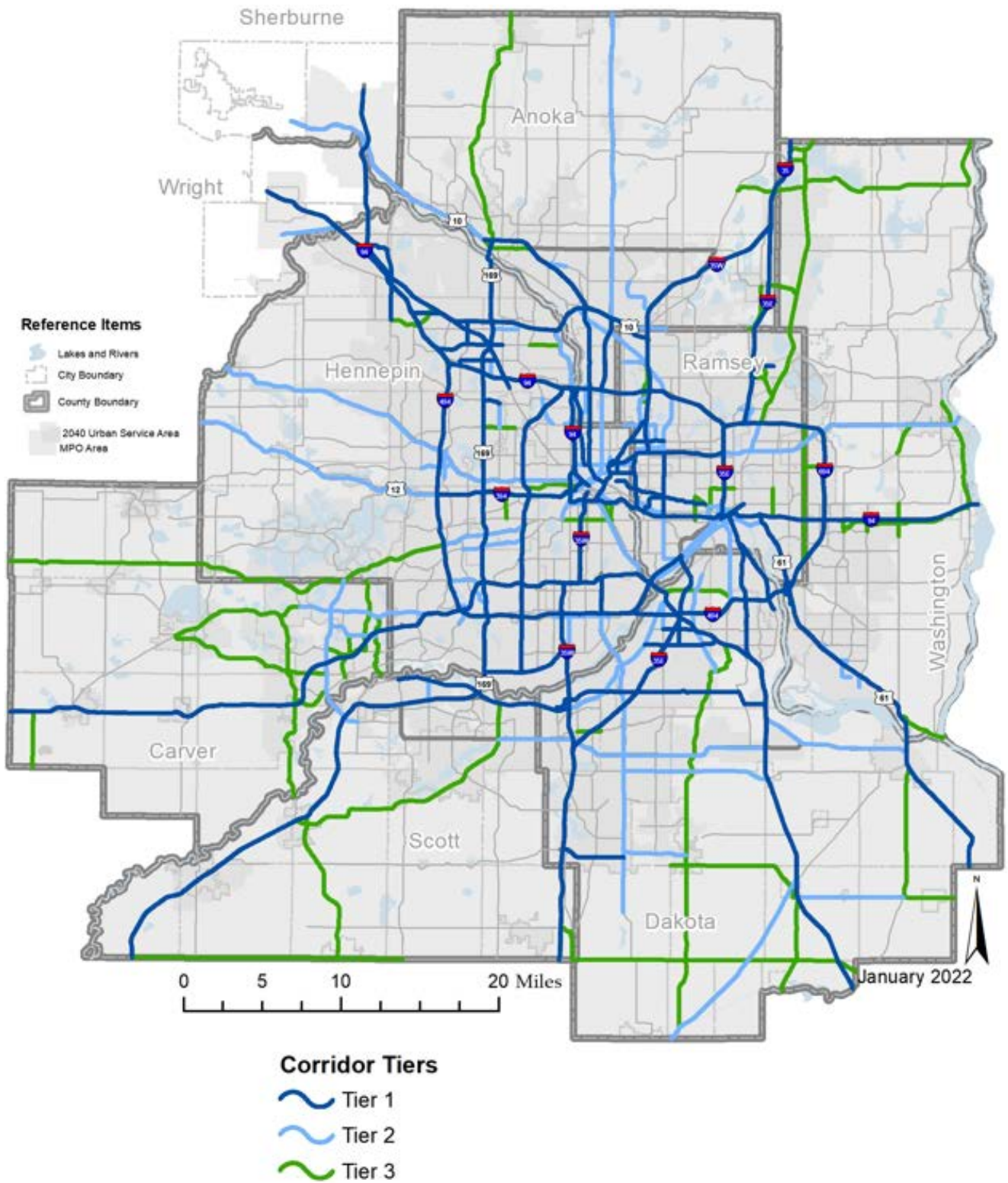
In June 2021, the Council held a formal open process for local governments to propose new truck freight corridors and/or new regional truck freight facilities. More details about Regional Truck Freight Corridors and regional truck freight terminals can be found in [TPP Chapter 8](#) (see Figure 8-1 and sections on "Regional Truck Highway Corridors Study" and "Guidelines for Regional Investment") and on the [Regional Truck Corridors Study](#) web page.

Through the 2021 update process, 14 proposed new regional truck freight corridors and two new regional truck freight facilities were received from two local agencies. Of the 14 proposed new truck corridors, 11 full corridors and two partial corridor segments meeting the minimum daily truck volume threshold were approved by the Transportation Advisory Board for use in the 2022 Regional Solicitation. Of the two proposed regional truck freight facilities, one met the minimum threshold and was approved. The approved new Regional Truck Freight Corridors and added regional truck freight facility are displayed in Figure 5 and the fully updated map of Regional Truck Freight Corridors is shown in Figure 6, which updates and replaces Figure 8-4 in [TPP Chapter 8](#). Also included is the revised Metropolitan Freight System map, updated to include the added regional truck freight facility in Washington County as shown in Figure 7. This change updates Figure 8-1 in [TPP Chapter 8](#).

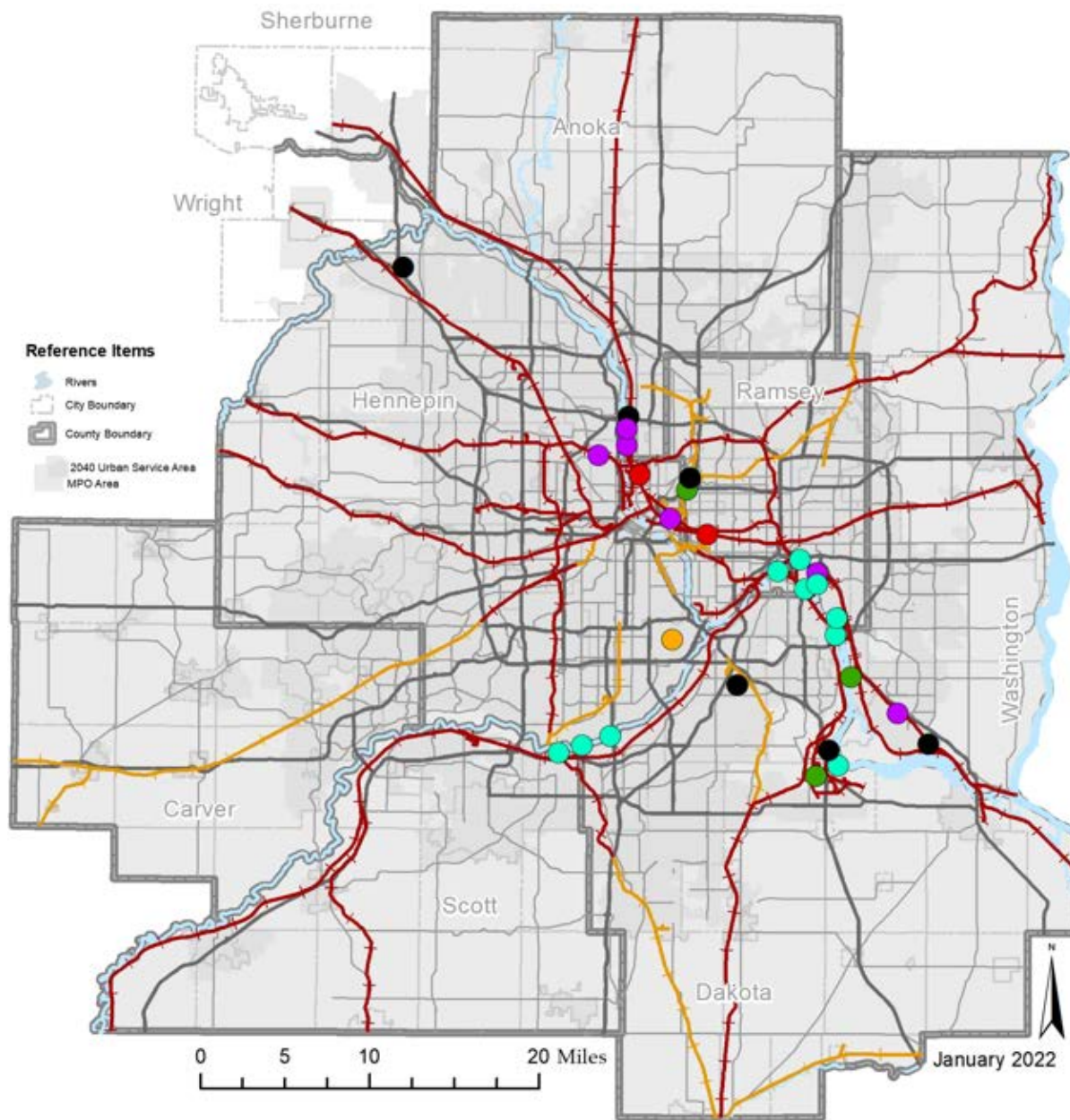
**Figure 5: Approved Regional Truck Freight Corridors and Regional Truck Freight Facilities 2021 Updates**



**Figure 6: 2022 Updated Regional Truck Freight Corridors**



**Figure 7: 2022 Updated Metropolitan Freight System**



- |                               |                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>type</b>                   | Class I Railroads   |
| Airport Terminal              | Class III Railroads |
| Major Truck Terminal          | Principal Arterials |
| Pipeline Terminal             | A-minor Arterials   |
| Rail Terminal - Container     |                     |
| Rail Terminal - Non Container |                     |
| River Barge Terminal          |                     |

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**REGIONAL BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK and**  
**REGIONAL BICYCLE BARRIERS 2021 UPDATES**  
*PUBLIC COMMENT REPORT*



**METROPOLITAN**  
C O U N C I L

January 2022

# The Council's mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

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## Comment Overview

This report summarizes comments received for the forthcoming Transportation Policy Plan Administrative Modification #1 to incorporate the proposed changes to the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) and Regional Bicycle Barriers resulting from the 2021 update process. The draft updated RBTN and Regional Bicycle Barriers maps were posted for public comment on September 16, 2021. Comments were accepted through October 18, 2021. During this time, the maps were available via the Metropolitan Council's website.

This report includes a spreadsheet summarizing the comments received by individual commenter and the staff response to the comment. Overall, 37 comments were received from 18 individuals, agencies, or interest groups. The comments were grouped into 12 key comment themes shown in Table 1.

<b>Number of Commenters</b>	18
<b>Methods used</b>	Web announcement and web page noticed Facebook Twitter
<b>Comments received through</b>	Email Web form

## Key Comment Themes

Public comments produced the themes described in Table 1. The rightmost columns indicate the number and percent of commenters mentioning a theme. Full comments and staff responses are displayed in Table 2.

RBTN = Regional Bicycle Transportation Network

**Table 1: Public Comment Theme Summary**

Category	Key Theme	Number of Commenters	Percent of Commenters
RBTN/Regional Bicycle Barriers	Support extension of Midtown Greenway into Saint Paul	11	61%
RBTN/Regional Bicycle Barriers	Support for separated bicycle facility in Snelling Ave corridor in St. Paul, particularly across rail corridor	6	33%
RBTN	Suggested improvements needed along specific routes	5	28%
Regional Bicycle Barriers	Safe biking routes are missing/limited due to major bicycle barriers.	4	22%
RBTN/Regional Bicycle Barriers	Improve connectivity between downtown Saint Paul and surrounding neighborhoods	3	17%
RBTN	Expanding separated/safe bicycle facilities for commuter transportation should be a priority	2	11%
RBTN	Make connectivity between bike trails a priority	1	6%
Other	Bike paths negatively impact traffic; stop making roads less efficient for biking minority.	1	6%
RBTN	Importance of regional/state trails to commuting & recreational biking	1	6%
RBTN	Opposition to proposed alignment through Murphy-Hanrahan Park Preserve	1	6%
Other	Push for updated bicycle facility design standards	1	6%
Regional Bicycle Barriers	Significance of temporary bicycle route closures as barriers	1	6%

## Comments and Responses

**Table 2: Full Comments and Responses**

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Nicholas Schuetz	Other	Bike paths negatively impact traffic; stop making roads less efficient for biking minority.	Please stop making our roads less efficient for a theoretical and seasonal bike riding minority. The arrogant placement of these bike paths through busy areas negatively impacts traffic as a whole. The build it and they will come mentality is a pipe dream. Especially in our climate.	Comments acknowledged.
Thaddeus Austin	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.  Safe biking routes are missing/limited due to major bicycle barriers.	I wish to express my strong support for an extension of the Minneapolis Bicycle Greenway into Saint Paul over the CP Rail Bridge by the addition of a walkway or deck of some kind. This would tie the two bicycle trail systems together into a cohesive whole and make it more viable as a pleasure or commuting network. There are too few Mississippi River crossings available to bicyclists in general, and the ones that exist are not particularly safe or pleasant. I'd love it if the Greenway extended into Saint Paul over the CP bridge.	The CP Rail bridge over the Mississippi River is along an RBTN Tier 1 corridor, and the Mississippi River is a major river bicycle barrier in the Transportation Policy Plan; these designations make a new Midtown Greenway extension bicycle crossing here a good candidate for future regional transportation funding.
Darcie Vandegrift & Victor Tonelli	Regional Bicycle Barriers	Safe biking routes are missing/limited due to major bicycle barriers.	White Bear Ave is an additional barrier for bike transportation. Currently, between 61 and McKnight Ave, there are no safe transportation routes for bikes on the East Side. Our family has quit riding bikes for transportation to errands because of near misses on White Bear and Ruth. East-West crossing of 61 on Burns Ave is also amidst heavy traffic. 61 is like crossing a freeway with a stoplight.	While White Bear Ave is a physical barrier for bicycle travel on a local scale, Regional Bicycle Barriers (as defined in the Regional Bicycle Barriers Study and Technical Addendum) included freeways and expressways with the latter defined to include highways that have 4 or more through lanes divided by a median barrier with posted speeds of at least 45 mph. U.S. Highway 61 is a regional bicycle barrier expressway and the Burns Ave intersection is a Tier 1 priority barrier crossing improvement area. This designation in the Transportation Policy Plan makes it a high priority (on one criterion) and a good candidate for regional transportation funding for a future local agency-proposed improvement project.

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Renee Spillum	Regional Bicycle Barriers	Safe biking routes are missing/limited due to major bicycle barriers.	<p>I am a half time bike commuter, living west of Snelling, north of University in the Midway and working on the U of M East Bank. Half of the trip is on the U of M transitway trail, which is lovely. But the industrial nature of most of the land use between home and access to that trail is problematic. I'm experienced enough to manage having to navigate University Ave, but I feel like I'm taking my life in my hands every time I jostle with cars for the full lane to get under the railroad bridge between Prior and Transfer Road. Then the pavement on Territorial and Westgate is awful, with lots of truck traffic that doesn't necessarily expect me there (though I'm less afraid of trucks actually than I am of a typical car driver). I could cut out that piece by going a little over a mile out of my way on Pierce Butler and Territorial, but honestly I'd rather deal with 1/2 block of danger than crossing that huge street and going up the gravelly hill when trucks are speeding by because it's so wide.</p> <p>The route to go way backwards and farther north is much safer and more pleasant - Lexington's bridge is great, and the paths on Energy Park or Como work great. I just have two little kids, and am always in a hurry, and can't add 15 minutes to my trip just for it to be a bit more comfortable.</p> <p>I will never understand why we couldn't have done University Avenue better when we did the light rail. I would, even as a person who also drives, be thrilled to see the outside lanes get turned into protected bike lanes. My starting point and ending point are both just off University 3.5 miles apart, but because bikes aren't welcome on that street, I have to go .5 miles further to have half my commute be safe or 2.5 miles further to actually be safe. For a really strong/fast biker who doesn't have parenting responsibilities, that's probably really fine. But it stinks for me and causes me to bike less often.</p>	<p>University Ave is the centerline of an RBTN Tier 1 Corridor between Hampden and NE Central Avenues making future bikeway improvement projects along University and/or along parallel routes a high priority for future regional transportation funding. A future east-west bikeway connection between Pierce Butler route and University is possible as the Canadian-Pacific rail tracks running north/south are a designated regional bicycle barrier and the area just north of University at the rail corridor is a Tier 1 bike barrier crossing improvement area which is also a project selection criterion for regional funding. Your comments will be forwarded to planning staff at Cities of Minneapolis and St Paul for consideration in developing future bike plans and projects.</p>

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Robert Straughn	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	<p>Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.</p> <p>Suggested improvements needed along specific routes.</p> <p>Support for separated bicycle facility in Snelling Ave corridor in St. Paul, particularly across rail corridor.</p> <p>Expanding separated/safe bicycle facilities for commuter transportation should be a priority.</p>	<p>The following are some suggested bike transit routes to improve access and safety in and around the northwestern part of Saint Paul:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Territorial Road from Berry to Green Fourth Street in Mpls. University Avenue is unsafe.</li> <li>2. Need off-road trail along Energy Park Drive from the Saint Paul Grand Round on Raymond to the University Transitway and extending to Kasota Avenue in Minneapolis. Heavy truck traffic on Energy Park Drive hampers use of on-road bike lanes.</li> <li>3. Safe bike route from Como to University on or near Snelling.</li> <li>4. Safe bike route from Hampden to Prior on or near University</li> <li>5. Extension of Midtown Greenway from Mpls. to connect to Ayd Mill Road bike trail, with connection to the Saint Paul Grand Round at Pelham.</li> <li>6. Adding the "Prospect Park Spur" connecting the extended Midtown Greenway in Desnoyer Park to Stadium Village using the RR R/W.</li> <li>7. Connection from the Saint Paul Grand Round at Pelham to the new Westgate Park and Franklin Avenue using the RR R/W along Wabash.</li> <li>8. Connection from Raymond at or near Robbins to Pierce Butler Route at Transfer Rd.</li> </ol> <p>I also suggested the priority going forward should be safe commuting routes, including connections to neighboring communities. Not everyone is going to the park.</p>	<p>Thank you for your suggestions. Many of these routes are on alignments or within corridors on the RBTN, making them good candidates for future regional funding for local-agency proposed projects. Your comments are being forwarded to planning staff at Minneapolis and St Paul for consideration in future bicycle plans and projects.</p>

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
<p>Andrew Singer, Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition</p>	<p>RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers</p>	<p>Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.</p> <p>Suggested improvements needed along specific routes.</p> <p>Improve connectivity between downtown Saint Paul and surrounding neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Family-Friendly bicycle Connections between Minneapolis and St Paul are poor. The Lake Street Bridge and Marshall Avenue are most popular but data shows that this route has unusually high numbers of bicycle and pedestrian crashes. There isn't a westbound bike lane on Marshall west of Cretin so bikes are expected to mingle with high-speed motor vehicle traffic. The Met Council needs to take the lead on extending the Midtown Greenway across the Mississippi River into St Paul, at least as far as Cleveland Avenue but, preferably, as far as St Paul's new Ayd Mill Trail. This would provide an amazing multi-use connection between the two cities and would provide a regional trail in an area of St Paul (the southeast corner of the Midway) that lacks park space and is gradually converting from a warehouse and manufacturing area into a more residential and retail area. Extending the Greenway is a complex, multi-county, multi-city project that involves negotiation with CP Rail ...but it is entirely doable with adequate funding and organization. The railroad once offered to sell the bridge to Hennepin County for a dollar if the county assumed liability for it. At the time, Hennepin County balked (at the costs). But now, there are potentially federal dollars or other funding sources and an engineering study commissioned by the Midtown Greenway Coalition showing that the bridge can be safely shored up or rebuilt on the existing piers to accommodate both trains and bicycles/pedestrians for a cost of \$15-\$25 million. Only the MET Council or MnDOT have the multi-jurisdictional ability to lead this project and close one of the largest bicycle barriers in the Twin Cities.</p> <p>The MET Council also needs to help to fix the doughnut hole in the bicycle network around downtown St Paul and I-35E. This includes connecting downtown to its neighborhoods via planned bikeways on St Peter Street (from 10th to John Ireland Blvd), from the end of 10th Street to Kellogg via the MN History Center parking lot, and via Kellogg (from 7th Street up to John Ireland Blvd). In addition, the MET Council should make a nice connection across the freeway trench between the Capitol and downtown so capital workers can easily bike to downtown and visa versa. This could be done on Cedar Street or Minnesota Street (across the Green Line LRT). Finally, as part of the Rush Line BRT project, the MET Council needs to put a multi-use pathway on Pennsylvania from L'Orient to Como. It currently has no sidewalk.</p>	<p>The Midtown Greenway extension route is within an RBTN Tier 1 corridor (CP Rail bridge over Mississippi River) and a Tier 2 corridor (through St Paul to Ayd Mill trail) making it a good candidate for future regional transportation funding. Historically, Met Council has not initiated projects for major bikeways unless they are along planned regional transitways and are included as elements of the larger transitway project; the Council defers to the local government host agency(ies) and/or MnDOT to plan, design and construct major bikeway projects. Council staff may participate in discussions with railroad officials if desired and requested by the project-sponsoring agencies. Specific comments relating to future bikeway improvements in St Paul are being forwarded to City of St Paul planning staff for consideration in future plans and projects.</p>

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Amy Michael	RBTN	Suggested improvements needed along specific routes.	<p>In St. Paul Marshall Avenue between Western and Lexington is hazardous for bicycle riders. There is a bike route from Summit/Kellogg up Marshall that ends on Western and then starts again at Lexington. Please repave Marshall Ave from Western to Lexington and repaint the bicycle route lines. The city, Metropolitan Council and the County should be ashamed of the state of Marshall Ave and the hazardous bike path (which can be seen faintly in some spots)</p> <p>This portion of Marshall Ave is neglected.</p>	Comment acknowledged. Marshall Ave east of Lexington Ave is a City of St Paul owned street. Your comment will be forwarded to St Paul Public Works staff for consideration in future bicycle and capital improvement plans and projects.
Bailey Waters	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.	A greenway extension into St. Paul - or even just a rail greenway corridor would be greatly beneficial to the people of the Westgate area/Saint Anthony Park area, and connecting to downtown via Ayd Mill Road.	Comment acknowledged. The Midtown Greenway extension route is within an RBTN Tier 1 corridor (CP Rail bridge over Mississippi River) and a Tier 2 corridor (through St Paul to Ayd Mill trail) making it a good candidate for future regional transportation funding.

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Karen Nelson	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	<p>Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.</p> <p>Suggested improvements needed along specific routes.</p> <p>Importance of regional/state trails to commuting &amp; recreational biking.</p>	<p>Please support the Midtown Greenway Extension.</p> <p>Trails are so important to regional connections. I am able to ebike from St. Paul Westgate station area to my work in Oakdale on separated trails almost the entire way because of regional/state Gateway Trail and Grand Round trails along Wheelock and Como Ave. As a 50+ yr old woman, I would never do this bike commute if not for those trails.</p> <p>The Midtown Greenway Extension could provide similar wonderful, appealing, safe biking infrastructure connections of St. Paul and Minneapolis. The biggest obstacle seems to be negotiations with the RRs. They often ask for things from the state, metro area but are not asked for concessions in return. We need help getting RR to all Midway Greenway Extension to happen. Midtown Greenway Extension could St. Paul and south of river Mpls to the U of MN campus via the add on of Prospect Park spur.</p> <p>Regional Bicycle Transportation isn't just transportation infrastructure, regional trails are huge amenity to the metro area. Trails are the most used parts of our parks/green space, and sour development and economic activity around them. Trails become a destination themselves. Such would be the case with the Midtown Greenway Extension on the bridge over the MS River, it would be a beloved attraction.</p> <p>Please support this Extension, it would be a star as a part of our wonderful regional bike network.</p>	<p>Comments acknowledged. The Midtown Greenway extension route is within an RBTN Tier 1 corridor (CP Rail bridge over Mississippi River) and a Tier 2 corridor (through St Paul to Ayd Mill trail); the Prospect Park spur connection is also an RBTN Tier 2 corridor. These regional designations make these corridors good candidates for future regional transportation funding.</p>
Keith Heiberg	RBTN	<p>Make connectivity between bike trails a priority</p>	<p>Thanks for the online maps. It looks like many of the bike trails do not connect to one another. Of course that limits their usefulness. Imagine if you were driving in a car, and the road suddenly ended! Please make connectivity a priority.</p>	<p>Comment acknowledged. Connectivity between regional destinations and the regional transit system was a highly weighted criterion in the development of the RBTN. Local connections and continuity of bicycle facilities are the responsibility of cities and counties.</p>



Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Victor Henao Navarro	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	<p>Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.</p> <p>Support for separated bicycle facility in Snelling Ave corridor in St. Paul, particularly across rail corridor.</p> <p>Improve connectivity between downtown Saint Paul and surrounding neighborhoods.</p>	I would like to see the Midtown Greenway extended across the Mississippi River into Saint Paul through the Ayd Mill Corridor. Also, I would like to see the agency help improve connectivity between downtown Saint Paul and its neighborhoods across the various freeways and rail lines, and I'd like to see something done all through Snelling Ave; this major artery should be less center around cars, and give more space for biking, walking and commerce.	Comments acknowledged. The Midtown Greenway extension route is within an RBTN Tier 1 corridor (CP Rail bridge over Mississippi River) and a Tier 2 corridor (through St Paul to Ayd Mill trail) making it a good candidate for future regional transportation funding. Also, all freeways and rail corridors are designated regional bicycle barriers which helps to prioritize projects that improve crossings of these barriers for receiving future regional transportation funding.
Andy Luft, Ordway Center for the Arts	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.	Extend the Greenway into Saint Paul	The Midtown Greenway extension route is within an RBTN Tier 1 corridor (CP Rail bridge over Mississippi River) and a Tier 2 corridor (through St Paul to Ayd Mill trail) making it a good candidate for future regional transportation funding.
Will Jones	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	<p>Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.</p> <p>Safe biking routes are missing/limited due to major bicycle barriers.</p> <p>Support for separated bicycle facility in Snelling Ave corridor in St. Paul, particularly across rail corridor.</p>	Please try to extend the Midtown Greenway across the MS River into St. Paul. We also need more bikeways across I-94. I live in Mac/Groveland, and have no safe crossings between Prior and Griggs. The Snelling corridor is particularly bad.	The Midtown Greenway extension route is within an RBTN Tier 1 corridor (CP Rail bridge over Mississippi River) and a Tier 2 corridor (through St Paul to Ayd Mill trail) making it a good candidate for future regional transportation funding. In addition, all freeways are designated regional bicycle barriers in the TPP which helps to prioritize projects that improve crossings of these barriers for receiving future transportation funding.

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Kyle Hoff	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	<p>Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.</p> <p>Suggested improvements needed along specific routes.</p> <p>Support for separated bicycle facility in Snelling Ave corridor in St. Paul, particularly across rail corridor.</p> <p>Expanding separated/safe bicycle facilities for commuter transportation should be a priority.</p> <p>Push for updated bicycle facility design standards.</p>	<p>In general the Met Council should focus on expanding separate bicycle facilities for commuter travel throughout the region. The long term benefits of increasing transportation modes other than single occupancy vehicles will pay off in the long run, in safety, construction costs and economic viability in the transportation sector. Continuously expanding roads, just to watch induced demand fill the increased capacity within a matter of years or even months is not a good strategy for long term transportation development. If the council can fund projects that make short commutes more feasible and safe for bicycles in the area, then that will reduce further congestion increases in the future. It won't stop congestion, but it will reduce the growth of it at a lower cost.</p> <p>For the Council, a few areas to consider for these projects would be expanding the Midtown Greenway into St. Paul via the Short Line Bridge (I know railroad companies are tough to work with, but just keep working on it); aiding in creating a separated bike path along Summit Ave in St. Paul; pushing for some sort of bicycle infrastructure along Snelling Ave in St. Paul; and perhaps pushing for the regions' cities to update their bike facility standards.</p> <p>I'm not sure the Met Council's role in influencing design standards and details in the area, but the U.S. just doesn't do a good job of promoting bike commuting. If the Met Council looked to the Netherlands for their bike facility standards and construction details and promoted them to the region's cities, the Twin Cities could set themselves apart from other metros by vastly reducing short commutes taken by motor vehicles.</p>	<p>Comments acknowledged. The CP Rail bridge over the Mississippi River is along an RBTN Tier 1 corridor, and the Mississippi River is a major river bicycle barrier in the Transportation Policy Plan; these designations make a new Midtown Greenway extension bicycle crossing a good candidate for future regional transportation funding.</p> <p>Local bicycle facility design standards are based on MnDOT's "Bikeway Facility Design Manual" which was updated in 2021, as well as other national sources such as the National Association of City Transportation Official's "Urban Bikeway Design Guide, Second Edition," and the Federal Highway Administration's "Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide." The development of the NACTO guide included a worldwide literature search and is based on the collective experience of the foremost cycling cities in the world. The Council performs a review &amp; comment role on draft guidelines such as these when they are updated. Specific comments relating to Summit and Snelling Avenues are being forwarded to Saint Paul and MnDOT planning staff for consideration in future bicycle plans and projects.</p>
Luke Peterson	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	<p>Support for separated bicycle facility in Snelling Ave corridor in St. Paul, particularly across rail corridor.</p>	<p>The lack of shared path on Snelling from Hewitt to Como is astounding. We allow a half mile of highway smack in the middle of the city, with stoplights on both ends for what? People to speed up only to use those brakes? There are phenomenal resources on both sides of this corridor with no way to get to them without a car. A shared use path there not only makes sense, but was promised and not delivered.</p>	<p>Comments acknowledged. That segment of Snelling Ave in St Paul was the subject of a planning study in 2013 to develop &amp; evaluate options for a future bridge/roadway reconstruction project that would add facilities to accommodate safer walking and biking; the project concept is currently not funded, but will remain an emphasis for a future project when the existing bridges approach the end of their usable life cycles.</p>

Commenter	Category	Summary	Original Comment	Response
Austen Zuege	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.  Significance of temporary bicycle route closures as barriers.	I would like to see the midtown greenway extended east across the Mississippi river.  In addition to "permanent" physical barriers like rivers that limit bicycle access, "temporary" barriers like construction shutdowns, mudslides, flooding, etc. also limit bicycle access. And much if not most bicycle infrastructure is "brittle" in the sense that there are limited options and no safe alternative routes available. If one bicycle route becomes blocked there may be no safe alternative available. Sometimes "temporary" barriers for bicycle routes last years due to disregard for bicycle access (including pro-automobile bias), lack of funding priority, or simply neglect.	Comments acknowledged. The CP Rail bridge over the Mississippi River is along an RBTN Tier 1 corridor, and the Mississippi River is a major river bicycle barrier in the Transportation Policy Plan; these designations make a new bicycle crossing here a good candidate for future regional transportation funding.
Jon Ulrich, Scott County	RBTN	Opposition to proposed alignment through Murphy-Hanrahan Park Preserve.	Scott County and Three Rivers Park District did not request a change to the RBTN in Scott County, this was a Dakota County request only. The proposed changes show an alignment across Murphy Hanrehan Park Reserve. It was Scott County's understanding that Dakota County was requesting a corridor across the park and not an alignment. This change should not be approved as an alignment but a corridor in Scott County.	This was due to an overlooked error in the proposed RBTN alignment for the Lake Marion Greenway. As a result of a meeting between Council, Scott County, Dakota County and Three Rivers Park District planning staff to review this issue, the alignment through Scott County and Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve will be removed and replaced by an RBTN corridor running entirely within Dakota County.
Ian R Buck, Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition	RBTN, Regional Bicycle Barriers	Extend Midtown Greenway into St. Paul.  Support for separated bicycle facility in Snelling Ave corridor in St. Paul, particularly across rail corridor.  Improve connectivity between downtown Saint Paul and surrounding neighborhoods.	The most significant bicycle barriers that I have to navigate across on a regular basis include the Mississippi River, inner-city highways, and the railroad tracks north of the Frogtown/Midway neighborhoods. Met Council should assist in connecting the Midtown Greenway across the river, building bikeways between downtown St Paul and the surrounding neighborhoods, and creating a bike facility on Snelling Ave across the train tracks.	The Midtown Greenway extension route is within an RBTN Tier 1 corridor (CP Rail bridge over Mississippi River) and a Tier 2 corridor (through St Paul to Ayd Mill trail) making it a good candidate for future regional transportation funding. Historically, Met Council has not initiated or led projects for major bikeways unless they are along planned regional transitways and are included as elements of the larger transitway project; the Council defers to the local government host agency(ies) and/or MnDOT to plan, design and construct major bikeway projects. Specific comments relating to future bikeway improvements in St Paul are being forwarded to city and MnDOT planning staff for consideration in future plans and projects.



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