

Business Item

Transportation Committee



Committee Meeting Date: Oct 9, 2023

For the Metropolitan Council: Oct 25, 2023

Business Item: 2023-228

2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

District(s), Member(s):	All
Policy/Legal Reference:	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Amy Vennewitz, Deputy Director of Finance & Planning (651-602-1058) David Burns, Planning Analyst (651-602-1887)
Division/Department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

- Adopt the proposed 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with a budget of \$7,332,756.
- 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. Federal regulations require that every metropolitan planning organization (MPO) submit the UPWP for consideration by the USDOT on an annual basis. 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, regional transit providers 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 the allocation of staff resources for the transportation planning activities of the MPO. Projects with Metropolitan Council participation include staff hours and consultant costs that detail how the estimated \$5.6 million of federal planning money will be spent, along with a required minimum 20 percent local match to the federal funds. In 2024, the Council is committing to use federal planning funds and local match to support the regional transportation planning process and continue the significant work to update the 2050 Regional Development Guide and 2050 Transportation Policy Plan.

Many of the tasks described in the UPWP are ongoing activities. Examples include staff support of the TAB/TAC committee process, the annual preparation of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and support of the Regional Solicitation. Other tasks are focused planning studies that help to move forward the region's transportation policies and knowledge, identify regional investments and fulfill the transportation system vision as outlined in the Transportation Policy

Plan. The 2024 UPWP includes over \$2 million in planned consulting costs to complete these planning studies.

The 2024 UPWP was released for public review on August 21 and accepted comments through September 8. Both the 2024 UPWP and the Public Comment Report is available on the agenda link.

Rationale

The UPWP is a federally required description and documentation of proposed transportation and transportation-related planning activities in the metropolitan area. The activities include both activities required for the MPO to operate as well as projects that reflect the regional transportation vision.

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 the Goals and Outcomes of Thrive MSP 2040, as it includes work tasks associated with each goal and outcome. The 2024 UPWP includes work items that focus on furthering engagement with historically disadvantaged populations and increasing equity in transportation planning and investment processes.

Funding

The proposed planning work is funded with approximately \$5.6 million in federal transportation planning grant funds distributed through MnDOT and \$1.8 million in Council match funds.

