



POLICY CONNECTIONS

Technical Working Group – February 2023

Agency:

Instructions

Agencies are asked to provide feedback on the existing policies with a particular focus on identifying concepts and/or topic areas that may be considered policy gaps or new policies. The feedback on policies should identify the role(s) the Council has in administering this policy as well as the implementation methods (actions) that could be used by the Council and its transportation partners.

Additional prompts to consider in identifying policy concepts and topic areas:

- What policies do we need to better achieve the identified outcomes for the region?
- What tools or actions would be helpful or necessary for implementation of the policies?

Each policy has a comment box that can be used to provide comments on the policy, role, and implementation. Text boxes are also provided at the end of the document to allow for more general feedback as well as identifying policy gaps or new policies.

Please only provide comments in the text boxes.

Contents

All Modes

AM1. Make investments in transportation that preserve and maintain the regional system in a state of good repair.4

AM2. Provide a system of interconnected streets, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities to meet local travel needs using Complete Streets and Safe System principles.5

AM3. Cost-effectively support job and population growth forecasts through transportation investments.6

Roadways

R1. Use roadway preservation projects as a catalyst to address other identified safety, mobility, freight, bicycle, and pedestrian needs.7

R2. Maximize the performance of the regional highway system (principal and minor arterial) as measured by person throughput.8

R3. Manage access to the principal and minor arterial network appropriate to the functional classification.9

R4. Maintain a network of functionally classified roadways to create a system that adequately balances mobility and land access.10

R5. Identify and address critical transportation connections that are missing or inadequate.11

R6. Improve travel time reliability and provide alternatives to congested highway corridors.12

R7. Address mobility needs using the highway investment hierarchy.13

Freight

F1. Maintain adequate highway-, riverfront-, and rail-accessible land to meet existing and future demand for freight.14

F2. Identify impacts of highway congestion on freight mobility and identify cost-effective mitigation solutions.15

F3. Pursue short- and long-term improvements to accommodate freight and passenger rail demand.16

F4. Provide more reliable last-mile connections between major freight terminals and trucking facilities and the regional highway system, including the federally designated Primary Freight Network.17

Transit

T1. Use a variety of transit service types to match transit service delivery to expected demand based on transit markets.18

T2. Build a network of transitways to expand access to high-capacity, reliable, and frequent transit service.19

T3. Coordinate transit service delivery and operations to create a high-quality rider experience.20

T4. Provide transit police services and coordinate with public safety agencies to provide a collaborative approach to safety and security.21

T5. Plan for increased density and a diversification of uses in job concentrations, nodes along corridors, and local centers to maximize the effectiveness of the transportation system.22

T6. Plan, build, and promote multimodal travel options and alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel and highway congestion through travel demand management.23

Bicycle & Pedestrian

- BP1. Prioritize and implement the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network alignments and provide connections to local bicycle networks.24
- BP2. Prioritize and improve regional bicycle and major river barrier crossings.25

Safety

- S1. Prioritize and implement safety considerations in projects for all modes and users.26
- S2. Reduce the vulnerability of transportation infrastructure to natural disasters.27
- S3. Minimize the threat of human-made incidents that degrade security of the system.28

Equity

- EQ1. Plan and implement a transportation system that considers the needs of all potential users, including children, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities, and that promotes active lifestyles and cohesive and connected communities.29
- EQ2. Use a variety of communication methods and eliminate barriers to foster public engagement in transportation planning to engage members of historically underrepresented communities, including communities of color, low-income communities, and those with disabilities.30

Environment

- EN1. Prioritize and implement transportation projects that reduce emissions.31
- EN2. Minimize impacts on the natural environment.32
- EN3. Protect, enhance, and mitigate impacts on the cultural and built environments.33
- EN4. Avoid, minimize, and mitigate disproportionately high and adverse impacts of transportation projects to historically underrepresented communities, including communities of color, low-income communities, and those with disabilities.34

All Modes

AM1. Make investments in transportation that preserve and maintain the regional system in a state of good repair.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Technical analysis and system impacts evaluation.
- Annually report the bridge and pavement conditions performance measure.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Regional Solicitation funding categories include reconstruction and modernization, bridges, and transit modernization.
- A qualifying requirement for Regional Solicitation includes a commitment to maintain funded projects.
- Coordinate with partners on investment plans and evaluations (MnSHIP, Transit Asset Management Plans, transit Capital Improvement Programs, fleet procedures, county and city plans).
- Some regional studies have addressed this is a factor, but assessments usually originate from road authorities or transit providers.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- TBD

AM2. Provide a system of interconnected streets, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian facilities to meet local travel needs using Complete Streets and Safe System principles.

Regional Role:

- Regional coordination.
- Technical guidance and system impacts evaluation.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Comprehensive plan review process to ensure minimum requirements are met.
- Regional Solicitation funding categories include reconstruction and modernization, multiuse trails and bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, and safe routes to school.
- Regional solicitation scoring measures to prioritize projects with complete streets elements.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Policy could be more focused on Complete Streets and Safe System approach and how it applies to implementation of regional projects or projects receiving regional funding.

AM3. Cost-effectively support job and population growth forecasts through transportation investments.

Regional Role:

- State planning law, purpose of council.

Existing Implementation Actions

- Minimum Comprehensive Plan requirements (TAZ forecasting for population, household, and employment growth)
- Regional Solicitation funding categories include strategic capacity and transit expansion.
- The use of both existing data and forecast data in project selection processes and project development processes.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- TBD

Roadways

R1. Use roadway preservation projects as a catalyst to address other identified safety, mobility, freight, bicycle, and pedestrian needs.

Regional Role:

- Assist with regional coordination of major projects to increase cost effectiveness and limit construction impacts.
- Prioritize projects that are coordinated with preservation projects.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Tie MnDOT major highway mobility projects to preservation projects when possible.
- Used as a prioritization factor in regional investment planning like E-ZPass and other system studies.
- Preservation projects are identified in MnDOT plans and the Transportation Policy Plan at least 10 years out to allow for partners to plan for nearby projects.
- The Regional Solicitation roadways modal category is aimed at funding and scoring of the local projects that include elements beyond pavement preservation.
- Regional Solicitation uses the age of the facility as a scoring measure.
- MnDOT Congestion Mitigation Safety Plan projects attempt to tie into existing, planned preservation projects.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Balance the age of facility with other policy/ transportation needs.
-or-
- Limit regionally funded capacity projects to those coordinated with preservation projects.
- Any recommendations from studies, including the Regional Safety Action Plan, Intersection Mobility and Safety Study, etc.

R2. Maximize the performance of the regional highway system (principal and minor arterial) as measured by person throughput.

Regional Role:

- State and/or federal requirements include identifying principal arterials, approve major projects, and work towards federal performance targets.
- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Evaluate system impacts.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Prioritization efforts like the Congestion Management Safety Plan, System-to-System Interchange Study, and E-ZPASS. Include person throughput as an evaluation factor.
- The Regional Solicitation roadways modal category considers person throughput as a scoring measure.
- Regional Solicitation prioritizes current needs over future needs.
- The congestion management process's strategies prioritize initiatives that promote high occupancy vehicles thus optimizing person throughput.
- Projects are encouraged to evaluate design exceptions (narrowing lanes, etc.) before acquiring right-of-way.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Any recommendations from studies, including the Regional Travel Demand Management Study, Intersection Mobility and Safety Study, Regional Safety Action Plan, Twin Cities Highway Mobility Needs Analysis, and the Congestion Management Policies and Procedures Guide and Handbook.
- Partner with MnDOT and FHWA on design exceptions (e.g., stormwater or lane/shoulder widths).

R3. Manage access to the principal and minor arterial network appropriate to the functional classification.

Regional Role:

- State legislative authority and federal requirements.
- Project review and approval (consistency and conformance).
- Technical analysis.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Access standards must be included in comprehensive plans as a minimum requirement.
- Access changes, including interchange projects, are evaluated through the MnDOT and Metropolitan Council Joint Interchange Committee, as described in Appendix F.
- Evaluate access and/or capacity projects through the Metro Freeway Project Approval process.
- Analyze existing access relative to access standards as part of the functional class change review.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Potential future functional class studies.

R4. Maintain a network of functionally classified roadways to create a system that adequately balances mobility and land access.

Regional Role:

- Jurisdictional coordination.
- Federal requirement to classify roadways.
- State requirement to identify the principal arterial network.
- Technical analysis and system impacts evaluation.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Functional Classification Update Study to maintain and update network.
- Partner with MnDOT to determine additions and/or changes to the principal arterial system.
- Work with local partners, MnDOT, and FHWA as part of the functional classification request and approval process.
- Use the Regional Solicitation process to fund improvements to the A-minor and non-freeway principal arterial roadways through a qualifying requirement limiting funding to these roadway types.
- All existing and planned roadways by functional classification must be included in comprehensive plans as a minimum requirement.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from any studies.
- Functional classification update process.

R5. Identify and address critical transportation connections that are missing or inadequate.

Regional Role:

- State planning and policy plan legislation and federal planning requirements.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Use system and highway corridor studies to identify and prioritize transportation needs across all modes.
- Regional Solicitation funding categories, including spot mobility and safety, strategic capacity, transit expansion, and bus rapid transit), support increased connections.
- Develop and maintain the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network, Bike Barrier Crossing, Critical Urban/Rural Freight Connections, and Regional Truck Freight Corridors.
- Respond to locally identified needs for new access to the freeway network through the Appendix F Preliminary Interchange Approval Process.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from any studies, including the Regional Solicitation Evaluation and the Intersection Mobility and Safety Study.

R6. Improve travel time reliability and provide alternatives to congested highway corridors.

Regional Role:

- Report system reliability as a federally required performance measure.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Use Congestion Management Process (CMP) handbook to identify congested areas and potential solutions.
- Prioritize E-ZPASS improvements on the system to provide improved travel time reliability.
- Regional Solicitation provides points for adding multimodal elements to projects or for improving alternate routes to congested, parallel corridors.
- Annually report the system reliability performance measure.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from any studies, including the Twin Cities Highway Mobility Needs Analysis and targets.

R7. Address mobility needs using the highway investment hierarchy.

Regional Role:

- State and federal approval of major projects in the TIP and TPP.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Existing or proposed MnPASS lanes and transit advantages must be included in comprehensive plans as a minimum requirement.
- Regional Solicitation modal and funding categories use the investment hierarchy.
- The congestion management process provides guidance and policy for highway investments.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from studies, including the Intersection Mobility and Safety Study, and CMP Analysis Handbook.
- Future solicitation cycles could require a congestion management process analysis.

Freight

F1. Maintain adequate highway-, riverfront-, and rail-accessible land to meet existing and future demand for freight.

Regional Role:

- Regional resource development and technical assistance.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Develop and maintain the Regional Industrial Land Inventory and Industrial Land Atlas mapping tools.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- TBD

F2. Identify impacts of highway congestion on freight mobility (e.g., at FHWA-identified truck freight bottlenecks) and identify cost-effective mitigation solutions.

Regional Role:

- Regional coordination with MnDOT and local transportation partners.
- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Technical analysis and system impacts evaluation.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Minimum requirement for Comprehensive Plans (Identify other important nodes that may generate freight movements, map HCAADT, Identify any local roadway issues or problem areas...)
- Regional Solicitation scoring measure.
- Coordinate with MnDOT during the development of the Metro District Freight Plan and MnDOT Capital Highway Investment Plan for the Metro District.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- TBD

F3. Pursue short- and long-term improvements to accommodate freight and passenger rail demand.

Regional Role:

- Regional rail coordination with MnDOT and local partners.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Coordinate with MnDOT and participate in State Rail Plan updates.
- Participate in MnDOT led passenger rail planning coordination with adjacent states and federal agencies.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from future plans and/or studies, including State Rail Plan update and MnDOT Metro District Freight Plan.
- Consider future studies of last-mile freight connections.

F4. Provide more reliable last-mile connections between major freight terminals and trucking facilities and the regional highway system, including the federally designated Primary Freight Network.

Regional Role:

- Metro area freight plan development and coordination and coordination with MnDOT.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Designate National Highway System Intermodal Connectors.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Integrate criteria and analysis into other funding programs (Corridors of Commerce, MnDOT Freight plan/solicitation).

Transit

T1. Use a variety of transit service types to match transit service delivery to expected demand based on transit markets.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Jurisdictional coordination.
- Technical analysis and system impacts evaluation.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Establish transit market areas, service design guidelines, and performance standards to evaluate system performance (including Regional Route Analysis).
- Coordinate with partners on transit provider studies, corridor studies, and other transit planning efforts to ensure consistency performance expectation for regional transit projects.
- Performance review for other efforts like state transit reports and Olmstead Report.
- Minimum requirement for Comprehensive Plans (acknowledge Transit Market Areas, existing services, and transit opportunities connected to land use plans).

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Establishing performance expectations for Regional Solicitation project requests (scoring or qualification).
- Determining areas where different service types are allowed and/or encouraged.
- Provide land use guidelines/thresholds for different levels of transit investment and service.

T2. Build a network of transitways to expand access to high-capacity, reliable, and frequent transit service.

Regional Role:

- Transitway implementor through Metro Transit.
- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Jurisdictional coordination.
- Technical analysis and system impacts evaluation.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Regional Solicitation funding set aside/ categories.
- Involvement in corridor studies; final review of Local Planning Assistance recommendations, financial plan, and other requirements for inclusion in the TPP.
- Minimum requirement for Comprehensive Plans (show transitways and coordinate adjacent land use).
- Identify potential transitways based on system studies, prioritization efforts, and work with local governments.
- Corridor planning coordination with a variety of partner agencies (transit providers, counties, cities, MnDOT).
- Dedicate funds through county sales taxes, federal competitive funds (regional and national, and state and/or local funds).

Potential Implementation Actions:

- System management, modernization, and incremental improvements could be more thoroughly documented or studied in many corridors; identified needs are often ad hoc or reactionary.

T3. Coordinate transit service delivery and operations to create a high-quality rider experience.

Regional Role:

- Regional convener and implementer.
- Jurisdictional/service coordination.
- Technical analysis and guidance.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Unified fare structure and establishment of a fare policy review committee.
- Centralized fleet procurement.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Additional considerations through Appendix G or other service design guidelines.

T4. Provide transit police services and coordinate with public safety agencies to provide a collaborative approach to safety and security.

Regional Role:

- State legislative authority.
- Regional implementer.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Maintain the Metro Transit Police Department.
- Deploy Metro Transit's Public Safety Plan.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- This policy may be better combined with other actions relating to the health and safety of all travelers.

T5. Plan for increased density and a diversification of uses in job concentrations, nodes along corridors, and local centers to maximize the effectiveness of the transportation system.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Technical guidance and system impacts evaluation.
- Jurisdictional coordination.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Minimum requirement for Comprehensive Plans (station/corridor plans, minimum/ target densities, level of activity).
- Transit Oriented Development grant program through Local Community Assistance to fund and support the land use requirements of the policy.
- Regional solicitation scoring measure (multimodal improvements near transit).

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Provide land use guidelines/thresholds for communities to serve as targets for transit service.
- Provide more weighting for multimodal Regional Solicitation projects that implement elements of a station-area plans.

T6. Plan, build, and promote multimodal travel options and alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel and highway congestion through travel demand management.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Technical analysis, guidance, and system impacts evaluation.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Regional Solicitation funding set aside for Bus Rapid Transit projects.
- Regional Solicitation funding categories for Travel Demand Management and Unique projects.
- Prioritize related concepts in Local Community Assistance grant programs.
- Metro Transit and transportation management organizations implements the travel demand management program.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Providing model TDM practices for local governments and transportation partners.
- Creating a consistent TDM implementation approach or requirement across federal funding recipients (both within TDM category and across other Regional Solicitation categories).
- Promote or foster increased TDM actions into new implementation areas.

Bicycle & Pedestrian

BP1. Prioritize and implement the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network alignments and provide connections to local bicycle networks.

Regional Role:

- Planning coordination with state and local agencies.
- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Implementation guidance to state and local planning agencies.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Convene the Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Work Group.
- Update the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network every two years.
- Minimum requirement for Comprehensive Plans (Identify Tier 1 and Tier 2 RBTNs and connections between the local bicycle network and the RBTN).
- Regional Solicitation scoring measures and funding category (Multiuse Trails and Bicycle Facilities).

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Add preferred RBTN facility types per community designation category based on RBTN Guidelines & Measures Study.

BP2. Prioritize and improve regional bicycle and major river barrier crossings.

Regional Role:

- Regional planning coordination with state and local agencies.
- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Implementation guidance to state/local agencies.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Minimum requirement for Comprehensive Plans (analyze and address need for local bike and pedestrian facilities to provide connections over major physical barriers).
- Regional Solicitation scoring measure.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- TBD

Safety

S1. Prioritize and implement safety considerations in projects for all modes and users.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Technical analysis, best practices guidance, and system impacts evaluation.
- Regional coordination.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Regional Solicitation scoring measure.
- Support the development of state and local safety plans.
- Maintain and update the Congestion Management Safety Plan.
- Annually report the safety performance measure.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from studies, including the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan and the Regional Safety Action Plan.
- Develop a policy to shift funding when performance measure targets are not met.
- More explicitly use a Safe System approach in policy.
- Use Regional High Injury Streets identification (will be developed as part of Regional Safety Action Plan) to help prioritize projects and evaluate system impacts.

S2. Reduce the vulnerability of transportation infrastructure to natural disasters.

Regional Role:

- Technical analysis and best practices guidance.
- Federal requirement.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- TBD

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from studies and plans, including the Climate Action Workplan.
- Develop Regional Solicitation funding categories and/or scoring measures.
- Incorporate the Localized Flood Risk tool and stormwater capacity needs analysis into planning and Regional Solicitation scoring.

S3. Minimize the threat of human-made incidents that degrade security of the system.

Regional Role:

- Federal requirement.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Develop, maintain, and deploy a transit safety and security plan.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Consider transit security needs on Regional Solicitation funded projects.
- Include transit security needs as a Regional Solicitation scoring measure.

Equity

EQ1. Plan and implement a transportation system that considers the needs of all potential users, including children, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities, and that promotes active lifestyles and cohesive and connected communities.

Regional Role:

- Regional coordination and implementer.
- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Evaluate system impacts.
- Promote best practices.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Regional Solicitation scoring measures to prioritize projects with connections to equity populations.
- Metro Mobility operates paratransit for the region.
- Complete environmental justice process and reporting requirements as well as Title VI plan.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Recommendations from studies, including the Equity Evaluation of Regional Transportation Investment Study and its Equity Policy Group; Equity Populations Engagement; Metropolitan Highway System Harms, Impacts and Mitigation Priorities.
- Recommendations from Coordinated Plan (required plan)- how to integrate into transit section as well to elevate the need as a priority
- Incorporate Justice40 initiatives into planning.

EQ2. Use a variety of communication methods and eliminate barriers to foster public engagement in transportation planning to engage members of historically underrepresented communities, including communities of color, low-income communities, and those with disabilities.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Regional implementer.
- Promote best practices.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Regional Solicitation scoring measures to engage equity populations in the project development process.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Process for including in our studies.
- Current standing contracts for equity-focused engagement.

Environment

EN1. Prioritize and implement transportation projects that reduce emissions.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Jurisdictional coordination.
- Technical analysis and system impacts evaluation.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Complete air quality monitoring.
- Regional Solicitation scoring measures include an emissions scoring measure in roadway projects (CO, NOX, VOC) and transit expansion and TDM projects. (GHG/CO2).

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Evaluate all projects' contributions to GHG emissions within the Regional Solicitation and TPP processes.
- Develop a VMT reduction and/or GHG performance target.
- Incorporate recommendations from studies, including the Regional Climate Change Multimodal Measures Study, E-Commerce Study, and Regional TDM Study.
- Complete an EV Charging Gap Analysis
- Incorporate best practices from National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure planning into planning processes.

EN2. Minimize impacts on the natural environment.

Regional Role:

- Federal requirement.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- TBD

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Use the Council's Growing Shade tool in the Regional Solicitation.

EN3. Protect, enhance, and mitigate impacts on the cultural and built environments.

Regional Role:

- Technical analysis.
- Regional coordination with sovereign nations.
- Federal requirement.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- The Council has a Government-to-Government Tribal Relations Policy and designates Council tribal liaison.

Potential Implementation Actions:

- TBD

EN4. Avoid, minimize, and mitigate disproportionately high and adverse impacts of transportation projects to historically underrepresented communities, including communities of color, low-income communities, and those with disabilities.

Regional Role:

- Project prioritization for regional funding.
- Technical analysis and system impacts evaluation.
- Federal requirement.

Existing Implementation Actions:

- Equity Considerations for Place-Based Advocacy and Decisions in the Twin Cities Region
- Regional Solicitation equity scoring measure

Potential Implementation Actions:

- Develop a process for including equity considerations in studies.

Other Comments

All Modes

Roadway & Freight

Transit, Bicycle, & Pedestrian

Safety

Equity

Environment