2050 TRANSPORATION POLICY PLAN POLICIES AND ACTIONS
APRIL 2023

Background

In February 2023 the 2050 TPP Technical Working Group (TWG) was asked to review and provide feedback on the existing policy concepts and identify potential policy gaps or new policies. The feedback that was received is summarized in this document.

The focus on this exercise was policies and actions, which have the following definitions:

- **Policies** are the statement of intent and approach to regional issues or topics, independently and in its roles with partners.
- **Actions** are the specific strategies or activities to implement polices and achieve goals.

This feedback, along with planning study recommendations and additional feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, will be considered during Phase II (gaps, opportunities, and redundancies identification) and Phase III (new policy development) to develop policy language for the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan.

Overall Summary

General themes emerged from the comments received:

- Safety was mentioned under all topics with strong support for the Safe Systems approach.
- Prioritize equity in all aspects of policy, planning, and implementation.
- Set VMT, GHG, and emissions reduction targets with a more comprehensive consideration of climate.
- Expand multimodal networks and apply mobility and accessibility goals to all modes.
- New tools, support, resources, and training are needed for local governments to advance regional priorities.
- Establish performance measures and targets to guide investments to respond to actual performance (e.g. shift investments to meet targets).
- Improve coordination efforts for comprehensive plans, multimodal transportation networks, land use.

Topic specific summaries are provided at the end of this document.

Next Steps

Feedback that was received was from a limited set of stakeholders from the TWG. TWG are encouraged to *submit any additional feedback from this exercise by May 1, 2023*.

To being drafting the 2050 TPP policy and action statements, Council staff propose the following approach:

- Once the draft goals and objectives language is complete, Council staff will reorganize existing policies to align with the proposed goals and objectives. (*May and June*)
- A Policy Development Team, consisting of a small group of topic area technical experts, will be formed. This team will meet 3 to 5 times, as needed, to propose draft policy and implementation actions statements. The first set of meetings will occur prior to the workshops and the second set of meetings after. (*June through September*)
- Council staff will facilities a series of half-day workshops organized around related goals and topics. TWG members will provide feedback on policy and action statements. (*July through August*)

- Workshop outputs will provide the basis of the proposed draft policies and actions chapter for the 2050 TPP and will be subject to further review and feedback through the TWG (*fall/winter*).

All Modes

AM 1. Make investments in transportation that preserve and maintain the regional system in a state of good repair.

- Four comments expressed a desire to **prioritize maintenance** of the system, but varied with approach:
  - Support a holistic strategic asset management plan.
  - Expand PM2 and PM3 performance measures to include the local arterial system.
  - Prioritize maintenance over expansion.
  - Coordinate investments for state of good repair in transit and expand access to funds through Regional Solicitation.
- Two comments identified a need for **more sustainable funding sources:**
  - Prioritizing funding is separate from expanded and dedicated funding.
  - Support local governments pursuing sustainable funding.

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

- Five comments discussed **complete streets** elements and approach and how to fill gaps:
  - Three comments requested support, training, and tools to implement complete streets in their communities.
  - An identified need in complete streets policies for context sensitive solutions and a consideration for comfortable and sustainable (green streets) facilities for all ages.
  - One comment encouraged expanding complete streets from individual elements to a complete streets approach which includes operation and maintenance.
  - One comment suggested using an equity lens to prioritize gaps in complete streets systems.
- Two comments suggested expanding policy to regional travel needs to support VMT reduction.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - Performance measures to track outcomes.
  - Better coordination across communities to develop multimodal systems in comprehensive plans.

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

- Two comments were received regarding travel forecasting and one requesting support on how to use traffic analysis zones in local studies and future travel demand based on COVID-19 impacts and policy related outcomes (VMT reduction, land use strategies, etc.).
- Three comments were received regarding **reduce vehicle miles traveled**:
  - Support TDM plans, practices, and studies to minimize VMT increases with new developments.
  - Land use strategies to promote VMT reduction.
  - VMT reduction to help meet climate needs.
  - Two comments had conflicting views on the Regional Solicitation process:
    - Strategic Capacity funding category rewards VMT growth.
    - The process does not account for future growth in suburban cities.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - An identified need to incorporate freight in these considerations.
  - How to support current or forecasted high-growth locations through transit.

General Comments

- Three comments advocated for **VMT and GHG reduction targets** and more broadly incorporating them into the policy plan.
- Single comments were received on:
    - Advocating for additional funding.
    - Considering how remote work influences planning.
    - Better development of built environments to support multimodal travel.
    - Reducing disparities and inclusive decision making processes.
    - Establishing a prioritization of goals, objectives, and policies.

Roadways

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

- Comments **generally disagreed with this policy**, mostly noting that other roadway elements are the priority in project development and are not a factor of infrastructure age.
- The comments also diverged on project priorities – capacity needs, specific modal needs, transit needs, safety.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
    - State a complete streets hierarchy.
    - Performance measures.

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

- Four comments discussed expanding this policy to **include all modes**, including multimodal access and accessibility to support VMT reduction and mode shift.
- Two comments related to highway delay and congestion, with one questioning why current needs are being prioritized over future needs.
- Two comments suggested design exceptions implementing actions were unnecessary.

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

- One comment referenced MnDOT's context categories and corresponding baseline modal hierarchy

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

- Three comments supported adding functional class types to funding eligibility.
- One comment questioned whether this policy was necessary.
- One comment encouraged stronger land use and transportation planning connections.

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

- Five comments supported building out **multimodal systems:**
    - Close pedestrian system gaps.
    - Identify missing or inadequate multimodal connections and accessibility.
    - Put more emphasis on transportation alternatives that are safe and fast.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
    - Local comprehensive plan coordination.

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

- Nine comments generally discussed **alternatives to expansion and prioritizing transportation choices**, VMT reduction, and alternatives to single occupant vehicles:
  - Prioritize transit advantages on ABRT corridors.
  - Competitive travel times for non-SOV modes.
  - Some amount of congestion should be expected.
- Two comments indicated support for **performance measures** for VMT reduction and mode share.
- One comment encouraged incorporating freight considerations in travel time reliability.

R7. Address mobility needs using the highway investment hierarchy.

- Two comments indicated mobility needs should be expanded to all modes of transportation.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - Mobility needs should address equity.
  - Congestion management process could undermine decarbonization goals.
  - Use performance measures to achieve goals and objectives.
  - The highway investment hierarchy is unclear.

Freight

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

- Three comments discussed the relationship between land use and freight movements within comprehensive plans and other planning documents to protect freight and industrial related land uses and appropriate facility siting.
- Single comments were received on:
  - Expand focus on rail crossing safety.
  - Coordination with the freight industry on vehicle design and truck parking.

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

- Single comments were received on:
  - MnPASS/E-Z Pass options for freight.
  - Site freight generators near regional routes and system plans.
  - More emphasis on freight throughout the plan.
  - Encourage travel during off-peak hours before expansion for freight.
  - Use MnDOT Freight bottlenecks and not FHWA.
  - Improved coordination across all levels of government.

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

- Two comments supporting prioritizing and advancing intercity passenger rail. One additional comment supported better integration between regional public transit and passenger rail.
- Single comments were received on:
  - Accurate freight volume estimation and offsetting negative impacts to communities.
  - Continue to implement state rail safety plans.
  - Encouraging private-sector development and operation of rail carriers.

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.

- Three comments discussed **last-mile deliveries:**
  - Consider smaller truck mandates.
  - Opportunities to reduce freight-related emissions.
  - Breaking down larger loads at urban consolidation facilities.
- Single comments were received on:
  - Comprehensive planning, zoning, and land uses for last-mile connections.
  - Accurate freight volume estimation and offsetting negative impacts to communities.
  - Revise to consider the National Multimodal Freight Network for a comprehensive review of the entire freight system.

General Comments

- Four comments generally discussed freight, with different perspectives:
  - Meaningfully incorporate freight.
  - Consider health equity in freight planning.
  - Explore non-truck freight movement.
  - Focus on last-mile delivery impacts and opportunities.

Transit

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

- Four comments indicated support for **more suburban transit service** or more flexible options for delivering service.
- Four comments discussed **microtransit** (demand-response transit):
  - Two comments indicated support for more microtransit service.
  - One comment requested design guidelines and performance standards for permanent, non-pilot microtransit service.
  - One comment asked for general consideration of micro-mobility but undefined, potentially related to microtransit rather than active transportation in its context.
- Three comments mentioned **transit performance measurement**, including:
  - General support for performance measurement to assess outcomes.
  - Considering measures other than ridership and subsidy per passenger, and measures inclusive of microtransit.
  - Questioning the method of forecasting demand and response to missing expectations.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - Clarify zoning and pedestrian network qualification for transitway station areas.
  - Align policy and practice on transitway development that do not currently match.
  - Consider environmental justice factors like transit dependence and air pollution when prioritizing service.
  - Align transit investments with supportive land uses, density, and low-vehicle and/or low-income households.
  - Improve service frequency and reliability.
  - Change the Regional Solicitation to support a variety of service types and geography.
  - Remove system acknowledgement requirements for local comprehensive plans.
  - Improve plain-language and avoid transit industry jargon.

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

- Two comments support **coordinated roadway or intersection improvements** with transit projects.
- Two comments gave general support for the policy or transitway projects.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
    - Improve suburban provider inclusion and acknowledge transitway service is not suitable for all communities.
    - Phrasing suggests transitways are the only way to provide high-capacity, reliable, and frequent service. Consider rephrasing to "frequent transit corridors" and include methods/procedures for upgrading existing transit corridors to transitways.
    - More clearly detail Motor Vehicle Sales Tax (MVST) allocation process.
    - Serve as a regional convener of providers on first-last mile solutions.
    - General support for performance measurement to assess outcomes.
    - General support for innovation or technology assistance.
    - Preference for determining needs based on observed ridership and not expectations.
    - Support actions to encourage mode shift in Transit Market Areas 1 and 2 to reduce regional vehicle miles travelled.

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

- Five comments addressed the **regional fare system** with differing viewpoints:
    - One stated support for a unified fare system and payment methods.
    - Two stated support for fare programs to encourage ridership or equity; one stated support for reduced and/or free fare programs.
    - One stated the current unified fare system does not provide enough flexibility for high-milage or microtransit services.
    - One stated support for an account-based fare system and for mobile ticketing standards for seamless transfers among providers.
- Three comments addressed **security** for riders and/or operators.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
    - Consider maintenance in new projects and do not rely on property owners or local government.
    - Consider creating service delivery, operations, and fleet procurement flexibility for different regional contexts.
    - Support for suburban transit frequency and reverse trips for job accessibility.
    - Support the Better Bus Stops program and other improvements coordinated with transit projects.
    - Develop guidelines for shared facilities receiving regional funding.
    - General support for the policy.

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

- Three comments stated support for a **transit ambassadors or administrative citations** concept:
    - One comment was supportive of this program paired with changes to fare enforcement, code of conduct enforcement, and connection of public health and housing services.
    - One comment was supportive of non-enforcement measures.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
    - Equitable provision of security services for suburban transit providers and providing clear, detailed plans for allocation of transit police services in the region.
    - Question regarding coordination with other law enforcement agencies.

- o Consider rider and operator safety and security in an equitable manner.
- o Be clear when referencing personal or operating safety.
- o Develop enforcement tools for transit advantages.
- o Group this policy with the previous policy.
- o General support for this policy.

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.

- Three comments addressed **travel demand management** related topics, including the following supporting actions:
  - o Support electrification and mobility hub elements in grant programs.
  - o Require employers have travel demand management plans in job concentrations.
  - o Increasing the funding available for non-roadway projects in the Regional Solicitation.
- Two comments support identifying **local actions to increase density**, one focused on transit station areas and another focused on reducing vehicle trips. One of these comments supports identifying anti-displacement actions for the Met Council alongside major transit investments.
  - o There was a third comment from a suburban community questioning how land use guidance near transit is implemented and if density thresholds exist and preclude transit investment.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - o Consider in evaluation criteria the connection between suburban employers and employees.
  - o Provide increased technical assistance on Transit Oriented Development grants.
  - o Improve scoring measures to consider geography.
  - o Consider freight movement needs in job concentrations.
  - o Consider incentives to create job and service clusters near METRO stations.
  - o Prevent transitway development along undevelopable land and set minimum availability and intensity around transitway stations.
  - o Regional role can include providing best practices and illustrative examples.
  - o General support for performance measurement to assess outcomes.

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

- Three comments support **tying travel demand management to development**, including the following potential actions:
  - o Require developers have travel demand management plans.
  - o Apply tiered travel demand management requirements to new projects (e.g., Bloomington ordinance)
  - o Connect travel demand management to local zoning (e.g., Minneapolis zoning requirements)
- Three comments addressed **travel demand management in Regional Solicitation**, including the following:
  - o Specify modal priorities rather than unique projects.
  - o Support for the travel demand management set-aside in the Regional Solicitation.
  - o Provide opportunity for non-Metro Transit providers to pursue bus rapid transit projects in the unique projects category.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - o Provide model travel demand management practices for local governments.
  - o Encourage modal shifts through Met Council policy to reach statewide vehicle miles travelled and greenhouse gas reduction targets.

- o Comment regarding replacement of some freeway and parking capacity with high-frequency transit.
- o General support for this policy.

General Comments

- One comment requested contextual considerations in policies and actions for suburban transit providers and their operating environments.
- One comment supports increasing speed, frequency, and reliability of transit and use of transit investments to meet regional climate and equity goals.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

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

- Two comments support **better interagency coordination** to promote bicycle and pedestrian network cohesion.
- Two comments raised the issue of **pedestrian needs losing focus** alongside bicycles, either requesting separation of these policies or pedestrian-specific policies.
- Two comments addressed **mapping of bicycle and pedestrian networks**:
  - o One requested that local comprehensive plans should show both local bicycle and pedestrian networks and the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network.
  - o One raised concerns about sidewalks being reported as bicycle infrastructure.
- Two comments gave general support for this policy. One suggested combining the two bicycle and pedestrian policies and supported performance measurement to assess outcomes.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - o Connect bicycle networks to transit and activity centers.
  - o Increase Regional Bicycle Transportation Network density in core cities.
  - o Support all ages and abilities bicycle infrastructure.
  - o Start a bicycle planning technical assistance program.
  - o Include messaging on mode choice and related travel preferences and costs.
  - o Support infrastructure that supports independence and comfort in aging.

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

- Five comments support **improving network connectivity** and/or removal of network gaps and barriers.
  - o One of these comments discussed this in terms of improving health and reducing disparities.
  - o One comment requested expanding the "major river barrier" language to "major natural and infrastructure barriers," and asked if gap analysis of infrastructure barriers has been completed.
  - o One comment specifically supported regional involvement in bridge connections for the Midtown and Great Northern Greenways.
- Two comments gave general support for this policy. One suggested combining the two bicycle and pedestrian policies and supported performance measurement to assess outcomes.
- One comment generally supported system safety.

General Comments

- One comment supports promotion of complete streets, bicycle and pedestrian network connectivity, and active transportation programs that reduce auto dependency and promote health.
- One comment supports the Met Council specifying a regional role in bikeshare systems.

Safety

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

- Four comments advocated for **shifting investments** when safety performance measures are not met.
- Three comments discussed using the **safe system** approach.
- Two comments supported the development of safety plans.
- Single comments were received on:
    - Prioritizing equity in safety.
    - Separating congestion from the congestion management safety plan.
    - Establishing a modal hierarchy to limit vehicle level of service to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

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

- Single comments were received on:
    - Flooding impacts all infrastructure and additional data and analysis is needed to identify critical assets.
    - Incorporate adaptation measures into projects to protect against the impacts of climate change.
    - Green stormwater infrastructure improvements.
    - Combine S2 and S3.

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

- Single comments were received on:
    - Expand considerations outside of transit including stormwater, access, and people driving on bikeways/trails/sidewalks.
    - Transit security and safety should be improved to encourage ridership.
    - Include transit security needs as a Regional Solicitation scoring measure.

General Comments

- Three general comments were received:
    - Safety language should be woven throughout all topics.
    - Invest in rail safety improvements.
    - Regional commitment Toward Zero Deaths.

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.

- Five comments addressed **prioritizing equity or related topics** and implementing **prioritization or performance measurement tools**.
    - One comment supports collaborative work to develop measures of transportation and health impacts.
    - One comment supports development of an equity scoring measure that prioritizes areas of greater need.
    - Consider partner agency to contextualize or inform regional work, such as the MnDOT Equity Definition and the Minneapolis Racial Equity Framework.
- Two comments gave general support for this policy. One supported performance measurement to assess outcomes.
- Single comments were received on each of the following:

- o Accommodate freight needs, as related jobs create opportunities for low-income residents.
- o Support hiring practices in transit projects that create employment opportunities for disadvantaged areas.
- o Support innovative workforce programs to help transit agencies develop their current and future workforces.
- o Incorporate federal Justice40 initiative goals into regional transportation planning.
- o Focus equity initiatives in areas exposed to greater pollution.
- o Support separating sidewalks from roadways with boulevards to reduce pedestrian exposure to vehicle exhaust.
- o Design inclusive engagement processes.
- o Sharpen the policy's language. "[A]ll potential users" is vague.
- o Support other factors (e.g., density, destinations, employment) ahead of equity in determining transit needs.
- o Improve transportation equity by reducing the need to own a car through transit improvements and land use policies that reduce travel needs.

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.

- Three comments addressed engagement practices in varying levels of detail. Some themes included:
  - o Building standing and compensated relationships with communities that aren't necessarily oriented around a project.
  - o Provide translation services and conduct culturally-relevant engagement.
  - o Creating two-way communications between the Met Council and communities in decision-making.
- Two comments gave general support for this policy.
- One comment supports providing technical assistance on Regional Solicitation to areas of concern for environmental justice and addressing equitable distribution of transportation investment costs and benefits.

General Comments

- Single comments were received on each of the following:
  - o Discussion on equity should be woven throughout the plan.
  - o Set equity promotion as a standard agency practice, particularly in setting spending and project priorities.
  - o Work with community-based organizations and environmental justice groups to collaboratively understand and address needs.
  - o Acknowledge and reverse historical inequities in the regional transportation system and be aware that "all people" is often code for watering down proactive investments to address historic inequities for Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities.

Environment

EN1. Prioritize and implement transportation projects that reduce emissions.

- Six comments discussed **VMT reductions:**
  - o Five comments supported various VMT reduction targets.
  - o One comment discussed the freight industry's concern surrounding VMT reduction targets.

- Four comments supported **emissions and GHG reductions targets** and incorporation into Regional Solicitation scoring.
- Four comments were received on **electrification and electric vehicles**, with different concerns:
  - Electric vehicles alone are not sufficient to address climate change or roadway safety needs.
  - No identified funding opportunities for vehicle electrification and supporting infrastructure limits its implementation.

EN2. Minimize impacts on the natural environment.

- Four comments supported **incentivizing projects with additional natural elements** like pollinator habitats, green infrastructure, stormwater management, etc.
- Two comments discussed land use policies to protect the natural environment.
- Single comments were received on:
  - How to measure impacts and incorporate into Regional Solicitation scoring.
  - A framework to assess various impacts from different stakeholders.
  - Whether this policy is necessary because it is already required in environmental review processes.

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

- Two comments supported proactively **addressing racial and economic disparities** and building tools and resources to support more equitable outcomes.
- Two comments discussed relationships with **Tribal nations**; one to expand relations with Tribal nations and one to support existing Tribal relationships.

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.

- Four comments supported efforts to assess impacts on vulnerable populations with different models (EPA's Environmental Justice Screening Tool, Social Vulnerability Index, restorative economic analysis, racial equity framework, etc.)
- Three comments discussed anti-displacement policies to mitigate gentrification resulting from transportation investments.
- Two comments supported efforts to mitigate past harms with specific projects and dedicated funding.
- Two comments encouraged better engagement methods when developing projects.

General Comments

- Four general comments were received:
  - Environment and climate action language should be woven throughout all topics.
  - Put an emphasis on health outcomes and develop scoring and evaluation matrix.
  - Stronger emphasis is needed on water quality improvements.
  - Aggressively reduce GHG emissions through VMT and GHG reduction goals and prioritize in Regional Solicitation scoring.
  - Invest in rail safety improvements.
  - Regional commitment Toward Zero Deaths.