

Regional Solicitation Unique Projects Development Process

TAB Unique Projects Policy Work Group – April 23, 2021



How are we going to operate?

BE ACTIVE

RESPECT OUR TIME

KEEP AN OPEN MIND

ALLOW FOR EVERYONE

HAVE FUN

USE TECHNOLOGY

OTHERS?

Come prepared to engage (you all volunteered!)

Limit the side chatter, stay focused on topic

Be considerate of others' opinions

Don't dominate the conversation

This is an exciting topic, let your creative side loose!

Use Webex tools and Mentimeter to communicate

Cole Hiniker

Host, me

Participants (1)

Search

Raise hand

CH Cole Hiniker
Host, me

Mute all Unmute all ...

Chat

Everyone

Enter chat message here

Unmute Start video Share Record ... X

Participants Chat ...

Proposed Schedule

| Meeting Date | Topic #1 | Topic #2 | Info Items |
|--------------|--|---|------------|
| April 23 | Introduction and History | Goals, Purpose, and Outcomes | |
| May 7 | Prioritize Goals | Evaluation Metrics and Eligibility | TBD |
| May 23 | Evaluation Metrics and Eligibility (Cont.) | Information Needed to Evaluate Projects | TBD |
| June 4 | Information Needed to Evaluate Projects (Cont.) | Weighting of Goals/Metrics | TBD |
| June 18 | Weighting of Goals/Metrics (Cont.) | Min/max funding, match expectations, and TDM discussion | TBD |
| July 9 | Min/max funding, match, and TDM discussion (Cont.) | TBD | TBD |

What is the Regional Solicitation?

Regional process to allocate federal transportation funds to locally-initiated public projects that support regional transportation goals and objectives.

- Solicit and select **\$200 million worth of projects every two years** for implementation four-to-five years into the future (e.g., 2020 Regional Solicitation will fund projects in 2024 and 2025)
- Use a transparent and **technically-driven scoring system** to select projects
- Federal awards pay **up to 80%** of total project cost or adopted maximum awards

Strong Linkage to Regional Policy



- Qualifying criteria ask applicants to document consistency with regional policy
- Geographic balance is a secondary lens

Past Funded Unique Projects

- 1990 – Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) (\$50,000 FAU)
- 2008 – MPCA Diesel Retrofits (\$500,000 CMAQ)
- 2010 – TBI \$ (special federal ARRA funding)
- 2012 – MPCA Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
 - \$500,000 CMAQ-additional federal funds became available
 - Part of local match provided by Xcel Energy
- 2014 – Transit On-Board Survey (\$800,000 STP-additional federal funds became available)
- 2016 and 2018 – Regional Model/TBI (\$2.7M STP in 2016, \$850,000 in 2018)
- 2018 – St. Paul/Hourcar Mobility Hub Charging Stations (\$4 M)

Unique Projects History

- Prior to 2014, unique projects funded on a case-by-case basis
- Unique projects application category suggested to be added during 2014 Regional Solicitation evaluation (for 2016 application)
- Interest from TAB in providing flexibility to respond to Unique project requests
 - Reviewing requests during Regional Solicitation timeline allows for consideration during creation of funding options

TAB Technical Advisory Committee Feedback from 2016

- Unique projects are difficult to compare
- TAC does not have a technical recommendation for how to objectively differentiate projects
- Projects should meet the qualifying criteria, as appropriate
- Do not solicit for unique project applications - Unique projects requests should be sent directly to TAB for consideration

2018 Regional Solicitation Feedback

How do we accommodate the potential influx of interest related to technology and shared mobility?

- Unique Projects:
 - Formalize the category with a set-aside of funding?
 - How to score?
 - TAB directed staff to create a framework for Unique Projects
- Rethinking the Travel Demand Management category?
- Shared mobility / CAV / new technologies
- Policy-level input needed

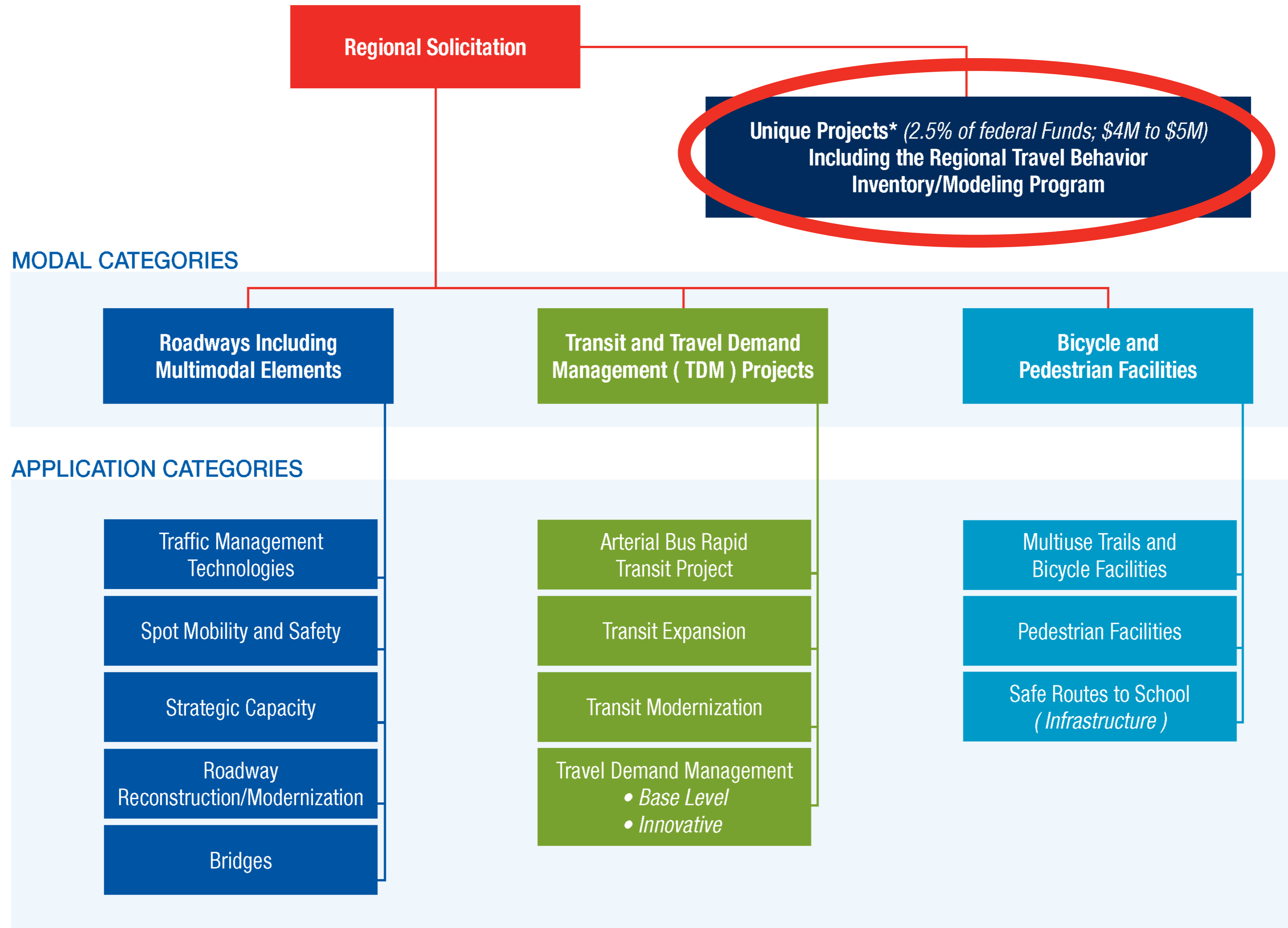
Regional Solicitation Policymaker Work Group – Met throughout 2019

- TAB Chair and Vice Chair
- City of Minneapolis
- Transit and Bike-Ped reps
- Suburban provider rep
- Two Met Council Members
- Three county reps

Policymaker Work Group Recommendation

- Create a Unique Projects application category
- Set aside 2.5% of total funding in 2020 Solicitation for Unique projects
- Select Unique projects in the 2022 Solicitation
- Identify the Unique Projects criteria and evaluation process after the 2020 Solicitation

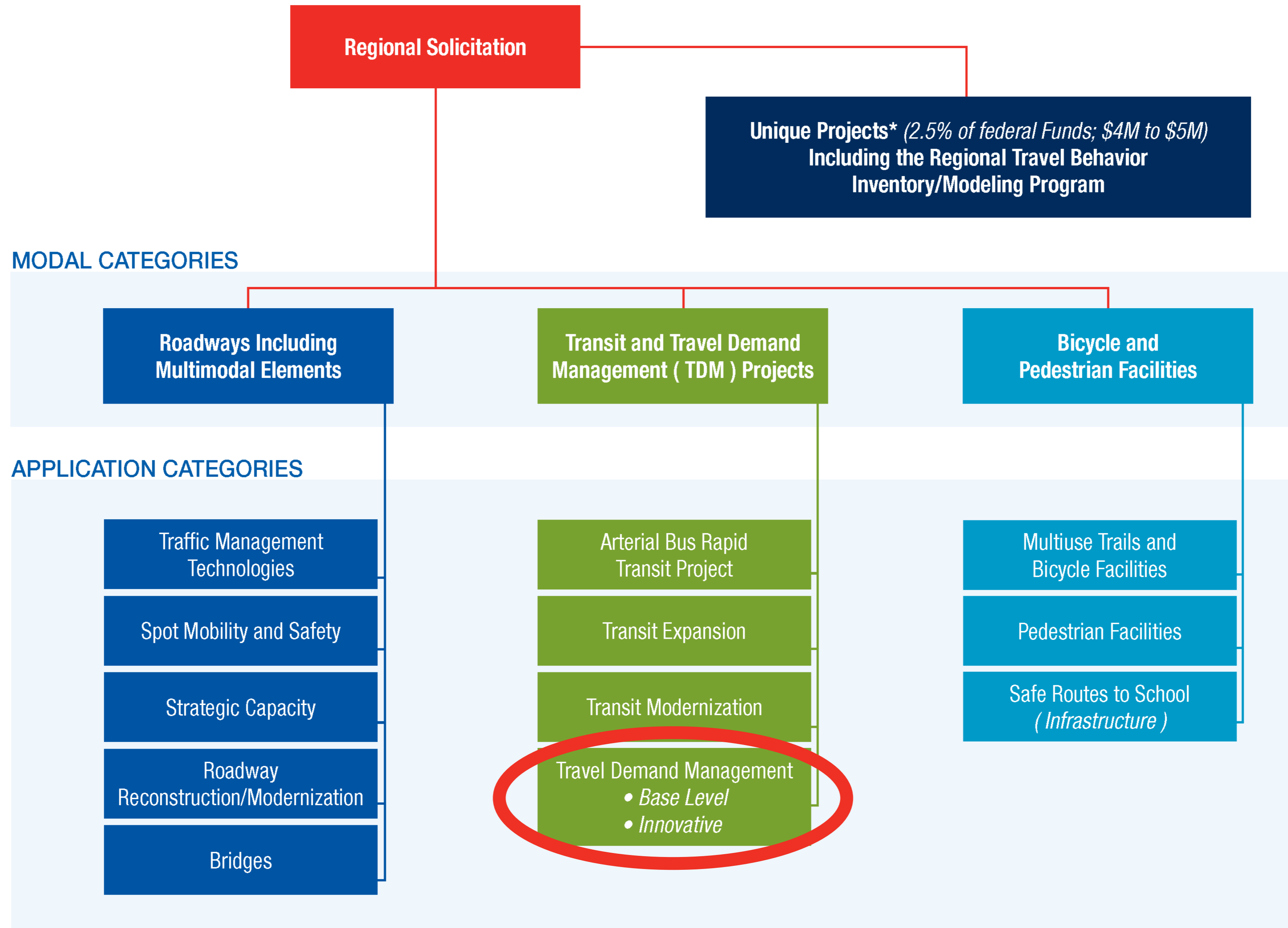
Approved Application Categories



Unique Project Characteristics (from 2019)

- Projects that do not fit into other application categories
- Are difficult to score using existing measures – leads to need for more qualitative scoring
- Have a more immediate implementation timeline (< typical 4-to-5-year period to receive Regional Solicitation funds)
- Potentially innovative, demonstration type projects or data collection, surveying projects
- Have regional benefits
- Combine or cross modal categories

Approved Application Categories



Innovative TDM Projects

- Innovative Travel Demand Management (TDM) projects category established 2014 in the Transit and TDM application category
- \$1.2 M in funds available above \$5.8 M on-going funding for Transportation Management Organizations (funded as part of one \$7 M project)
- Funds available in next 2-3 year period as opposed to 4-5 year period for other Solicitation categories
- Minimum federal award \$100,000, maximum federal award \$500,000

Innovative TDM Project Characteristics

- TDM projects are federal high-priority for CMAQ funds
- Demonstrate air-quality/congestion-reduction benefits through single-occupant-vehicle travel reduction
- Introduce new TDM concepts to the region, expand to a new geographic area, serve populations previously unserved, or incorporate enhancements to an existing program
- Small in scale, not capital-intensive investments
- Scoring includes qualitative assessment of innovation

Unique Projects Development Recommendation

- Past solicitation for unique projects resulted in difficult to compare proposals, goals not well defined
- Difficult to know what technical questions to ask without specific program goals
- Considerations for the work group
 - Focus on 1-2 goals that will likely result in a narrow scope of projects that can be compared
 - What information is needed by TAB to make an adequate evaluation of the projects and how they achieve the unique project goals?
 - What projects are eligible? How to relate to existing categories?
 - What are the max and min award amounts, match requirements?
 - What is the role of technical committees in evaluating proposals?
 - Should TDM be combined with Unique Projects?

Unique Project Purpose and Goals Input

Approx. \$4 million available for 2024-2025 projects

Round Table:

What is the purpose of funding Unique Projects, from your perspective?

Group Input:

- What goals/outcomes should be a priority for the work group to consider? **Think about measurable change and how it impacts people's lives**

Examples:

- Mitigate climate change
- Reduce racial disparities
- Environmental justice
- COVID-19 opportunities or predictions
- Mode shift away from single-occupant vehicle travel
- What kinds of projects would you like to see come forward?

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Meeting Reflection

- What worked?
- What didn't work?
- Any meeting rules to add or revisit for next time?

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