

REGIONAL SOLICITATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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GENERAL TOPICS

Question 1: WebGrants

In WebGrants, what is the best method for filling in questions in that require answers to be written in paragraph form?

Answer: Any question that requires answers to be written in paragraph form should have a character limit listed underneath the text box. However, WebGrants will not show you a character count. If the response you enter exceeds the character limit, WebGrants will still let you save, but any text you have entered will be lost. It is recommended that you type out your responses in Microsoft Word first and use its character count feature to make sure that your response does not exceed the character limit. Once the response is completed, it is recommended that the you copy/paste the text from Word into Notepad (basic text editor), and then copy/paste the text from Notepad into WebGrants. The reason for this is that sometimes when you copy/paste text from Word directly into WebGrants, certain punctuation marks, such as apostrophes, will be converted to question marks after you save. This does not happen when you copy/paste text from Notepad into WebGrants.

Question 2: Multiple Applications

Can an agency submit two applications along the same corridor in different funding categories?

Answer: Yes. However, the applicant should note that the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and Council have expressed interest in funding multimodal projects. The two applications must be for different projects (i.e., have different project descriptions and scopes). The two projects would be independent of each other and would not factor into each other's scores. Within a mode, TAB will not fund more than one project in the same application category that is immediately adjacent to another submitted project on the same corridor.

Question 3: MnDOT (and other agencies) Right-of-Way

Are letters from MnDOT required for projects on MnDOT right-of-way?

Answer: Yes. If a project is located on MnDOT right-of-way, it cannot be considered without a letter from MnDOT acknowledging the project. Similarly, letters from other agencies are needed for location on any right-of-way not operated by the applicant.

To request a letter from MnDOT, contact the MnDOT Program Management Director (see [Contacts](#) on Regional Solicitation page) for the applicant city/county/organization no later than **March 15, 2022**. The request must include a brief description of the project, project area, and estimated costs. It must also specify whether the applicant intends to request that MnDOT contribute either funding, services, or other resources for the project. The project letter must be from the MnDOT Metro District Engineer. MnDOT Metro District will coordinate review of requests for letters. MnDOT letters will include a requirement for development of an amicable agreement that provides for long-term maintenance of the project for its useful life.

For letters from other agencies, contact those agencies as soon as possible to obtain a letter.

Question 4: Mapping – Educational Institutions

My proposed transit project connects to or falls within 1/4 or 1/2 mile of an educational institution, but is not reported in the results on my “Regional Economy” map. What should I do?

Answer: The educational institutions are point-based locations with a 1/8-mile buffer around each address point. If your project connects to the University of Minnesota campus, you will receive the same number of points for your connection to the University of Minnesota job concentration. In this scenario, please mark “connection to job concentration” in your application. If your project connects to the University of St. Thomas, Augsburg, or another urban campus that is not fully encompassed by a 1/8-mile buffer, contact Metropolitan Council staff to resolve this issue.

Question 5: Federal Requirements

Where can applicants find which federal requirements apply (e.g., Buy American, NEPA, and CATEX)?

Answer: Buy America is always required. CATEX, which is part of NEPA is usually required for typical projects. Check the [website](#) (Application Resources bar on the right) for resources on federal requirements. [Colleen Brown](#) at MnDOT Metro District State Aid is a resource for federal requirements.

Question 6: ADA Transition Plans

How current do the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plans need to be?

Answer: There is no set timeframe at this point. However, FHWA is considering establishment of policy that they be completed within the previous five years, so this is something may come up going into the next Regional Solicitation.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN

Question 7: Funding Availability

Will more Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding be made available?

Answer: TAP funds are part of the Surface Transportation Program (STP) through FHWA. This, along with CMAQ goes into one pot, where projects are selected by mode, as opposed to funding sources. TAB selects the projects based on modal funding ranges (9% to 20% for bicycle/pedestrian).

Question 8: State Highway Projects (Safe Routes to School)

Can federal funding be used on the state highway system for Safe Routes to School

Answer: Yes. A letter of acknowledgement would need to be provided by MnDOT (see question 3 above).

Question 9: Student tallies for Safe Routes to School

How recent do the school travel tallies need to be?

Answer: Applicants should use the most recent tally they have. Contact [Elaine Koutsoukos](#) to let her know when your survey was completed.

Question 10: RBTN Scoring

How will proposed bikeway/trail projects be scored with respect to designated alignments within the RBTN?

Answer: For projects that are proposed to improve, complete, or connect to a segment of a designated Tier 1 or Tier 2 alignment, refer to the official [online interactive RBTN map](#). In order for the project to receive the available points associated with Tier 1 and Tier 2 alignments, the project must accomplish one of the following:

- Improve a segment of an existing Tier 1 or Tier 2 alignment beyond a simple resurfacing of the facility (*Note: In order to be eligible for funding, reconstruction projects must be replacing a facility at the end of its useful life or include improvements to the facility such as ADA compliance or safety improvements, or removing other deficiencies,*
- Implement a currently non-existing segment of a Tier 1 or Tier 2 alignment, or
- Connect directly to a specific Tier 1 or Tier 2 alignment of the RBTN.

(Note: For local grade separation projects that cross above or below a roadway or trail designated as an RBTN alignment, the project must include physical connections from either side of the grade separation to the RBTN roadway or trail. A project that only provides a bikeway that crosses above or below the RBTN facility without connections will not receive the points allocated for direct connections to the RBTN.)

Question 11: RBTN Tier 1 and Tier 2

How can I be sure that my project will receive the total points shown for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 RBTN corridor?

Answer: In order for a project to be awarded the total points for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 RBTN corridor, the project must implement an on-street or off-street facility that lies within the designated corridor and follows along the directional orientation of the larger east-west or north-south running RBTN corridor. If the orientation of a bicycle facility project only runs across and along a line not consistent with that of the corridor alignment, it may only receive points for providing a direct connection to the RBTN.

Question 12: Bikeway Relation to RBTN Corridors and Alignments

How will proposed bikeway/trail projects be scored if only a portion of the project will improve a RBTN corridor or alignment?

Answer: Projects proposed that are comprised of segments that are both on and off a RBTN corridor (or alignment) will be scored based on the largest proportional segment of the project. If 50% or more of the project falls within and along the corridor (or along the designated RBTN alignment as shown in the official [online interactive RBTN map](#)) the project will receive the total points corresponding to the Tier 1 and Tier 2 point assignments. If more than 50% of the project is outside the RBTN corridor (or is off the designated RBTN alignment) the project will receive the corresponding total points for providing a “direct connection to the RBTN.” If a project consists of improvements that improve both Tier 1 and Tier 2 corridors or

alignments (and more than 50% of the total project length is along the Tier 1/Tier 2 corridor or alignment overall), the points awarded will correspond to the Tier level having the higher proportional length included in the project.

Question 13: RBTN Tier Level

How will I know which Tier level of a Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) corridor or alignment my project is on or connects with?

Answer: The Regional Solicitation Mapping Application will generate a map of your project with the RBTN on it. This map will have a red line depicting your project’s orientation to nearby RBTN alignments and corridors. Applicants will need to include the Project to RBTN Orientation map in the online application.

For additional map details for your city or county, please use the official [online interactive RBTN map](#). You will be able to zoom in to your community to determine specific streets or other landmarks that lie along a designated Tier 1 or Tier 2 corridor or alignment.

TRANSIT

Question 14: Advanced Construction

Is it possible to advanced construct (AC) transit projects through FTA or is that process only available for FHWA projects?

Answer: No. AC is an FHWA process that does not exist for FTA projects.

ROADWAYS

Question 15: Daily Person Throughput with Multiple Roadways

For the Traffic Management Technology application, how do I answer the daily person throughput, forecast, and safety measures for a project that involves multiple roadways?

Answer: If the project includes multiple roadways, select one of the A-Minor Arterials or Non-Freeway Principal Arterials within the network of roadways to answer each measure. The applicant does not have to use the same A-Minor Arterial or Non-Freeway Principal Arterial. For instance, there is a project involving the signal coordination along seven different roadways within the network, whereas three of the roadways are A-Minor Arterials. Minor Arterial 1 could be used to answer four measures and Minor Arterial 2 could be used to answer two measures. More than one roadway can be used as part of the safety measure.

Question 16: New Roads

For the Roadway Strategic Capacity application, how do I complete the Safety measure for a project that involves the construction of a new roadway? More specifically, there isn't a crash modification factor that can be used for the construction of a new roadway in the HSIP methodology.

Answer: With the construction of a new roadway, an analysis should be conducted to determine the parallel routes that will be affected by the project. The crash reduction factor can be calculated using the following methodology:

- Identify the parallel roadway(s) that will be affected by the project (i.e. which roadway(s) will traffic divert from)
- Using the crash data for the most recent three years, calculate the existing crash rate for the parallel roadway(s) identified in Step 1.
- Identify the daily traffic volume that will be relocated from the parallel roadway(s) to the new roadway.
- Calculate the number of crashes on the parallel roadway(s) using the existing crash rate from Step 2 and the relocated traffic volume to determine the change in number of crashes due to the relocated traffic volume. For instance, if 5,000 vehicles are expected to relocate from the existing parallel roadway to the new roadway, calculate the number of crashes related to the 5,000 vehicles.
- Identify the average crash rate for the new roadway using MnDOT's average crash rates by roadway type. Using the average crash rate for the new roadway, calculate the number of crashes related to the relocated traffic (such as the 5,000 vehicles).
- Calculate the crash reduction factor using the existing number of crashes on the existing parallel roadway (Step 4) compared to the estimated crashes calculated for the new roadway (Step 5), due to the relocated traffic volume (such as the 5,000 vehicles).
- The calculated crash reduction factor should be used in the HSIP B/C worksheet.
- Upload additional documentation materials into the "Other Attachments" Form in the online application.

Question 17: A-Minor Arterials

What are "A-minor arterials?" Does this include A-minor relievers?

Answer: Yes. A-minor arterials include augmenters, expanders, relievers, and connectors. Along with non-freeway principal arterials, these are eligible for funding in the roadways categories.