

Policymaker Working Group

Regional Solicitation Evaluation

metro council.org



July 16, 2025



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Recent Project Updates

Recap

- **April:** Formed Special Issue Working Groups for initial engagement
- **April 25:** Special Issue Working Groups Workshop (Eligibility and scoring criteria)
- **April 28:** TAB Active Transportation Work Group (Application categories by funding source)
- **May 6:** Technical Steering Committee Feedback (Funding min/max, geographic balance)
- **May 30:** Special Issue Working Groups Workshop (Funding min/max, measures, scoring breakdown)
- **June 24:** Technical Steering Committee Feedback (Funding min/max, geographic balance)

Special Issue Working Groups for Technical Staff

Role and Structure

- Identify eligible project types
- Develop scoring criteria and measures
- Identify potential funding minimums and maximums

Groups

Safety

Bike/Pedestrian

Transit

Roadway

Climate/GHG/EV

TDM

Community Considerations

Proposed Modal+ Hybrid Structure

Safety

Proactive Safety (All Modes):

Small Projects (HSIP)
Large Project
(Reg Sol Federal
Funding)

Reactive Safety (All Modes):

Small Projects (HSIP)
Large Projects
(Reg Sol Federal
Funding)

Dynamic and Resilient

Bicycle/Pedestrian

Federal Reg Sol Funding

Regional Bike Facilities

Reg Active Transportation Funding

Local Bike Facilities

Local Pedestrian
Facilities

Active Transportation
Planning

Transit

Transit Expansion
(Including
Microtransit)

Transit Customer
Experience

Arterial Bus Rapid
Transit

Roadway

Roadway
Modernization

Congestion
Management
Strategies

- At-Grade Projects
- New Interchanges

Bridge Connections

Environment

EV Charging
Infrastructure

Travel Demand
Management
(TDM)

Regional Data

Regional Modeling/Travel Behavior Inventory

The goal area, Our Region is Equitable and Inclusive, is being proposed as a scoring measure called Community Considerations.

Transit

Arterial Bus Rapid Transit – Project Selection

Proposed Application Category Name:

Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (ABRT)

The Arterial BRT application category seeks to fund projects that expand arterial bus rapid transit consistent with the definition in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan.

Recommended Approach

- Continue current process— Metro Transit brings its planning process and line recommendation to TAB for approval; fills out the Transit Expansion application as a way to gather programmatic performance evaluation data but it is not scored as there is only one project.

Other Option Discussed

- Create a competitive application process – Application for single corridor investment up to the maximum award.

Considerations:

- Process was previously agreed upon and viewed as a success by TAB (and nationally)
- Only one transit provider with an arterial bus rapid transit corridor/system plan
- Arterial BRT is a high regional transit priority and Metro Transit's #1 priority for Regional Solicitation funding; Metro Transit has a project selection process with substantial stakeholder involvement
- Current process limits option for other applicants to fund arterial BRT, though this can be revisited if new corridors emerge
- Application process creates additional work and uncertainty for planned arterial BRT system

Congestion Management Strategies

New Interchanges Category

- General feedback from MnDOT, counties, and cities was to fund a smaller number of interchange projects but fund them at a higher dollar maximum award.
- Instead of funding 4 interchange projects at \$10M (total of \$40M), fund one interchange at \$20M (\$20M total). This higher amount would fund around 40% of the total project cost of an interchange and be easier for local partners and MnDOT to deliver. A smaller number of projects would also be helpful in successfully fulfilling the new GHG requirements.
- The goal of the Regional Solicitation Evaluation is to tie the 2050 TPP to funding decisions. There are four interchange projects identified in the 2050 TPP that would be eligible to pursue the funding. This list is based on the joint MnDOT/Met Council Intersection Mobility and Safety Study (2024).
 - Highway 36 and Highway 120 (border of Washington Co and Ramsey Co)
 - Highway 65 and 93rd Ave (Anoka Co)
 - Highway 65 and South of Highway 10 (Anoka Co)
 - Highway 5 and Eden Prairie Rd (Hennepin Co)

Congestion Management Strategies (2)

Proposed Application Category
Name:

Congestion Management Strategies – New Interchanges

The Interchanges application category seeks to fund projects identified as priorities in the Intersection Mobility and Safety Study.

New Interchanges Category – Project Selection

Recommended approach

An interchange project would fill out the CMP Strategies application for programmatic performance evaluation purposes, but the project would not be scored as there is only one project in the region that is ready for implementation in the 2026 funding cycle:

- Highway 36/Highway 120 (border of Washington Co and Ramsey Co)

Then, revisit this approach before the 2028 funding cycle as this may need to move to be a scored, competitive category.

Other Option Discussed

- Create a competitive application process – Application for single interchange investment up to the maximum award.

Funding Min/Max



Draft Min/Max Awards for Discussion

2026 Proposed Category	Proposed 2026 Min	Proposed 2026 Max	2024 Average Award
Safety			
Proactive/Reactive Safety	\$2,000,000	\$7,000,000	N/A
Roadway			
Congestion Management Strategies – At-Grade Projects	\$1,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000
Congestion Management Strategies - Interchanges	\$1,000,000	\$20,000,000	N/A
Roadway Modernization	\$1,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$ 6,677,731
Bridge Connections	\$1,000,000	\$7,000,000	\$5,927,000
Transit			
Arterial BRT	N/A	TBD	\$25,000,000
Transit Expansion	\$500,000	\$10,000,000	\$3,935,962
Transit Customer Experience	\$500,000	\$10,000,000	\$4,112,886
Bike/Ped			
Regional Bike Facilities	\$1,000,000	\$5,500,000	\$3,630,409
Local Bike Facilities (Local Funding)	\$150,000	\$3,500,000	N/A
Local Pedestrian Facilities (Local Funding)	\$150,000	\$2,500,000	\$1,373,404
Active Transportation Planning (Local Funding)	\$50,000	\$200,000	N/A
Environment			
EV Charging Infrastructure	\$250,000	\$2,000,000	N/A
TDM	\$100,000	\$750,000	\$464,116

Transit

Arterial Bus Rapid Transit – Proposed Project Award Min/Max

Proposed Application Category
Name:

**Arterial Bus Rapid Transit
(ABRT)**

The ABRT application category seeks to fund projects that expand arterial bus rapid transit consistent with the definition in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan.

Proposed project award min/max

- Min: \$1,000,000
- Max: \$25,000,000-\$35,000,000*

Considerations

- Capital costs per mile have doubled (\$3.03 million/mile to \$6.33 million/mile)
- Project size is increasing with longer corridors (nearly 50% longer from 9.7 miles to 14.2 miles)
- Federal funds becoming a smaller portion of the overall project from around 33-40% to less than 25%
- Current max award based on previous history of four max transit awards totaling \$28 million, new max recommended at \$10 million

Discussion

- Should the max funding be changed? What factors to consider?

**Metro Transit is requesting an increase to \$35M because of increased project costs. Technical Steering Committee discussed but did not make a recommendation*

Geographic Balance Discussion



How is federal funding generated?

Most of the federal funds are earned by population

- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and the Transportation Alternatives set-aside within this program are earned **by existing population**. \$81M/year
- Carbon Reduction Program is a new program that is earned **by existing population**. \$7M/year
- PROTECT Resiliency Program is given to the state and MnDOT is giving a portion of this new funding source to locals in Minnesota based **on existing population**. \$3.5M/year
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) is for air quality improvement projects and is **not generated by population**. \$33.5M/year
 - Most of the CMAQ funding in this region has gone to transit and TDM projects.

Geographic Balance

Rules Currently in Place that Encourage Geographic Balance

- Fund at least one roadway project of each of the five eligible functional classifications (4 minor arterial types and one non-freeway principal arterial)
- Transit New Market Guarantee: Fund at least one project that serves areas outside of Transit Market Areas 1 and 2

Historic Practices that Encourage Geographic Balance

- Retain a lower maximum award amount to encourage smaller projects and help distribute funding to more parts of the region (rather than funding a few, larger projects, particularly for multiuse trail projects)
- The final funding scenario often selected by TAB is, in part, based on geographic balance discussions related to one part of the metro not receiving funding proportionate to its population.
- In a future Regional Solicitation, geographic balance could be included into the rules, scoring, or project selection

Preview of Future Items



Future Meeting: Geographic Balance for Active Transportation Funds

Options for Active Transportation Funding

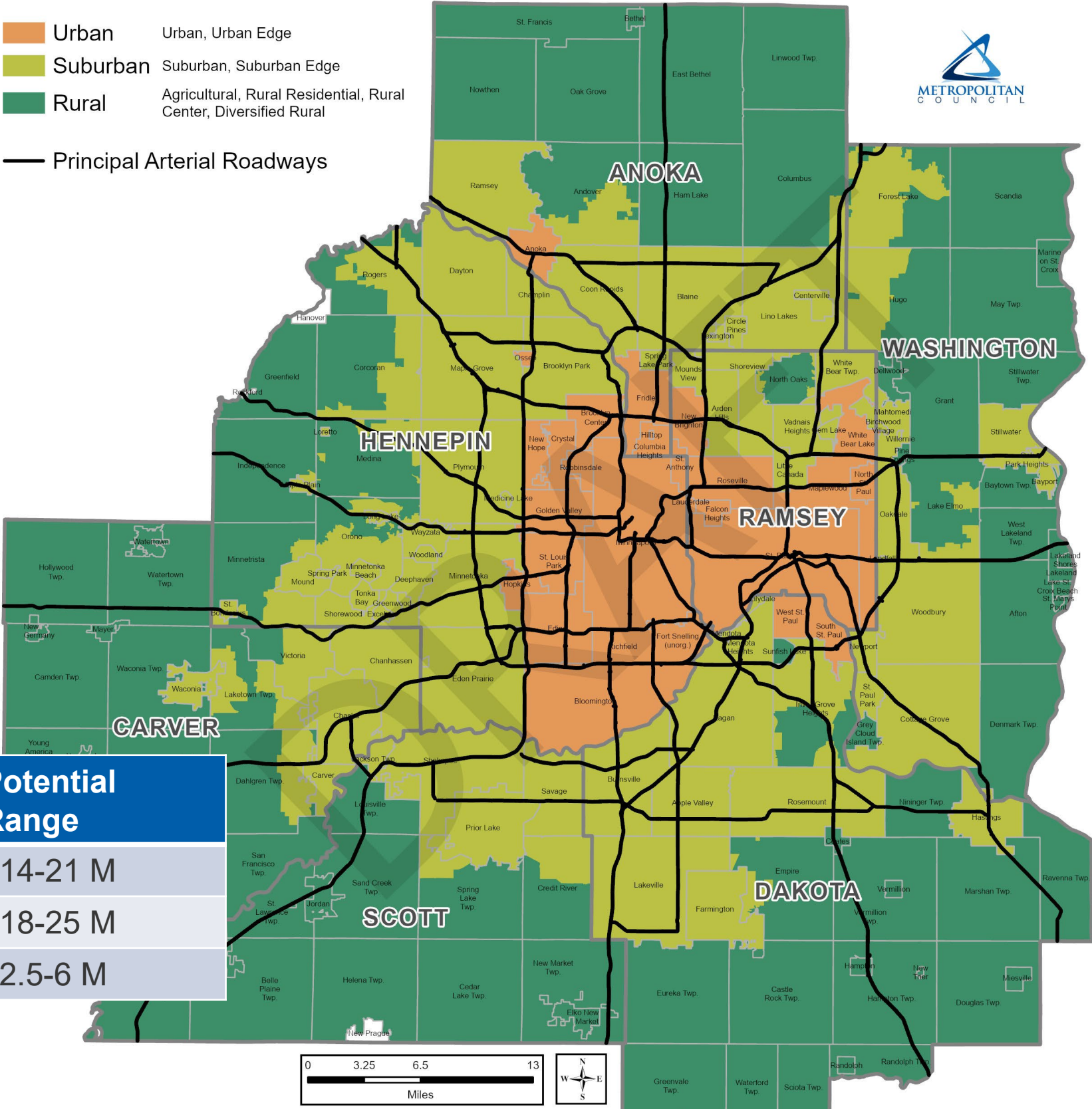
1. **Do nothing.** Additional funding may naturally lead to geographic balance.
2. **Split into three geographic buckets** based on Imagine 2050 Community Designations. Distribute the available funding based on population.
3. **Guarantee at least one project from the urban, suburban, and rural areas or limit the number of applications** for each agency to ensure the funding is spread around the region.

Geographic Balance for AT

Potential Funding Splits

Designation	Population	Jobs	Potential 2 Year Funding	Potential Range
Urban	42%	53%	\$17.6 M	\$14-21 M
Suburban	52%	45%	\$21.84 M	\$18-25 M
Rural	6%	2%	\$2.52 M	\$2.5-6 M

- Urban Urban, Urban Edge
- Suburban Suburban, Suburban Edge
- Rural Agricultural, Rural Residential, Rural Center, Diversified Rural
- Principal Arterial Roadways



Future Meeting: Funding Range Discussion

Safety

Proactive Safety (All Modes):

Small Projects (HSIP)
Large Project
(Reg Sol Federal
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Dynamic and Resilient

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Regional Modeling/Travel Behavior Inventory

Next steps



Next steps:

1. Technical Steering Committee Meeting – July 24
2. Active Transportation Work Group – July 25
3. Draft applications for Special Issue Working Groups and Technical Steering Committee to review – August
4. Policymaker Working Group Meeting – August 20 – **Will send calendar hold**
5. Technical Steering Committee Meeting – September 4
6. First Package of Info Items – Sept-Oct
 - TAC Planning, F&P, TAC, TAB
7. Action Items to Release for Public Comment– Oct-Nov
 - TAC Planning, F&P, TAC, TAB
8. Policymaker Working Group – September 17 – **Need to reschedule**
9. Policymaker Working Group – October 15 – **Will send calendar hold**
10. Policymaker Working Group – November 19
11. Draft released for public comment – November 19
12. TAB Action Item – December 17