



Technical Steering Committee

Regional Solicitation Evaluation

metro council.org



February 25, 2025



Contents

Project Overview	2
What We've Learned	4
Structure Discussion	9
Decision Point 2	10
Special Issue Working Groups	12
Discussion	23
Next Steps	24

Project Overview

Regional Solicitation Evaluation

- Met Council conducts an evaluation of the Regional Solicitation process every 10 years (previous occurred 2012-2013)
- Overall goal is to align the allocation of the region's federal transportation funds through the Regional Solicitation project selection process to help achieve **the goals, objectives, and policies** of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan and Imagine 2050.
- Current modal structure incorporates the TPP goals, objectives, and policies at the measure level, which can lead to a more complicated application without clear ties to outcomes
- An additional objective is to provide a way to fund projects that further regional outcomes but have with no other adequate funding path (e.g., EV charging, TDM, etc.)

2050 TPP Goals

Equitable
and Inclusive

Healthy and
Safe

Dynamic and
Resilient

Climate
Change

Natural
Systems

Evaluation Decisions Timeline

Stakeholder Groups, Public Engagement, Equity Engagement

Decision Point 1: Preferred Solicitation Base Structure and Draft Application Categories	Decision Point 2: Eligible Projects and Concept Criteria	Decision Point 3: Simplified Application	Decision Point 4: Final Application Materials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-Year summary of investments • Listening sessions • MPO peer review • Develop solicitation structure that incorporates Imagine 2050 & 2050 TPP goals, objectives, and policies* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify qualifying project types • Develop high-level criteria (what do we want to measure?) • Identify best way to incorporate new funding sources • Commence special issue working group meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop detailed criteria and scoring measures (TSC and special issue working group) • Develop funding ranges • Implement changes to application process • Develop application documents and draft for public review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final application package • Final report • Online testing of application • Recommend any changes to the 2050 TPP
<p><u>TAB discussion April 16</u></p>	<p><u>February – May 2025</u></p>	<p><u>June - August 2025</u></p>	<p><u>Fall 2025</u></p>

*See this link for 2050 TPP goals, objectives and policies
<https://metro council.org/Transportation/Planning-2/Key-Transportation-Planning-Documents/Transportation-Policy-Plan/TPP-Goals-Objectives-Policies.aspx>

Where We've Been



1/28 Technical Steering Committee Recap

Key Takeaways

- General support for the hybrid/modal+ structure, but want some flexibility in the final application categories based what comes out of special issue working groups/measure development (e.g., some application categories may be combined or separated)
- Desire for simplification of the scoring/number of scoring measures
- Greater clarity needed on where a project would apply, and how to address projects that may fit under multiple categories
- Discussion on how Active Transportation regional sales tax funding will fit into this structure and the timing of solicitations (off-set solicitation or all at once)
- Interest in further discussion on potential planning grants
- Interest in funding a small set of larger, regional projects for certain application categories (ABRT, interchanges, complete streets, etc.) and then having smaller/medium projects compete against more similar project types/sizes.

2/5 TAC Feedback

Key Takeaways

- General support for the proposed structure
- Uncertainty on how to include equity
 - There will be an equity special issue working group to focus on this topic area
- Many want to move forward with developing technical details of application, including criteria, eligible project types and funding ranges
- Need to retain flexibility to respond to federal priorities and funding changes

2/13 TAC Planning Feedback

Key Takeaways

- Interest in where ADA-improvements fit (if at all)
 - Wasn't highly prioritized in December workshop as a stand-alone application category
- Discussion about the difference between geographic balance and equity, and how this plays into the Regional Solicitation
- Questions on the Active Transportation regional sales tax
- Interest in ensuring the focus of the project remains on making applications simpler and easy to complete

2/19 Policymaker Working Group

Key Takeaways

- Keeping on current track for now but need to retain flexibility to respond to federal changes. federal changes
- Special issue work group on equity work group will provide input on how to incorporate equity into solicitation
- Distinction between geographic balance vs. equity. How exactly geographic balance will be incorporated is a future technical and policy conversation
- Discussion about which categories may be used to fund bridge replacement – will be discussed by special issue working groups if they can compete in proposed application categories or if a separate one is needed.
- Recommended modal+ hybrid structure (see next slide) will be presented as informational item to TAC Planning (3/13), TAC F&P (3/20), TAC (4/2) and TAB (4/16)

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)

Bicycle/Pedestrian

Regional (RBTN and
Grade Separated
Barriers)

Local Bike Network
Gaps and Barriers

Local Pedestrian
Network
Connections

Dynamic

Transit

Transit Expansion
(Including
Microtransit)

Arterial Bus Rapid
Transit

Transit Customer
Experience

Roadway

Modernization/
Complete Streets

Reliability/
Excessive Delays

Environment

EV Charging
Infrastructure

TDM

Stormwater
Improvements &
Flood Mitigation

The other goal area, Our Region is Equitable and Inclusive, is being discussed as a scoring measurer/qualifying requirement.

Decision Point 2



Decision Point 2: Eligible Projects, Criteria, Measures, Funding Ranges

Decision Point 2 Tasks

- Commence special issue working group meetings to discuss the following topics in more detail with guidance from the Technical Steering Committee
 - Identify qualifying project types for each application category
 - Develop high-level criteria (what do we want to measure?)
 - Identify which criteria should be scoring criteria vs. qualifying requirements
 - Identify best way to incorporate new funding sources (AT funding vs Federal funding)
 - Identify funding minimums and maximums for each application category

Special Issue Working Groups



Remaining Questions Not Addressed Today

Special Issue Working Groups

- Are planning studies eligible for funding, and if so, under which categories?
- How do we ensure geographic balance?
- Are asset management projects such as bridge replacement eligible in certain categories?
- Which categories are competitive vs. prioritized by the 2050 TPP?
- How do we integrate regional active transportation funding?
- Where does Safe Routes to School fit?
- What are the min/max awards for each application category?

Future Policy Discussions

- How much funding to apply to each category/goal area (funding ranges)?
- Which criteria (such as equity) should be addressed across most/all categories?
- What are the policy priorities for the regional active transportation sales tax funding and what is the timing of the next call for projects?
- How do we ensure geographic balance?

Special Issue Working Groups

Role and Structure

- **Determine the key outcomes within each TPP goal to guide project evaluation.**
- Identify eligible project types
- Develop scoring criteria and measures
- Identify potential funding minimums and maximums
- Next Steps:
 - Identify membership for each group (likely technical staff)
 - Organize workshop (March/April) to begin detailed technical discussion

Potential Groups

Safety

Bike/Ped

Transit

Roadway

Climate/GHG/EV

TDM

Equity

Special Issue Working Group Discussion Topics



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)

Bicycle/Pedestrian

Regional (RBTN and
Grade Separated
Barriers)

Local Bike Network
Gaps and Barriers

Local Pedestrian
Network
Connections

Dynamic

Transit

Transit Expansion
(Including
Microtransit)

Arterial Bus Rapid
Transit

Transit Customer
Experience

Roadway

Modernization/
Complete Streets

Reliability/
Excessive Delays

Environment

EV Charging
Infrastructure

TDM

Stormwater
Improvements &
Flood Mitigation

The other goal area, Our Region is Equitable and Inclusive, is being discussed as a scoring measurer/qualifying requirement.

Safety

TPP Objectives/Policies

(majority of points should address these objectives)

- Eliminate fatalities and serious injuries
- Provide more opportunities to walk, bike, and roll
- Increase safety and comfort for people outside of vehicles

Example Eligible Project Types: *What are we missing?*

- New intersection controls such as roundabouts or traffic signals
- Intersection modifications
- Separated bicycle or pedestrian facilities
- Pedestrian crossing treatments
- Roadway reconstruction that focuses on safety improvements
- Crashes on roadway segments that include a bridge
- Road diets or lane modifications
- Safe Routes to School projects (Proactive)
- Safety studies

Example Core Scoring Criteria (*Special Issue Working Group Discussion*):

- Crash history
- Proposed reduction to fatal and serious injury crashes
- Addresses vulnerable road user safety

Bicycle/Pedestrian (Dynamic)

TPP Objectives/Policies

(majority of points should address these objectives)

- Enhance Travel Options
- Plan and implement a complete bicycle system
- Support pedestrian travel at the local level
- Address network gaps or physical barriers

Example Eligible Project Types: *What are we missing?*

- RBTN trail segments or connections
- Grade separated bike barriers
- Local bike gaps/barriers
- Local pedestrian options
- Safe Routes to School projects
- Planning studies

Example Core Scoring Criteria (*Special Issue Working Group Discussion*):

- RBTN Prioritization
- Bike Barriers Study
- Network gaps
- Connections between modes
- Connections to community destinations

Transit (Dynamic)

TPP Objectives/Policies

(majority of points should address these objectives)

- Enhance Travel Options
- Expand access to reliable, frequent, high-capacity transit
- Create a high-quality rider experience

Example Eligible Project Types: *What are we missing?*

- Transit Expansion
 - New transit service (including microtransit)
 - New transit centers or customer facilities
 - Highway BRT or dedicated guideway BRT
- Arterial Bus Rapid Transit
 - ABRT network corridors
- Transit Customer Experience
 - Improved passenger facilities
 - New maintenance/support facilities
 - Technology and fare system upgrades
 - Projects that improve travel time

Example Core Scoring Criteria (*Special Issue Working Group Discussion*):

- Potential and current ridership
- Improved travel times
- Innovative solutions
- Connections to jobs and educational institutions

Roadway (Dynamic)

TPP Objectives/Policies

(majority of points should address these objectives)

- Prioritize Complete Streets
- Increase Reliability and Minimize Excessive Delay
- Provide transportation options on corridors with delay and reliability issues

Example Eligible Project Types: *What are we missing?*

- Roadway Modernization/Complete Streets
 - Interchange reconstructions
 - Road diets or lane conversions
 - Access management
 - Multimodal improvements
- Reliability and Excessive Delays
 - Traffic operations improvements/ITS
 - TDM in congested corridors
 - New thru-lanes or turn lanes
 - New or expanded interchanges
 - Transit advantages in congested corridors

Example Core Scoring Criteria (*Special Issue Working Group Discussion*)

- Multimodal facilities
- Excessive delay/reliability
- Connection to jobs or other destinations
- Identified in major regional studies
- Follows CMP Process

Environment

TPP Objectives/Policies

(majority of points should address these objectives)

- Increase Access to Zero Emissions Vehicle Infrastructure (EV Charging)
- Reduce Green House Gases (GHG)
- Mitigate Climate or Weather-related Impacts through Resiliency Improvements
- Protect, Restore and Enhance Natural Systems

Example Eligible Project Types: *What are we missing?*

- EV Charging
 - Charger installation
 - Local Planning
- Travel Demand Management
 - Commuter programs
 - Carshare programs
 - Education and outreach
- Stormwater Improvements and Flood Mitigation
 - Road and bridge improvements to lift transportation infrastructure out of the floodplain
 - Culvert and storm drain upgrades

Example Core Scoring Criteria (*Special Issue Working Group Discussion*):

- EV charger location (aligns with regional study priorities)
- Charging speed/level
- VMT Reduced (TDM)
- Mitigates flooding or other severe weather hazards

Which categories are competitive vs. prioritized by the 2050 TPP?

- At the last TSC meeting there was interest in exploring a small set of larger regional projects.
- Based on a review of regionwide prioritization studies, only two project types provide an ordered list for funding and are listed in the TPP:
 - ABRT
 - \$25M/cycle for the last 3 funding cycles
 - Interchanges
 - Could split the Reliability/Excessive Delays Application Category into 2 parts (interchange and other projects)
- Other prioritization studies/efforts like the Regional Safety Action Plan and Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) provide high-level tiering that could be used for scoring of projects, but these efforts do not provide a ranked list.
- If this approach wants to be pursued for other categories such as Roadway Modernization, future regional prioritization efforts may be needed with this in mind.

Discussion



Next steps



Next steps:

1. Special Issue Working Groups
 - Bike/Ped Working Group – Feb 26
 - Transit Working Group – March 27
 - Other groups – April onwards
2. Info item on a base structure recommendation and application categories
 - F&P – March 20
 - TAC – April 2
 - TAB – April 16

Thank You

Steve Peterson, AICP

Senior Manager of Highway Planning and TAB/TAC Process
Steven.Peterson@metc.state.mn.us

Molly Stewart, PE, PTOE

Project Manager, SRF Consulting Group
MStewart@srfconsulting.com

Project Management Team

Elaine Koutsoukos
Joe Barbeau
Robbie King

Bethany Brandt
Cole Hiniker
Amy Vennewitz

