

Transportation Advisory Board of the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities

TO: TAC
FROM: TAC Funding & Programming Committee
DATE: March 17, 2011
RE: Response to Comments on the Draft 2011 Regional Solicitation

The Public Meeting on the 2011 Solicitation Draft Criteria was held on March 2. Representatives from Fresh Energy, Transit for Livable Communities, and 1000 Friends of Minnesota spoke at the meeting and prepared a joint comment letter, which is attached. Also attached are comments from Mn/DOT Program Management staff and Washington County staff. The following is a summary of the comments and staff responses to them. At the end of the memo is a summary of all changes that have been made to the package in response to these and other technical comments.

- 1) Need for greater transparency and accountability. We encourage enhanced stakeholder participation in defining future criteria for the regional solicitation early in the process. We encourage holding future public meetings before the TAC agenda so that members can fit it into their schedules and we hope that public comment opportunities will be made available at the TAB and Metropolitan Council during the upcoming stages of the process.**

We appreciate this feedback on stakeholder participation and will make some changes to our process in response. The TAC membership structure and meeting schedule will be made available on the Metropolitan Council's website with a staff contact to receive agenda materials.

The list of organizations considered to be stakeholders in the regional solicitation process is extensive; however, the primary stakeholders are the cities, counties, transportation agencies and transit providers. These stakeholders develop the regional solicitation process and criteria as member organizations on the Technical Advisory Committee and its Funding & Programming subcommittee. Cities, counties, transportation agencies and modal interests are also represented on the Transportation Advisory Board. Public comment opportunities have been and continue to be offered at the TAB Programming Committee meetings.

While some of the comments expressed in this public review period will reflect changes to the solicitation (described at the end of this memo), others are larger policy issues that will take longer to digest and would require more significant changes to the solicitation process than is feasible in this cycle. However, all of these comments and issues will be brought to the TAB and to all technical committees of the TAB prior to the revision work of the next solicitation. For this reason, the Funding & Programming Committee recommends holding a public comment period prior to criteria revision for the next solicitation rather than during adoption of the final criteria. The TAB/TAC may hold this public comment period several months after the conclusion of the 2011 Solicitation to allow greater time to work out major policy discussions raised by these and other comments.

- 2) A stronger connection should be made between regional goals and the solicitation criteria, and between state statutory goals for transportation including benchmarks and performance measures. Minnesota's statutory transportation goals were adjusted in 2010 to include "increasing transit, bicycling and walking trips as a percentage of all trips statewide. The proposed criteria will not fund sufficient transit projects to achieve the transit goals.**

The regional solicitation process does provide new or expanded transit services and new or expanded bike/pedestrian facilities that contribute to increased transit use and non-motorized travel. As such, the regional solicitation does contribute toward meeting regional transportation goals and State statutory benchmarks and performance measures. The regional solicitation funding is about 25% of the total amount programmed in the region's TIP. Combined with other federal formula and discretionary transit funds and the local funds raised by the Counties Transit Improvement Board, the region is making progress toward transit goals. While the transit projects funded through the CMAQ program provide estimates of new transit riders, overall growth or decline in region-wide transit ridership depends on many other variables that are not affected by the regional solicitation process.

The criteria reflect many of the goals and policies in the regional transportation plan. The long-range transportation plan, the TPP, includes goals for increasing transit use and bicycle and pedestrian travel. For these reasons, the regional solicitation process is structured to include project category in the CMAQ program specifically for new and expanded transit services, a project category in STP for bicycle/walkway projects and includes criteria supporting multimodal investments in all highway projects.

It should be noted that federal STP funds for transit are limited to capital expenses, and demand for this funding from transit agencies is determined by the demand for capital investment. The TAB expects to allocate the majority of its CMAQ funding to transit expansion projects as it has in previous solicitations.

- 3) Fully utilize the flexibility of STP. The current solicitation limits the flexibility of STP by focusing all but one of the categories on roads and requiring that transit projects can only be submitted in the CMAQ category. The Council misses a substantial opportunity to integrate modes and better accomplish its regional goals. The focus should be on the results, rather than the mode. Many other regions around the country have used STP for a variety of projects.**

The Transportation Advisory Board is aware that it may act to set up a new program to be funded with STP. At this point, there has not been an impetus to do so and so the programs have largely remained the same between this solicitation and the previous solicitation. In the past, the TAB has set up pilot programs such as the TIPEDD and TEA-21 AHED programs that connected land use development with transportation investments. In other cases, the TAB has funded projects with CMAQ funding that did not fit the application structure (e.g. diesel retrofit).

The STP program is flexible and the TAB has taken advantage of that flexibility by awarding STP funds to transit and highway projects that are not part of the regional solicitation. The TAB does not have a transit category in the STP because the evaluation criteria would be redundant to the CMAQ criteria. Instead, when considering STP funding options, the TAB always considers whether eligible CMAQ projects should be instead funded with STP. In the

2009 solicitation, nine of thirteen transit projects submitted for CMAQ funding were selected for funding.

All project categories include a criterion that evaluates the extent to which the project integrates other modes. The TAB has successfully encouraged project sponsors to think about other modes and integrate bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements into their primary roadway project.

The TAC/TAB/Council will review the "A" Minor Arterial System and will determine future use of STP funds.

- 4) Move the focus beyond congestion to Context Sensitive Solutions. The TPP notes the inability to grow our way out of congestion, yet the bulk of STP-UG funding appears to be targeted for congestion management rather than expanding driving alternatives and reducing trip distances by better linking transit and land use. The TAC, TAB, and Council should work together on a comprehensive restructuring of the solicitation to bring it more in line with Context Sensitive Solutions. Projects that do CSS very well cannot score well enough across enough different categories to be successful because the local context and community needs differ so much from project to project.**

This comment seems to indicate a view that addressing congestion is always against context sensitivity and the committee does not agree with that assessment. All projects are required to be developed using Context Sensitive Solutions principles as all agencies must obtain municipal consent before they can proceed which requires a lot of careful negotiation as to the appropriate design. Projects submitted in the regional solicitation are typically in the scoping stage of the project when many of these design decisions have not yet been determined.

The current functional classification are for the most part geographically-specific and each type of road has a particular function. For instance, Relievers are supposed to relieve congestion, Augmenters are supposed to provide medium-distance mobility in the urban core, and Expanders are supposed to serve growing areas in the developing suburbs. The criteria emphasis differs between these different categories in recognition of these different roles and contexts (Expanders are not evaluated against Augmenters). This classification system was developed before new policies were implemented and this evaluation of the "A" Minor Arterial system may be an opportunity to incorporate evolved policy objectives.

The FHWA definition of CSS includes safety and mobility. The regional solicitation process and criteria do not preclude applicants from including CSS elements in their roadway project, or from submitting projects that is focused on CSS design.

- 5) Focus more on preservation of the roadway system. We commend the addition of the new criteria in the Augmenter category but feel that similar categories should be added for each of the STP categories to reflect the TPPs prioritization of preservation.**

The new criterion was added for the Augmenters because many of these roads are very old and are in areas where safety improvements and congestion mitigation may not be available. This criterion will be evaluated following the 2011 solicitation and consideration will be made to add it to other categories. The "A" Minor Arterial system evaluation will consider preservation needs as well.

The federal funds are only a complement of the total funds available to transportation agencies, which spend most of their resources on preservation and operations. Cities, counties and Mn/DOT are all expected to use non-federal funds to maintain their roadways in good repair.

- 6) **Provide an explicit definition of “person thru-put” and incorporate it into the criteria. The Metropolitan Highway System Investment Study defines person throughput as “increases in average vehicle occupancy and increases in transit ridership.” The calculation used in the regional solicitation, however, awards points to projects that increase vehicle throughput but does not in fact increase vehicle occupancy or transit ridership. Consequently, points awarded for congestion management provide a disproportionate value to capacity expansion.**

The Council is working on this definition with Mn/DOT. However, the MHSIS is focused on the principal arterial system and not the “A” Minor Arterial system.

The criteria for STP roadway categories today consider transit use in its evaluation of the first criteria and the integration of modes criteria. The CMAQ system management category does give more points to projects that reduce SOV trips or VMT (IB) and projects that provide benefits to transit, bicycle and pedestrian mobility (IIIA). The measure of person throughput includes a factor for auto occupancy, not vehicle throughput. Project sponsors are invited to propose transit or bike/pedestrian elements along with the roadway improvement to increase person throughput.

Summary of changes made to the solicitation in response to detailed public comment suggestions:

- a) *Comment from Mn/DOT Program Management on eligible costs for CMAQ System Management projects:*

CMAQ Policy 5:

For construction or reconstruction projects, studies, preliminary engineering, design, construction engineering, etc. are not eligible for CMAQ funding. These costs are eligible for System Management projects that do not involve construction such as signal re-timing. Noise barriers, drainage projects, fences, landscaping, etc., are not eligible for CMAQ funding unless included as part of a larger project which is otherwise eligible or specifically defined as eligible under an individual funding category. Right-of-way cost is not eligible as a stand-alone proposal, but are eligible when included in a proposal to build or expand transit hubs, transit terminals, park-and-ride or pool-and-ride lots, and to build system management projects and bicycle and walkway projects. The cost of reconstructing or constructing a replacement bridge deck is eligible but the remainder of the superstructure and all elements of the substructure are not eligible. Projects to improve or replace bridges are solicited separately.

- b) *Comment from Mn/DOT Program Management on definition of independent utility for System Management projects:*

CMAQ Policy 10:

Projects with independent utility* (see Appendix A for definition) at separate locations cannot be combined into a single application. This policy does not apply to bus shoulder lane corridors or signal timing projects.

- c) *Comment that ADA requirement in STP Policy 5 should be listed separately as it has no direct relationship with the rest of the policy statement:*

STP New Policy 6 (all other policies increase by one number):

All projects must comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act at a minimum. Designers of roadway projects should consult the Access Board's Public Rights-of-Way Accessibility guidelines.

- d) *Comment that wording on Policy 19 limits cities and counties in their design options:*

STP Old Policy 19 (New Policy 20):

Design for all STP "A" Minor Arterial and Principal Arterial projects must meet the requirements of the Mn/DOT State Aid process. will be constructed to Minnesota State-Aid Standards. Design exceptions and variances to the State Aid standards are reviewed and may be granted during final design, not through this solicitation process. Depending on the project, more stringent standards may apply.

- e) *Comment that crash reduction should be worth more than congestion relief for Relievers as is the case in other categories.*

No change is recommended to the points assigned to crash reduction or congestion in the Reliever category. When combining the points for these criteria with their corresponding cost effectiveness criteria, they are worth the same (225 points each).

- f) *Comment that Access Management is not universally important and should not be worth as much as it is.*

No change is recommended as the points assigned to these criteria are not the same for each category. For instance, they are worth less in the Augmenter category than in the Expander or Connector categories which exist in areas where Access Management is more possible.

- g) *Comment that there should be criteria that evaluate how a project will reduce the number of drivers exceeding the speed limit:*

No change recommended. The detailed design of the roadway should influence the speeds on a roadway. Projects submitted for funding are not typically evolved enough to be able to measure this.

- h) *Comment that Integration of Modes be a qualifying criterion and that the application require a specific response as to what ADA improvements will be made with the project:*

* a project with *independent utility* is defined in FHWA guidance as one that is usable and would be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made.

The TAC considered making it a Qualifying Criterion but instead chose to keep it as a prioritizing criterion so as to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed project elements at improving the environment for bicycling, walking and transit use. The Transportation Policy Plan requires that projects consider all modes in the scoping stage of projects so all projects should address them at a minimum.

In response to the comment on ADA, the following changes have been made:

STP Integration of Modes:

Pedestrians: Include a map that shows all new or reconstructed walkways or multi-use paths that will be constructed as part of this project as well as all pathways that these walkways will connect to and any potential pedestrian destinations such as schools, residences, transit stops, parks, and businesses within ¼ mile of the project area that will be accessible to pedestrians. In the response field, indicate the characteristics of these pedestrian facilities (i.e. multi-use trail, sidewalk, or crosswalk etc.). All pedestrian facilities must be designed to be ADA-compliant at a minimum.

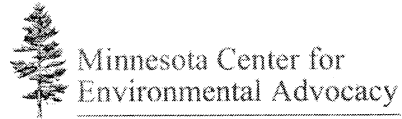
Bicycles: Include a map that shows all new or reconstructed bikeways that will be constructed (or striped) with this project, and show how they connect to an existing or planned bikeway network. Also show potential destinations along the roadway segment and within a ¼ mile of the project area that will be accessible with this bikeway network such as schools, parks residences, transit stops, and businesses. In the response field, indicate the characteristics of these bicycle facilities (i.e. bike lane, striped shoulder, cycle track, multi-use trail etc.).

i) Comment that Bike Sharing projects are not eligible for TE funds:

Bike sharing projects are eligible as facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists under TE. Since bike sharing is not a common type of project, some criteria may seem awkward to answer. An applicant should contact staff if they have questions about how to best answer the criteria.

j) Give a bonus to communities that have adopted a Complete Streets policy or similar commitment in an adopted policy or plan:

The criteria for Integration of Modes are designed to evaluate how the proposed improvements will affect bicycling, walking and transit use. These should not differ from one another based on whether these elements are motivated by an adopted Complete Streets policy or to access federal funds.



March 4, 2011

Kevin Roggenbuck, Administrator
Transportation Advisory Board

RE: Comments on Draft Criteria for 2011 Regional Solicitation

Dear Mr. Roggenbuck:

The Metropolitan Council's Transportation Policy Plan aptly states:

"The region faces hard choices in addressing mobility, safety and preservation needs. To respond effectively, the region needs a transportation strategy that is realistic, innovative and focused on leveraging available dollars for the most benefit while coordinating those investments with land use decisions. The transportation system must optimize all available transportation modes – highways, transit and others – and be coordinated with land use decisions for maximum effect" (2).

It's clear that with those hard choices is a need to make sure that all funds are spent wisely and contribute to a shared vision. Nationally, regions that do that the best will be most competitive. Competitive regions will also benefit more from increases in access (shorter trips and more transit, bicycle and walking trips) rather than increases in mobility (how fast cars move) given the realities of rising gas prices, demographic shifts, evolving market preferences, and fiscal realities. This approach creates more jobs, saves households money (on car ownership and operation), reduces costs to local government (for roads and sewers), delivers energy, environmental and health benefits, and appropriately prioritizes maintaining roads and bridges rather than expanding them.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft criteria for the 2011 Regional Solicitation. We've combined our comments to minimize repetition. We hope to have the opportunity to work with TAB, TAC, and the Met Council on updates to the criteria that help maximize progress toward the region's goals.

Applaud continued focus on objective, data-driven decision making

While we feel improvements can be made to the criteria, the TAC deserves credit for their continued focus on creating a regional solicitation process that is objective and data driven. This objectivity has

refreshingly left politics out of much of the process, and certainly leads to better outcomes than would otherwise be the case. There is no doubt that the process is time intensive (and more opportunities should be explored to speed that up), but that time helps limit serious conflict between competitors in an era of diminishing resources. We appreciate the effort that staff and TAC members put into the creation of the criteria and the scoring process.

Better connecting the solicitation with regional and state goals

The purpose of the regional solicitation is “to fund a variety of locally-initiated projects that also help implement regional transportation and development policies.” Qualifying criteria stipulate that projects must “be consistent with regional policies.” While the regional solicitation criteria generally reinforce regional policies, we believe a stronger connection can and should be made. This connection should include the regional benchmarks as well as regional policies enumerated in the Transportation Policy Plan (TPP). While we believe that TAC and TAB should work with the new Metropolitan Council on a fundamental reworking of the solicitation to better reflect regional priorities, there are also opportunities for improvement within the existing criteria framework.

We recommend a more structured and visible connection between state statutory goals for transportation, regional policies and benchmarks, and the regional solicitation criteria. Further, we recommend a more seamless set of performance measures between the Met Council's regional policies and Mn/DOT policies, goals, and performance reporting.

Minnesota's statutory transportation goals were adjusted in 2010 to include “increasing transit, bicycling and walking trips as a percentage of all trips statewide” and minimizing the degradation of the climate, including reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Regional policies seem to back up this approach as the Regional Framework notes that “Transit-supportive land use can lead to significant reduction in vehicle trips and vehicle miles travelled.” Yet, with gas at \$3.50 and rising steadily, we have not reached the regional benchmark of increasing transit service by 3% each year, while we greatly exceeded the benchmark for highway expansion. We question whether the proposed criteria will ultimately fund sufficient transit projects to achieve this transit goal.

Opportunity: Fully utilize the flexibility of STP

The goal of Metropolitan Council, like all MPOs, is to provide for the efficient and affordable movement of goods and people around the region. This requires (1) the maintenance of our existing assets; (2) an emphasis on an expanding transportation choices; (3) and focus on land use, which is often the main driver of transportation demand. The Surface Transportation Program provides great flexibility to state departments of transportation and MPOs to use their existing federal resources to support these goals.

The current solicitation inherently limits the flexibility of STP by focusing all but one of the categories on roads and requiring that transit projects can only be submitted in categories established for CMAQ funds.

By limiting transit projects in CMAQ, the Council misses a substantial opportunity to integrate modes and better accomplish its regional goals. The focus should be on the results, rather than on the mode.

Other states and regions have long histories of taking advantage of STP's flexibility. The San Francisco Bay Area uses one third of its STP funding to support their successful Transportation for Livable Communities program which supports both capital and planning grants for the creation of station area plans and for capital projects that improve walking and bicycle access to public transit hubs and stations, major activity centers and neighborhood commercial districts. The Atlanta Regional Commission has a similar program that encourages local jurisdictions to plan and implement strategies that link transportation improvements with land use development strategies, which are consistent with its regional development policies. Finally even smaller regions such as in Idaho have used their STP dollars to purchase transit replacement vehicles, ride-share programs, and significant investments in an alternative analysis.

Two Pennsylvania programs also warrant mentioning, Penn DOT's Smart Transportation Program and the Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative. These are set up similarly to the federal government's new TIGER program. They are competitive programs, based on specific performance measurements, and local governments apply with a variety of strategies to meet the program goals. This could just as easily be done at the metropolitan level, and would most likely result in many creative and innovative projects around the region.

Opportunity: Move beyond focus primarily on congestion to Context Sensitive Solutions

The TPP notes the inability to grow our way out of congestion and "envisions a region better served by alternatives to driving alone" (pg 50). Yet the bulk of funding (STP -Urban Guarantee) appears targeted for congestion management rather than expanding alternatives to driving alone and reducing trip distances by better linking transit and land use. The definition, purpose, and vision for each of the STP road categories focus on congestion and offer little or no mention of any other community goals. This runs contrary to the TPP policy on Context-Sensitive Design (pg 14) and to Mn/DOT's flagship initiatives to implement Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) and sustainability.

We again suggest that the TAC, TAB, and Council work together on a comprehensive restructuring of the solicitation to bring it more in line with CSS. The reality of the current criteria is that many local projects that do CSS very well cannot score well enough across enough different categories to be successful because the local context and community needs differ so much from project to project.

Opportunity: Focus more on preservation

The TPP (pg 16) states that "highway expansion projects should not be implemented at the expense of system preservation and management." The 2010 Mn/DOT Pavement Condition report shows that in the Metro District, 3.6 percent of principal arterials and 8.9 percent of non-principal arterials are in "poor" condition. While this is a marked improvement on 2009 (thanks largely to the infusion of stimulus

funding), it still falls short of Mn/DOT's targets—especially for non-principle arterials—and Mn/DOT projections show a worsening of conditions in the years to come. We commend the addition of the preservation category for the augmenters, but feel that similar categories should be added for each of the STP categories to reflect the TPP's prioritization of preservation. We cannot hope to maintain the system into the future if we do not ensure that our current system is in good condition before adding more.

Opportunity: Provide an explicit definition of “person thru-put” and incorporate it into criteria

To be meaningful, the definition of “person throughput” needs to be differentiated from vehicle throughput. Pg 51 of the TPP states that: “highway Person-throughput is preferable (to measures of vehicle throughput) because it takes into account the use of transit and HOV's on the system.” Unfortunately, neither the TPP nor these criteria provide such a precise metric for measuring person-throughput.

The Metropolitan Highway System Investment Study (pg 24) defines person throughput as “increases in average vehicle occupancy and increases in transit ridership.” The calculation used in the regional solicitation, however, would award points to a project that increases vehicle throughput (i.e. before and after hourly vehicle capacity of the roadway segment) but doesn't in fact increase vehicle occupancy or transit ridership. Consequently, points awarded for congestion management (CMAQ pg 16 and pg 21) provide a disproportionate value to capacity expansion—a short-term congestion relief strategies relative to the long-term strategy of reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips. As the TPP notes, “experience has shown that there are never enough highway lanes to meet the growing demand for peak-hour urban travel. Instead of preserving future capacity for decades, new highway lanes can fill up in a matter of months.” We believe this statement holds true for any increase in vehicle capacity of a roadway, whether it is new highway lanes or system management strategies that have a comparable impact on drivers.

Need for greater transparency and accountability

While the recent Legislative Auditor's report focused solely on the transit side of metropolitan governance, we feel that their focus on the perceived lack of transparency and accountability applies to all areas of metro governance including the TAC and TAB. We encourage enhanced stakeholder participation in defining future criteria for the regional solicitation, especially providing greater opportunity for public input early in the process. Reacting to a proposed set of criteria is too late for the public to have meaningful input on high-level issues that could result in comprehensive changes in the criteria. We also hope that the criteria could be simplified somewhat to enhance transparency and accountability and to also speed the application process. The Technical Advisory Committee should also prepare the required annual report on the implementation of regionally solicited STP projects for the review and approval of the TAB. These reports should be available on the Council's website – we could only find the 2005 report.

We were also disappointed that only two TAC members stayed for any of the public comment meeting on March 2. Regardless of whether or not TAC members thoroughly review the notes from the hearing, the lack of attendance sends a message to public stakeholders—whom the TAC is ultimately responsible to—

that their input is not important. We encourage holding future public hearings before the TAC agenda, so that members can more easily fit it into their schedules. We also encourage the Council to include a list of the TAC members on their website.

We also hope that public comment opportunities are made available at the TAB and Metropolitan Council during the upcoming stages of the process.

Invitation for additional discussion and coordination of sharing best practices from other regions

We've also attached a few detailed specific comments on the language of the draft criteria. We would be happy to discuss any of our comments in more detail. As part of that discussion, we can offer to facilitate some resource sharing from other regions that have done comprehensive restructuring of their criteria to better connect to regional goals. Thank you for your work.

Sincerely,

Ethan Fawley, Transportation Policy Director
Fresh Energy

Dave Van Hattum, Policy and Advocacy Program Manager
Transit for Livable Communities

John Bailey, Policy Director
1000 Friends of Minnesota

Jim Erkel, Land Use and Transportation Program Director
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

Matt Kane, Director of policy and research
Growth & Justice

CC:

Susan Haigh, Metropolitan Council Chair

William Hargis, TAB Chair

James Andrew, Met Council

Carl Ohrn, Met Council

Patrick Born, Met Council

Arlene McCarthy, Met Council

Susan Moe, FHWA

Scott McBride, Mn/DOT

Detailed comments

- STP, page 2: While we disagree with general policy 5, we also feel that the ADA requirement should be listed separately as it has no direct relationship with the rest of the policy statement.
- STP, page 4: Policy 19 should state that all projects should follow the State-Aid Standards process as a minimum. The current wording in the first sentence could be read to limit the ability of a city or county to seek a variance. Similar changes should be made to each of the STP categories “general information and restrictions” sections which currently state that “the project must result in a completed segment which meets current design standards...” It should say “...segment that follows the current design standards process.” Also, technically, State Aid grants “variances” to the Standards, not “exceptions,” which means something else.
- STP, pages 9 and 10: In all other categories, crash reduction is worth more points than congestion. We think that should be true for relievers as well since safety is the number one priority.
- STP, each road category: Access management is not universally important in every project, so it is unfair to rank it so highly in the criteria as it disadvantages projects in areas where access management isn’t possible or desirable.
- STP, each road category: Speeding traffic is a common enough problem that a criterion should be added to cover how well the project helps reduce the number of drivers exceeding the speed limit.
- STP, each road category: Given the new USDOT Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation, integration of modes should be listed as a qualifying criterion rather than as a prioritizing criterion. We generally support the language change for integration of modes, but would like to see a specific response required for ADA given the varied quality of previous ADA implementation.
- TE, page 7: Policy 10 related to the standards should be updated as with STP. It may also be worth mentioning the ITE recommended practice *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares: A Context Sensitive Approach* and the Mn/DOT Bikeway Facility Design Manual.
- TE, page 8: It is unclear if bike sharing would be eligible under any TE category. That should be eligible somewhere in TE and also in STP
- TE, criteria. We suggest a bonus for communities that have a Complete Streets policy or other similar commitment in an adopted policy or plan.



Public Works Department

Donald J. Theisen, P.E.
Director/County Engineer

Wayne H. Sandberg, P.E.
Deputy Director/Assistant County Engineer

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 3, 2011

To: James Andrew, Kevin Roggenbuck

From: Washington County Transportation Division

Re: **Issues/Concerns to Address in 2011 Draft Solicitation Package**

Included below are comments provided by staff members of the Washington County Transportation Division. The comments specifically respond to a few items identified by the TAC Funding and Programming Committee.

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

- Applicants are required to complete a checklist included at the beginning of the application that list all construction project elements with a cost estimate. These costs and elements will be reviewed during the project evaluation stage to ensure that construction cost estimates are reasonable.

It would be appropriate to require that the cost estimates be prepared by an engineer or a professional who is qualified to prepare such estimates.

- The Integration of Modes criteria have been revised to evaluate only the degree to which modal elements improve network connectivity or accessibility by all transportation modes.

Good revision.

- Natural Resource Protection has been eliminated from the application

Natural and Cultural Resource protection should be identified in the project description since it may impact project costs.

Transportation Enhancements Program (TE)

- **OPTION:** Applicants could be required to complete a checklist included at the beginning of the application that lists all construction project elements with a cost estimate, identical to the STP application.

Good addition.

From: Bursaw, Pat (DOT) [Pat.Bursaw@state.mn.us]
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2011 3:05 PM
To: Andrew, James
Cc: Isaacson, Brian (DOT); Roggenbuck, Kevin; Ohrn, Carl; 'Karl Keel'
Subject: 2011 TAB Solicitation

Hi James,

Besides the comment I brought up at TAC about the desire for some flexibility in the cost estimate form, I have just a couple other more technical change suggestions for the TAB solicitation packet that you might consider:

1. For CMAQ General Policies #5, the language indicates (as it does for all other categories) that Studies, preliminary engineering, design, construction engineering, etc... are not eligible for funding. For many System Management projects, however, the actual project is a consultant contract to perform programming functions for signal timing, rather than a construction project as it is for other categories of funding. Should this be clarified here?
2. #10 again under CMAQ General Policies, states, "Projects with independent utility at separate locations cannot be combined into a single application. This policy does not apply to bus shoulder lane corridors". Should this also clarify that it does not apply to signal timing projects either? I believe we have in the past funded multiple corridors and in fact encourage the combination of these types of projects along separate corridors for efficiency purposes.

I think that in both these cases, we have used the same language we use on other categories for the General Policy statements, but in these isolated instances for CMAQ they really don't apply. That's why I consider them to be technical type corrections, but you should approach them however you think is appropriate.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks, James.