

2024 Unique Projects Scoring – Committee Memo to TAB March 19, 2024

The Unique Projects Scoring Committee completed its final meeting on March 8 to finalize the scoring and discuss funding of the Unique Project applications. The Committee met a total of three times to review elements of the application and to determine a consistent methodology to score and rank the projects. Below are a summary of the review and scoring process, the final scoring table, and the funding recommendations agreed upon by the Committee.

Project Review Process and Scoring Summary

A total of six applications were received at the December 15, 2023, application deadline. All the applicants had previously filled out Applications of Interest to apply for funding, which were reviewed by staff for any elements that may not be eligible for federal funds. Staff met with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), MnDOT, and MPCA staff to discuss potential issues with the application and subsequently met with all applicants prior to the deadline to provide feedback and communicate any eligibility issues found during the preapplication process.

A few eligibility concerns regarding application 20491 – Our Streets Minneapolis: Building Awareness of Transportation Impact on Environmental Health – were brought to light during the preapplication meeting. In addition to the ineligible items, there were multiple projects within the application. To be scored, the applicant would need to submit multiple applications – one for each project. Council staff subsequently met with the applicant and suggested that the application be reworked to resolve the eligibility issues. The ineligible items and multiple projects were still present in the application submitted on December 15.

The first meeting of the Unique Projects Scoring Committee occurred on February 2. The committee was comprised of six members of the Transportation Advisory Board (two county representatives, two citizen representatives, one city representative, and one modal representative) and two alternates. The alternates did not provide official scores but did participate with the discussions. During the first meeting, the committee discussed the general approach on how the applications would be scored and committed to a follow-up meeting to review the preliminary scores.

The second meeting was held on February 16. The committee discussed the scoring methodology in more detail and decided to meet for a third meeting, before which members would submit revised scores based upon the alignment discussion that occurred. The largest point of discussion was to create an agreed-upon approach on how to score studies relative to more traditional infrastructure projects. The methodology for how the scoring would be calculated was also finalized at this meeting and will be outlined below. The committee also concluded that project 20491 was non-responsive to the recommendations provided after the initial review and that it would not be scored.

The third and final meeting of the committee was held on March 8th. The committee reviewed the final scores, ranking, available funding, and unanimously agreed upon the scores and the three projects recommended for funding.

Scoring Methodology and Results

Each project was assessed against five major categories with measures under each category totaling 15 measures that were scored per project. The scoring committee each independently provided a score for each measure for each project based on a scale from 1 – 9. The scoring rubric is as follows:

Poor	Marginal	Fair	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Outstanding	Exceptional
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Once the committee had provided their individual scores, the average score per measure was calculated to determine each project's score for a given measure. These measures were then further averaged under their relevant category to create an average category score. i.e. The three measures under Significance were averaged to create a single score for the Significance category. The four measures under Environmental impact were averaged for a single Environmental Impact score, and so on.

Once the category score was determined, the category weighting that TAB had previously determined for unique projects was applied to the category scores. (See Table 1 below for weights) This created a weighted total which was then multiplied by 100 to remove decimal places and created the Final Score. The maximum possible Final Score is 900 points. (Scoring a 9 in every measure).

Projects were then ranked in descending order by Final Score as is typical for the regional solicitation process. See Table 1 for the resulting scores. Note that Table 1 displays the *weighted* score which provides a possible *Weighted Total Score* of 9 points or 900 points for a Final Score.

Table 1: Weighted Category Scores and Totals

ID	Application Name	Significance (39%)	Environmental Impact (21%)	Racial Equity (18%)	Multimodal Communities (13%)	Partnerships (9%)	Weighted Total	Final Score	Rank	Federal Request	Cumulative Request
20426	St Paul EV Carshare Vehicles for Evie and EV Spot Network	2.34	1.36	1.28	0.89	0.69	6.56	656	1	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 1,400,000
20478	WashCo EV Carshare Gold Line BRT	2.18	1.25	1.13	0.93	0.64	6.14	614	2	\$ 639,936	\$ 2,039,936
20257	Minneapolis Ramp A Mobility Hub	1.92	0.93	0.77	0.78	0.60	5.01	501	3	\$ 1,218,064	\$ 3,258,000
20230	Global Wellness Hyperloop	1.27	0.57	0.46	0.34	0.38	3.02	302	4	\$ 2,000,000	\$ 5,258,000
20415	Global Wellness Intl. Commerce Mobility	1.07	0.56	0.46	0.25	0.33	2.66	266	5	\$ 480,000	\$ 5,738,000
20491	OurStreetsMpls Building Awareness of Transp Impact on Environmental Health	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$2,640,000	\$ 8,378,000

Federal Funding Requests

The Unique Projects funding availability for the 2024 Regional Solicitation is \$4,500,000. The Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) was previously agreed to be included as a multi-phase project during previous Regional Solicitation approvals. The scoring committee determined a clear delineation based on the Final scores between the top three scoring projects.

The scoring committee recommends that TAB fund projects 20426, 20478, and 20257. The total amount requested for these three projects, in addition to the committed funding for the Travel Behavior Inventory, is within \$8,000 of the total amount of federal funds available for the Unique Projects category.

	Federal
TOTAL AVAILABLE	\$4,500,000
20426 – Evie Spot Expansion	\$1,400,000
20478 – EV Gold Line/BRT	\$639,936
20257 – Ramp A Mobility Hub	\$1,218,064
Travel Behavior Inventory	\$1,250,000
TOTAL Federal Requested	\$4,508,000

Committee Recommendation to TAB

All present committee members discussed their scores during the final scoring meeting and no changes were made. Members noted the clear funding cut-off line after the third project. Their recommendation was to fund the three projects up to the set amount, with the third project – the Ramp A Mobility Hub, receiving \$8,000 less than the requested to stay within the allocated funding amount.

Future Topics for Discussion as Part of Regional Solicitation Evaluation

Members of the committee noted a few issues and improvements to the Unique projects process that should be considered and addressed as part of the Regional Solicitation Evaluation and potentially be incorporated as changes into the 2026 Solicitation. The following list of topics will be provided to the Regional Solicitation Evaluation project team for discussion:

- If a Unique projects application category continues, the existing five over-arching scoring criteria (Regional Significance, Environmental Impact, Equity, Multimodal Communities, Partnerships) appear to be appropriate; codify the scoring methodology for future use if the Unique projects application category remains
- Encourage applicants to identify the primary outcomes/benefits the project provides and also identify "secondary" or "tertiary" outcomes or benefits that might accrue, potential questions:
 - "How will your project have a direct, or primary, impact on this measure?"
 - "How will your project have indirect, or secondary, impacts on this measure?"
 - "How will your project have other tertiary impacts or non-quantifiable impacts to this measure?"
- Eliminate non-responsive applications (those with ineligible elements) from the pool prior to review by the Scoring Committee
- Determine if TAB desires to fund studies through the Unique projects category and, if so, identify the types of studies and provide appropriate evaluation criteria/measures