

REGIONAL BICYCLE FACILITIES

Prioritizing Criteria and Measures

2050 TPP Goal: Our Region is Dynamic and Resilient

2050 TPP Objectives or Policies:

- People have better travel options beyond driving alone to meet their daily needs, with a focus on improving travel times, reliability, directness, and affordability.
- People do not die or face life-changing injuries when using any form of transportation.
- People can increase physical activity with more opportunities to walk, roll, or bike.

Category Definition: The Regional Bicycle Facilities application category is intended to fund construction of and improvements to the regional bicycle system, and projects must either build out the Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN), address barriers identified in the Regional Bicycle Barrier Study (RBBS), or construct regional trails identified in the Regional Parks and Trails System Plan.

Scoring

Criteria and Measures	%
1. Regional Bicycle Priorities	30
Measure A – Identified network priorities	30
2. Connection to Key Destinations	10
Measure A – Connection to key destinations	10
3. All Ages & Abilities Design	20
Measure A – Facility type	10
Measure B – Design features and roadway crossings	10
4. Safety	20
Measure A – Connection to existing safety planning efforts	5
Measure B – Safety improvements for people outside of vehicles	15
5. Community Considerations	20
Measure A – Community data and context	6.7
Measure B – Community need and future engagement	6.7
Measure C – Community benefits	6.7
Total	100

Examples of Eligible Projects

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and is intended only to provide examples. For questions regarding project eligibility, see the qualifying requirements for this application category and contact the Metropolitan Council.

- Multiuse trails
- Bicycle or multiuse trail facility bridges or underpasses
- Dedicated on- or off-street bicycle facilities, including separated or protected bikeways
- Filling multiple gaps, improving multiple crossings, or making other similar improvements along a trail corridor

Application Criteria and Measures

1. Regional Bicycle Priorities

This criterion measures the project's ability to serve a transportation purpose within the regional transportation system and economy based on established regional policies and priorities.

Regional Bicycle Transportation Network (RBTN) is the [official regional bikeway network](#) that sets the region's priority vision for planning and investment. The network was established in 2014 based on a Regional Bicycle System Study analysis and prioritization of potential corridors. This analysis was based on factors such as bicycle trip demand, network connectivity, social equity, population and employment density, and connections to transit.

Regional Trails are part of the Regional Parks system and include planned alignments from the [2050 Regional Parks and Trails Policy Plan](#).

Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossings are the barrier segments within the "Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossing Improvement Areas" as adopted in 2025 and shown in the Regional Bike Boulevard Study ([RBBS](#)) [online map](#). Projects must create a new regional barrier crossing, replace an existing regional barrier crossing at the end of its useful life, or upgrade an existing barrier crossing to a higher level of bicycle facility treatment, to receive points.

Major River Bicycle Barrier Crossings include all existing and planned highway and bicycle/pedestrian bridge crossings of the Mississippi, Minnesota, and St. Croix Rivers as identified in figure 6 of the Bicycle Investment Plan within the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan. Projects must create a new major river bicycle barrier crossing, replace an existing major river crossing at the end of its useful life, or upgrade the crossing to a higher level of bike facility treatment to receive points.

A. Identified Network Priorities

Select all that apply, based on the project's location and types of improvements:

- RBTN Alignment (Tier 1)
- RBTN Alignment (Tier 2)
- RBTN Corridor (Tier 1)
- RBTN Corridor (Tier 2)

Regional Bicycle Facilities

- Regional Trail (not on the RBTN)
- Major River Bicycle Barrier Crossing
- Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossing (Tier 1)
- Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossing (Tier 2)
- Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossing (Tier 3)
- Regional Bicycle Barrier Crossing (non-tiered)

Provide an optional narrative to explain if multiple boxes were selected (300 words or less):

Scoring Guidance

The applicant will receive points based on the project's ability to advance previously defined regional bicycle priorities. Projects that include more than one type of improvement will receive the point value of the highest scoring improvement (e.g., RBTN Tier 1 alignment and Regional Trail would get the highest of those point totals based on the table below). In cases where a Regional Trail alignment that runs along and adjacent to a roadway does not match exactly with the parallel RBTN alignment in the same roadway corridor, the trail alignment may be interpreted as the RBTN alignment at the scorer's discretion. The scoring for regional trails will be revisited next funding cycle based on the results of the planning project to add RBTN corridors and alignments in rural communities. This regional effort will evaluate additions to the RBTN network in the rural parts of the region.

	Linear Facility	Barrier Crossing
30 Points	Projects with 50% or more of the project's length within and along a Tier 1 RBTN alignment	Improvements to a Tier 1 Regional Bicycle Barrier or Major Bicycle Barrier Crossing
25 Points	Projects with 50% or more of the project's length within and along a Tier 1 RBTN corridor or Tier 2 RBTN alignment, or a Non-RBTN Regional Trail corridor or alignment	Improvements to a Tier 2 Regional Bicycle Barrier
20 Points	Projects with 50% or more of the project's length within and along a Tier 2 RBTN corridor	Improvements to a Tier 3 Regional Bicycle Barrier
10 Points	N/A	Non-tiered bicycle barriers
0 Points	Project does not implement a regional facility or address a regional barrier	

Scorers may use discretion to apply a lower point value to projects that are located at a defined barrier crossing, but do not meaningfully improve upon existing conditions.

2. Connection to Key Destinations

This criterion measures the project's ability to serve a transportation purpose by connecting users to key local destinations.

Connection to Key Destinations

Attach a map that clearly identifies key destinations within ½ mile of the project limits. Key destinations may include destinations important to the local community, including (but not limited to) banks, post offices, high-frequency transit stations, childcare centers, grocery stores, medical centers, office parks, pharmacies, places of worship, public libraries, public parks, schools, universities, or colleges. Other destinations may be included with an explanation as to their importance to the local community.

Upload that map, along with a written response (300 words or less) that highlights the key destinations served and their importance to the local community.

Applicants may identify additional destinations up to 1 mile from the project location but will need to demonstrate that these destinations have a continuous bicycle facility connection, existing or planned, to ensure safe access from the project location. These destinations must be clearly marked outside of the ½ mile buffer for this criterion.

If the project does not directly serve any key destinations but facilitates an important connection to a destination more than ½ mile from the project, please explain.

Scoring Guidance

Consider the information and narrative provided by the applicant and rate projects based on the benchmarks provided below. Projects may be rated at any point along the scale based on their performance against the stated criteria.

- **High:** The highest rated projects in this measure will make a strong case about how the project will significantly increase access to key destinations. This may include providing new connections and/or improvements to existing connections. The narrative should also explain why the destinations are critical to the community and/or region. Destinations beyond ½ mile should be considered only if the respondent clearly demonstrates a safe connection from the project location to the identified destination.
- **Medium-High**
- **Medium:** Mid-range projects in this measure may minimally increase access to key destinations by only connecting to a few destinations and/or providing small improvements to existing connections. Differentiation among these projects should consider how many destinations are connected, the importance of the destinations to the community and/or region, and the level of increased access as provided in the narrative. Destinations beyond ½ mile should be considered only if the respondent clearly demonstrates a safe connection from the project location to the identified destination.
- **Medium-Low**
- **Low:** Projects that have minimal destinations within the project area or do not create safe connections to those destinations should receive minimal points for this criterion. Consider whether the project adds new connections and/or improves existing connections when making this assessment.
- **Non-responsive/Not relevant:** Projects that do not create any new connections, do not have any destinations within the project area, or do not provide adequate information should receive zero points for this measure.

3. All Ages & Abilities Design

This criterion measures how well the project provides bicycling infrastructure for all ages and abilities. Guidance from sources such as the following may be referenced as part of the written explanation, but the applicant should, at a minimum, provide the information requested below.

- Minnesota Department of Transportation's [Bicycle Facility Design Manual](#)
- National Association of City Transportation Officials' (NACTO) [Urban Bikeway Design Guide 3rd Edition](#)
- American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities 5th Edition
- Federal Highways Administration's [Bikeway Selection Guide](#)

FHWA guidance provides authorization for use of alternate roadway design guides in federally-funded projects. See [Alternate Roadway Design Publications Recognized by FHWA under IIJA and FAST Act](#) for details.

A. Facility Type

Describe the minimum level of protection this facility will provide. If your project proposes more than one facility type, provide the following information for each segment. Applicants are encouraged to consider how the project development process may affect the final layout after application to minimize need for scope changes.

- Proposed facility types: Multiuse trail, sidepath, off-street bikeway, on-street bikeway protected with permanent materials, on-street bikeway protected with temporary materials, on-street bikeway with painted buffer, constrained bike lane, advisory bike lane, bike boulevard, shared space.
- Roadway AADT: Use the highest value from the most recent count available.
- Motor vehicle design speed: This is collected only to score facility types other than off-street bikeways or on-street bikeways protected with permanent materials, which will receive high scores regardless of design speed. If state aid rules require a design speed greater than 25 mph, the applicant should acknowledge risk of a scope change if their application bases facility selection on a lower design speed on premise of receiving a variance.
- Number of lanes in each direction: This is collected only to score facility types other than off-street bikeways or on-street bikeways protected with permanent materials, which will receive high scores regardless of number of lanes. If state aid rules require or the project development process could lead to requiring more than one lane in any direction, the applicant should acknowledge risk of a scope change if their application bases facility selection on the premise of having no more than one lane per direction.

Segment 1 (include options in form to add additional segments)

- Proposed facility type(s) and length: _____
- Roadway AADT: _____
- Motor vehicle design speed: _____
- Number of lanes in each direction: _____

The table below shows the minimum recommended level of separation based on roadway features and operational characteristics. If the current proposed facility type differ from these recommendations, please explain your reasoning for selecting the facility type (400 words or less). Example constraints or risks may include, but are not limited to, drainage, trees, safety, utilities, and right-of-way constraints.

Facility Type	Target Motor Vehicle Speed	Motor Vehicle Lanes in Same Direction	Motor Vehicle AADT
Off-street (multiuse trail, sidepath, or bikeway)	Any	Any	Any
Protected bike lane (with permanent materials)	Any	Any	Any
Bike lane with buffer or temporary protection	≤25 mph	Single lane	≤6,000
Bike lane	≤20 mph	Single lane	≤1,500-3,000
Advisory bike lane or bike boulevard	≤20 mph	Single lane or no centerline	≤500-2,000
Shared spaces	≤10 mph	No centerline	≤1,000

Scoring Guidance

The project will be scored based on the following guidance. Projects may be rated at any point along the scale based on their performance against the stated criteria.

Single facility type

- **High:** All off-street multiuse trails, sidepaths, or bikeways and on-street bike lanes separated with permanent materials will receive high scores. All on-street facilities matching the recommended facility type or providing a higher level of protection will receive high scores.
- **Medium-High**
- **Medium:** Projects that do not adhere to the facility type guidance but provide an accepted justification for why they are providing the “next best facility type,” such as the examples listed in the prompt above, will receive a medium score.
- **Medium:** Applicants who are not in alignment with the recommended facility types may receive a medium score if they cite alternate guidance along with a clearly stated and accepted explanation of why that guidance is appropriate for the project.
- **Medium-Low**
- **Low:** Projects that do not adhere to the facility type guidance and do not provide an accepted justification.

Multiple facility types

Projects that include multiple facility types will receive length proportionate points based on the score of each proposed segment.

B. Design Features and Roadway Crossings

Provide a brief description (400 words or less) outlining the ways the project will meet or exceed the applicable design standards, specifically focusing on ways the project provides facilities suitable for users of all ages and abilities. The description should include the best available information on the facility's proposed width, buffer or separation, pavement markings and signage, facility transitions, ADA considerations, intersection design, driveways and conflict points, and any traffic calming elements.

In order to implement the Imagine 2050 Transportation Policy Plan actions seeking to provide a bicycle network suitable for riders of all ages and abilities, applicants are encouraged to meet or exceed the outlined guidance wherever possible.

Scoring Guidance

Consider the information and narrative provided by the applicant and rate projects based on the guidelines provided below. Projects may be rated at any point along the scale based on their performance against the stated criteria.

- **High:** High rated projects will provide low-stress facilities suitable for riders of all ages and abilities, provide simple to navigate and/or protected crossings, and provide strong vertical and horizontal separation from traffic or a low-speed, low-volume traffic place to ride.
- **Medium-High**
- **Medium:** Medium rated projects will provide bicycle facilities that are suitable for most adults, provide crossings that are easy for an adult to navigate, and provide a place to ride separated with permanent materials from higher speed and multilane traffic.
- **Medium-Low**
- **Low:** Low-rated projects have elements that meet minimum state design standards, but do not provide a low-stress facility. This may include providing facilities with adequate width and temporary or painted separation, but few improvements to roadway crossings or other conflict points.
- **Non-responsive/Not relevant:** Projects that do not meet minimum state design standards should receive zero points for this measure.

4. Safety

This criterion measures the project's ability to promote safety for all users, including how the project responds to existing risks and makes use of proven safety countermeasures.

A. Connection to Existing Safety Planning Efforts

Please select all of the following that apply:

- Project Location (or part of the location) is listed in the [Regional Safety Action Plan](#) on any of the following lists (note an online map is being developed and a link will be provided in final application):
 - Identified on Regional Top 25 Priority [lists](#) (reactive or proactive)
 - Identified on Regional High Injury Streets [maps](#)
 - Identified on County Top 10 priority lists (reactive or proactive)
 - Crash Risk Index >15 (for pedestrians, use the bicyclists' layers)
- Project location is not listed in a regional or local safety plan but provides a parallel or alternative route that will improve safety for people walking or biking.

Regional Bicycle Facilities

- Please describe and provide information on the ways the project will provide a safe alternative route (300 words or less).
- Location is listed in another safety plan that prioritizes reducing fatal and serious injury crashes.
- Please describe and provide reference or link to the plan: _____

Scoring Guidance

The project will be scored based on the scorer's discretion, using the following guidance.

- **High:** Project is identified in the regional safety action plan on either the regional top 25 or county top 10 lists or project provides a viable parallel or alternative route to a location listed.
- **Medium-High**
- **Medium:** Project location is identified in a regional safety action plan on High Injury Streets or Crash Risk Index, or project provides a viable parallel or alternative route to a location listed.
- **Medium-Low**
- **Low:** Project location is identified in a local (e.g. county or city) safety action plan or project has a completed targeted study (e.g., NEPA document, corridor study, intersection study, ICE report, etc.) that identifies the specific safety measures needed to improve safety and those safety measures have been incorporated into the proposed project or project provides a viable parallel or alternative route to a location listed.
- **Non-responsive/Not relevant:** Projects that are not identified in the Regional Safety Action Plan or any local safety plan. This could also include projects that also have not completed a targeted study that defines an existing safety issue (e.g. NEPA document, corridor study, intersection study, ICE report, etc).

B. Safety Improvements for People Outside of Vehicles

Please provide a written response that explains how the project will mitigate existing risk factors noted above and any other steps taken to ensure the project promotes safety for all users. Please cite any specific proven safety countermeasures that will be part of the project's design or methods the project will use to promote safety for people outside of vehicles (600 words or less).

Consider the following when developing your response. Note that not all considerations are applicable to all projects, but please respond to those that are applicable.

- Will crossing distances or times between protected crossings for people outside of vehicles be increasing or decreasing? If so, how many locations will be affected? If increasing, what measures will be considered to recognize the increase in distance between crossing opportunities?
- Describe what measures are being used to reduce exposure and delay for people outside of vehicles.
- If grade separated pedestrian crossings are being added and increasing crossing times, describe any features that are included that will reduce the detour required of pedestrians and make the separated crossing a more appealing option.
- If mid-block crossings are restricted or blocked, explain why this is necessary and how pedestrian crossing needs and safety are supported in other ways.
- Describe how motorist speed will be managed in the project design, in both through-traffic and turning movements. Note any strategies or treatments being considered that are intended to help motorists drive slower or protect pedestrians and bicyclists if motorist speeds will increase.

Regional Bicycle Facilities

- Consider these resources for safety improvements: [Regional Safety Action Plan's Programmatic Recommendations](#), [FHWA's Safe System Roadway Design Hierarchy](#), and [MnDOT's Traffic Engineering Countermeasures](#)

Scoring Guidance

Consider the information and narrative provided by the applicant and rate projects based on the benchmarks provided below. Projects may be rated at any point along the scale based on their performance against the stated criteria.

- **High:** The highest rated projects in this criterion will serve the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists with the greatest safety and least pedestrian and bicyclist delay, detour, or discomfort. Score projects higher if selected countermeasures are designed to be comfortably used by people of all ages and abilities. The highest scoring projects will provide frequent, safe, at-grade crossing opportunities to prioritize directness and convenience with safety. Score projects higher if design elements are included to help motorists drive slower. The response will include quantitative or qualitative metrics showing a high level of improvement using an established methodology.
- **Medium-High**
- **Medium:** Mid-range projects in this measure may make a strong case as to how the project improves the travel experience, safety, and security for people outside of vehicles but without quantitative data or using a less established methodology. These projects may require lengthy detours or elevation changes or have less frequent at-grade crossings that do not align well with destinations. Similarly, mid-range projects may have quantitative or qualitative data and an established methodology but only offer a small improvement to the multimodal experience.
- **Medium-Low**
- **Low:** Projects that make minimal improvement to the travel experience, safety and security for people outside of vehicles should receive low points in this measure. These projects may include motor vehicle design elements that raise concerns for pedestrian and bicyclist safety, such as increased vehicle speeds or increased crossing distances that would not be fully mitigated by any safety countermeasures for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Non-responsive/Not relevant:** Projects that do not improve the travel experience and safety for people outside of vehicles should receive zero points for this measure.

5. Community Considerations

See separate Community Considerations criteria document.