TRANSIT EXPANSION

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 have more predictable travel times when traveling on highways, with a focus on reducing excessive delays.

Category Definition: The Transit Expansion category seeks to fund new/expanded transit services or facilities with expanded service with the intent of attracting new riders to the system or improving transit coverage with expanded geographic coverage or service at new times of the day or week.

Scoring

Criteria and Measures	%
1. Service/Facility Provided Must be Effective for Transit Market Area	**30**
Measure A – Transit Market Area Alignment	10
Measure B – Regional Transit Performance Guidelines	20
2. New Ridership	**20**
Measure A – New annual riders	20
3. New Coverage	**10**
Measure A – New service hours by population within service area	10
4. Connection to Key Destinations	**10**
Measure A – Connection to key destinations	10
5. Transit Needs-based Determination	**10**
Measure A – Demographic and roadway delay/reliability data	10
6. 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

- New or expanded transit service, including microtransit and fixed-route service
- Expansion to existing transit centers or customer facilities that are associated with an expected service expansion (expanded transit centers or customer facilities not associated with an expected service expansion should apply in the Transit Customer Experience category)
- New or expanded park-and-rides with a service expansion
- New or expanded transitway facilities, including highway bus rapid transit (BRT), dedicated BRT, light rail transit, and modern streetcar (e.g., new lines, new stations, extended lines, expanded stations)

Application Criteria and Measures

1. Service/Facility Provided Must be Effective for Transit Market Area

This criterion measures the effectiveness of the project against Transit Market Area and performance guidelines (e.g., productivity, cost effectiveness).

A. Transit Market Area Alignment

Refer to the *2050 Transportation Policy Plan Transit Market Area map* and select which transit market area(s) the project serves:

☐ Existing or emerging Transit Market Area I: Most dense urban centers and corridor

☐ Existing or emerging Transit Market Area II: Less dense urban neighborhoods and activity centers

☐ Existing or emerging Transit Market Area III: Suburban but still dense enough to support from regular-route service

☐ Existing or emerging Transit Market Area IV: Low density suburban edge areas

☐ Existing or emerging Transit Market Area V: Rural with some small communities

☐ Freestanding Town Center

Based on the guidance provided in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Regional Transit Design and Performance Guidelines provide a brief narrative (400 words or less) explaining how the project aligns with the typical service expected and/or transit design guidelines for the project's service type and Transit Market Area context. If the project deviates from the typical service expected and/or transit design guidelines, explain why.

Refer to *Table 9.3: Typical service and key planning factors by Transit Market Area* to assess alignment with the typical service expected. Also assess how the project aligns with the Transit Design Guidelines section, with particular emphasis on stop spacing, route spacing, facility design, service span, frequency, and coverage service, as applicable to the project.

If the project expands an existing route, consider the expanded service in total, not just the added portion of service, when answering this question. If the route is intended to be a coverage route, please explain how it meets the criteria outlined in the Regional Transit Design and Performance Guidelines for such routes.

Scoring Guidance

Consider the information and narrative provided by the applicant and rate projects based on their alignment with the Regional Transit Design and Performance Guidelines. For new facility or expanded facility projects, assess how the project supports the appropriate service type within the market area, as well as how the project aligns with design guidelines related to stop spacing, customer facility features, and other aspects.

A project that aligns with all guidelines relevant for the project type should receive full points. A project that does not fully align with the relevant guidelines may receive partial points based on the scale of deviation and the applicant's justification for deviations from the guidelines. As you assess the project, consider the proposed service type, proposed facility type, how much of the service is in each Transit Market Area (if multiple), and other relevant considerations highlighted by the applicant.

- **High:** The highest rated projects in this measure aligns with all regional Transit Market Area and Transit Design guidance, including route type, frequency, facility type, and transitway type as applicable.
- **Medium-High**
- **Medium:** Mid-range projects in this measure are mostly consistent with regional guidance, or are consistent for most of the alignment served. There may be some inconsistencies, more points should be awarded if there is a strong justification provided for inconsistencies; fewer points should be awarded if a weak or no justification for inconsistencies is provided.
- **Medium-Low**
- **Low:** Low rated projects in this measure are only partly consistent with regional guidance, or are consistent for only part of the alignment. For facility projects, the proposed location may conflict with regional guidance.
- **Non-responsive/Not relevant:** Projects that do not align with regional guidance should receive zero points in this measure. Projects that do not provide a complete response should also receive zero points.

B. Regional Transit Performance Guidelines

Refer to the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Regional Transit Design and Performance Guidelines and select which route type applies to the project from the list below. For facility-only projects, select the type of service the facility serves.

☐ Core local bus

☐ Supporting local bus

☐ Suburban local bus

☐ Commuter and express bus

☐ Microtransit

☐ General public dial-a-ride

☐ Light rail

☐ Arterial BRT

- ☐ Highway BRT
- ☐ Dedicated BRT
- ☐ Commuter rail

Does the project meet the definition of a coverage service? If yes, check which type of coverage service applies.

- ☐ Geographic coverage
- ☐ Job-access coverage

Provide estimates for the following metrics. If the project expands an existing route, provide estimates for the route as expanded, not just the added portion of the service. For facility projects, respond with current data for the route(s) connecting to the facility. You may choose to provide alternative performance metrics to quantify the project's impact; however, you should include your rationale for using other metrics as part of your narrative response.

Note: Up until two weeks prior to the application due date, applicants will be able to submit their estimates to Metropolitan Council staff, who will advise whether the estimates need to be corrected. This optional review, or lack thereof, will be made available to the scorer of this criterion. Applicants who plan to use an alternative ridership estimation methodology are strongly encouraged to do this to avoid risking a deduction in their score.

For service expansion projects (with or without new or expanded facilities):

- Estimated passenger per in service hour in third year of service: _
- Route average riders per in-service hour: _
- Minimum riders per in-service hour: _
- Estimated subsidy per passenger in third year of service: _

For facility-only projects: Provide current information for routes that connect to the facility.

- Current passenger per in-service hours: _
- Route average riders per in-service hour: _
- Current subsidy per passenger: _
- Minimum riders per in-service hour: _____
- Current average stop spacing: _
- Proposed average stop spacing:
- Optional: alternative performance metrics: _

Based on the guidance provided in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan, provide a brief narrative of how the project aligns with the productivity and cost-effectiveness performance guidelines. Include information on how the project aligns with stop/station spacing guidelines if applicable. If using another methodology to assess the project's performance, provide your explanation here. If the project expands an existing route, consider the expanded service in total, not just the portion of added service, when answering this question (300 words or less): _

Provide a brief narrative of the data and methodology you used to quantify the project's impact (100 words or less): _

Scoring Guidance
Consider the information and narrative provided by the applicant and rate projects from Low to High based on the benchmarks provided below. Projects may be rated at any point along the scale based on their performance against the stated criteria. For this measure, it is important to have differentiation among the applications. The scorer may adjust the rubric, as needed, to ensure at least a 10-point spread among the applications.

Refer to *Table 9.11: Minimum guidance for passengers per in-service hour* and *Table 9.12: Subsidy thresholds per* passenger of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Regional Transit Design and Performance Guidelines to assess whether the project aligns with performance guidelines for passengers per in-service hour, based on the data provided by the applicant. Also consider the subsidy per passenger information, whether the project is geographic or job-access coverage service, the narrative provided by the applicant, and explanation of methodology.

For facility-only projects: In addition to the guidance above, refer to *Table 9.4: Local and express route spacing guidelines* and *Table 9.5 Local bus route spacing guidelines by route type and Transit Market* of the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Regional Transit Design and Performance Guidelines to assess whether the project aligns with performance guidelines for stop spacing, based on the data provided by the applicant.

If alternative performance metrics are provided, the scorer should consult the design and performance guidelines as reference and use their best judgement to assign a score.

- **High:** The highest rated projects in this measure will exceed the average passenger per in-service hour guidelines and be below the average per passenger subsidy for the route type. If the project is geographic or job-access coverage, it may still be awarded full points even though it doesn't meet these thresholds if it is close, and the narrative describes the critical service gap filled by the project. The methodology provided must be technically established.
- Medium-High
- **Medium:** Mid-range projects in this measure may meet some but not all passenger per in-service hour and average subsidy per passenger thresholds. Projects meeting or exceeding more performance thresholds should be scored higher than those meeting fewer. Differentiation among projects should also be made based on the merit of the service described in the narrative. Points should be deducted if no methodology is provided or methodology is not established.
- Medium-Low
- **Low:** Projects that do not meet average or minimum passenger per in-service hour guidelines and have per passenger subsidies of greater than 60 percent more than peer route average should receive a low rating for this measure. If the project is geographic or job-access coverage, it may be awarded more points even if it is below these thresholds if the narrative describes how the project fills a critical service gap.
- **Non-responsive/Not relevant**: Projects that do not provide sufficient data or explanation to assess their performance should receive zero points in this measure.

2. New Ridership

The criterion measures the project's impact by estimating the annual new transit ridership.

A. New Annual Riders

Based on the service type, estimate and provide the new annual transit ridership that is produced by the new project in the third year of service.

Note: Up until two weeks prior to the application due date, applicants will be able to submit their estimates to Metropolitan Council staff, who will advise whether the estimates need to be corrected. This optional review, or lack thereof, will be made available to the scorer of this criterion. Applicants who plan to use an alternative ridership estimation methodology are strongly encouraged to do this to avoid risking a deduction in their score.

Select the relevant ridership methodology type for the project and provide the annual transit ridership, based on the methodology listed in the following sections.

Methodology type:

☐ Park-and-Rides and Express Routes Projects to Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and U of M Campuses

☐ Transitway Projects

☐ Urban and Suburban Local Routes and Suburb-to-Suburb Express Routes Only

☐ Other

Estimated ridership:

- Estimated new ridership in third year of service: _

Provide a brief narrative of the data and methodology you used to quantify the project's impact (100 words or less): _

New Facilities, Park-and-Rides and Express Routes Projects to Minneapolis, St. Paul, and U of M Campuses Only:

Use a technically established forecast methodology to estimate the third year of ridership. The ridership estimate should include only new transit users and should exclude transit riders that shift from an existing facility or service. Applicants must clearly describe the methodology and assumptions used to estimate annual ridership.

The following is a list of key factors that drive park-and-ride demand and should be the basis for new rider estimates for new or expanded park-and-ride projects.

- Socioeconomic forecasts
- Commute patterns from Census data
- Transit rider characteristics from a variety of survey data sources
- Downtown job growth and the overall distribution of jobs in the region
- Parking costs
- Level of transit service, both during peak periods and in the midday
- Travel time to downtown Minneapolis or Saint Paul or U of M campuses
- Travel time from user origins to potential park-and-ride facilities
- Available capacity at potential facilities

Note: Any express routes not going to these downtown areas should follow the peer route methodology described in the "For Urban and Suburban Local Routes and Suburb-to-Suburb Express Routes Only" section.

Transitways Projects Only:
Use the most recent forecast data (current or opening year) to estimate ridership for the third year of service. Forecast data for the transitway must be derived from a study or plan that uses data approved by Metropolitan Council staff. This includes the most up-to-date estimates from plans that have been already adopted. Describe the study or plan where the ridership is derived from and where the documentation can be found (provide weblinks, if available).

Note: Transitways offer travel time advantages for transit vehicles, improve transit service reliability, and increase the convenience and attractiveness of transit service. Transitways are defined in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan to include commuter rail; light rail; highway, dedicated, and arterial bus rapid transit; and modern streetcar. Eligible transitway projects must have a mode and alignment identified and recommended through a local process approved by a policy board. Transitways projects that are not in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan's fiscally constrained plan will also require a TPP amendment prior to receiving funds, if selected.

Urban and Suburban Local Routes and Suburb-to-Suburb Express Routes Only:
Use peer routes that are currently in service to develop a ridership estimate for the third year of service. To select the peer routes, the applicant should identify routes in the same Transit Market Area (as defined in the 2050 Transportation Policy Plan), or routes that serve locations with similar land use and development patterns. Applicants must use the average passengers per service hour of at least three peer routes to apply a ridership rate for the proposed service project. The route proposed for expansion and all three routes must use the same year's annual ridership. Additionally, describe how a peer route was selected in the response and any assumptions used. The applicant must also explain why they chose a given year for their forecast.

Scoring Guidance
The applicant with the highest new annual ridership will receive full points. The remaining projects will receive a proportionate share of the full points. Points should be deducted if no methodology is provided or if the methodology is not established.

3. New Coverage

This criterion measures the project's impact by measuring the number of residents in an area impacted by the new hours of transit service or the number of residents impacted by a new or expanded facility.

A. Service Hours by Population within Service Area

The Service Hours by Population within Service Area metric is a measure of the people impacted by the new service or facility.

- Population within service area (include new coverage from new/expanded facilities, if applicable): _
- Hours of service (include new coverage from new/expanded service hours, if applicable): _
- Population within service area multiplied by new hours of service (divided by 100): _

Notes: The project's service area is defined as within ½ mile of stops for all types of transit service. For microtransit, the full service area may be included, but not connecting zones. For existing routes that

are being extended or restructured, include only the newly served populations (subtract the population of the existing service area from the new total). Use population data from the most recently available U.S. Census year (American Community Survey).

New hours of service are defined as the number of hours in a week that the service operates that it wasn't previously operating.

Provide a brief narrative (100 words or less) of the data and methodology you used to quantify the population within the service area: _

Scoring Guidance
The applicant with the highest calculated value will receive full points. The remaining projects will receive a proportionate share of the full points. Points should be deducted if no methodology is provided or the methodology is not established.

4. Connections 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.

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.
- **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.
- **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.

5. Transit Needs-based Determination

This criterion measures the project's impact on areas of high transit need, based on demographic data and roadway delay and reliability performance.

A. Demographic and Roadway Delay/Reliability Data

Check which characteristics of high transit need the project will address:

Demographic Data

☐ Service area includes a high proportion of households with no access to a vehicle
Include percentage of households: _

☐ Service area includes a high proportion of people with lower income (185% of federal poverty rate)
Include percentage of people with lower income: _

☐ Service area includes a high proportion of people with disabilities
Include percentage of people with disabilities: _

☐ Service area includes a high proportion of youth (ages 8 to 18)
Include percentage of youth: _

Excessive Delay and Reliability Corridors

☐ Provides an alternative travel option along a roadway corridor with two hours or more of excessive delay

☐ Provides an alternative travel option along a roadway corridor with low reliability as measured by a buffer index of 0.5 or greater

Other

☐ Project serves another type of high transit need (describe how you are defining need and how the project addresses it in your narrative response)

Note: For demographic data, use data from the most recently available U.S. Census year (American Community Survey). The project's service area is defined as within ½ mile of stops for all types of transit service. Data from Census Tracts – existing and new – may be included in the analysis. For microtransit, all Census Tracts within the service area zone may be included but not connecting zones. Include the relevant data in your narrative and your methodology in the open-response sections below.

For excessive delay and reliability corridors, only check the box if the project provides a new alternate travel option or improves an existing alternate travel option for a corridor originally identified on page 19 and page 20 of the *2050 TPP Highway Investment Plan maps for Reliability or Excessive Delay.* The data will be updated for use in the Regional Solicitation. The narrative should address how the project will impact performance on the corridor using a quantitative and/or qualitative assessment.

The transit needs-based determination may apply to the whole project area, portions of the route, or specific stops served by the project. Your narrative should clearly explain where the project is serving an area of transit need and how the project will improve service to these areas.

Provide a brief narrative that describes how the proposed project impacts areas of high transit need, including addressing any of the items selected above. Provide quantitative information as applicable (300 words or less): _

If you provided quantitative information above, provide a brief narrative of the data and methodology you used to quantify the project's impact (100 words or less): _

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

- **High:** The highest rated projects in this measure will address multiple areas/types of transit needs, using sound data and analysis methodology. Addressing demographic areas of need should be prioritized over delay/reliability and other types of need. Specifically, highest priority should be given to projects that address the demographic areas of need directly listed in the question (checkboxes).
- **Medium-High**
- **Medium:** Mid-range projects in this measure address one or few areas of transit need or address lower priority types of transit need. Points should be reduced if data or analysis methodology is less established.
- **Medium-Low**
- **Low:** Low rated project in this measure will address only one area of transit need and/or have low quality data or an unestablished analysis methodology.
- **Non-responsive/non relevant:** Projects should receive zero points in this measure if they do not provide data or sufficient explanation describing how the project will address an area of transit need.

6. Community Considerations

See separate Community Considerations criteria document.