



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION WORKING GROUP REPORT

Overview of new program

In 2023, the Minnesota State Legislature approved a new regional sales tax for the seven-county region to support a variety of transportation improvements and operations. Part of this new funding is being dedicated to active transportation purposes in the region and to be distributed by the [Transportation Advisory Board \(TAB\)](#) and administered by the Metropolitan Council. The new funding was authorized in the 2023 legislative session which included key requirements that must be incorporated into any project selection process that the TAB designed.

The requirements outlined in state statute 473.4465 are listed below.

- *The Transportation Advisory Board must establish eligibility requirements and a selection process to provide the grant awards. The process must include: solicitation; evaluation and prioritization, including technical review, scoring, and ranking; project selection; and award of funds. To the extent practicable and subject to the next paragraph, the process must align with procedures and requirements established for allocation of other sources of funds.*
- *The selection process must include criteria and prioritization of projects based on:*
 1. *the project's inclusion in a municipal or regional nonmotorized transportation system plan;*
 2. *the extent to which policies or practices of the political subdivision encourage and promote complete streets planning, design, and construction;*
 3. *the extent to which the project supports connections between communities and to key destinations within a community;*
 4. *identified barriers or deficiencies in the nonmotorized transportation system;*
 5. *identified safety or health benefits;*
 6. *geographic equity in project benefits, with an emphasis on communities that are historically and currently underrepresented in local or regional planning; and*
 7. *the ability of a grantee to maintain the active transportation infrastructure following project completion.*

In order to fulfill the requirements for this new funding source, the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) established a working group to make decisions for the first solicitation and provide guidance for other decisions as part of the Regional Solicitation Evaluation. The working group established two main objectives: 1) make decisions on immediate funding for regional projects, and 2) establish solicitation details for a formal 2026 solicitation.

Development of the working group

The group was formed from both policymakers on the TAB and technical personnel on the various TAB subcommittees to ensure technical feedback was given during policy decisions. The working group members represented various counties, cities and representatives of non-motorized users in the region.

The working group was made up of the following TAB policy members:

1. Glen Johnson (Chair & TAB District D Citizen Rep)
2. Brian Martinson (Vice Chair & TAB Non-Motorized Rep)
3. James Hovland (TAB Chair)
4. Hwa Jeong Kim (TAB, St. Paul)
5. Mary Liz Holberg (TAB, Dakota Co)
6. Peter Dugan (TAB District H Citizen Rep)
7. Amity Foster (TAB Transit Rep)
8. Aurin Chowdhury (TAB, Minneapolis)
9. Mark Steffenson (TAB, Maple Grove)
10. Julie Jeppson (TAB, Anoka Co)
11. Stan Karwoski (TAB, Washington Co)
12. John Ulrich (TAB, Scott Co)
13. Mai Chong Xiong (TAB, Ramsey Co)
14. Dahn Do (TAB District E Citizen Rep)

The working group met over a nearly two-year period. During that time, membership evolved as circumstances changed for original members and TAB alternates joined and participated in later meetings. In addition to the original voting members noted, the following non-voting technical members and TAB alternates also formally participated at points throughout the process.

TAB Alternates:

1. Brandon Wagenfeld (TAB District D Citizen Rep Alternate)
2. Rachel Chinitz (TAB District H Citizen Rep Alternate)
3. Mary Jo McGuire (TAB, Ramsey Co alternate)
4. Timothy Marino (TAB Transit Rep alternate)
5. Alexander Ask (TAB Non-Motorized Rep alternate)

Technical advisors:

1. Jeni Hager (TAC Chair, 2024)
2. Joe MacPherson (TAC Chair, 2025-2026)
3. Brian Issacson (TAC Vice Chair, 2024)
4. Michael Thompson (TAC F&P Chair, 2024)
5. Jim Kosluchar (TAC F&P Chair, 2025-2026)
6. Marc Briese (State-Aid AT Rep)
7. Aaron Tag (TAC F&P, MnDOT rep)
8. Craig Jenson (Bike-Ped WG Co-Chair)
9. Jordan Kocak (Bike-Ped WG Co-Chair)

The working group met 16 times through 2024 and 2025 with an additional final meeting in February 2026. Full meeting materials including agenda, presentations, notes and additional materials can be found here: [Regional Solicitation Evaluation - Metropolitan Council](#)

Summary of Recommendations

2024 Funding Recommendations

The new sales tax was put into effect in October 2023, and the new active transportation account began accruing funds at that time. A key difference of the new funding source is that funds accrue and can be expended as soon as they are available. In contrast, the federal Regional Solicitation which TAB oversees distributes federal funds for future years before actual funds are available for distribution. In light of this difference, the Working Group was convened and began meeting in 2024 to make key recommendations for more immediate use of the funds as they were generated. These discussions resulted in the recommendation to not hold a dedicated active transportation solicitation in 2025, and

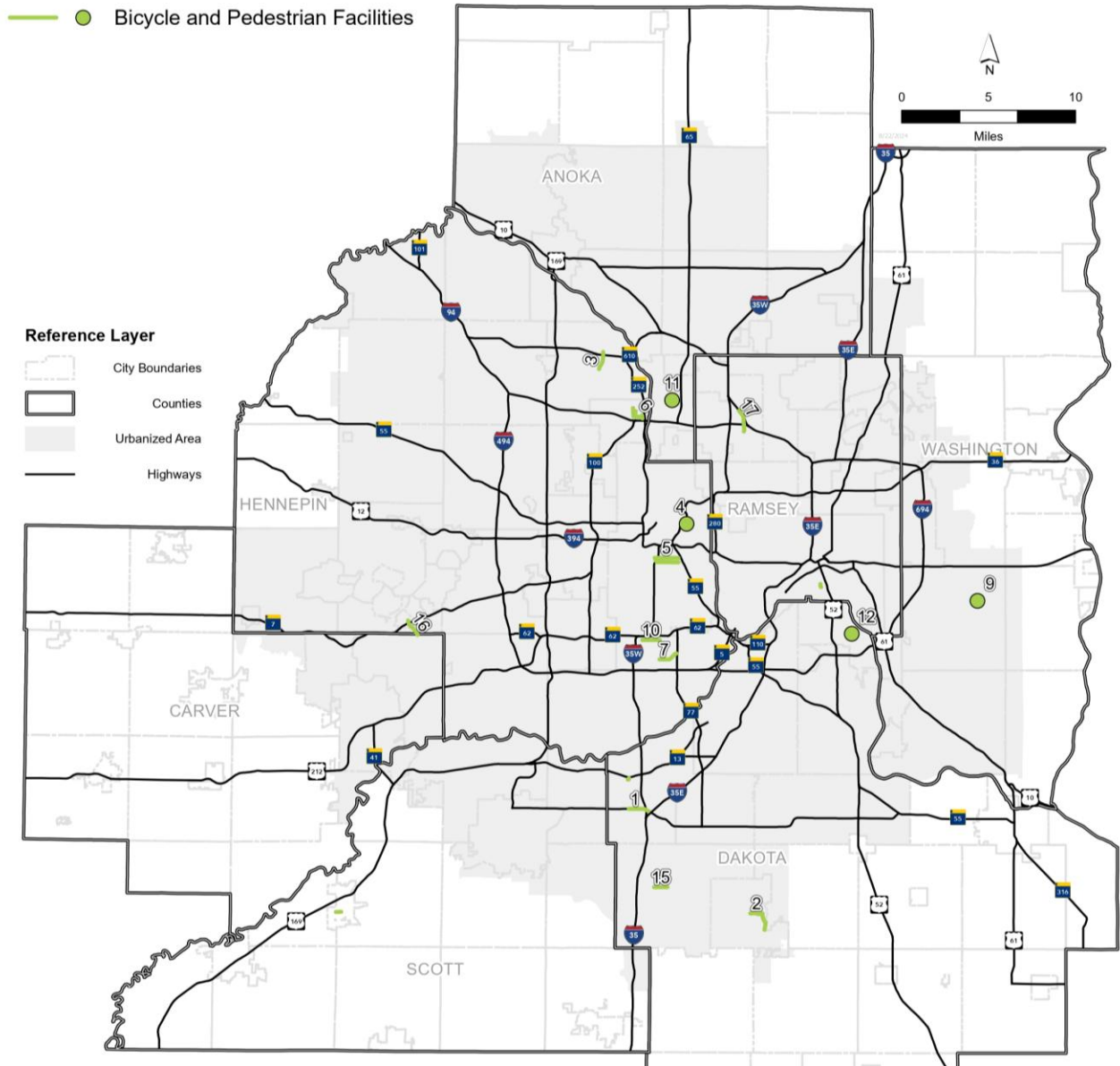
rather to utilize some of the funds to select from projects previously submitted to the 2024 federal Regional Solicitation which had scored well. More information on the federal process can be found here: [Regional Solicitation - Metropolitan Council](#). One key recommendation from these discussions was to ensure that local funds and federal funds not be comingled with each other to ensure simplified and less burdensome project delivery.

This resulted in the development of a pilot program to fund 17 pedestrian and bicycle projects with \$19 million from the active transportation funds planned to be implemented prior to the end of 2026. This pilot program was important to help the Council Grant Department ramp up staffing and internal processes to manage a new program and source of funding.

Summary of the 17 funded projects:

- Selected projects include projects from each county in the region except for Carver County.
- Selected projects include projects within all community designations (Urban Center to Emerging Suburban Edge) within the Urban Service Area and Rural Center in the Rural Service Area.
- A majority of pedestrian projects (12 out of 17) and all Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects (10/10) from the Regional Solicitation will be able to be funded with the addition of sales tax funding.
- Three additional multi-use trail and bicycle projects were funded through the new sales tax funding.
- Of the 17 selected projects, two were completed within a year of project selection.
- Overall, the \$19 million in additional regional funding from the new Active Transportation Sales Tax revenues added to federal funding to total \$68.8 million in TAB support for active transportation projects around the region. Combining these new regional funds with existing federal funds and local match funds led to a total investment of \$102.5 million for active transportation projects in the region.

Figure 1. Selected bicycle, pedestrian and safe routes to school projects in the 2024 Regional Solicitation



Additional 2024 Recommendations

In addition to selecting projects to fund in 2024, the working group also needed to establish grant administration requirements for these selected projects. For many grant administration requirements, the working group considered the federal requirements the baseline for projects as these projects initially applied for federal funding through the Regional Solicitation. Requirements like local match remained as they are for federal grants at 20% of the project costs. These grant administration requirements were applied for the selected pilot projects and were revisited for projects funded through the 2026 Active Transportation Solicitation.

The requirements applied are as follows:

- Program Year: No program year needed to be identified as projects were required to begin before the end of 2026. TAB approval needed for extensions and follows TAB policy on project extension requests.
- Grant Funding Disbursements: 50% of awarded amount granted up-front at construction start, with the remainder reimbursed after expenses were incurred.

- Eligible Project Costs: Eligible costs remain the same as federal Regional Solicitation.
- Plan Documentation and Submittals: Final plans required to be submitted to the Council to ensure project meets minimum standards (MnDOT Facility Design Guide and Americans with Disabilities Act) and project description.
- Project Scope Change: Scope change process required to follow existing TAB scope change policy.
- Right-of-Way Acquisition: Required to follow applicable state statutes and to submit ownership or agreement documentation prior to project bidding.
- Environmental Review: Required to follow applicable state statutes. No documentation required to be submitted.
- Labor Force and Business Firm Equity Initiatives: Required to work with the Council's Underutilized Business (MCUB) program to set goals for contracted work for projects receiving more than a \$750,000 grant. If a receiving local agency already has a federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) or equivalent program in place, this requirement could be deferred to the local equivalent program.

The Working Group recommended these grant administration requirements to the full TAB, which were then approved at the September 18, 2024, meeting.

2025 Solicitation Decisions

In 2025, the working group next focused on establishing parameters and details for the 2026 solicitation of projects. The group met seven times to discuss policy level details for the first active transportation solicitation. The group discussed at high levels how the program should be guided and focused to best meet the legislative intent. Before moving onto discussions for the 2026 solicitation, the working group looked to establish principals on program outcomes to help guide future decision making. To read more about the discussions and results from interactive polls taken by the Work Group members here: [March 14th 2025 RSE Active Transportation Working Group presentation](#). The group moved on to deciding key policy topics for the 2026 solicitation. The key items discussed were as follows:

1. Project categories
2. Required local funding match
3. Funding targets for the 2026 solicitation
4. Minimum and maximum project awards
5. Project funding eligibility
6. Geographic balance

The working group made the following recommendations for the full TAB to consider:

1. **Project categories:** A key consideration for the new active transportation funds was to ensure that they were not mixed with federal funds, that they would be used independently, and that they did not supplant projects likely to be funded with federal funds in the Regional Solicitation. Following discussions on how to achieve these objectives, the working group recommended separating the funds by distinct project application categories. In order to facilitate this, the active transportation solicitation was recommended to contain three project categories: local bicycle facilities, local pedestrian facilities and active transportation planning. In addition, the working group recommended that federal funds for active transportation be focused on regional bicycle facilities with its own dedicated category. In a change from previous federal solicitations, Safe Routes to School projects will not have a dedicated category, rather they will be considered within the overall bicycle and pedestrian categories. This change is being addressed through project scoring to ensure school safety focused projects will still remain competitive for regional active transportation funding. The planning category is a new type of support from TAB to help communities who do not yet have plans in place to be eligible for funding in the infrastructure categories. These recommendations were incorporated into the federal regional

solicitation and the new active transportation solicitation to ensure awarded funding completely separated federal sources and regional sources of funding. It also helped to ensure locally funded projects have limited process barriers and cannot be impacted by changes to federal funding.

2. **Required local funding match:** The 2023 enabling legislation did not specify or require any level of local match for awarded projects. For federally funded projects, grant awardees are required to identify a minimum 20% of a requested grant amount with local funds or from non-federal sources. One major consideration was how smaller, or less well-resourced communities could better participate in active transportation funding in the region, with the local match requirement for federal funding being noted by partners to be a major hurdle for many communities when applying for grant funding for projects. After significant discussion, the working group recommended two options for the full TAB, either no local match requirement for projects at all, or a small 5% match requirement. This recommendation was taken up by the full TAB who approved no local match for any project category in the active transportation solicitation.
3. **Funding targets for the 2026 solicitation:** As revenue for the program had been accruing since 2023, with only a partial releasing of funds in 2024 for pilot projects, revenues accumulated to \$12.6 million of unencumbered revenue by the end of 2024. When the legislation was signed into law, it was anticipated that up to \$24 million would be generated for active transportation projects per year; real revenue numbers have come in slightly lower, at \$21 million per year over the first two years. The working group considered the existing revenue with additional anticipated revenues for 2025 and 2026 which were projected to total \$52.5 million by the end of 2026. In addition, as selected projects in 2026 would not be spending program dollars until at soonest 2027, future revenues could be anticipated and awarded for 2026 projects. In light of this, the working group needed to recommend how much funding for the first solicitation should be made available. After significant discussions, the work group recommended that a target of \$50 million be made available for the 2026 active transportation solicitation with \$48 million dedicated toward infrastructure projects and \$2 million for planning projects. In addition to funding targets, the work group recommended to hold 5% of program revenues (approximately \$2.5 million) in reserve to anticipate other program needs if they arise. These funding targets were approved by the full TAB.
4. **Minimum and maximum projects awards:** As applicants prepare to apply for program funds, it is important to establish award thresholds. Minimum and maximum award recommendations were developed in collaboration with local technical partners in a series of workshops for every project category within the federal regional solicitation and active transportation programs. In consideration with federal awards for regional bicycle facilities, which will have an award range from \$1 million to \$5.5 million, the local bicycle facilities category would allow project awards from \$150,000 to \$3.5 million, a lower minimum award and maximum award than the federal category to ensure a wide range of project types and potential smaller project scopes to compete for funding. The pedestrian facilities category would see projects from \$150,000 to \$2.5 million, reflecting a lower maximum than bicycle facilities as typical pedestrian focused projects have reduced scope and price than bicycle focused projects. For active transportation planning it was decided that no minimum award amount and a maximum of \$200,000 to be able to fund a wide variety of potential planning types, for smaller communities and larger system planning. The working group discussed these numbers and recommended them to the full TAB, which were approved with all project categories minimum and maximum awards.
5. **Project funding eligibility:** The 2023 legislation did not establish types, or elements of projects, which could be eligible for funding for awarded grants. The working group discussed this topic in light of ways to encourage smaller and less resourced communities to apply for project funding. The TAB has restricted federal funding to only the construction phase of projects in the past, which can limit smaller communities' interest in pursuing funds if they cannot fund the design and engineering phases of construction projects. It was determined after

discussion to allow for more phases of a project to be eligible for grant funding to support communities as they design and prepare to build the projects that were awarded funding. The working group recommended that project design and engineering cost be eligible in addition to construction costs for awarded projects. This recommendation was approved by the full TAB.

6. **Geographic balance:** One of the seven criteria for selecting projects outlined in state law is the geographic equity in project benefits. The TAB has traditionally considered regional spread of funding to be an important metric for selected projects as the TAB represents the entire seven-county region. The working group considered and discussed multiple options to formalize means to ensure projects were selected throughout the region, but ultimately recommended that the traditional TAB final selection process, which considers geographic balance, was adequate to be used for the active transportation solicitation as well. In addition, the active transportation categories will feature scoring measures for how projects provide benefits for local communities to meet the statute criteria language.

Overview of 2026 Active Transportation Solicitation

The 2026 Active Transportation Solicitation was developed through collaboration with numerous regional partners through multiple meetings and discussions. The 2026 solicitation details were developed to directly respond to legislative requirements which direct key topics that must be considered when scoring and selecting projects. These requirements are being met by setting either qualifying criteria or scoring criteria for each requirement. Qualifying criteria means that project applicants must meet the criteria to be eligible to apply for a project. Scoring criteria means that projects will be scored on how well they meet the requirement as part of the competitive solicitation process. Those requirements are detailed below with how the solicitation is addressing them:

1. *the project's inclusion in a municipal or regional nonmotorized transportation system plan;*
 - This requirement is being met in the qualifying criteria.
 - For the infrastructure categories, for projects to be eligible, they must be found in an active transportation plan or a programming document.
 - For the planning category, the category itself will aid communities to meet this requirement for future infrastructure or other project applications.
2. *the extent to which policies or practices of the political subdivision encourage and promote complete streets planning, design, and construction;*
 - This requirement is being met in the scoring criteria and measures for each active transportation category.
 - The question will measure if a community has a complete streets policy or ordinance in place or to what extent applicant's practices advance complete streets in their community. This will be worth 5% of scoring points for the infrastructure categories and 10% in the planning category.
 - For applicants which do not own public rights-of-way or roadway corridors like regional park implementation agencies or non-profits, this requirement may be met by partnering with an agency sponsor, or by identifying relevant local ordinances, policies or practices of the agency in which the proposed project is located.
3. *the extent to which the project supports connections between communities and to key destinations within a community;*
 - This requirement is being met in the scoring criteria and measures for each active transportation category.
 - For the infrastructure categories, the question will measure the amount and type of destinations which can be connected to a proposed project within one-half mile of the project location, this will be worth 20% of the total score. Additional measures include connections to k-12 schools (5%) and measuring demand (5%).

- For the planning category, applicants will be required to describe how a proposed plan will support improved non-motorized connections to key destinations within a community as part of the project description.
- 4. *identified barriers or deficiencies in the nonmotorized transportation system;*
 - This requirement is being met in the scoring criteria and measure for each active transportation category.
 - For the infrastructure categories, the question will measure how the applicant is addressing a system gap, barrier or an existing deficiency with the proposed project, this will be worth 25% of the total score.
 - For the planning category, the question will measure applicant's response on how the proposed planning project will address systematic safety improvements for non-motorized travel in the subject area. This measure will be worth 20% of the total score.
- 5. *identified safety or health benefits;*
 - This requirement is being met in the scoring criteria and measure for each active transportation category.
 - For the infrastructure categories, the question will measure if there are any existing safety planning efforts that have identified the project or issues at the project location and the proposed improvements and how much they will improve active transportation safety conditions, this measure will be worth 20% of the total score.
 - For the planning category, the question will measure applicant's response on how the proposed planning project will address systematic safety improvements for active transportation travel in the subject area. This measure will be worth 20% of the total score.
- 6. *geographic equity in project benefits, with an emphasis on communities that are historically and currently underrepresented in local or regional planning;*
 - This requirement is being met in the scoring criteria and measure for each active transportation category. In addition, the TAB will make geographic balance decisions to spread project benefits around the region during the project selection period.
 - There will be three questions that will measure factors of community considerations on how the applicants can describe the relevant community data and context in the project area, how the project need was identified, future engagement activities to take place as the project moves toward implementation and the anticipated benefits to the immediate community from the proposed project.
- 7. *the ability of a grantee to maintain the active transportation infrastructure following project completion.*
 - This requirement is being met in the qualifying criteria.
 - For the infrastructure categories, for projects to be eligible, applicants will need to provide evidence of year-round maintenance policies including winter maintenance. This requirement can be met by describing a community policy or practices to maintain facilities, a letter confirming the proposed project will be maintained year-round, ordinances which require adjacent property owners to maintain facilities, or a cross-jurisdictional agreement which indicates another agency will maintain the proposed facility for the applicant.
 - For the planning categories, there is no direct requirement, however applicants are encouraged to include discussion or policies which explore means to maintain planned facilities year-round when implemented.

Figure 2. Scoring Criteria and Measures for the Local Bicycle Facilities Category

Criteria and Measures	%
1. Complete Streets* Measure A – Complete streets planning, design, and construction	5%
2. Connection to Key Destinations* Measure A – Connections to key destinations Measure B – Connections to K-12 schools Measure C – Active transportation demand	30%
3. Identified Gaps, Barriers, or Deficiencies* Measure A – Gaps, barriers or deficiencies addressed	25%
4. Safety* Measure A – Connection to existing safety planning efforts Measure B – Safety improvements for people outside of vehicles	20%
5. Community Considerations* Measure A – Community Data and Context Measure B – Community Engagement Measure C – Community Benefits	20%
Total	100%

*Denotes a criterion and measure directly addresses a legislative requirement

Figure 3. Scoring Criteria and Measures for the Local Pedestrian Facilities Category

Criteria and Measures	%
1. Complete Streets* Measure A – Complete streets planning, design, and construction	5%
2. Connection to Key Destinations* Measure A – Connections to key destinations Measure B – Connections to K-12 schools Measure C – Active transportation demand	30%
3. Identified Gaps, Barriers, or Deficiencies* Measure A – Gaps, barriers or deficiencies addressed	25%
4. Safety* Measure A – Connection to existing safety planning efforts Measure B – Safety improvements for people outside of vehicles	20%
5. Community Considerations* Measure A – Community Data and Context Measure B – Community Engagement Measure C – Community Benefits	20%
Total	100%

*Denotes a criterion and measure directly addresses a legislative requirement

Figure 4. Scoring Criteria and Measures for the Active Transportation Planning Category

Criteria and Measures	%
1. Proposed Project*	50%
Measure A – Project identification	40%
Measure B – Complete streets planning, design and construction*	10%
2. Active Transportation Demand	10%
Measure A – Community SPACE score	
3. Safety*	20%
Measure A – Safety improvements for people outside of vehicles	
4. Community Considerations*	20%
Measure A – Community considerations (data, engagement, benefits)	
Total	100%

*Denotes a criterion and measure directly addresses a legislative requirement

Full application details can be found here: [2026 Regional Solicitation Applications - Metropolitan Council](#)

The 2026 Active Transportation Solicitation will be opened for applications in late April/early May 2026 and close in June or July 2026. Project scoring will take place over summer 2026 with final project selection expected in early 2027.

2026 Final Recommendations

Administrative Program Costs

At its final meeting on February 23, 2026. The Active Transportation Working Group discussed and recommended administration spending for the management and administration of the active transportation program and solicitation. Because TAB does not have staff to manage these new funds, Met Council staff are leading the efforts to develop and manage the program including the solicitations, managing awarded grants, performing evaluation and prioritization studies for the program and engaging regional partners and stakeholders on the program.

In 2025, the Council hired a new grants manager to work specifically on the new active transportation grants and so has need to draw from the new source of funds to perform work for the program. Additionally, Council staff have shifted roles and dedicated significant time toward developing the solicitation and managing the program.

According to state statute 16b.98 and Minnesota Management and Budget office guidance, up to 10% of program revenue can be appropriated for administrative costs of the competitive program.

Beginning in 2026, the management and development of the program will continue to get more complicated as dozens of new projects are selected for funding and award cycles begin to overlap for management purposes. It is also anticipated that additional policy work will continue to be necessary to continue to develop the program for future solicitations. The experience of managing the pilot program and expectations for growth of the program in the future have informed the staff recommendation. In order to support the new active transportation program, staff recommended that up to \$500,000 per year be dedicated toward administration of the program beginning in 2026.

The Working Group reviewed the staff recommendation and forwarded it for the full TAB review and consideration. The full TAB authorized up to \$500,000 to be utilized for administration of the new program in 2026 at the March 18, 2026, meeting.

Establish TAB Active Transportation Task Force

TAB Bylaws outline that the Chair may establish task forces composed of TAB members and non-TAB members to assist the TAB in accomplishing its duties and responsibilities. As the Active Transportation program is a new duty identified in state law for the TAB to administer, establishing a standing task force to meet and make decisions for future solicitations and program management is necessary as the program grows and matures. TAB Bylaws can be seen here: [Bylaws of the Transportation Advisory Board](#).

As the Active Transportation Working Group was created as a subcommittee of the Regional Solicitation Evaluation process for the 2026 solicitation, its work will end with the final approval and release of the 2026 solicitation by TAB. The program will continue beyond this time through the managing of selected grants and continued work for future solicitations. It is important that policy makers continue to be involved in the ongoing and future work for the program. In light of this, the working group discussed and moved forward a recommendation for the TAB to establish a standing task force to continue to meet and forward recommendations to the full TAB on policy issues related to the Active Transportation Solicitations and Program.

Next steps

The active transportation working group was formed as part of the Regional Solicitation evaluation for the 2026 solicitation, first meeting on February 12, 2024, to make initial recommendations on pilot funding in the 2024 Regional Solicitation. The working group had many responsibilities to prepare for the first active transportation solicitation and could not attend to all potential possibilities for the program. In 2026, a standing active transportation task force will be established to continue to discuss the program and future solicitations to make recommendations on potential project types, modifications to application questions and scoring measures, and any additional support for the program to advance active transportation initiatives in the region.

The group identified outstanding topics and project types which should be considered for future program inclusion.

This list is as follows:

- Pilot program evaluation and recommendations for future solicitation and program changes
- Ongoing monitoring of the Active Transportation program
- Continued coordination with county partners on their dedicated share of new sales tax funding for active transportation uses
- Bicycle or pedestrian count program
- Quick-build equipment lending for local governments
- Future project types for future solicitations
 - Programmatic project types, such as
 - Cargo bike library support or other lending programs
 - Learn to ride or safety training program support
 - Operational/maintenance support
 - Equipment support (snow clearance equipment or other equipment)
 - Bike share program support
 - Quick-build or demonstration projects with non-permanent infrastructure
 - Other infrastructure types
 - Bridge barriers for suicide prevention
 - Bike rack installations or bike parking dedicated projects

Signatures and signoff

The Active Transportation Working Group reviewed the report and recommended its acceptance on February 23rd, 2026.

Glen Johnson, Active Transportation Working Group Chair



[Glen Johnson \(Mar 19, 2026 17:35:59 CDT\)](#)

Brian Martinson, Active Transportation Working Group Vice Chair

Brian C. Martinson

Signature: 

Email: brian.c.martinson@gmail.com