

(\$ in thousands)

Project Title	Priority Ranking	Funding Source	Project Requests for State Funds		
			2022	2024	2026
Busway Capital Improvement Program Bus Rapid Transit	1	GO	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 60,000
Regional Parks and Trails Grant Program	2	GO	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000
Inflow and Infiltration Grant Program	3	GO	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,500
Total Project Requests			\$ 84,500	\$ 84,500	\$ 84,500
General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total			\$ 84,500	\$ 84,500	\$ 84,500

Busway Capital Improvement Program Bus Rapid Transit

AT A GLANCE**2022 Request Amount:** \$60,000**Priority Ranking:** 1**Project Summary:** \$60 million of state funds are requested to implement capital projects along regional busway corridors. Requested funds would be used for design, environmental work, acquisition of right-of-way interests, preliminary engineering, engineering, acquisition, and construction of projects including arterial bus rapid transit lines.**Project Description**

In fulfilling its long-range transportation planning responsibilities, the Metropolitan Council has identified a 20 year vision for building a system of transitways and expanding transit in the region. However, funding has not been identified to implement busway capital improvements that do not operate primarily in exclusive lanes.

Requested funds would advance several efforts, focusing primarily on the buildout of the arterial bus rapid transit (BRT) network. Bus rapid transit is a proven solution to significant challenges on local bus corridors. Following implementation in June 2016, the Metro Transit A Line BRT project responded to two challenges in the Snelling Avenue corridor, common to other local bus corridors proposed for BRT implementation: slow travel speeds and inadequate passenger facilities and information.

BRT improvements addressed these issues and grew local ridership over 30 percent by implementing a cost-effective BRT project. The \$27 million A Line project was constructed with \$16 million (60%) state funds including \$9 million of state GO bonds. These funds leveraged federal, local, and MnDOT funds and resulted in a successful project opening. In its first year, the A Line exceeded ridership expectations by 33% and was favorably received by customers and the travelling public. Corridor ridership also increased, generating new fare revenue to offset the operating cost of GO bond-funded improvements.

Additional lines are under development or planned, including the METRO C Line in Minneapolis and Brooklyn Center which began service on June 8, 2019. D Line (Chicago-Fremont) construction began in early 2021 toward construction in late 2022. The Metropolitan Council anticipates the start of the METRO B Line (Lake/Marshall/Selby) engineering activities in mid-2021 toward 2023 construction. Planning is also underway on the METRO E Line (Hennepin/France) corridor.

The Council has identified a program of arterial BRT lines for implementation by 2030. In March 2021 following an extensive community engagement process, the Council selected Central Avenue and University Ave NE from Minneapolis to Northtown Mall for METRO F Line, the Rice/Robert Street

corridor from West St. Paul to Little Canada for the G Line, and the Como/Maryland Avenue corridor from Minneapolis to Sun Ray Transit Center in St. Paul for the H Line. Requested funds would advance this program on schedule. This network would link nearly 500,000 jobs and residents via transit and expand the reach of the METRO network of dedicated guideway LRT and BRT projects. Together, this vision will keep the Twin Cities region more economically competitive with peer regions in the nation and world.

In addition to arterial BRT, the Busway Capital Improvement Program will be used to fund projects to continue development, engineering, and implementation of other capital projects along corridors covering the metropolitan area. Under the Transitway Capital Improvement Plan the Council will review eligible transitway projects and make allocations of state bond proceeds among projects based upon criteria that will include:

- consistency with the Council’s long-range transportation policy plan (TPP);
- readiness of the project;
- potential use by the public (ridership) both current and forecast;
- expansion of the busway (non-guideway) system;
- availability of federal or other matching funds;
- coordination with other major projects; and
- additional criteria for priorities otherwise specified in state law, statute, rule, or regulation applicable to a bus transitway, including the state law authorizing the state bond fund appropriation for the bus transitway.

Eligible expenditures may include land and property acquisition, pre-design, design and engineering, environmental testing and mitigation, utility relocation, traffic mitigation, construction, demolition, furnishing and equipping of facilities. A portion or phase of a transitway project may be accomplished with one or more state appropriations and other funding over time.

The Council has identified more than \$60 million in transitway projects that would be eligible to receive capital funding over the next two years. Several projects are anticipated to receive funding from other sources such as federal funds. The state bond funds will be used to both match other sources of funds and advance other projects’ funding opportunities.

Project Rationale

The project addresses critical problems faced by transit, which has seen ridership decline 60-70% due to the pandemic.

Through implementing the A Line busway, Metro Transit has proven fast, frequent, and legible transit service can reverse these ridership trends in a cost-effective manner. While other local bus ridership declined in 2016, A Line corridor ridership grew over 30 percent without significant additional transit service prior to the pandemic. Comparable projects would be implemented with the requested funds in three high ridership corridors carrying over 35,000 average daily passengers, yielding faster travel

times, increased ridership, and enhanced access to destinations through the metro.

Project Timeline

Other Considerations

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

The impact on the agency operating budget can vary depending upon which transitway capital projects are funded. The Council has established a policy requiring anticipated operating funds to be identified before capital projects proceed. The vast majority of required resources for arterial BRT operations comes from replacement of existing local bus service with more attractive, faster arterial BRT. Reduced delays allow faster speed and more efficient use of existing operating resources. Service plans include options with limited expansion of service as well as resource-neutral operating plans.

Description of Previous Appropriations

The 2014 Capital Investment bonding bill appropriated \$15 million state GO bonds to the Transit Capital Improvement program. The Metropolitan Council determined use of these funds in consultation with local partners and designated \$9 million to complete the A Line corridor, \$2 million for Orange Line BRT, \$2 million for the Gateway/Gold Line corridor, \$1 million for Red Line Cedar Grove station, and \$1 million for Bottineau LRT. The 2020 Legislature appropriated \$55 million for Busway Capital Improvement Program.

The 2021 Legislature appropriated \$57.5 million in general fund cash for arterial bus rapid transit in the omnibus transportation bill.

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Regional Parks and Trails Grant Program

AT A GLANCE**2022 Request Amount:** \$15,000**Priority Ranking:** 2**Project Summary:** The Metropolitan Council requests \$15 million in State bonds to match \$10 million of Metropolitan Council Regional Bonds to improve and expand the Metropolitan Regional Parks System.**Project Description**

The Metropolitan Regional Park System is owned, operated, and maintained by the 10 Regional Park Implementing Agencies (Agencies) defined in Minnesota Statutes 473.341, Subd. 1(a).

The Twin Cities region is home to a system of regional parks and trails that is nationally renowned for its beauty, size and variety of features. The system provides an abundance of opportunities for recreation, exercise, mental and physical health, and, of course, just plain fun. It also preserves significant green space and wildlife habitat. In 2017, there were over 58 million visits to the Regional Parks System, more than twice as many visits to the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, and Yosemite National Parks – combined. Our parks and trails draw visitors from across the region, state, and United States.

The Council proposes to match \$15 million of state bonds with \$10 million in Regional bonds for a total Regional Parks System capital investment of \$25 million. 100% of bond funds are allocated to Implementing Agencies. The Council keeps no state funding for administrative costs.

Each agency is allocated a share of the combined state and regional bonds according to a formula set in Council policy: 70% is based on each agency’s jurisdictional population, and 30% is based on the agency’s relative share of non-local visits.

Note that under limited circumstances, Regional Parks Implementing Agencies may request Metropolitan Council approval to begin a capital project prior to funding being available, with reimbursement coming from their share of a future bonding cycle. These “reimbursement” grants are funded entirely with Council bonds. For this reason, some individual grants may be funded 100% by State bonds, but the proposed \$25 million total is split, with 60% paid from State bonds and 40% from Council bonds.

Project Rationale

The purpose of the Metropolitan Regional Parks program is to maintain, expand, and improve the Metropolitan Regional Parks System, which consists of more than 54,000 acres of parks and 389 miles of trails. The program funds regional parks that provide recreational services similar to those provided

in state parks in Greater Minnesota.

Project Timeline

Other Considerations

None

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

There is no direct impact on State agency operating budgets since the State of Minnesota does not operate Metropolitan Regional Parks System units.

Description of Previous Appropriations

2016- \$8.5m GF and \$18.2 Legacy/ENRTF

2017- \$8.5m GF and \$18.1m Legacy and \$5.0m GO Bonds

2018- \$8.5m GF and \$18.1m Legacy/ENTRF

2019- \$8.5m GF and \$18.9m Legacy and \$10.0m GO Bonds

2020- \$9.1m GF and \$19.8m Legacy

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Inflow and Infiltration Grant Program

AT A GLANCE

2022 Request Amount:	\$9,500
Priority Ranking:	3
Project Summary:	The Metropolitan Council requests \$9.5 million in State bonds to continue to provide grants to municipalities for eligible public infrastructure capital improvements to reduce inflow and infiltration (I/I) into wastewater collection systems.

Project Description

The Metropolitan Council requests \$9.5 million in State bonds to continue to provide grants to municipalities for eligible public infrastructure capital improvements to reduce inflow and infiltration (I/I) into wastewater collection systems. In cooperation with Metro Cities, similar requests have been made in 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020. The requested amount for 2022 represents a portion of the demonstrated need from communities for work completed under the previous programs. The program has been a successful incentive for communities to complete I/I mitigation work.

Inflow and Infiltration – or I/I – are terms that describe clear water that enters wastewater systems and consumes capacity that is intended for growth. Each has unique sources, methods of entry, and effects on the wastewater collection system. I/I from both public and private sources causes major challenges in the region.

Since 2005, the Metropolitan Council has intensified efforts to mitigate excessive I/I through partnership with regional communities. There is evidence of success through flow reduction and reduced system flow response to wet weather. However, the repairs needed to the local public wastewater collection system can be costly, and regional communities have expressed a need for consistent funding for I/I mitigation activities.

In 2010, Metro Cities championed inclusion of a \$3 million grant program in the 2010 bonding bill for providing grants to municipalities for capital improvements to public infrastructure to reduce inflow and infiltration (I/I) into the wastewater collection system. From 2010 through 2015, the total funding received by communities for I/I mitigation was \$10.5 million.

The approved bills have included the following language:

Metropolitan Cities Inflow and Infiltration Grants: For grants to municipalities within the metropolitan area, as defined in MN Statutes, Section 473.121, subdivision 2, for capital improvements in municipal wastewater collection systems to reduce the amount of inflow and infiltration to the Metropolitan

Council's metropolitan sanitary sewer disposal system. To be eligible for a grant, a municipality must be identified by the Metropolitan Council as a contributor of excessive inflow and infiltration. Grants from this appropriation are for up to 50 percent of the cost to mitigate inflow and infiltration in the publicly owned municipal wastewater collection systems. The council must award grants based on applications from eligible cities and townships that identify eligible capital costs and include a timeline for inflow and infiltration mitigation construction, pursuant to guidelines established by the Council.

Project Rationale

The purpose of the project is to assist communities served by Metropolitan Council Environmental Services in undertaking public infrastructure projects that reduce I/I into the local and regional wastewater collection systems.

Project Timeline

Other Considerations

This grant program is tied to the Metropolitan Council's stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability, and sustainability outcomes of *Thrive MSP 2040* and supports the Metropolitan Council's principles of collaboration and accountability. This grant program will support the I/I mitigation efforts of local communities. This program protects the environment and public health, supports construction jobs, promotes infrastructure investment, and is cost-effective.

Metropolitan Council proposes to utilize existing program guidelines which have been reviewed by local government partners in the region and have been agreed to by State agencies.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets

There is no direct impact on State agency operating budgets since the State of Minnesota does not have a similar grant program.

Description of Previous Appropriations

The following appropriations have been made for this program:

2010 - \$3 million

2012 - \$4 million

2014 - \$2 million

2015 - \$1.5 million

2017 - \$3.7 million

2018 - \$5 million

2020- \$5 million

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