

Project Requests for State Funds					
Project Title	Priority Ranking	Funding Source	2026	2028	2030
Busway Capital Improvement Program Bus Rapid Transit	1	GO	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
Regional Parks and Trails 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			\$ 99,500	\$ 99,500	\$ 99,500
General Obligation Bonds (GO) Total			\$ 99,500	\$ 99,500	\$ 99,500

(\$ in thousands)

**Busway Capital Improvement Program Bus Rapid Transit****AT A GLANCE****2026 Request Amount:** \$75,000**Priority Ranking:** 1**Project Summary:** \$75 million in general obligation bonds is requested for development of busway capital improvement projects. Requested funding would advance arterial bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor development including, but not limited to, environmental analysis, engineering, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction.**Project Description**

Busway corridor projects like arterial BRT improve the speed and reliability of bus service along the Twin Cities' busiest transit corridors. Project investments result in high-quality stations that enable faster and more reliable limited-stop transit service to major destinations. Busway corridors typically have stations every half-mile at major intersections. Constructing and integrating these stations into the existing roadway system is the focus of the proposed investment.

Requested funding would advance the development of the H Line (Como/Maryland, from Saint Paul to Minneapolis via the University of Minnesota) corridor.

The preliminary project budget is \$120-150 million, of which \$60 million has been secured to date through other sources. If capital investment is proposed through a state bonding recommendation, corridor fleet improvements would be separately funded through other sources, including federal and regional funds.

Partial funding is currently available for the H Line from previous state capital investment. \$16.7 million of state bonds appropriated in 2023 is currently advancing the planning and preliminary design stages of the project. Additional resources are needed to construct the H Line. Requested funds would leverage at least \$25 million in identified federal funding allocated to the H Line corridor by the Transportation Advisory Board through the Regional Solicitation. Funding through this request could also leverage discretionary award through the federal Capital Investment Grant program, potentially leveraging up to \$60-80 million of additional federal funds to this project.

Metro Transit is also currently undertaking a planning process and seeking community feedback to identify additional arterial BRT lines such as the J, K, and L lines to be implemented between 2030 and 2035. These projects may also be funded by a portion of the requested funding, if Metro Transit is successful in securing competitive federal funding for a portion of the H Line project.

**Project Rationale**

Busway projects have increased the attractiveness and usage of the transit system in multiple corridors since 2016 with the launch of the A Line. Investments in BRT in strong, existing transit markets have proven successful in increasing ridership. More than 8 million rides were taken on BRT

lines in 2024, a 14% increase from 2023 compared to a systemwide increase of 6%.

By concentrating improvements in the region's most heavily traveled bus corridors, BRT maximizes ongoing operating investment in transit service by reducing delay from passenger boarding, traffic signals, and merging in and out of traffic. Reduced stop times also smooths traffic flow and enables construction of robust transit stations without need for significant property acquisition or private property displacement or relocations.

### **Project Timeline**

2024-2026: H Line planning and preliminary design

2026-2027: H Line engineering

2028-2029: H Line planned construction (pending full funding)

2029: Planned start of H Line service (pending full funding)

### **Other Considerations**

Busway projects are an integral part of the growing METRO network of rail and bus lines. By 2030, a planned 165-mile bus rapid transit network of 12 lines will offer fast, frequent, all-day service to many communities in the Twin Cities region. By 2030, BRT is estimated to: serve 580,000 people and 600,000 jobs with all-day, all-purpose trips. It is estimated that 44% of people served by this network identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC), and 13% of households to be served by BRT don't currently have access to a vehicle.

This network will also help households reduce their environmental footprint. Typical households near BRT emit fewer greenhouse gases than the rest of the region and are well below the national average, according to EcoDataLab data.

Affordable and high-quality public transportation reduces reliance on private automobile ownership and resulting savings can be applied to housing, education, or other personal and family expenses that benefit the state and local economy.

### **Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

The Council has established a policy requiring anticipated operating funds to be identified before capital projects proceed. Most 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**

State funding has enabled program advancement since 2014.

- In 2014 the state capital investment bill allocated \$15 million in general obligation bonds for transitway development, \$9 million of which was used on the A Line corridor. An additional \$1 million state cash appropriation in 2014 completed A Line project funding.
- In 2020, the state capital investment bill (October 2020) allocated \$55 million in general obligation bonds to complete funding of the D Line and B Line corridors, and advance pre-construction of the E Line corridor.
- In 2021, a state general fund appropriation allocated \$57.5 million to the arterial bus rapid transit

program. The Council is using these funds to complete funding of the E Line corridor and to advance the development of the F Line corridor.

- In 2023, the state capital investment bill allocated \$72 million in general obligation bonds to the arterial bus transit program. The Council is using these funds to complete funding of the F and G lines, and advance preliminary activities on the H Line.

**Project Contact Person**

Katie Thompson

Director, Arterial BRT

612-349-7772

katie.roth@metc.state.mn.us

## Regional Parks and Trails Program

**AT A GLANCE****2026 Request Amount:** \$15,000**Priority Ranking:** 2**Project Summary:** The Metropolitan Council requests \$15 million in general obligation bonds to match \$10 million of Metropolitan Council Regional Bonds to improve and expand the Metropolitan Regional Parks System.**Project Description**

The Metropolitan Regional Parks 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. The regional parks system draws more than 69 million visits every year — more than the Mall of America. 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.

**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 over 400 miles of interconnected trails. The program funds regional parks that provide recreational services similar to those provided in state parks that are located largely outside of the 7-county region.

This request invests critical funding directly into the regional park systems to both protect past public investments by extending the useful life of park and trail infrastructure and to expand the system. The Regional Parks System provides close-to-home opportunities for children and families in the 7-county metro area, fostering wellness and building strong communities. It also offers the opportunity for carbon free transportation and recreation, and preserves natural systems that serve as carbon sinks to greenhouse gases, to help manage stormwater, as well as serving to cool the region during extreme heat events. Lastly and importantly, it fosters health and wellness among residents, which has a mutually beneficial overlap with support for natural resource system health.

**Project Timeline**

The Council would award grants in the second half of 2026 and the agencies would complete funded projects in 2026 through 2028.

**Other Considerations**

N/A

**Impact on Agency Operating Budgets**

There is no direct impact on our operating budgets since the Met Council does not operate Metropolitan Regional Parks System units.

**Description of Previous Appropriations**

The state appropriated \$16.62 million of bonds to the Metropolitan Council for the Metropolitan Regional Parks Capital Budget in the 2023 bonding bill. This program also received \$5 million of bonds in the 2020 capital budget and \$10 million of bonds in the 2019 capital budget.

**Project Contact Person**

Heather Giesel  
Director of Finance and Administration, Community Development  
651-602-1715  
heather.giesel@metc.state.mn.us

## Inflow and Infiltration Grant Program

**AT A GLANCE****2026 Request Amount:** \$9,500**Priority Ranking:** 3**Project Summary:** The Metropolitan Council requests \$9.5 million in general obligation 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 general obligation 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, 2023, 2024, and 2025. The requested amount for 2026 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 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.

**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**

Grants will be made under a grants application process once funding is secured, with local units of

government performing work funded with the grants. Work typically extends into two construction seasons (2-years).

### **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**

#### **Description of Previous Appropriations**

This is a recurring request. The 2025 the Governor recommended \$4.6 million in GO bonds and the Legislature appropriated \$15 million in GO bonds for this program. As part of the 2023 bonding bill, the Council was appropriated \$12 million. This program also received \$5 million in the 2020 capital budget and \$5 million in the 2018 capital budget.

### **Project Contact Person**

Matt Gsellmeier  
Budget Manager, Environmental Services  
651-602-1802  
mathew.gsellmeier@metc.state.mn.us