

Revisiting Project Selection Policy Issues

Transportation Policy Board
November 14, 2024



Puget Sound Regional Council



We are leaders in the region to realize equity for all. Diversity, racial equity and inclusion are integrated into how we carry out all our work.

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Board-Directed Policy Topics

Two policy topics were deferred by the board in the January adoption of the *Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds*

1. Potential application of a scoring threshold for funding eligibility
2. Potentially restricting the eligibility of projects adding general purpose roadway capacity on limited access facilities into the competitions

Staff was directed to compile/evaluate data to support more detailed discussion later this year



Coordination with RPEC

RPEC reviewed these topics July – October 2024

July	Begin discussion, preliminary review of data at July meeting
August	Complete survey of additional data desired
September	Review and discuss more detailed data at September meeting
October	RPEC and countywide reps complete survey with feedback on specific policy questions
	Final review data and feedback to date, unanimous recommendations made at October meeting



Potential Scoring Thresholds – Background

- Challenges identified:
 - Variation in scoring between forums – regional and four countywide competitions
 - Variation in criteria questions over time
 - Kitsap high/medium/low scoring approach needed to be translated to be included in assessment
 - Concerns about unintended consequences and/or disproportionate impacts without more data to consider
→ additional analysis desired



Scoring Threshold Discussion

To address challenges...

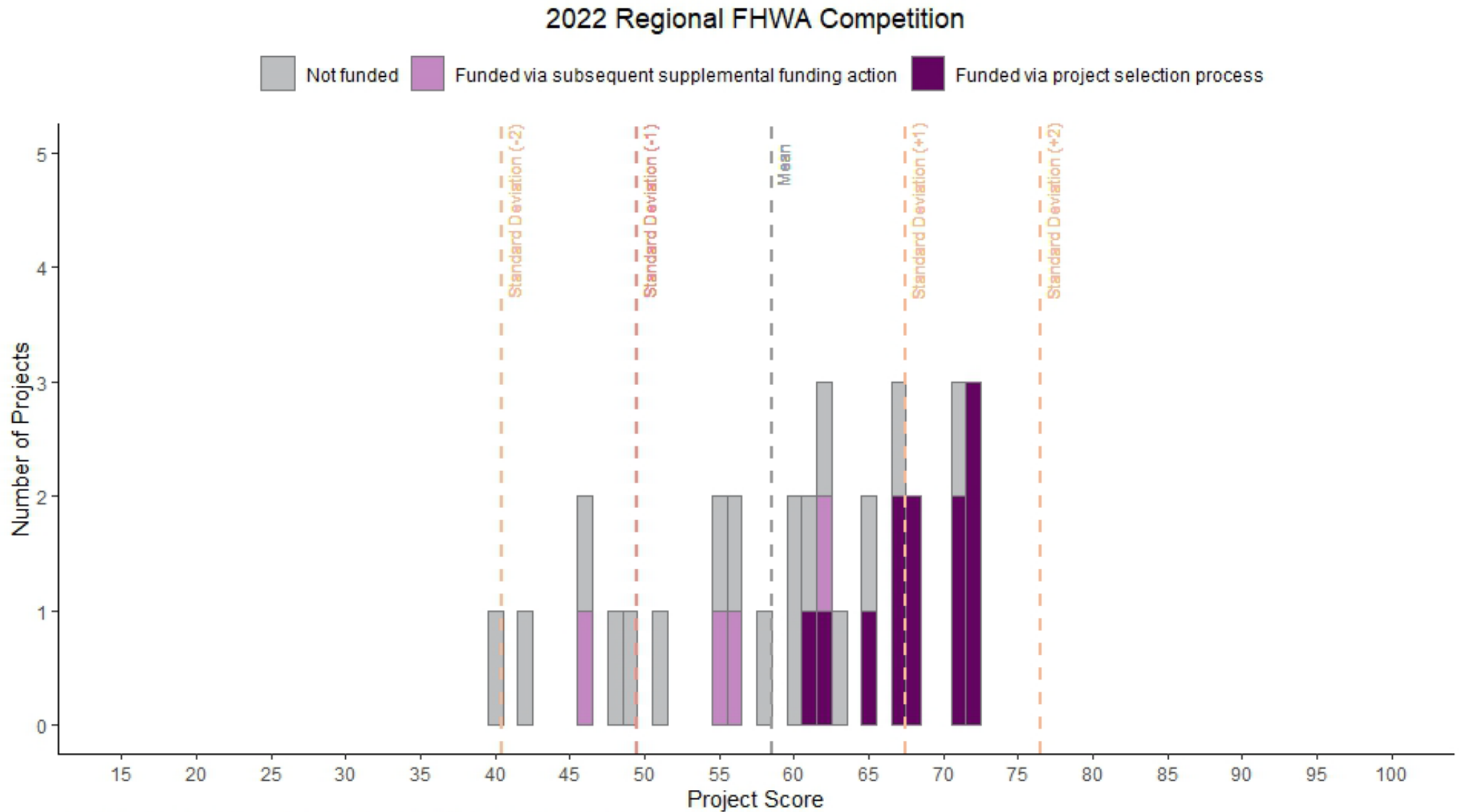
- Data was compiled by forum, year of competition
- Staff coordinated with Kitsap TransTAC to translate the high/medium/low approach into a numerical score
- For each forum/year, determined mean and standard deviation (measure of spread)
 - Accounts for scoring variation between forums and competitions

Provided detail about funded projects with lower scores



EXAMPLE

Summary provided in agenda packet for each of 5 forums and 3 funding biennia (2018, 2020, 2022)

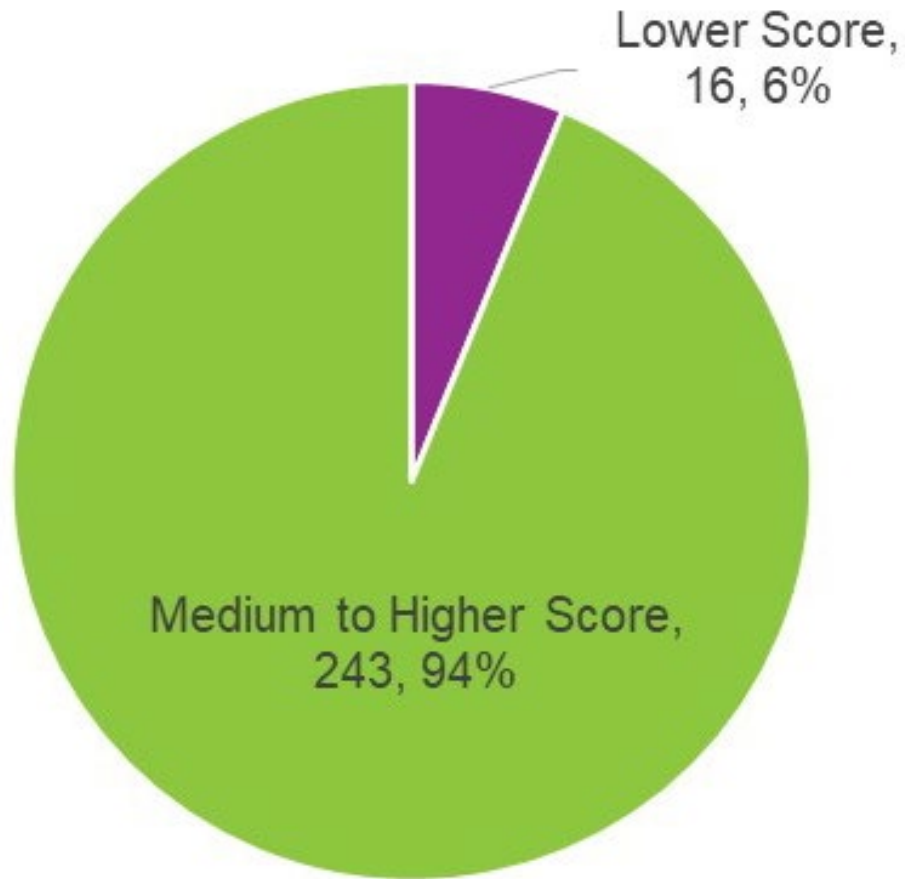


Funded project(s) below one or more standard deviations from mean:
(46) Supplemental Funding - Arlington 180th Street Connector (PE)

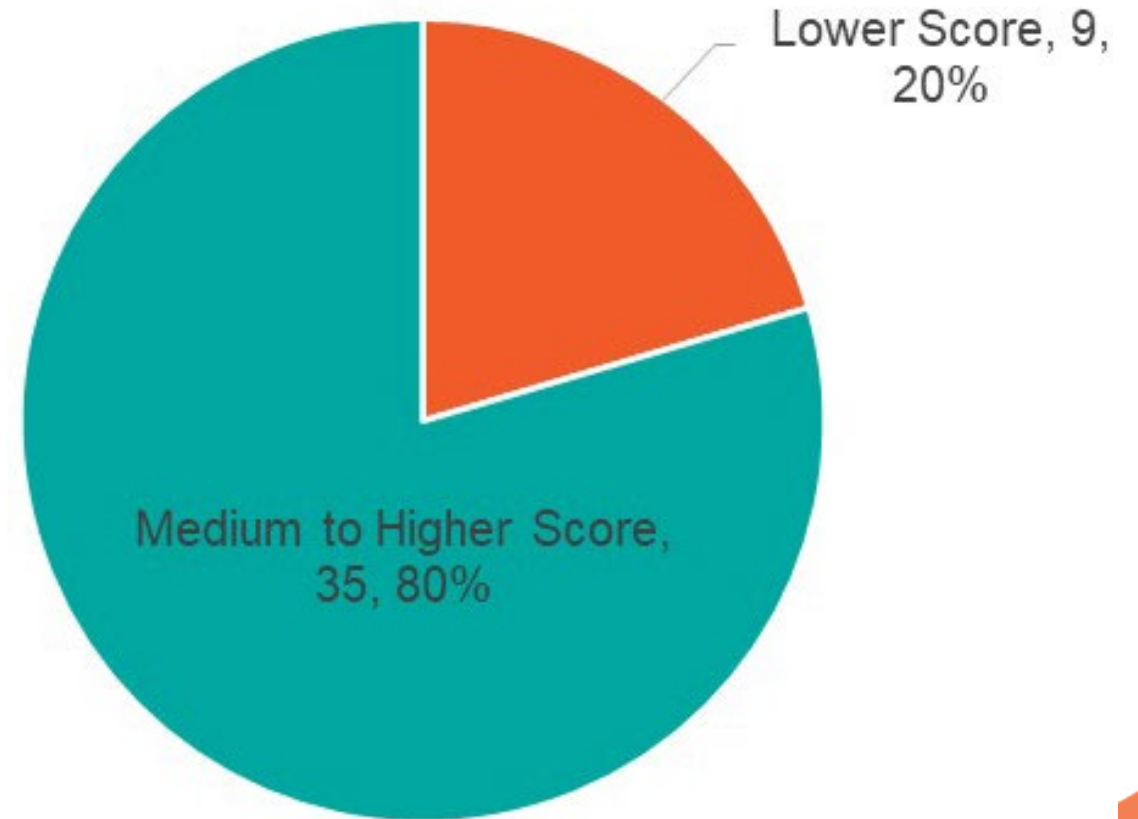


Proportion of Funded Projects with Lower Scores (2018-2023)

Of 259 projects awarded in Project Selection...

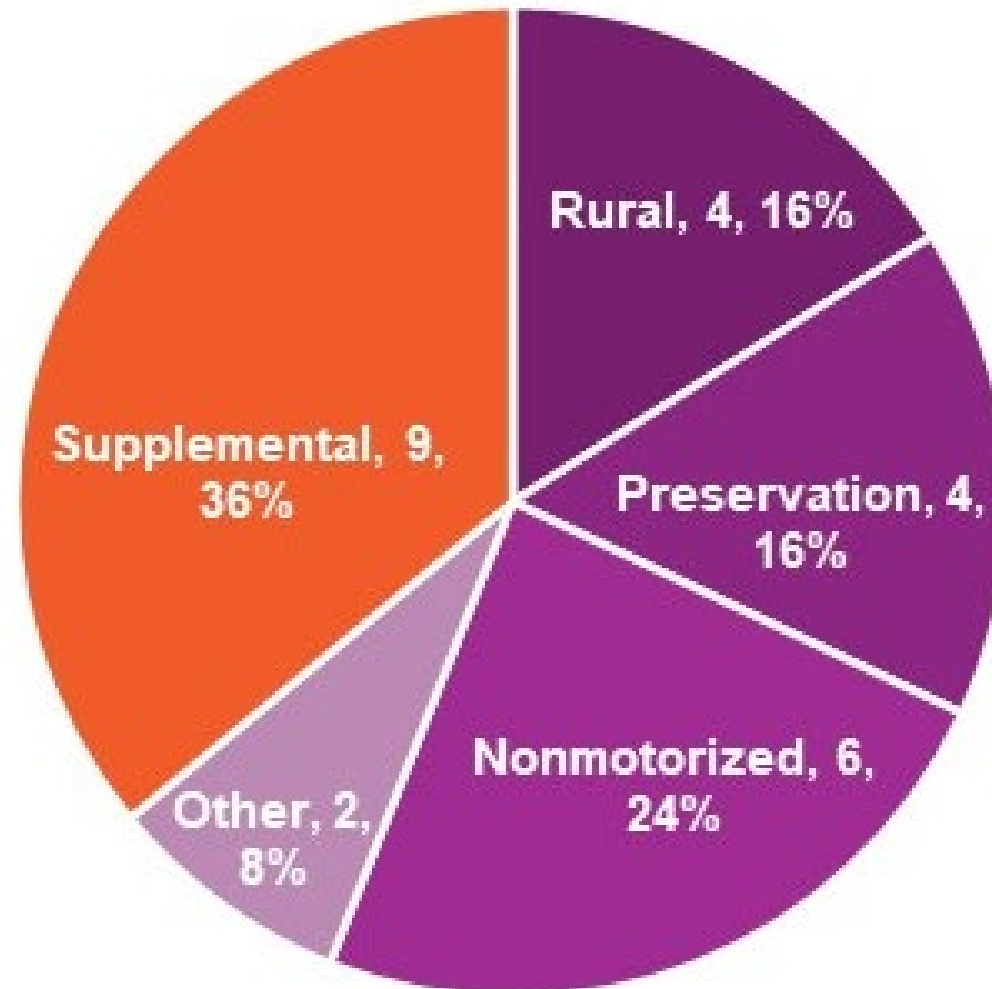


Of 44 projects awarded supplemental funding (immediately ready to go)...



Funding Program of Projects with Lower Scores

Of the 25 lower scoring projects that received funding, 2018 through 2023...



*Note, both "Other" projects were funded in King Countywide's "Small Cities" program



RPEC Feedback on Scoring / Threshold Data

RPEC's review and conclusions:

- Existing policies, criteria and recommendation processes are working and relatively few low scoring projects are being funded
- Awards to lower scoring projects in project selection processes have primarily been under the set-aside categories
- The application of a scoring threshold may add complications out of proportion to the potential benefit, for example, undermining efforts to meet the set-asides



RPEC Feedback on Scoring / Threshold Data

- For Supplemental Funding Processes:
 - January revisions to the Project Tracking policies reordered the steps by which supplemental funding is distributed to meet the annual delivery target.
 - Now, before seeking immediately-ready-to-go-projects, funding is distributed to increase the federal share of previously awarded projects.
 - These revisions are expected to mitigate potential awards to lower scoring projects during future supplemental funding processes



RPEC Recommendation on Scoring Threshold

Based on review and discussion of these data and findings, RPEC unanimously recommended no change to the current policy related to funding eligibility based on score.



General Purpose (GP) Lane Capacity – Background

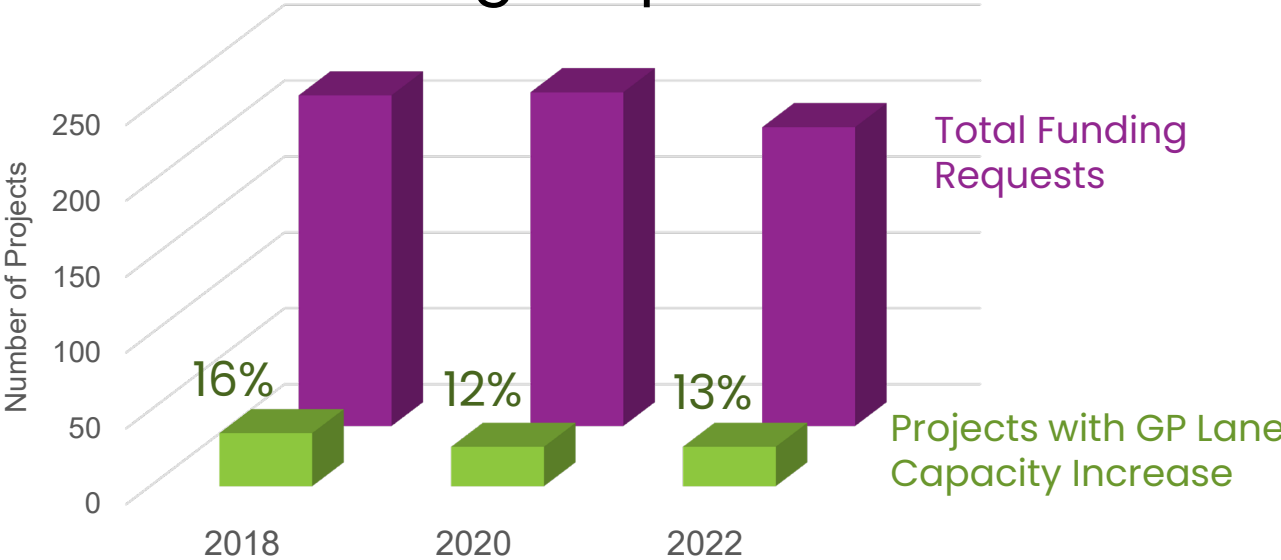
Comments / Challenges Identified:

- There was acknowledgement that funded projects adding lane capacity, in general, are also accomplishing other things and are aligned with the full suite of PSRC criteria
- There was interest expressed in setting policy to identify projects that most strongly support climate goals
- There was concern over definitions and setting clear parameters for eligibility
- Considered a limited proposal to restrict inclusion of general capacity additions to limited access highways into the competition



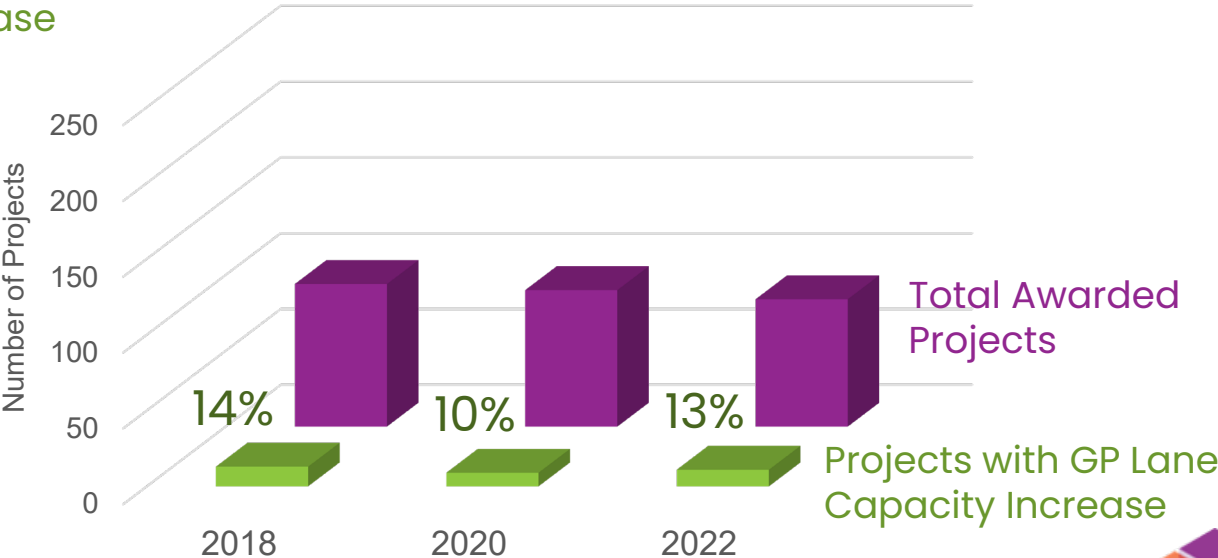
Projects with GP Lane Capacity Component, 2018-2022

Funding Requests...

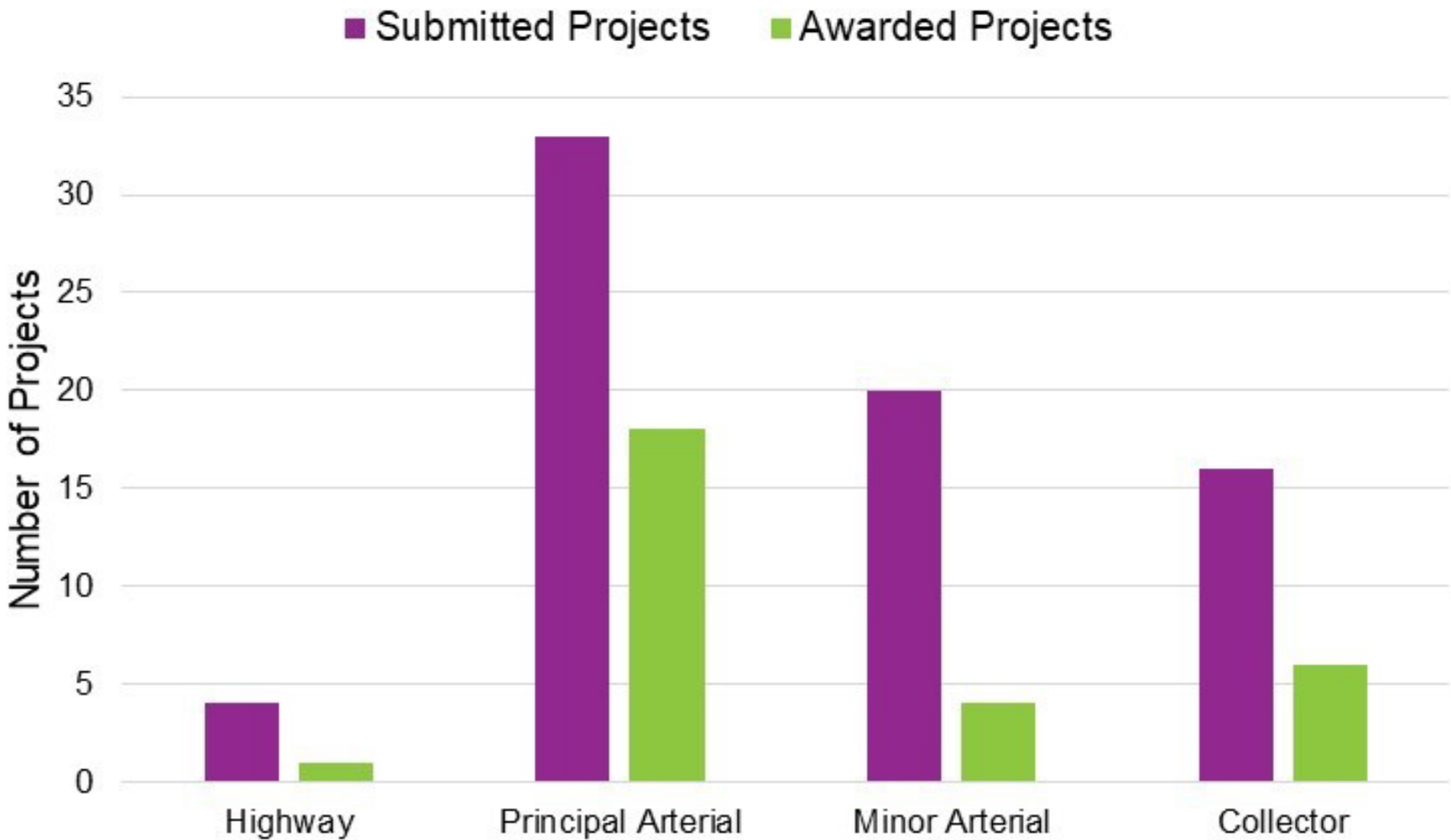


Overall, 31 projects of 268 funded during this period (12%) included a GP lane capacity element

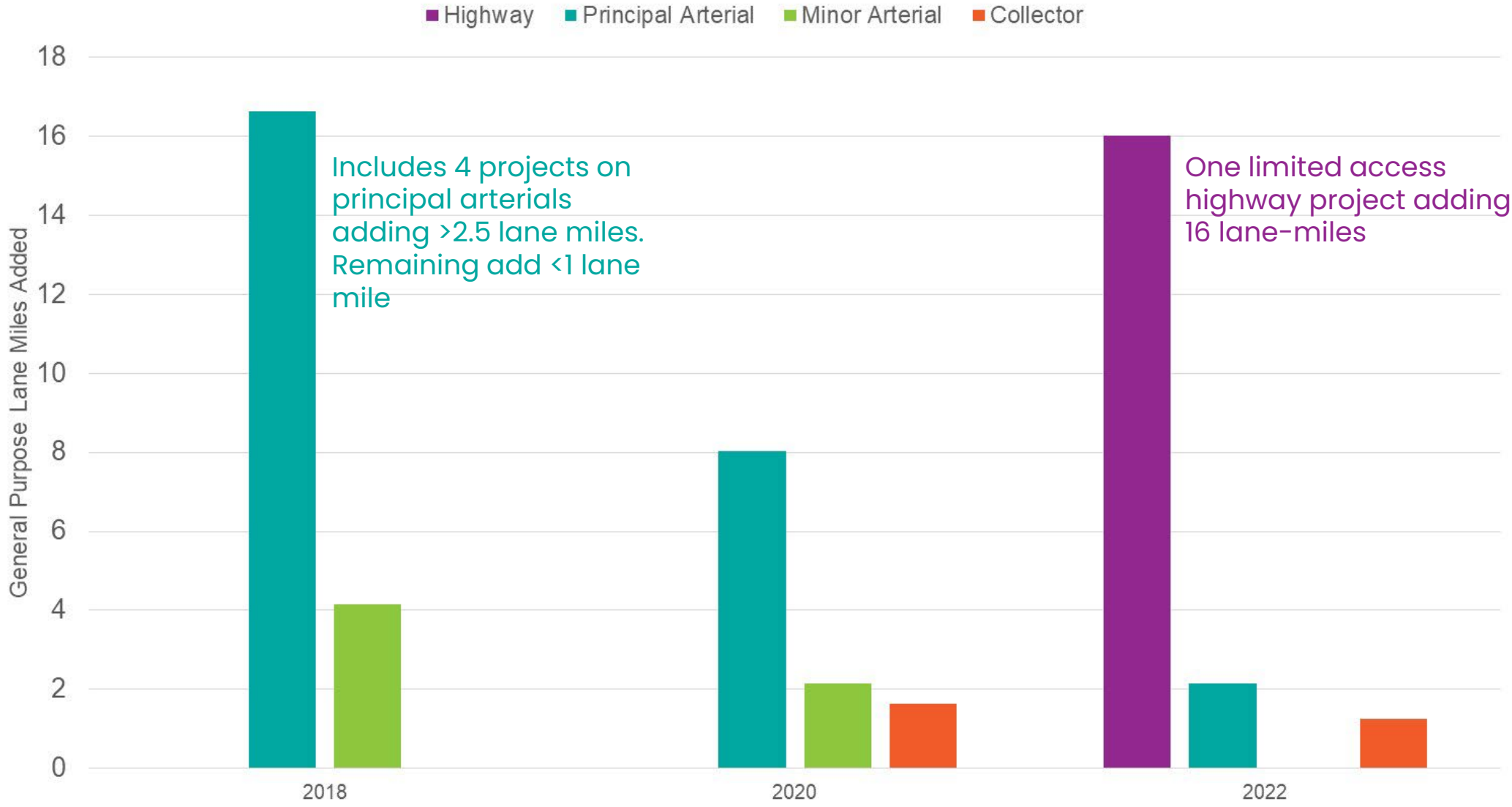
Awarded Projects...



Functional Classification of Projects with GP Lane Element



General Purpose Lane-Miles Added

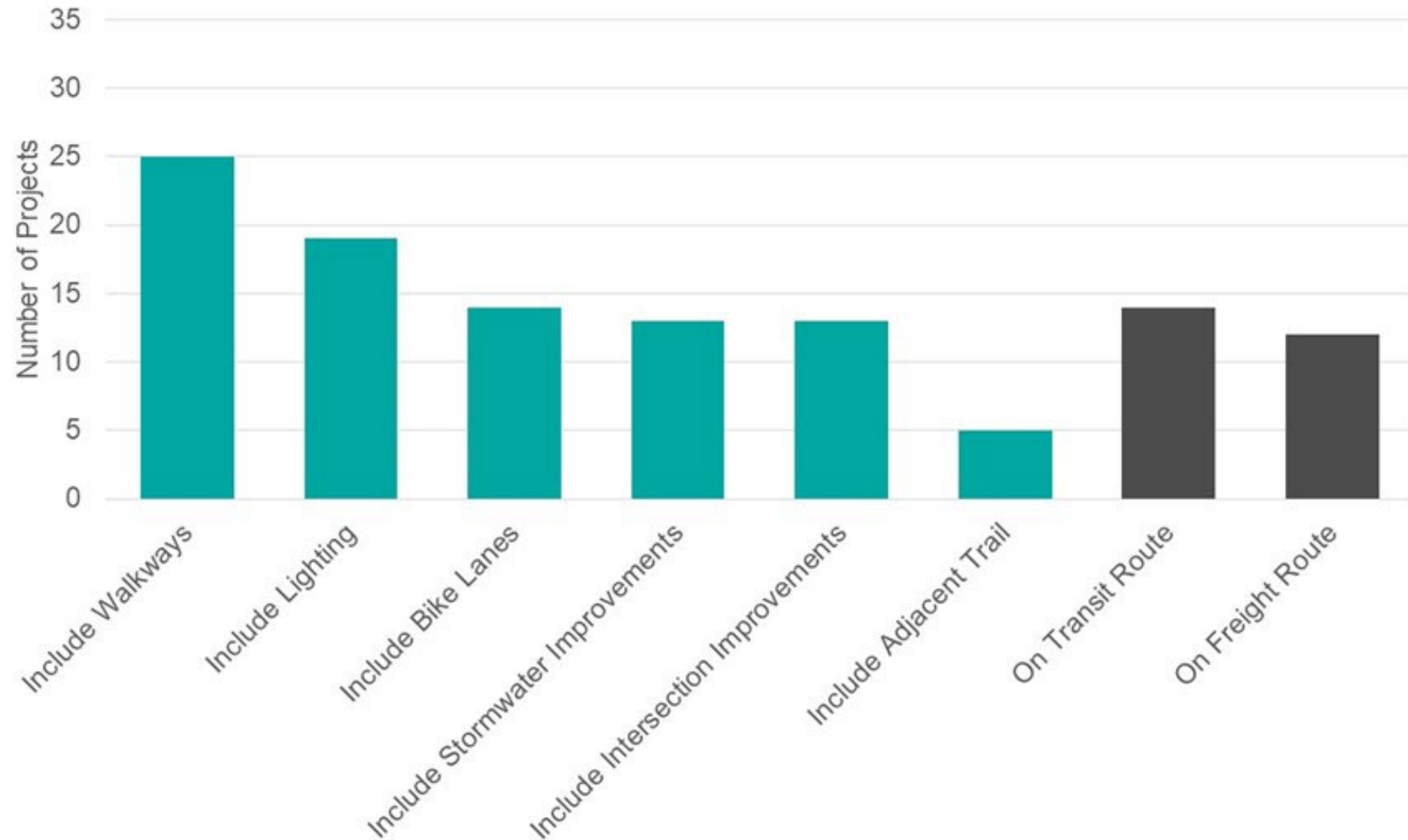


About 52 lane miles added through funded projects, 2018-2022

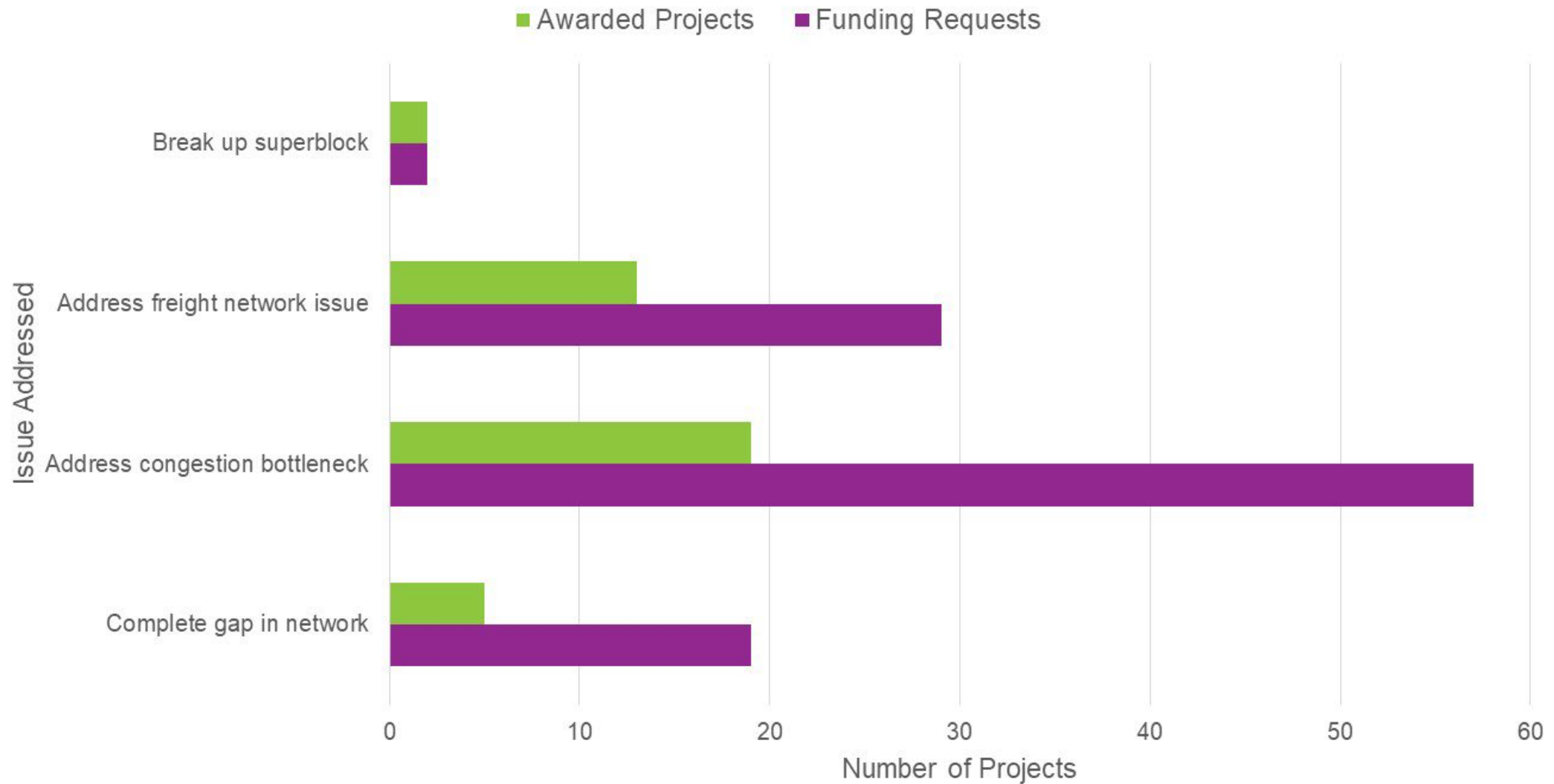


Other Scope Elements of Funded Projects

Of 31 funded projects with GP lane capacity element, scope also includes...



Issues Addressed by GP Lane Component



RPEC Feedback on Projects with GP Lane Capacity

RPEC's review and conclusions:

- Existing policies, criteria and recommendation processes are working and a modest number of projects adding GP roadway capacity are being funded
- Projects that have been funded have received competitive scores due to the provision of multiple outcomes consistent with the adopted criteria
- The transportation system is complex and interconnected, and broadly limiting this one type of improvement could impede projects that would benefit multiple modes



RPEC Recommendation on Projects Including GP Capacity

Based on review and discussion of these data and findings, RPEC unanimously recommended no change to current policy and to not prohibit projects adding GP capacity into the competition.

- *Further, PSRC will continue to review the process and criteria prior to each project selection process, and will add clarity where warranted to identify the benefits, purpose and scope elements of all projects.*



Board Discussion

Per board direction, the additional data and RPEC review of these two policy items is brought back to the TPB for further review and discussion.

- Next steps will be determined by the board, for a possible future action to be defined

