



Community-Based Transportation, Innovative Mobility and Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set- Asides: Joint Call for Letters of Interest Overview

Fall 2025

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Table of Contents

Community-Based Transportation, Innovative Mobility and Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Asides: Joint Call for Letters of Interest	1
Call for Letters of Interest overview	3
About the three programs: quick comparison	3
Call for Letters of Interest timeline	4
Expectations for project sponsors.....	4
What types of projects are eligible?.....	4
Selection process:.....	5
Key details by set-aside program	6
Community-Based Transportation Planning.....	6
Innovative Mobility.....	8
Livable Centers Small-Area Planning.....	9



Call for Letters of Interest overview

In fall 2025 the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) will be conducting a joint call for letters of interest for three technical assistance set-aside programs in the Fiscal Years 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

- Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside
- Innovative Mobility Set-Aside
- Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside

All three set-aside programs are intended to support planning in the DRCOG [metropolitan planning area](#) and are structured similarly: DRCOG will solicit project proposals through a combined call for letters of interest, select those that best align with the Board-approved goals of each program, and then manage the selected projects in close partnership with the submitting organization and other key stakeholders. There is no local match required for these projects.

Full details about each program, including scoring criteria, are included in the [Policies for Fiscal Years 2024-2027 TIP Set-Aside Programs document](#).

About the three programs: quick comparison

Set-aside program	Community-Based Transportation	Innovative Mobility	Livable Centers Small-Area Planning
Primary focus	Identify the mobility needs of marginalized communities and develop transportation plans or studies to address those needs.	Develop innovative solutions for mobility challenges throughout the region, with a focus on innovative mobility preparedness, analysis, feasibility and planning projects.	Support planning efforts that integrate land use, housing, and multimodal transportation to enhance livability in centers and nodes across the region.
Funds available for this call	\$650,000 - \$1.3 million available, but anticipate allocating around \$700,000	Up to \$1,550,000	Up to \$835,000
Recommended minimum project size	\$100,000	\$250,000	\$100,000



Eligible project sponsors

Eligible sponsors for these set-asides include: municipal governments; regional agencies; state of Colorado offices, including universities; and nonprofits, including transportation management associations as outlined in [Policies for Fiscal Years 2024-2027 TIP Set-Aside Programs](#).

Call for Letters of Interest timeline

- **October 1 – November 15, 2025:** Call for Letters of Interest through the [online form](#).
- DRCOG staff are available for one-on-one conversations to answer questions or help project sponsors determine which program is the best fit for their project.
- **October 14, 2025:** informational webinar.
- **November 15, 2025, at 11:59 PM:** Letters of Interest due.
- **November – January 2026:** Follow up conversations with sponsors, if necessary
- **January 2026:** Evaluation panels recommend projects for selection.
- **January – March 2026:** DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and Board of Directors approve project selection.
- **Spring– Summer 2026:** Begin scoping projects and developing requests for proposals. Kick-offs may be staggered.

Expectations for project sponsors

DRCOG will fund the projects, manage contractor procurement and support the projects as project manager. DRCOG expects active participation from the project sponsor. The nominating entity will at minimum serve on a bi-monthly or monthly project management team, provide data and background information, support community engagement, and support future implementation.

All project sponsors will be required to submit a letter of support from a senior staff member who is able to commit staff time, outlining their commitment to the project and to participate fully in all elements of the project.

What types of projects are eligible?

All projects funded through these set-asides must be located in and/or provide benefits to the [metropolitan planning organization geographical area](#).

These set-asides are funded with federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines. These funds cannot be used for infrastructure, design, engineering or construction work.



Each set-aside may also have additional goals or criteria, which are outlined below.

Selection process:

Letter of interest: All letters of interest must be submitted through [the formstack form](#) by November 15 at 11:59 p.m. A list of questions included in the letter of interest form are on the [TIP Set-Aside webpage](#). Project sponsors will indicate which of the three set-aside programs they would like their project to be considered for. Project sponsors can indicate interest in more than one set-aside for each project, though additional questions will be required for each set-aside, so staff recommend only selecting one or two set-aside programs.

Final selection: An evaluation panel will be formed for each set-aside to review the letters of interest and recommend projects. These panel members will include DRCOG staff and other relevant stakeholders as appropriate. If a decision cannot be made after the letter of interest phase, DRCOG may invite project sponsors to submit a full application to provide additional information. Evaluation criteria for all three set-asides are in the [Policies for Fiscal Years 2024-2027 TIP Set-Aside Program](#).



Key details by set-aside program

Community-Based Transportation Planning

Funds available: \$650,000 - \$1.3 million available, but anticipate around \$700,000 will be allocated for 2026 (both fiscal year 2026 and 2027 funds may be allocated).

Program description: The Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside works to identify and address the transportation and mobility needs of marginalized communities in the region. These plans will center community voices through creative engagement strategies.

Program goals:

- Expand access to opportunities for residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities.
- Address the needs of [disproportionately impacted](#) and marginalized communities in the region.
- Support livable communities by recommending improvements for transportation infrastructure and services.
- Center voices of the community in transportation planning.
- Develop innovative engagement methods to center hard to reach audiences, including partnering with respected community-based organizations.

Eligible project sponsors:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies.
- Nonprofits, including community-based organizations or transportation management association. However, nonprofits must also include a letter of support from the impacted local government detailing their support for the project and willingness to participate in the plan or study. This letter should outline their willingness to attend monthly meetings, provide relevant data, support community engagement through their existing communication channels, and support or lead implementation of the recommendations.

Important note: A nonprofit organization that is a project sponsor and submits a letter of interest will not be eligible to bid to be a contractor or subcontractor on the project.



Defining marginalized communities

All plans or studies must focus on a marginalized community, as defined by the nominating jurisdiction or organization. This could include low-income households, people of color, people with disabilities, people without vehicles, transit riders, youth, people born outside the United States, older adults, people with limited English proficiency, households that are housing-cost burdened, single-parent households, or some mixture of these groups. Communities can be defined geographically (i.e., a neighborhood, urban center, corridor) or as a specific population within a broader area (i.e., non-English speakers or transit riders in a certain neighborhood).

Project sponsors can explain why the community that they are proposing to study is marginalized. They can also use the [DRCOG Data Tool](#) to analyze the project area's demographics.

Types of eligible projects

- Subarea transportation plans.
- Corridor plans.
- Multimodal, bicycle and/or pedestrian plans.
- Safety or vision zero plans.
- Transit or microtransit studies.
- First and last mile studies.
- School transportation plans.
- Conceptual design (planning level only).
- Other transportation or mobility related studies.



Innovative Mobility

Funds available: up to \$1,550,000 (fiscal year 2026 funds)

Program description: The Innovative Mobility Set-Aside is focused on planning for and developing innovative solutions for mobility challenges throughout the region, with a focus on innovative mobility preparedness, analysis, feasibility and planning. This set-aside will support the implementation of Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan priorities and tactical actions identified in Mobility Choice Blueprint.

Program goals:

- Prepare the region for advanced and emerging mobility.
- Invest in collaborative learning.
- Demonstrate new and innovative mobility solutions.
- Learn and transfer innovative solutions throughout the region.
- Increase mobility and accessibility by providing innovative transportation options for travelers of all ages, incomes and abilities.

Eligible project sponsors:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional and state agencies, including RTD, the Regional Air Quality Council, DRCOG, [transportation management organizations](#) and associations, other nonprofits in the region serving a transportation purpose, State of Colorado offices and agencies (including CDOT) and Colorado public colleges and universities.

Non-governmental organizations must provide documentation of support from applicable local governments and must emphasize the connection between their project proposal and responsible agencies involved in possible solutions.

Eligible project types

This program focuses on innovative solutions to mobility problems. Some example project topics may include, but are not limited to, preparedness, analysis, planning and feasibility related to topics such as, but not limited to:

- Mobility data collection, management, sharing and associated tool(s) or concept(s) of operation development.
- Emerging modes feasibility analyses, studies or plans.
- Curbside management data or tool development, analyses or plans.
- Shared mobility or mobility on demand analyses, studies, feasibility or plans.
- Connected and automated vehicles plans, studies or analyses.
- Mobility hub plans or analyses.
- Other new or innovative transportation technology-related projects.



Livable Centers Small-Area Planning

Funds Available: up to \$835,000 (fiscal year 2026 funds)

Program description: The Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside supports the development of plans and studies that integrate land use and housing strategies with multimodal transportation strategies in key centers across the region.

This program aims to enhance livability in a variety of centers and nodes, such as urban centers, station areas, town centers, employment hubs, historic districts, neighborhood centers and other key activity areas. "Livable centers" is a flexible term that refers to diverse types of central places within communities and does not imply a formal designation in Metro Vision.

Selected projects will support implementation of goals from Metro Vision.

Program goals:

- Increase housing and employment in connected urban centers.
- Support the investment in multimodal enhancements and transit access along corridors connecting centers.
- Promote investment or reinvestment in existing communities.
- Increase opportunities for diverse housing accessible by multimodal transportation.
- Improve access to and from the region's developed and emerging housing and employment centers.
- Improve multimodal access to employment, commerce, educational, cultural and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities.

Eligible project sponsors:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies, including RTD, DRCOG, [transportation management organizations](#) associations, and other nonprofits in the region serving a transportation purpose.
- State of Colorado offices and agencies (including CDOT) and Colorado public colleges and universities.

Non-governmental organizations should document support from applicable local governments, due to the connection between planning outcomes and implementation of projects by governmental partner agency(ies).



Eligible project locations:

Under the Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside, small-area planning must occur in a center or node on the region's multimodal transportation system (such as the [Regional Roadway System](#), [Regional Rapid Transit System](#) or regional active transportation network), including but not limited to:

- Centers of regional importance, such as urban centers from Metro Vision.
- Areas that could be eligible to become urban centers.
- Rapid transit station areas.
- Other employment, activity and housing centers which require significant multimodal connections.

Eligible Project Types

The Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside is funded with federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines.

Sponsors are encouraged to consider the program goals in developing planning and analysis proposals. Planning projects and analyses that consider a single site will not be considered small-area plans. Similarly, plans that intend to cover an entire jurisdiction's boundaries may not be suitable for small-area planning.

Livable center small-area plans are intended to enhance and increase livability in connected multimodal centers and therefore may take a wide variety of formats. Eligible plan types may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following plan types:

- Active transportation plans.
- First and final mile access studies and plans.
- Transit-oriented development plans.
- Redevelopment plans.
- Zoning and design standards.
- Market analysis or development feasibility analysis.
- Parking studies.
- Infrastructure improvement prioritization.
- Implementation planning.
- Placemaking.
- Access to opportunity analysis.
- Housing type diversity analysis.
- Housing needs assessment.
- Cost-benefit analysis.
- Center or node connector multimodal corridor plans.