# Policies for 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside Programs

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address | 1001 17th St., Suite 700 Denver, CO 80202
main | 303-455-1000
fax | 303-480-6790
email | drcog@drcog.org
web | drcog.org

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# Introduction

The Denver Regional Council of Governments, or DRCOG, includes within its Transportation Improvement Program, or TIP, several TIP set-aside programs. These set-asides represent funding priorities for which the DRCOG Board has determined funding should be allocated off-the-top from the total funding available for TIP calls for projects and set aside for particular initiatives and programs.

As they are funded through the TIP, set-aside programs ultimately have the same purpose as all other TIP projects, to implement the regional vision and objectives identified in Metro Vision and the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan, known as the RTP. A simple graphic representation of this relationship is shown in Figure 1. The RTP makes the transportation element of Metro Vision more concrete and identifies specific projects and programs expected to be implemented in the long-term as well as general priorities to target regional investments to move that vision forward. Similarly, the TIP identifies short-term funding to implement projects drawn from the RTP's project and program investment priorities. The set-aside programs, as elements of the TIP, help to identify projects within specifically focused priority areas that help to make progress toward that wider vision. Each set-aside program develops its own eligibility guidelines, scoring criteria and evaluation process, however they all function within this broader planning framework and shared regional vision.

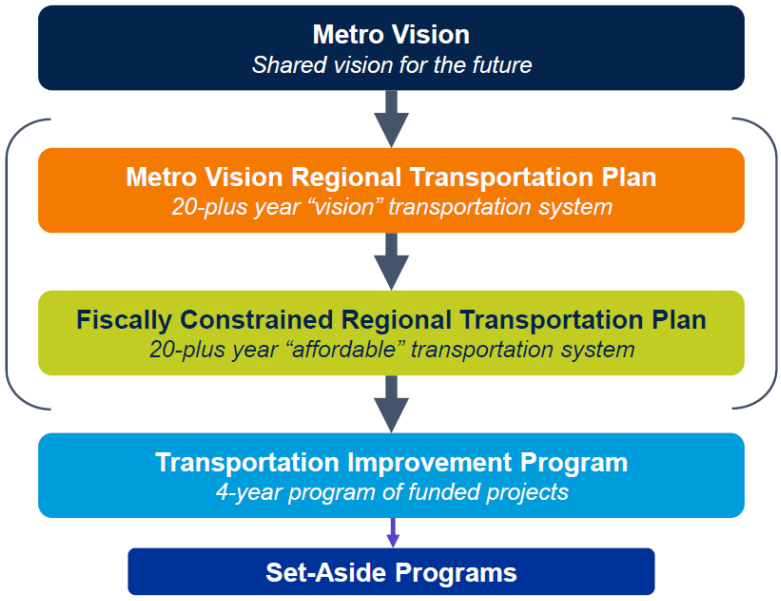


**Figure 1. Set-aside programs within DRCOG's planning framework**

The specific set-aside programs in any given TIP are defined in the Policies for Transportation Improvement Program Development, also known as the TIP Policy. For the Fiscal Year 2024-2027 TIP, the TIP Policy identifies five set-asides:

- Transportation Demand Management Services.
- Regional Transportation Operations and Technology.
- Air Quality Improvements.
- Human Service Transportation.
- Community Mobility Planning and Innovation.

The Community Mobility Planning and Innovation set-aside in the TIP Policy is referred to in this document as the Corridor, Community, Livability and Innovation Planning set-aside, to call attention to its four constituent programs:

- Transportation Corridor Planning.
- Community-Based Transportation Planning.
- Livable Centers Small-Area Planning.
- Innovative Mobility.

Two of these, Community-Based Transportation Planning and Livable Centers Small-Area Planning, do not explicitly appear in the TIP Policy but are rather two tracks within the Community Mobility Planning set-aside. A graphic depiction of these programs is shown in Figure 2.

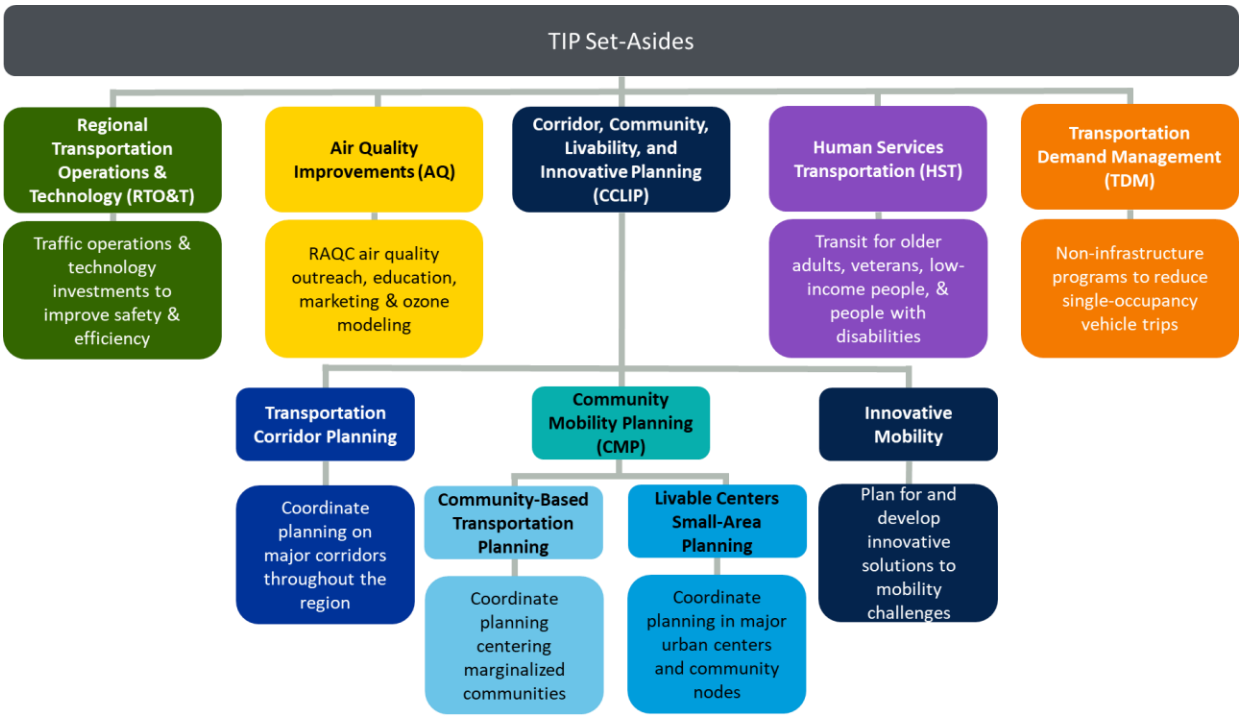


**Figure 2. Fiscal Year 2024-2028 TIP set-aside programs**

This document serves as an addendum to the TIP Policy for the purpose of defining the call for projects or proposal solicitation element of each of these set-aside programs and compiling all the relevant legal, regulatory and policy requirements applicable to each. This document does not supersede the TIP Policy but rather acts to clarify the elements

of the TIP Policy that apply to the set-aside programs and provide all relevant information in a single location. Per Board action in November 2025, each 2024-2027 set-aside is extended by one year to account for the addition of fiscal year 2028 funds.

A call for projects is the process by which local agencies apply for funding through DRCOG for a locally sponsored and administered project. A proposal solicitation is the process of gathering project ideas from regional stakeholders that will inform projects managed in-house by DRCOG. Most Corridor, Community, Livability and Innovation Planning set-aside programs are envisioned as operating under the proposal solicitation model, though some may hold calls for projects as well. The Air Quality Improvements set-aside does not directly involve a DRCOG-managed call for projects or proposal solicitation but rather provides funding to the Regional Air Quality Council for specified purposes. The Regional Air Quality Council may in turn hold calls for projects to distribute this funding further, if it fits within the purposes described in the TIP Policy. Some set-aside programs fund other programmatic elements apart from calls for projects and proposal solicitations, however these elements are not discussed here. It is hoped that this document can serve as a resource for potential applicants to better understand all of DRCOG's set-aside programs and requirements, awarded sponsors to fully grasp their responsibilities post-award and set-aside managers to further collaborate on potential innovations, scheduling and program synergies.

## Policy revisions

This policy is subject to revision, either by an administrative modification by staff or through a formal amendment adopted by the DRCOG Board of Directors. Updated copies of this document accounting for any revisions will be posted publicly to the DRCOG website. Changes which impact the roles of the Colorado Department of Transportation, known as CDOT, or the Regional Transportation District, known as RTD, will be relayed to them. No revisions which would violate the terms of the current TIP Policy will be permitted.

### *Amendments*

Amendments are significant changes to the set-aside policy which require approval by the DRCOG Board of Directors. They will be processed as needed, given set-aside schedule constraints. Once identified, amendments will be taken through the DRCOG committee structure for formal action. Revisions to this document which require an amendment include:

- A significant change to the scoring criteria of a set-aside, including adding or removing a criterion or adjusting the weighting.
- A significant change to the eligibility guidelines to a set-aside.
- An increase or decrease to the overall amount of funding available to a set-aside of more than 10%.
- Other changes deemed significant by the DRCOG Transportation Planning and Operations Director and/or Executive Director.

*Administrative Modifications*

Administrative modifications include all revisions other than those listed under Amendments and will be processed as needed by DRCOG staff. Administrative modifications do not require committee review or approval. However, administrative modifications are presented to the Board as informational items.

## Anticipated set-aside schedule

Here is the anticipated schedule for each call for projects or proposal solicitation. This is meant to assist interested sponsor agencies in planning for participation in the set-aside programs. Note that more detailed schedules will be distributed by DRCOG's various communication channels prior to the opening of a set-aside's call or solicitation. Please contact DRCOG staff to ensure you are on the contact lists or review the set-aside webpage on drcog.org on a regular basis for announcements of a set-aside opening.

*Transportation Demand Management Services*

- $2,500,000 across 2024-2028.
- 2024-2025 call anticipated in first half of 2023 with project approval in second half of 2023.
- 2026-2027 call anticipated in first half of 2025 with project approval in second half of 2025.
- 2028 call anticipated either in first half of 2027 or combined with 2029 funding.

*Regional Transportation Operations and Technology*

- $20,000,000 across 2024-2028.
- 2024-2026 call anticipated in first half of 2023 with project approval in second half of 2023.
- 2027-2028 call anticipated in first half of 2026 with project approval in second half of 2026.

*Air Quality Improvements*

- $9,900,000 across 2024-2028.
- Funding provided to the Regional Air Quality Council. Funding allocation and calls for projects to be determined by the Regional Air Quality Council.

*Human Service Transportation*

- $10,000,000 across 2024-2028.
- Annual call for projects anticipated in the winter.

*Transportation Corridor Planning*

- 2024-2025 solicitation anticipated in second half of 2023 with project approval in first half of 2024.
- 2026-2027 solicitation anticipated in first half of 2025 with project approval in second half of 2025.
- 2028 solicitation anticipated in first half of 2027 or combined with 2029 funding.

*Innovative Mobility*

- Annual call for projects anticipated in the fall.

*Community-Based Transportation Planning*

- Annual call for projects anticipated in the fall.

*Livable Centers Small-Area Planning*

- Annual call for projects anticipated in the fall.

# Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside

The TIP Policy establishes the Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside with three component program areas: DRCOG's Way to Go program, partnerships with the eight regional transportation management organizations/associations and the non-infrastructure call for projects. The information in this policy is specific to the non-infrastructure call for projects.

## Program purpose

The Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside was developed to support marketing, outreach and research projects that reduce single occupant vehicle travel and ultimately reduce traffic congestion and improve regional air quality. The set-aside is also intended to support Way to Go's programmatic goals as outlined in its annual work plans.

## Program goals

- Reduce single occupant vehicle travel.
- Reduce traffic congestion.
- Improve regional air quality.
- Pilot new approaches to transportation demand management.
- Improve awareness of and access to mobility options for people of all ages, incomes and abilities.
- Aligns with Way to Go's annual priorities, whether mode- or topic-specific.

## Eligible applicants

Per federal regulations and the DRCOG TIP Policy, project sponsor agencies must be eligible to receive federal transportation funds. These include:

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

Additional eligibility information for the Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside includes:

- Non-governmental sponsors must provide documentation of support from applicable local government(s) where the project is located.
- Private, for-profit companies (such as contractors, suppliers or consultants) are not eligible.

- Project sponsors must also be in good standing with the State of Colorado via the Secretary of State's business database.

## Eligible project locations

All projects submitted through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area.

## Eligible project types

The non-infrastructure call for projects within the Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside is funded with federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines. These are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 2 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy.

Additionally, applications must be for new projects or activities which implement transportation demand management strategies that reduce single occupant vehicle travel and ultimately contribute to reducing traffic congestion and improving regional air quality. Applicants must demonstrate how their project/program will have a direct impact on reducing single occupant vehicle travel, improving air quality and reducing traffic congestion. Eligible project types may include, but are not limited to:

- Public education, marketing and outreach promoting or expanding use of non-single occupant vehicle mobility.
- Innovative projects that pilot and demonstrate effectiveness of the approach.
- Market research that helps identify opportunities to promote non-single occupant vehicle mobility.

## Funding requirements

Applicants may request funding for up to two years for the federal fiscal years listed in the application. Although there is no funding request minimum or maximum, no single entity will be awarded more than 50% of the available funds in the call. Project sponsors should clearly describe how the funding request is supported by the work proposed for the project.

## Matching funds

The Surface Transportation Block Grant program requires a minimum of 17.21% of total project costs be made up of non-federal match funds. As such, this is the minimum match required for all Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside applications. Note that required match rates through different funding programs, including other DRCOG calls for projects, may differ. All match funds must be from non-federal sources of funding, and applicants should contact DRCOG staff with any questions on whether a particular funding source is eligible to be used as match. CDOT is the steward of these funds and does not track overmatch. If a sponsor wants to

commit more funding to the project on their own, they may do so, but if funding is awarded, additional funds will generally not be shown in the contract. Matching funds should be available or reasonably expected to be available prior to submittal of an application for funding. Should the required matching funds become unavailable, it is the sponsor agency's responsibility to identify alternative eligible funding to meet the match requirement. If a project is awarded funds but experiences cost increases beyond what was initially estimated, the cost difference must be made up with non-DRCOG funding. Sponsors may not apply or receive additional DRCOG funding for the same project scope following project award.

## Training

Sponsors are required to attend a training session given by DRCOG prior to applying for funds. This training will occur near the beginning of the call for projects, and all interested agencies must attend if they are considering applying. The training will cover the set-aside program goals, the application process and the requirements laid out in this policy to ensure applicants are aware of the program requirements and their responsibilities should they be awarded funds.

## Letter of interest

A two-step application process will be utilized wherein sponsors will first submit a letter of interest including the applicant's contact information, a brief description of their project and estimated funding request, due before the formal application period opens. Supplemental materials will be accepted if they contribute to the understanding of the project being proposed. The set-aside manager will make a letter of interest form available on the website prior to the call for letters of interest opening. Sponsors are strongly encouraged, but not required, to reach out to the set-aside manager prior to developing their letter of interest for informal discussions about their project concept.

Following submittal of the letter of interest, DRCOG staff will review the letter of interest and request additional information if needed. Sponsors will then meet with the set-aside manager to discuss their submitted letter(s) of interest, project details, eligibility, funding assumptions and potential issues, outcomes and partnerships prior to the application period opening. Based on the discussions, DRCOG staff will invite eligible applicants to submit an application. Sponsors may adjust their project information in their final application (or choose not to apply) based on the information gained in these conversations.

## Application

Along with the application form, sponsors should submit letters of support from impacted or participating entities. Per CDOT requirements, a Subrecipient Risk Assessment form must also be submitted with the application. No more than two applications per sponsor will be accepted. Data that will assist applicants in completing their application form will be linked from the individual set-aside webpage.

## Scoring process

Once the call for projects closes, DRCOG staff will review submitted applications for eligibility and initiate the scoring process. The scoring process can involve either DRCOG staff and/or an external panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. DRCOG requires that a minimum of four scorers conduct the evaluation, although at least six are preferred. To ensure consistency, each scorer must individually evaluate and score each application. Panel members may not score any applications from or closely associated with their own agency, to avoid potential bias. Following individual scoring, a debrief should be held with all scorers to discuss their scores. Scorers may adjust scores following this debrief, if necessary.

For the Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside call for projects, DRCOG will establish a project review panel to assist with scoring and evaluating projects. Participants may include staff from DRCOG divisions:

- Transportation Planning and Operations.
- Regional Planning and Development.
- Communications and Marketing (Way to Go).
- Area Agency on Aging.
- Executive Office.

The review panel may also include external stakeholders and subject matter experts who may represent:

- CDOT.
- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.
- Regional Air Quality Council.
- RTD.
- Transportation demand management professionals.

Each member of the panel will review the applications and assign points to the criteria based on information contained in the project application forms. The panel will convene to discuss the applications and reach consensus on the final criteria points and total score for each project as outlined in Section A in the Evaluation criteria table. In addition, DRCOG staff will score based on data-driven criteria listed in Section B in the table.

## Evaluation criteria

Each criterion in the table will be scored on a scale from 0-5. These will then be multiplied by the weighted percentage and totaled to create a weighted average score.

**Section A – Scored by Project Review Panel**

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Motor vehicle trip and vehicle miles traveled reduction potential | The extent to which the project reduces vehicle miles traveled in the region. | 0 – None / very low potential.<br><br>5 – High potential | 25% |
| Innovation | The extent to which the project involves an innovative and/or new practice(s), technique(s) or technology; the extent to which the project replicates/scales a demonstratively successful innovative project. | 0 – Project does not utilize a new practice(s), technique(s), technology(ies) or mode(s) nor is it a replication or scaling of a demonstratively successful innovative project.<br><br>5 – Project utilizes or is related to new practices, techniques, technologies or modes and/or is a replication or scaling of a demonstratively successful innovative project. | 15% |
| Replicability | The extent to which the project can be scaled and replicated to other jurisdictions, contexts and/or situations within the DRCOG boundaries. | 0 – The concept or approach has no application beyond the defined project scope and timeline.<br><br>5 – The concept or approach offers great potential to be replicated in part or in whole across the region. | 10% |
| Benefits to marginalized communities | The extent to which the project benefits members of marginalized communities who are users or benefactors of the proposed project. | 0 – The project disproportionately impacts members of marginalized communities.<br><br>5 – The project provides clear benefits to members of marginalized communities. | 10% |
| Funding effectiveness potential | The project cost per user. | 0 – Extremely high cost for a small number of users.<br><br>5 – Very low cost for a larger number of users. | 5% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project and applicant readiness | The extent to which the project sponsor has experience in transportation demand management projects. | 0 – Project sponsor has no previous experience in transportation demand management projects.<br><br>5 – Sponsor is an experienced partner in transportation demand management projects; coordination between agencies is strong. | 5% |
| Timing/synergy of project | The time it takes for project benefits to occur and/or synergy with other transportation projects. | 0 – Immediate benefits are not clear and/or benefits may be years away; does not coincide with or support other transportation projects.<br><br>5 – Clear immediate benefits and/or project coincides with or supports other transportation projects. | 5% |
| Serves DRCOG designated urban centers | The extent to which the project serves one or more urban centers (as defined in DRCOG's Urban Centers dataset). | 0 – The project does not serve an urban center.<br><br>5 – The project primarily serves urban center(s). | 5% |

**Section B – Measured/scored by DRCOG staff**

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Short trip opportunity potential | The extent to which the project is located in a short trip opportunity zone (as defined by DRCOG's Active Transportation Plan). | 0 – Project is not located in a short trip opportunity zone.<br><br><range based on percent of project area that is identified as a short trip opportunity zone, normalized based on projects submitted><br><br>5 – Project area serves short trip opportunity zone(s). | 5% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| DRCOG Index area | The extent to which the project is located in a highly marginalized area (as defined by DRCOG's Index of marginalized communities). For projects encompassing multiple census tracts, take the highest score. As of 2024, quartiles are defined as:<br>Quartile 1 – less than 18.1<br>Quartile 2 – 18.1 to less than 22.6<br>Quartile 3 – 22.6 to less than 30.2<br>Quartile 4 – greater than 30.2<br>Note that quartiles are subject to change as data is updated and the most current data available in the Index should be used in evaluation. | 0 – The project is located in an area with an index score in the lowest quartile.<br><br>1 – The project is located in an area with an index score in the second lowest quartile.<br><br>2 – The project is located in an area with an index score in the second highest quartile.<br><br>3 – The project is located in an area that encompasses more than one census tract, each with an index score in the second highest quartile.<br><br>4 – The project is located in an area with an index score in the highest quartile.<br><br>5 – The project is located in an area that encompasses more than one census tract, each with an index score in the highest quartile. | 10% |
| Financial partners | The extent to which additional financial support for the project is provided by additional partners. Partners must be identified in the application as funding match partners. | 0 – No other financial partners.<br><br>2 – One additional financial partner.<br><br>5 – Two or more financial partners. | 2% |
| Local match | The type of local match provided. | 0 – Only "in-kind" match.<br><br>5 – All cash match. | 3% |

## Approval process

DRCOG requires a formal recommendation to be developed consisting of a list of the projects recommended for funding which total an amount equal to or less than the amount of funding available, the funding amount for each project and the project phase to be initiated for each year of funding. In addition, the recommendation should include

a ranked wait list of projects that are unable to be funded or fully funded at this time but could be funded should additional funding become available prior to the next call for projects. The recommending body will have the option to exclude projects from the wait list at their discretion. This recommendation can be developed either by DRCOG staff or by utilizing an external project review panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. The recommending body may be the same individuals who scored the projects or a separate panel.

For the Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside call for projects, the project review panel which scored projects will also convene to discuss the applications and scoring and reach consensus on the list of recommended projects to be funded by the set-aside.

Once the recommended project list and associated wait list have been developed, they will be considered by the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and the Board of Directors.

Should additional funding become available (such as through project cancellations or return of unused funding), sponsors of wait list projects will be contacted in rank order and will have the opportunity to accept funding. If the sponsor declines (for instance, if the amount of available funding is not enough to deliver their project, the sponsor no longer wishes to move the project forward, the project is being completed with other funding sources, etc.) they will remain on the wait list pending future additional funding opportunities, unless the sponsor instructs DRCOG staff for the project to be removed from the list.

## Website management

The most current version of this guideline document will be available publicly on the set-aside webpage. Prior to opening a call for projects, DRCOG staff will post the application form and any other resource information for applicants publicly on the set-aside webpage, along with contact information for sponsors to reach out with any questions. A link to this webpage will be included with any notices sent out to alert potential applicants to the location of these resources. Notices will be sent to members of DRCOG's TIP Notification List and other relevant email lists.

## Post-award process

### Award notification

Following Board action, DRCOG staff will issue an award notification to awarded project sponsors to inform them of their award. This notification should include the amount of funding awarded by fiscal year, next steps for the sponsor, who their contacts at CDOT or RTD will be for future coordination and any expectations of continued DRCOG involvement in the project.

## Contract

Following Board action, project sponsors will need to enter into a contract with DRCOG. It is the sponsor agency's responsibility to reach out to DRCOG following notice of project award. The contracting process can begin before the fiscal year in which funds are allocated. The scope submitted within the application will inform the scope contained within the contract. All anticipated reimbursable activities must be outlined in the contract scope to be eligible for reimbursement.

## Delays

DRCOG has a project tracking program that tracks the initiation of a project phase. A delay occurs when a project phase, as identified in the approved project list and contained within the project description (taken from the project application), has not been initiated in the identified year. For example, a project that has only one year of DRCOG-selected funding receives a delay if the project did not hold its kick-off meeting (studies) or didn't conduct similar project initiation activities (other types of projects) by the end of the federal fiscal year for which it was programmed. For projects that have more than one year of DRCOG-selected funding, each phase (year) will be reviewed to see if the objectives defined for that phase have been initiated.

DRCOG defines the initiation of a project phase in the following manner as of September 30 for the year with DRCOG-selected funding in the TIP that is being analyzed:

- Study: contract executed and kick-off meeting has been held.
- Bus service: contract executed and service has begun.
- Equipment purchase (procurement): contract executed and request for proposals/qualifications/bids issued.
- Other: contract executed and at least one invoice submitted to DRCOG.

On October 1 (beginning of the next fiscal year), DRCOG will review the project phase status to determine if a delay has occurred. If a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG will discuss the project and the reasons for its delay with the sponsor. The result will be an action plan enforceable by DRCOG committees and Board. For a sponsor that has a phase of any of its projects delayed, the sponsor must report the implementation status on all its DRCOG-selected projects.

Sponsors will be requested to appear before the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board of Directors to explain the reasons for the delay(s) and receive committee recommendation and ultimately DRCOG Board approval to continue. Any conditions established by the DRCOG Board in approving the delay become policy.

On the following July 1, nine months after the project phase(s) was initially delayed, DRCOG staff will review the project status to determine if the phase is still delayed. If it's determined the project sponsor, as identified in the adopted TIP, is the cause of the

continued delay (phase not being initiated by July 1), the project's un-reimbursed DRCOG-selected funding for the delayed phase will be returned to DRCOG for reprogramming (federal funding reimbursement requests by the sponsor will not be allowed after July 1). If it's determined that another agency or an outside factor beyond the control of the project sponsor not reasonably anticipated is the cause of the delay (phase not being initiated by July 1), the future course of action and penalty will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Board action may include, but is not limited to:

- Establish a deadline for initiating the phase.
- Cancel the phase or project funding and return to DRCOG for reprogramming.
- Reprogram the project funding to future years to allow other programmed projects to advance.

### Scope change

There is an expectation that DRCOG-selected projects will be implemented, at a minimum, with the scope defined in the approved project list (and drawn from the submitted application form). Sometimes sponsors desire to significantly change scope elements within the same budget. If this is the case, a majority of the recommending body (internal or external, using whatever process was initially used to recommend the project) must provide confirmation to change scope elements. If the recommending body agrees to the scope changes, DRCOG staff will process the request as a modification to the TIP, if necessary. If the proposed change is solely to add additional reasonable, related elements within the same budget, while still accomplishing the submitted scope, no confirmation is necessary by the recommending body, but DRCOG staff review will still be required. As stated in the Matching funds section, if additional funds are needed beyond the amount initially awarded for the project, either due to a cost increase or to a change in scope, it is the responsibility of the sponsor agency to identify and secure those funds through non-DRCOG sources.

## Additional requirements

- Funding provided to local government sponsors must not replace existing local funding for staff.
- Applicants should not request funding for projects, activities or services that are currently performed by other agencies or government entities. Applicants should not request funding for projects, activities or services that are currently performed by, or may compete with, the private sector.
- All project scopes of work and subsequent revisions must be approved by DRCOG and CDOT.
- Project sponsors will formally acknowledge that they have been awarded federal funding and that adherence to applicable state and federal regulations (and the current DRCOG TIP Policy) is mandatory for all phases of the project and will work with DRCOG, CDOT, RTD (as appropriate), Federal Highway Administration

and/or Federal Transit Administration to ensure that the project is being implemented in accordance with federal requirements.

- Each awarded project sponsor will be required to attend reimbursement training (up to 2 hours) that defines the documentation required for tracking expenses and requesting reimbursement.
- Project sponsors will be expected to work closely with Way to Go, the regional transportation demand management brand, to identify synergies and cross-promotion opportunities.
- Each awarded project sponsor will go through a post-award and/or post-project debrief with DRCOG staff, either through a survey or meeting. The Transportation Demand Management Services Set-Aside also requires sponsors to submit a post-project report.
- Projects must be completed within two years of the contract start date.

# Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside

The TIP Policy establishes the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside with two component program areas: DRCOG transportation operations support services and the call for projects. The information in this policy is specific to the call for projects.

## Program purpose

The Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside funds tools and processes used by public operating agencies to meet the day-to-day demands of the traveling public and achieve the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology vision:

> *Transportation systems serving all travel modes across the DRCOG region are interconnected and collaboratively operated, managed, and maintained to optimize safe, reliable and efficient travel for all system users, contributing to the region's economic prosperity and high quality of life.*

This set-aside funds operations and technology improvements to achieve the specific goals and objectives of the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan.

## Program goals

The Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan identifies five goals:

- Safe operations – operational improvements to reduce crashes and achieve zero fatalities.
- Efficient, seamless travel – systems interconnected across jurisdictions and modes operated cooperatively.
- Travel time reliability – multimodal travel times monitored and managed cooperatively.
- Equitable access – all travelers have access to safe and reliable mobility options.
- Environmental sustainability – reduce energy consumption and harmful emissions.

## Eligible applicants

Per federal regulations and the DRCOG TIP Policy, project sponsor agencies must be eligible to receive federal transportation funds. These include:

- County and municipal governments.

- Regional agencies including RTD and DRCOG.
- State of Colorado offices and agencies (including CDOT).

Private, for-profit companies (such as contractors, suppliers or consultants), nonprofits and transportation management associations/organizations are not eligible sponsors.

## Eligible project locations

All projects submitted through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area. Additionally, any roadway operational improvements must be located on or directly benefit the DRCOG Regional Roadway System on roadway segments with an average traffic signal spacing of no more than one half mile.

## Eligible project types

The Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside call for projects is funded with federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines. These are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 2 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy.

Additionally, sponsors are directed to priority initiatives identified in the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan to guide project development. The following highlights eligible project requirements:

- Capital projects must be an operational improvement as defined in 23 USC § 101(a)(19).
- Operating costs for traffic monitoring, management and control facilities and programs are eligible to the extent they implement the proposed regional operations systems envisioned in the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan. Sponsors must coordinate with DRCOG prior to proposing an application for operating costs.
- As per 23 CFR §940.11, projects must be represented in the DRCOG Regional Intelligent Transportation System Architecture.

The following project types are ineligible for Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside funds:

- Restoration and rehabilitation projects (such as projects that replace equipment or systems without adding functionality advancing the strategic plan). For example, maintenance replacement of controllers, detection and other equipment or upgrading or replacing signal systems and software that does not add functionality that advances the strategic plan.
- The procurement and deployment of dynamic message signs.
- Equipment or technology evaluation projects.

Please reach out to DRCOG staff if there are questions about eligibility.

## Funding requirements

Applicants may request funding for up to four years for the federal fiscal years listed in the application. The funding minimum is $100,000 federal. There is no funding maximum. Project sponsors should clearly describe how the funding request is supported by the work proposed for the project.

## Matching funds

The Surface Transportation Block Grant program requires a minimum of 17.21% of total project costs be made up of non-federal match funds. As such, this is the minimum match required for most Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside applications, with the exceptions noted below. Note that required match rates through different funding programs, including other DRCOG calls for projects, may differ. All match funds must be from non-federal sources of funding, and applicants should contact DRCOG staff with any questions on whether a particular funding source is eligible to be used as match.

CDOT is the steward of these funds and does not track overmatch. If a sponsor wants to commit more funding to the project on their own, they may do so. Matching funds should be available or reasonably expected to be available prior to submittal of an application for funding. Should the required matching funds become unavailable, it is the sponsor agency's responsibility to identify alternative eligible funding to meet the match requirement. If a project is awarded funds, but experiences cost increases beyond what was initially estimated, the cost difference must be made up with non-DRCOG funding. Sponsors may not apply or receive additional DRCOG funding for the same project scope following project award.

Select project types are eligible for an increased federal share, up to 100% federal participation per federal regulations (23 USC 120(c)(1)). For the purpose of this call for projects, projects that include exclusively the items listed below will be considered for an increased federal share (up to 100 percent of the cost of construction):

- Traffic signal system (must provide new functionality and advance the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan).
- Traffic signal controllers (must meet Advanced Traffic Controller standard with high-resolution data logging capability) or dedicated data aggregator equipment.
- Traffic signal cabinets (meeting or exceeding jurisdiction's current standard specifications; new functionality requirements must be documented).
- Communications infrastructure connecting traffic signal system field equipment to traffic management center.
- Priority control systems and infrastructure for transit vehicles at signalized intersections.
- System/advance detection specifically supporting deployment of advanced traffic signal timing coordination strategies.

- Deployment of vehicle-to-infrastructure communication equipment (such as roadside units). Deployment of roadside units must implement or expand an operational improvement. The backend systems development and deployment must meet minimum match requirements.

## Training

Sponsors are required to attend a training session given by DRCOG prior to applying for funds. This training will occur near the beginning of the call for projects, and all interested agencies must attend if they are considering applying for funding. The training will cover the set-aside program goals, the application process and the requirements laid out in this policy to ensure applicants are aware of the program requirements and their responsibilities should they be awarded funds.

## Letter of interest

A two-step application process will be utilized wherein sponsors will first submit a letter of interest including the applicant's contact information, a brief description of their project, anticipated project outcomes and estimated funding request, due before the formal application period opens. Supplemental material including initial systems engineering analysis conforming to CDOT's requirements and risk assessment documentation is also required. Additional supplemental materials will be accepted if they contribute to the understanding of the project being proposed.

The set-aside manager will make a letter of interest form available on the website prior to the call for letters of interest opening. Sponsors are strongly encouraged, but not required, to reach out to the set-aside manager prior to developing their letter of interest for informal discussions about their project concept. The set-aside manager will be available to assist with regional intelligent transportation systems (ITS) architecture support throughout the application process.

Following submittal of the letter of interest, DRCOG staff will review the letter of interest and request additional information if needed. Submitted letters of interest will then be discussed at a Regional Transportation Operations Working Group meeting. The working group members and other stakeholders will collectively review project details, eligibility, funding assumptions and potential issues, outcomes and partnerships prior to the application period opening. Based on the discussions, DRCOG staff will invite eligible applicants to submit an application. Sponsors may adjust their project information in their final application (or choose not to apply) based on the information gained at this meeting.

## Application

Along with the application form, sponsors should submit letters of support/commitment from impacted or participating entities. These letters must formally acknowledge and commit to their respective roles and responsibilities for the project implementation and

subsequent operations. Infrastructure projects requiring CDOT or RTD concurrence (projects on a state highway or within the state rights-of-way or involving RTD service, within RTD rights-of-way or otherwise in need of RTD involvement) must provide an official agency response with the application submittal.

Note that applications must also include the required preliminary systems engineering analysis documentation necessary to initiate the project. Also, per CDOT requirements, a Subrecipient Risk Assessment form must also be submitted with the application.

Data that will assist applicants in completing their application form will be linked from the individual set-aside page.

## Scoring process

Once the call for projects closes, DRCOG staff will review submitted applications for eligibility and initiate the scoring process. The scoring process can involve either DRCOG staff and/or an external panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. DRCOG requires that a minimum of four scorers conduct the evaluation, although at least six are preferred. To ensure consistency, each panel member must individually evaluate and score each application. Panel members may not score any applications from or closely associated with their own agency, to avoid potential bias. Following individual scoring, a debrief should be held with all scorers to discuss their scores. Scorers may adjust scores following this debrief, if necessary.

For the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside call for projects, DRCOG will establish an evaluation panel of four to six evaluators comprised of DRCOG staff and volunteer subject matter experts from the region. DRCOG staff evaluators may be from the following DRCOG divisions:

- Transportation Planning and Operations.
- Regional Planning and Development.
- Communications and Marketing (Way to Go).
- Area Agency on Aging.
- Executive Office.
- The review panel may also include external stakeholders and subject matter experts.

Each evaluator will review the applications and assess scores based on the following evaluation criteria.

## Evaluation criteria

Each criterion in the table will be scored on a scale from 0-5. These will then be multiplied by the weighted percentage and totaled to create a weighted average score.

| Category | Measure | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Deployment of initiatives in the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan | Alignment with initiatives outlined in the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Strategic Plan. | 0 – The project implements no initiatives.<br>1 – The project implements or advances one or more Tertiary initiatives.<br>2 – The project implements or advances one Secondary initiative.<br>3 – The project implements or advances several Secondary initiatives.<br>4 – The project implements or advances one Primary initiative.<br>5 – The project implements or advances several Primary initiatives. | 20% |
| Project impact | Proximity to marginalized communities and project's effectiveness in improving mobility of marginalized communities.<br><br>Effectiveness in moving the region toward Metro Vision regional transportation outcomes.<br><br>Average Congestion Mitigation Process Mobility Score within the project area. | 0 – The project does not address a regional problem.<br>1 – The project benefits will address a minor regional problem.<br>2 – The project benefits will moderately address a moderate-level regional problem.<br>3 – The project benefits will either moderately address a major regional problem or significantly address a moderate-level regional problem.<br>4 – The project benefits will significantly address a major regional problem primarily benefiting people and businesses in one community.<br>5 – The project benefits will substantially address a major regional problem and benefit people and businesses in multiple communities. | 30% |

| Category | Measure | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| RTP priorities | Effectiveness in improving efficiency and reliability of multimodal mobility services.<br><br>Effectiveness in reducing regional vehicle emissions.<br><br>Effectiveness in improving transit on-time performance and availability.<br><br>Effectiveness in improving safety.<br><br>Effectiveness in improving freight operations.<br><br>Effectiveness in improving active transportation. | 0 – The project does not provide demonstrable benefits in the priority area.<br>1 – The project provides demonstrable slight benefits in the priority area and is determined to be in the bottom fifth of applications based on the magnitude of benefits in that priority area.<br>2 – The project provides demonstrable modest benefits in the priority area.<br>3 – The project provides demonstrable moderate benefits in the priority area and is determined to be in the middle fifth of applications based on the magnitude of benefits in that priority area.<br>4 – The project provides demonstrable significant benefits in the priority area.<br>5 – The project provides demonstrable substantial benefits in the priority area and is determined to be in the top fifth of applications based on the magnitude of benefits in that priority area. | 30% |
| Financial leveraging | The non-federal funding committed to this project as a percent of the total project cost. | 1 – Less than 21% non-federal sources (including 100%-eligible projects with no match.<br>2 – At least 21% but less than 26%.<br>3 – At least 26% but less than 31%.<br>4 – At least 31% but less than 36%.<br>5 – 36% or greater. | 5% |

| Category | Measure | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project readiness | The extent of project development and preliminary engineering prepared to meet the rigors of project implementation as per the CDOT Local Agency process. | 0 – No mitigation or readiness activities have been demonstrated.<br>1 – Few mitigation or readiness activities have been demonstrated.<br>2 – Slight readiness is demonstrated and some known obstacles that are likely to result in project delays have been mitigated.<br>3 – Moderate readiness is demonstrated and some known obstacles that are likely to result in project delays have been mitigated.<br>4 – Significant readiness is demonstrated and several known obstacles that are likely to result in project delays have been mitigated.<br>5 – Substantial readiness is demonstrated and all known obstacles that are likely to result in project delays have been mitigated. | 15% |

## Approval process

DRCOG requires a formal recommendation to be developed consisting of a list of the projects recommended for funding which total an amount equal to or less than the amount of funding available, the funding amount for each project and the project phase to be initiated for each year of funding. In addition, the recommendation should include a ranked wait list of projects that are unable to be funded or fully funded at this time but could be funded should additional funding become available prior to the next call for projects. The recommending body will have the option to exclude projects from the wait list at their discretion. This recommendation can be developed either by DRCOG staff or by utilizing an external project review panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. The recommending body may be the same individuals who scored the projects or a separate panel.

For the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside call for projects, the evaluation panel will prepare the recommendation. The recommended list of projects and associated wait list will be presented to the Regional Transportation Operations Working Group prior to being considered by the DRCOG committees.

Once the recommended project list and associated wait list have been developed, they will be considered by the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and the Board of Directors.

Should additional funding become available (such as through project cancellations or return of unused funding), sponsors of wait list projects will be contacted in rank order and will have the opportunity to accept funding. If the sponsor declines (such as, if the amount of available funding is not enough to deliver their project, the sponsor no longer wishes to move the project forward, the project is being completed with other funding sources, etc.) they will remain on the wait list pending future additional funding opportunities, unless the sponsor instructs DRCOG staff for the project to be removed from the list.

## Website management

The most current version of this guideline document will be available publicly on the set-aside webpage. Prior to opening a call for projects, DRCOG staff will post the application form and any other resource information for applicants publicly on the set-aside webpage, along with contact information for sponsors to reach out with any questions. A link to this webpage will be included with any notices sent out to alert potential applicants to the location of these resources. Notices will be sent to members of DRCOG's TIP Notification List and other relevant email lists.

## Post-award process

### *Award notification*

Following Board action, DRCOG staff will issue an award notification to awarded project sponsors to inform them of their award. This notification should include the amount of funding awarded by fiscal year, next steps for the sponsor, who their contacts at CDOT/RTD will be for future coordination and any expectations of continued DRCOG involvement in the project.

### *Agreements*

Following Board action, project sponsors will need to enter into an intergovernmental agreement or subaward agreement with CDOT and/or RTD. The agreement process will generally take approximately 4-9 months to complete, so it is imperative to contact CDOT early to discuss next steps. It is the sponsor agency's responsibility to reach out to CDOT following notice of project award. The agreement process can begin before the fiscal year in which funds are allocated. The scope submitted within the application will become the scope contained within the agreement. Any changes in this scope during the agreement development stage are subject to the conditions in the Scope Change section.

### *Delays*

DRCOG has a project tracking program that tracks the initiation of a project phase. A delay occurs when a project phase, as identified in the approved project list and

contained within the project description (taken from the project application), has not been initiated in the identified year. For example, a project that has only one year of DRCOG-selected funding receives a delay if the project did not go to ad (construction projects), did not hold its kick-off meeting (studies) or didn't conduct similar project initiation activities (other types of projects) by the end of the federal fiscal year for which it was programmed. For projects that have more than one year of DRCOG-selected funding, each phase (year) will be reviewed to see if the objectives defined for that phase have been initiated.

DRCOG defines the initiation of a project phase in the following manner as of September 30 for the year with DRCOG-selected funding in the TIP that is being analyzed:

- Construction: project publicly advertised.
- Equipment purchase (procurement): agreement executed and request for proposals/qualifications/bids issued.
- Other: intergovernmental agreement executed and at least one invoice submitted to CDOT/RTD for work completed.

On October 1 (beginning of the next fiscal year), DRCOG will review the project phase status with CDOT and RTD to determine if a delay has occurred. If a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG, along with CDOT or RTD, will discuss the project and the reasons for its delay with the sponsor. The result will be an action plan enforceable by CDOT/RTD, which will be reported to the DRCOG committees and Board. For a sponsor that has a phase of any of its projects delayed, the sponsor must report the implementation status on all its DRCOG-selected projects.

Sponsors will be requested to appear before the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board to explain the reasons for the delay(s) and receive committee recommendation and ultimately DRCOG Board approval to continue. Any conditions established by the DRCOG Board in approving the delay become policy.

On the following July 1, nine months after the project phase(s) was initially delayed, DRCOG staff will review the project status with CDOT or RTD to determine if the phase is still delayed. If it's determined the project sponsor, as identified in the adopted TIP, is the cause of the continued delay (phase not being initiated by July 1), the project's un-reimbursed DRCOG-selected funding for the delayed phase will be returned to DRCOG for reprogramming (federal funding reimbursement requests by the sponsor will not be allowed after July 1). If it's determined that another agency or an outside factor beyond the control of the project sponsor not reasonably anticipated is the cause of the delay (phase not being initiated by July 1), the future course of action and penalty will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Board action may include, but is not limited to:

- Establish a deadline for initiating the phase.
- Cancel the phase or project funding and return to DRCOG for reprogramming.
- Reprogram the project funding to future years to allow other programmed projects to advance.

### *Scope change*

There is an expectation that DRCOG-selected projects will be implemented, at a minimum, with the scope defined in the approved project list (and drawn from the submitted application form). Sometimes sponsors desire to significantly change scope elements within the same budget. If this is the case, a majority of the recommending body (internal or external, using whatever process was initially used to recommend the project) must provide confirmation to change scope elements. If the recommending body agrees to the scope changes, DRCOG staff will process the request as a modification to the TIP, if necessary. If the proposed change is solely to add additional reasonable, related elements within the same budget, while still accomplishing the submitted scope, no confirmation is necessary by the recommending body, but DRCOG staff review will still be required. As stated in the Matching Funds section, if additional funds are needed beyond the amount initially awarded for the project, either due to a cost increase or to a change in scope, it is the responsibility of the sponsor agency to identify and secure those funds through non-DRCOG sources.

## Additional requirements

- Funding provided to local government sponsors must not replace existing local funding for staff.
- All project scopes of work and subsequent revisions must be approved by DRCOG and CDOT.
- Project sponsors will formally acknowledge that they have been awarded federal funding and that adherence to applicable state and federal regulations (and DRCOG TIP policy) is mandatory for all phases of the project and will work with DRCOG, CDOT, RTD (as appropriate), Federal Highway Administration and/or Federal Transit Administration to ensure that the project is being implemented in accordance with federal requirements.
- All funded projects must include a DRCOG staff liaison as a member of the project management team or equivalent group.
- Applicants must update DRCOG with their existing technology inventory information annually. DRCOG will authorize CDOT to obligate funds to the project or issue an option letter only when complete inventory information is submitted.
- Upon award, the applicant will establish project-specific data-sharing requirements that ensure timely, secure and interoperable exchange of information with relevant public agency project partners. Applicants must follow the systems engineering analysis process, which begins with an identification of the portion of the DRCOG Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture being deployed and includes development of system testing

requirements to demonstrate the project meets its functional requirements. CDOT has specific systems engineering analysis processes and documentation requirements for Local Agency projects.

- Each awarded project sponsor will go through a post-award and/or post-project debrief with DRCOG staff, either through a survey or meeting. For the Regional Transportation Operations and Technology Set-Aside, the project sponsor will be required to submit systems engineering analysis documentation for subsequent regional use.
- Each awarded project sponsor will be required to attend reimbursement training (approximately 4 hours) that defines the documentation required for tracking expenses and requesting reimbursement.

# Air Quality Improvements Set-Aside

The TIP Policy establishes the Air Quality Improvements Set-Aside with four component program areas, all of which are carried out by the Regional Air Quality Council: ozone outreach and education, localized community-based marketing, other focused outreach and air quality improvement programs and ozone modeling. While no calls for projects are explicitly included within these program areas, the information below will apply should the Regional Air Quality Council choose to hold a call for projects associated with any of the four program areas.

## Eligible applicants

Air Quality Improvements Set-Aside funds are distributed directly to the Regional Air Quality Council. They are eligible to use these funds for internal programs or distribute them to external agencies through their own processes. Per federal regulations and the DRCOG TIP Policy, eligible sponsor agencies for suballocated funds include:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies, including RTD, DRCOG, transportation management organizations/associations and other nonprofits serving a regional transportation purpose.
- State of Colorado offices and agencies (including CDOT) and Colorado public colleges and universities.

Should suballocation take place, the Regional Air Quality Council may set additional guidelines for eligibility not listed here.

## Eligible project locations

All projects funded through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area. Additionally, due to their inclusion in the Denver Metro/North Front Range Non-Attainment Area, the remainder of Adams, Arapahoe and Boulder counties outside the metropolitan planning organization area are also eligible for Air Quality Improvements Set-Aside funding. No funds may be directed to programs in Clear Creek or Gilpin counties or areas outside of DRCOG's boundaries.

## Eligible project types

The Air Quality Improvements Set-Aside is funded with federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality and Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines.

The Surface Transportation Block Grant funds are specified in the TIP Policy as being for the purpose of ozone modeling associated with the state's State Implementation Plan.

The Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality funds must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines. These are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 1 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy. Additionally, the TIP Policy specifies these funds are for the following purposes:

- Ozone outreach and education.
- Localized community-based marketing.
- Other focused outreach and air quality improvement programs.

## Matching funds

The Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality and Surface Transportation Block Grant programs require a minimum match rate of 17.21%. As such, this is the minimum match required for all Air Quality Improvements Set-Aside projects and programs. All match funds must be from non-federal sources of funding, and applicants should contact DRCOG staff with any questions on whether a particular funding source is eligible to be used as match.

## Additional details

The Regional Air Quality Council will determine all program requirements and eligibility guidelines, in line with federal regulations and DRCOG policy. For any suballocated funding programs, details will be posted publicly to the Regional Air Quality Council website.

# Human Service Transportation Set-Aside

The Human Service Transportation Set-Aside operates in conjunction with the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 and Older Americans Act/Older Coloradans Act funding programs. As such, the primary guiding document is the DRCOG Section 5310 Program Management Plan. This section of the set-aside guide is provided as a reference, but for full details, please reference the Program Management Plan. If any information below conflicts with the information in the Program Management Plan, the Program Management Plan takes precedence.

## Program purpose

The Human Service Transportation Set-Aside provides a dedicated funding source to improve mobility for vulnerable populations including older adults, low-income people, veterans and people with disabilities. This set-aside complements Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities and Older Americans Act/Older Coloradans Act dollars by funding identified needs that are underfunded or underserved by those sources.

## Program goals

The DRCOG Coordinated Transit Plan identifies needs, gaps and strategies related to Section 5310 and other human service transportation programs including the following:

- Transportation ranked as a top service priority for older adults and people with disabilities.
- Affordable fares, especially for older adults, people with disabilities and/or low incomes.
- More cross-jurisdictional trips, better trip coordination and more accessibility.
- Better regional coordination to build on improving local coordination.
- Demand for transportation will increase as the population increases and ages.
- Expand volunteer driver programs.
- Continue to work with the Denver Regional Mobility and Access Council to implement the Transportation Coordination Systems project and other technological improvements.
- Accessible and understandable transportation information and referral services.
- Increase service areas, frequency and service hours (nights and weekends) where gaps exist.
- Increase transportation options for quality-of-life trips such as hair appointments and social visits.
- Improve access to healthcare for non-emergent visits.
- Make sure that veterans have access to transportation.
- Removing barriers to ride fixed-route transit such as infrastructure improvements, transit supportive land use, first and last mile connections, travel training,

affordable fares programs, improve access to employment and pilot new technology and practices to improve mobility.

- Fund transit projects that address identified needs and Federal Transit Administration program guidelines.
- Spend local, regional, state and federal funds more efficiently.
- Increase human service transportation coordination efforts.
- Address cross-jurisdictional, cross service boundary and interregional trips.
- Implement trip exchange initiatives from transportation studies.
- Improve access to key services such as healthcare and employment through coordination.

## Eligible applicants

Per federal regulations and the DRCOG TIP Policy, project sponsor agencies must be eligible to receive federal transportation funds. These include:

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

## Eligible project locations

All projects submitted through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area.

This applies only to the Human Service Transportation funds. Other funding sources included in the same call for projects "Supercall" have different geographic requirements. Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 funds must be allocated to projects in the Denver-Aurora Urbanized Area, while Older Americans Act/Older Coloradans Act funds may be used anywhere within the DRCOG Area Agency on Aging boundary, which excludes Boulder and Weld counties.

## Eligible project types

The Human Service Transportation Set-Aside call for projects is funded with state Funding Advancements for Surface Transportation and Economic Recovery Transit funding, state Multimodal Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund funding and federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality funding and is held in conjunction with the call for projects for DRCOG's Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 and Older Americans Act/Older Coloradans Act funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet state and federal eligibility guidelines. Minimum guidelines for Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 1 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy. Minimum guidelines for Multimodal

Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund are outlined by CDOT as well as in Section 5 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy. All funding used in this set-aside must meet the eligibility requirements detailed in Tables 1 & 2 of the Program Management Plan, duplicated here.

Federal guidance divides projects between "Traditional" capital projects, such as those public transportation projects planned, designed and carried out to meet the special needs of older adults and people with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate or unavailable; and "Other/New Freedom" types of projects that are:

- Public transportation projects that exceed the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Public transportation projects that improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance by people with disabilities on complementary paratransit.
- Alternatives to public transportation that assist older adults and people with disabilities.

Operating assistance for required Americans with Disabilities Act complementary paratransit service is not an eligible expense for the "Other/New Freedom" category.

**Summary of eligible project activities and project sponsors/subrecipients**

| Type | Eligible activities | Eligible project sponsors/ subrecipients |
|---|---|---|
| **Traditional capital projects** | A. Rolling stock and related activities for Section 5310 funded vehicles.<br>1. Acquisition of expansion or replacement buses or vans and related procurement, testing, inspection and acceptance costs.<br>2. Vehicle rehabilitation or overhaul.<br>3. Preventative maintenance.<br>4. Radios and communication equipment.<br>5. Vehicle wheelchair lifts, ramps and securement devices.<br>B. Passenger facilities related to Section 5310-funded vehicles.<br>1. Purchase and installation of benches, shelters and other passenger amenities.<br>C. Support facilities and equipment for Section 5310-funded vehicles.<br>1. Extended warranties that do not exceed the industry standard.<br>2. Computer hardware and software. | Private non-profit organizations and state or local governmental authorities that are either:<br>• Approved by a state to coordinate services for older adults and people with disabilities.<br>• Certify that there are no nonprofit organizations readily available in the area to |

| Type | Eligible activities | Eligible project sponsors/ subrecipients |
|---|---|---|
| | 3. Transit-related intelligent transportation systems.<br>4. Dispatch systems.<br>5. Fare collection systems.<br>D. Lease of equipment when lease is more cost effective than purchase.<br>E. Acquisition of transportation services under a contract, lease or other arrangement. This may include acquisition of Americans with Disabilities Act-complementary paratransit services when provided by an eligible recipient or subrecipient. Both capital and operating costs associated with contracted service are eligible capital expenses. User-side subsidies are considered one form of eligible arrangement.<br>F. Support for mobility management and coordination programs among public transportation providers and other human service agencies providing transportation. Mobility management is an eligible capital cost. Eligible activities include the following:<br>1. Operating transportation brokerages to coordinate service providers, funding sources and customer needs.<br>2. Coordinating transportation services for older adults, people with disabilities and people with low incomes.<br>3. Supporting local partnerships that coordinate transportation services.<br>4. Staffing for the development and implementation of coordination plans.<br>5. Providing travel training and trip planning activities for customers.<br>6. Developing and operating traveler call centers to coordinate travel information, manage eligibility | provide the service. |

| Type | Eligible activities | Eligible project sponsors/ subrecipients |
|---|---|---|
| | requirements and arrange customer travel.<br>7. Planning and implementing the acquisition and purchase of intelligent transportation technologies to operate a coordinated system. | |
| **Other/New Freedom types of projects** | A. Public transportation projects (capital only) planned, designed and carried out to meet the special needs of older adults and people with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, inappropriate or unavailable.<br>B. Public transportation projects (capital and operating) that exceed requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.<br>1. Enhancing paratransit beyond minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.<br>2. Expansion of paratransit service parameters beyond the ¾ mile required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.<br>3. Expansion of current hours of operation for Americans with Disabilities Act paratransit services that are beyond those provided on the fixed-route services.<br>4. The incremental cost of providing same day service.<br>5. The incremental cost (if any) of making door-to-door service available to all eligible Americans with Disabilities Act paratransit riders, but not on a case-by-case basis for individual riders in an otherwise curb-to-curb system.<br>6. Enhancement of the level of service by providing escorts or assisting riders through the door of their destination.<br>7. Acquisition of vehicles and equipment designed to | • Private non-profit organizations.<br>• Public transportation operators.<br>• State or local governmental authorities.<br>• Private taxi companies (providing shared ride taxi service). |

| Type | Eligible activities | Eligible project sponsors/ subrecipients |
|---|---|---|
| | accommodate mobility aids that exceed the dimensions and weight ratings established for wheelchairs under the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations and labor costs of aids to help drivers assist passengers with oversized wheelchairs.<br>8. Installation of additional securement locations in public buses beyond what is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.<br>9. Accessible "feeder" service (transit service that provides access) to other modes, for which complementary paratransit service is not required under the Americans with Disabilities Act.<br>C. Public transportation projects (capital and operating) that improve access to fixed-route service and decrease reliance by people with disabilities on Americans with Disabilities Act-complementary paratransit service.<br>1. Making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations not designated as key stations.<br>2. Travel training.<br>D. Public transportation alternatives that assist older adults and people with disabilities with transportation (capital and operating).<br>1. Purchasing vehicles to support accessible taxi, ridesharing and/or vanpooling programs.<br>2. Supporting the administration and expenses related to voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service providers.<br>3. Supporting volunteer driver and aide programs. | |

## Funding requirements

Funds are awarded on a yearly basis through a call for projects generally every state fiscal year. There is no funding minimum or maximum. However, DRCOG does ask for further justification for requests for Human Service Transportation Set-Aside funding of less than $75,000. Project sponsors should clearly describe how the funding request is supported by the work proposed for the project.

## Matching funds

Minimum match requirements for the Human Service Transportation Set-Aside vary by project type. These match requirements are outlined in the following table.

| Project type | Match requirement |
|---|---|
| **Capital (including mobility management)** | • 15% match required for Americans with Disabilities Act compliant vehicles and facilities.<br>• 20% match required for all other capital purchases and mobility management. |
| **Operating** | • 50% match required for general operations.<br>• 20% match required for capitalized cost of contracting. |
| **Planning** | • 20% match required. |

CDOT is the steward of these funds and does not track overmatch. If a sponsor wants to commit more funding to the project on their own, they may do so. Matching funds should be available or reasonably expected to be available prior to submittal of an application for funding. Should the required matching funds become unavailable, it is the sponsor agency's responsibility to identify alternative funding to meet the match requirement. In the case of cost increases beyond what was initially estimated, the cost difference must be made up with non-DRCOG funding (such as additional match). Sponsors may not apply or receive additional DRCOG funding for the same project scope during the same period of performance following project award.

## Training

Sponsors are required to attend a training session given by DRCOG prior to applying for funds. This training will occur near the beginning of the call for projects, and all interested agencies must attend if they are considering applying for funding. The training will cover the set-aside program goals, the application process and the requirements laid out in this policy to ensure applicants are aware of the program requirements and their responsibilities should they be awarded funds.

## Letter of interest

A two-step application process will be utilized wherein sponsors may first submit a letter of interest including the applicant's contact information, a brief description of their project and estimated funding request, due before the formal application period opens. Supplemental materials will be accepted if they contribute to the understanding of the project being proposed. Sponsors are strongly encouraged, but not required, to reach out to the set-aside manager prior to developing their letter of interest for informal discussions about their project concept.

Following submittal of the letter of interest, DRCOG staff will review the letter of interest and request additional information if needed. Sponsors, if requested, will then meet with the set-aside manager to discuss their submitted letter(s) of interest, project details, eligibility, funding assumptions and potential issues, outcomes and partnerships prior to the application period opening. Based on the discussions, DRCOG staff will invite eligible applicants to submit an application. Sponsors may adjust their project information in their final application (or choose not to apply) based on the information gained in these conversations.

## Application

Applications for Human Service Transportation Set-Aside projects are submitted through a web portal. Along with the application form, sponsors should submit letters of support from impacted or participating entities. Per CDOT requirements, a Subrecipient Risk Assessment is conducted at the time of application. Small infrastructure projects requiring CDOT or RTD concurrence (projects on a state highway or within the state rights-of way or involving RTD service, within RTD rights-of-way or otherwise in need of RTD involvement) must provide an official agency response with the application submittal. Data that will assist applicants in completing their application form will be linked from the individual set-aside page.

## Scoring process

Once the call for projects closes, DRCOG staff will review submitted applications for eligibility and initiate the scoring process. The scoring process can involve either DRCOG staff and/or an external panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. DRCOG requires that a minimum of four scorers conduct the evaluation, although at least six are preferred. To ensure consistency, each scorer must individually evaluate and score each application. Panel members may not score any applications from or closely associated with their own agency, to avoid potential bias. Following individual scoring, a debrief should be held with all scorers to discuss their scores. Scorers may adjust scores following this debrief, if necessary.

For the Human Service Transportation Set-Aside call for projects, DRCOG will establish an external project review panel to assist with scoring and evaluating projects.

Participants may include representatives of external stakeholders and subject matter experts who may represent agencies such as the following:

- Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.
- AARP.
- Counties and municipal governments.

Each member of the panel will review the submittals and assign points to the criteria based on the information provided in the project application forms.

## Evaluation criteria

Each criterion in the table will be scored on a scale from 0-5. These will then be multiplied by the weighted percentage and totaled to create a weighted average score.

**All project criteria – 70% of total score**

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Compatibility with the DRCOG Coordinated Transit Plan | The extent to which the completed planning proposal moves toward being an actionable/ implementable project derived from the DRCOG Coordinated Transit Plan. | Low – The project is minimally derived from the Plan.<br><br>Medium – The project is derived from many of the needs, gaps and strategies related to Section 5310 and other human service transportation programs identified in the Coordinated Transit Plan. In addition, the project sponsor is a participant at some level in Ride Alliance.<br><br>High – The project is not only derived from many of the needs, gaps and strategies related to Section 5310 and other human service transportation programs identified in the Coordinated Transit Plan but personifies the spirit of the Plan as well. In addition, the project sponsor regularly coordinates with transportation providers, local governments and other stakeholders in the provision of services, and the application details a plan for coordination for the proposed scope of work and participates at a high level in Ride Alliance. | 65% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Innovation and transferability | The extent to which the project involves an innovative practice or technique and/or potential transferability of project process or products. | Low – No potential for outcome to provide proof of concept for a process or practice. No transferability locally or regionally.<br><br>Medium – Limited potential for outcome to provide proof of concept for a process or practice. Concept may prove transferable to other projects locally or regionally.<br><br>High – Strong potential for outcome to provide proof of concept for a process or practice including potential transferability to other projects locally and regionally. | 5% |

**Additional criteria for replacement revenue service vehicles – 30% of total score**

| Category | Scoring | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| Replacement of revenue service vehicles | Metric 1: The vehicle's state of good repair – Age, mileage, usage, readiness, including how the vehicle's replacement is projected and prioritized within the agency's or Group Asset Management Plans; higher mileage vehicles will be scored higher than lower mileage units.<br><br>Metric 2: Higher scoring will be awarded to applicants that can demonstrate a good state of repair through effective, documented, formal preventive maintenance programs or Transit Asset Management programs and to those that have and follow a capital replacement plan. | 30% |

**Additional criteria for expansion revenue service vehicles – 30% of total score**

| Category | Scoring | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| Expansion of revenue service vehicles | Metric 1: Demonstrated need and readiness – Higher scoring will be awarded to projects that clearly demonstrate the need for the expanded service in terms of documented ridership or need studies and community support, which demonstrate an effective business case and can demonstrate they are truly ready to implement the expansion.<br><br>Metric 2: Special considerations – For vehicle requests, applicants with a lower fleet spare ratio, who have a capital replacement plan/asset management plan, who can show strong institutional commitment and who can show a strong financial commitment (higher local match ratio), will be scored more strongly. | 30% |

**Additional criteria for facilities, design and equipment – 30% of total score**

| Category | Scoring | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| Facilities, design and equipment | Metric 1: Readiness and demonstrated timetable – Higher priority will be given to those that are shovel ready (National Environmental Policy Act clearance finalized, at least 30% design completed and site location selected and purchased) and to the completion of existing projects.<br><br>Metric 2: Project purpose, cost savings and efficiency – Higher priority will be given to those projects that have a high degree of local and regional support, well developed and defensible business case and support or provide significant transit operational and utilization benefits.<br><br>Metric 3: Special considerations – Higher scoring in this area will be given to those projects that demonstrate they were developed in partnership with the local community. In the case of requests for the expansion of existing facilities, higher scoring will be applied if the project demonstrates the need for the facility and for growth in the program it supports. Agencies that adequately demonstrate institutional commitment, funding, financial capacity and capability to sustain the service and project over time will also be scored more strongly. | 30% |

**Additional criteria for operating, planning and mobility management – 30% of total score**

| Category | Scoring | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| Financial need | • Lack of funding sources available to the applicant.<br>• Good faith efforts to obtain funds for the project from non-Department of Transportation sources.<br>• Economic condition of the applicant's service area and/or clients served.<br>• Level and amount of local commitment to transit.<br>• Reasonableness of costs to operate and administer the project amount of available revenue, including contract and earmarked funds.<br>• Portion of costs covered by local funds. | 10% |
| Service justification | • Lack of appropriate public transportation alternatives (RTP Regional Transit Priority).<br>• Transit dependency of the population in the applicant's service area, particularly the extent to which the proposed project serves elderly or disabled persons, persons without a car or low-income persons, veterans and other vulnerable populations (RTP Regional Transit Priority; Metro Vision Objective: Improve access for traditionally underserved populations).<br>• Extent to which the applicant provides service to other organizations; the numbers of riders and types of trips provided (Metro Vision Objective: Increase collaboration among stakeholders at the local, regional and state levels).<br>• Size of an applicant's service area (Metro Vision Objective: Improve access to opportunity).<br>• Other relevant factors, including congestion mitigation and air quality improvement (Metro Vision Objective: Improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions). | 10% |

| Category | Scoring | Weight |
|---|---|---|
| Coordination/ effectiveness | • Extent which coordination reduces operating expenses, number of vehicles used and lead time for passenger scheduling.<br>• Extent to which the applicant works with community organizations (such as Chambers of Commerce, human service agencies) to promote the service and make it more efficient.<br>• Lack of duplication or overlap with transit services provided by others.<br>• An applicant's good faith efforts to coordinate with private for-profit operators.<br>• The performance measure(s) listed for each activity demonstrates its ability to improve your clients' quality of life and can also indicate the quality of change that was produced by your activity. | 10% |

## Approval process

DRCOG requires a formal recommendation to be developed consisting of a list of the projects recommended for funding which total an amount equal to or less than the amount of funding available, the funding amount for each project and the project phase to be initiated for each year of funding. This recommendation can be developed either by DRCOG staff or by utilizing an external project review panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. The recommending body may be the same individuals who scored the projects or a separate panel.

For the Human Service Transportation Set-Aside call for projects, the project review panel which scored projects will also convene to discuss the applications and scoring and reach consensus on the list of recommended projects to be funded by the set-aside.

Once the recommended project list has been developed, it will be considered by the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and the Board of Directors.

## Website management

The most current version of this guideline document will be available publicly on the set-aside webpage. Prior to opening a call for projects, DRCOG staff will post the application form and any other resource information for applicants publicly on the set-aside webpage, along with contact information for sponsors to reach out with any questions. A link to this webpage will be included with any notices sent out to alert potential applicants to the location of these resources. Notices will be sent to members of DRCOG's TIP Notification List and other relevant email lists.

## Post-award process

### *Award notification*

Following Board action, DRCOG staff will issue an award notification to awarded project sponsors to inform them of their award. This notification should include the amount of funding awarded by fiscal year, next steps for the sponsor and any expectations of continued DRCOG involvement in the project.

### *Contracts*

Following Board action, project sponsors will need to enter into a contract with DRCOG. Contact DRCOG staff early to discuss next steps. The scope submitted within the application will become the scope contained within the contract. DRCOG may request updated budgets, in the event that a full award wasn't made prior to entering into an agreement with the sponsor.

### *Delays*

DRCOG has a project tracking program that tracks the initiation of a project phase for those projects funded with DRCOG TIP funding. For those projects receiving Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality funds or Multimodal Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund funding, a delay occurs when a project phase, as identified in the approved project list and contained within the project description (taken from the project application), has not been initiated in the identified year. For example, a project that has only one year of DRCOG-selected funding receives a delay if the project did not go to ad (construction projects), did not hold its kick-off meeting (studies) or didn't conduct similar project initiation activities (other types of projects) by the end of the federal fiscal year for which it was programmed. For projects that have more than one year of DRCOG-selected funding, each phase (year) will be reviewed to see if the objectives defined for that phase have been initiated.

DRCOG defines the initiation of a project phase in the following manner as of September 30 for the year with DRCOG-selected funding in the TIP that is being analyzed:

- Study: contract executed and kick-off meeting has been held.
- Bus service: contract executed and service has begun.
- Equipment purchase (procurement): contract executed and request for proposals/qualifications/bids issued.
- Other: contract executed and at least one invoice submitted to DRCOG for work completed.

On October 1 (beginning of the next fiscal year), DRCOG will review the project phase status to determine if a delay has occurred. If a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG will discuss the project and the reasons for its delay with the sponsor. The result will be an action plan enforceable by DRCOG, which will be reported to the DRCOG committees and Board.

For a sponsor that has a phase of any of its projects delayed, the sponsor must report the implementation status on all its DRCOG-selected projects.

Sponsors will be requested to appear before the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board to explain the reasons for the delay(s) and receive committee recommendation and ultimately DRCOG Board approval to continue. Any conditions established by the DRCOG Board in approving the delay become policy.

On the following July 1, nine months after the project phase(s) was initially delayed, DRCOG staff will review the project status to determine if the phase is still delayed. If it's determined the project sponsor, as identified in the adopted TIP, is the cause of the continued delay (phase not being initiated by July 1), the project's un-reimbursed DRCOG-selected funding for the delayed phase will be returned to DRCOG for reprogramming (federal funding reimbursement requests by the sponsor will not be allowed after July 1). If it's determined that another agency or an outside factor beyond the control of the project sponsor not reasonably anticipated is the cause of the delay (phase not being initiated by July 1), the future course of action and penalty will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Board action may include, but is not limited to:

- Establish a deadline for initiating the phase.
- Cancel the phase or project funding and return to DRCOG for reprogramming.
- Reprogram the project funding to future years to allow other programmed projects to advance.

### *Scope change*

There is an expectation that DRCOG-selected projects will be implemented, at a minimum, with the scope defined in the approved project list (and drawn from the submitted application form). Sometimes sponsors desire to significantly change scope elements within the same budget. If this is the case, a majority of the recommending body (internal or external, using whatever process was initially used to recommend the project) must provide confirmation to change scope elements. If the recommending body agrees to the scope changes, DRCOG staff will process the request as a modification to the TIP, if necessary. If the proposed change is solely to add additional reasonable, related elements within the same budget, while still accomplishing the submitted scope, no confirmation is necessary by the recommending body, but DRCOG staff review will still be required. As stated in the Matching Funds section, if additional funds are needed beyond the amount initially awarded for the project, either due to a cost increase or to a change in scope, it is the responsibility of the sponsor agency to identify and secure those funds through non-DRCOG sources.

## Additional requirements

- Funding provided to local government sponsors must not replace existing local funding for staff.
- Applicants should not request funding for projects, activities or services that are currently performed by other agencies or government entities.
- Applicants should not request funding for projects, activities or services that are currently performed by, or may compete with, the private sector.
- All project scopes of work and subsequent revisions must be approved by DRCOG.
- Project sponsors will formally acknowledge that they have been awarded federal funding and that adherence to applicable state and federal regulations (and DRCOG TIP policy) is mandatory for all phases of the project and will work with DRCOG, CDOT, RTD (as appropriate) and the Federal Highway Administration/ Federal Transit Administration to ensure that the project is being implemented in accordance with federal requirements.
- Each awarded project sponsor will be required to attend reimbursement training (approximately 2 hours) that defines the documentation required for tracking expenses and requesting reimbursement.
- Each awarded project sponsor will go through a post-award and/or post-project debrief with DRCOG staff, either through a survey or meeting. Sponsors may be required to submit a post-project report.

# Corridors, Community, Livability and Innovation Planning Set-Asides overview

The TIP Policy establishes three related set-aside programs under the Community Mobility Planning and Innovation title:

1. Transportation Corridor Planning.
2. Innovative Mobility.
3. Community Mobility Planning.

The Community Mobility Planning Set-Aside is itself divided into two tracks:

1. Community-Based Transportation Planning.
2. Livable Centers Small-Area Planning.

The working collective reference for these separate programs in this document is Corridors, Community, Livability and Innovation Planning to call attention to the four component programs. While these are separate programs, each will benefit from coordination with the others through similar contracting processes, thematic coordination and/or cohort identification. The guidelines for all four component programs follow.

# Transportation Corridor Planning Set-Aside

## Program purpose

The Corridor Planning Set-Aside is focused on bringing DRCOG staff expertise and coordination to major corridors throughout the region to advance the RTP's investment priorities. Priority corridors will be multijurisdictional, supported by local jurisdictions and included in the RTP.

## Program goals

Priorities outlined in the RTP, including:

- Regional Transit.
- Safety/Vision Zero.
- Multimodal Mobility.
- Active Transportation.
- Air Quality.
- Freight.
- Community Impact.

Projects and priority corridors identified in Tables 3.1 through 3.9 of the RTP including:

- DRCOG administered multimodal capital projects and programs.
- Regional bus rapid transit projects.
- Corridor transit planning projects and program.
- Arterial safety/Regional Vision Zero projects and program.
- Other priorities outlined in the RTP.

## Eligible participants

While DRCOG will remain the sponsor of the funding, stakeholders eligible to submit project ideas include the following government agencies:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies, including RTD and DRCOG.

## Eligible project locations

All projects funded through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area.

Project locations should also:

- Impact multiple jurisdictions (such as corridors that cross jurisdictional boundaries or those that impact regional travel).
- Be on the Regional Roadway System (Principal Arterial or Major Regional Arterial), but not limited access freeways/interstates or local roads.

- Be identified in the current RTP.

## Eligible project types

The Transportation Corridor Planning Set-Aside is funded with federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines. These are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 2 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy.

The Transportation Corridor Planning Set-Aside focuses on multimodal transportation planning along major corridors throughout the region. This program will focus on corridors in need of initial planning, to set a shared vision for the corridor and to help identify project and program investment alternatives that can be advanced towards implementation. Priority will be to corridors in earlier staging periods in the RTP.

## Funding requirements

Transportation Corridor Planning Set-Aside funds will be retained by DRCOG. DRCOG will serve as the recipient of funds and develop an intergovernmental agreement with CDOT for DRCOG-led work. DRCOG may contract with consultants, vendors and others to develop plans within this program. While local agencies will be integral partners in the program, they will not participate as subrecipients of funds but rather participate in a stakeholder capacity. This format is anticipated to allow for improved cross-jurisdictional coordination on major planning projects, reduce the burden on local agencies and better integrate DRCOG staff expertise into regional planning initiatives.

## Matching funds

DRCOG will coordinate with CDOT to use toll credits to eliminate the match requirement on the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for this program. As such, no additional match will be required from program participants.

## Letter of interest

A two-step proposal solicitation process will be utilized wherein interested stakeholders will first submit a letter of interest including the nominating jurisdiction's contact information, a brief description of their proposed project and high-level estimate of resources required. Supplemental materials will be accepted if they contribute to the understanding of the project being proposed. The set-aside manager will make a letter of interest form available on the website prior to the proposal solicitation opening. Interested stakeholders are required to contact the set-aside manager before developing their letter(s) of interest for informal discussions about their project concept.

Following submittal of the proposals, DRCOG staff will review the letters of interest and request additional information if needed. Nominating agencies will then meet with the set-aside manager to discuss their submitted proposal(s), project details, eligibility, resource assumptions and potential issues, outcomes and partnerships. Based on the

letter of interest and discussions, DRCOG staff will evaluate and score proposals and invite eligible stakeholders to either participate in the Transportation Corridor Planning Set-Aside or submit a formal application, as necessary.

## Application

If needed, DRCOG staff will invite stakeholders to submit a formal, detailed project request following the letter of interest process. Staff will make the form, required attachments and any other requirements available on the website prior to opening the application process. If the letter of interest phase was able to narrow down the list of projects, then the application period may be unnecessary and DRCOG staff will work directly with the agencies that submitted proposals to gather any additional information necessary. Data that will assist applicants in completing their application form will be linked from the main set-aside page.

## Evaluation process

After receiving proposals, DRCOG staff will review submitted projects for eligibility and initiate the evaluation process. The evaluation process can involve DRCOG staff and/or an external panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. DRCOG requires that a minimum of four scorers conduct the evaluation, although at least six are preferred. To ensure consistency, each scorer must individually evaluate and score each application. Panel members may not score any applications from or closely associated with their own agency, to avoid potential bias.

For the Transportation Corridor Planning Set-Aside proposal solicitation, DRCOG will establish a project review panel to assist in the evaluation of submitted project concepts. Participants may include staff from DRCOG divisions:

- Transportation Planning and Operations.
- Regional Planning and Development.
- Communications and Marketing (Way to Go).
- Executive Office.

The review panel may also include external stakeholders and subject matter experts who may represent agencies such as the following:

- CDOT.
- RTD.
- Transportation Advisory Committee.

Each member of the panel will review the submittals and assign points to the criteria based on the information provided. The panel will convene to discuss the submittals and reach consensus on the final criteria points and total score for each project. DRCOG staff will take the panel's feedback into account and develop a recommendation of projects to be included in the program.

## Evaluation criteria

Each criterion in the table below will be scored on a scale from 0-5. These will then be multiplied by the weighted percentage and totaled to create a weighted average score.

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Vision alignment | Will a study of this corridor advance overarching themes and outcomes outlined in Metro Vision? | 0 – Not discussed or no impact.<br><br>5 – The project has clearly defined goals tied to Metro Vision themes and could help make a significant impact. | 10% |
| Alignment with RTP priorities | Will this corridor study advance goals outlined in the RTP, in particular safety, regional transit, multimodal options and air quality? Is this project or priority specifically identified in the plan? Is this corridor identified in a sub-plan like Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero or Coordinated Transit Plan? | 0 – Not discussed or no impact.<br><br>5 – The project has clearly defined goals tied to RTP priorities and could help make a significant impact. | 25% |
| Benefit to marginalized communities | Will this project provide benefits to marginalized communities in the region? | 0 – This project will not benefit marginalized communities or will negatively impact marginalized communities.<br><br>5 – This project will have a large positive benefit to marginalized communities. The majority of the project benefits are in a state-defined disproportionately impacted community. The area around this project has a high density of marginalized communities (per the DRCOG Index). | 10% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Regional impact | Does this corridor provide key regional transportation and community connections for the region? | 0 – This is a local corridor with limited to no impacts for the region.<br><br>5 – This is a critical corridor for many people in the region. | 20% |
| Readiness | Is this corridor study ready to proceed? Is this project in an earlier RTP staging period? Is there a coalition of regional partners and local jurisdictions prepared to support this study? | 0 – Improvements to this corridor are not urgently needed, it appears in a later staging period in the RTP and/or there is limited support from regional and local partners.<br><br>5 – This project is in an early RTP staging period and is supported and prioritized by local and regional partners. | 20% |
| Planning need | Is there a clear need to conduct this transportation planning effort? Are there urgent transportation challenges on this corridor? Are there barriers to regional collaboration on this corridor? Is this corridor key to the future of the region's transportation system? | 0 – Little to no urgent need for a study on this corridor led by DRCOG.<br><br>5 – Significant need for planning support to advance regional priorities on this corridor and/or address urgent mobility challenges. | 15% |

## Approval process

The recommended corridor(s) will be considered by the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and the Board of Directors.

## Website management

The most current version of this guideline document will be available publicly on the set-aside webpage. Prior to opening a proposal solicitation, DRCOG staff will post the necessary form(s) and any other resource information for interested stakeholders publicly on the set-aside webpage, along with contact information for nominating agencies to reach out with any questions. A link to this webpage will be included with any notices sent out to alert potential stakeholders to the location of these resources. Notices will be sent to members of DRCOG's TIP Notification List and other relevant

email lists. Active corridor plans may maintain their own webpages but should be linked through the main Transportation Corridor Planning webpage which will serve as a centralized landing page for the program.

## Stakeholder notification

Following Board action, DRCOG staff will notify impacted local agencies and other stakeholders of the corridor's selection and invite them to participate in a stakeholder committee for the plan. Multiple committees may exist (steering, technical, community/civic, etc.) depending on the corridor's characteristics and program need. At a minimum, all local government agencies along the corridor, CDOT (if impacts to a state highway) and RTD (if impacts to RTD service or properties) shall be included.

## Intergovernmental agreement

DRCOG will enter into an intergovernmental agreement with CDOT. Other involved local agencies will not need to participate in the intergovernmental agreement as DRCOG will remain the funding recipient and lead agency.

## Delays

DRCOG commits to meeting the requirements set out in the TIP Policy for all TIP funding. This includes meeting the requirements in the delays policy. The policy stipulates that for planning/study funds, the intergovernmental agreement must be executed and a kick-off meeting held by September 30 of the year in which funds are programmed in the TIP.

On October 1 (beginning of the next fiscal year), DRCOG will review progress and determine if a delay has occurred. If a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG, along with the stakeholders, will determine the reasons for its delay. The result will be an action plan, which will be reported to the DRCOG committees and Board.

DRCOG staff will appear before the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board to explain the reasons for the delay(s) and receive committee recommendation and ultimately DRCOG Board approval to continue. Any conditions established by the DRCOG Board in approving the delay become policy.

On the following July 1, nine months after the project phase(s) was initially delayed, DRCOG staff will review the project status to determine if the phase is still delayed. If the project is still delayed, the future course of action and penalty will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Board action may include, but is not limited to:

- Establish a deadline for initiating the phase.
- Cancel the phase or project funding and return to DRCOG for reprogramming.

# Innovative Mobility Set-Aside

## Program purpose

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 assessments, planning and development of resources. This set-aside will support the implementation of RTP 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 participants

Stakeholders and applicants eligible to submit project proposals include the following:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies, including RTD, the Regional Air Quality Council, 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 must provide documentation of support from applicable local government(s) and must emphasize the connection between their project proposal and responsible agencies involved in implementing solutions.

## Eligible project locations

All projects funded through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area.

## Eligible project types

The Innovative Mobility Set-Aside is funded with federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines. These are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 2 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy.

This program focuses on innovative solutions to mobility problems. A particular theme or focus may frame each proposal solicitation. Some example project topics may include, but are not limited to topics such as:

- Mobility data.
- Emerging modes.
- Curbside management.
- Shared mobility.
- Connected and automated vehicles.
- Transportation electrification.
- Mobility hubs.

## Funding requirements

The Innovative Mobility Set-Aside funds will be retained by DRCOG, which will solicit project proposals, select projects for funding, procure vendor/consultant services and manage the projects directly, with support from project partners.

DRCOG will serve as the recipient of funds and develop an intergovernmental agreement with CDOT for the program. DRCOG may contract with consultants, vendors and others to develop plans and projects within this program. While local agencies will be integral partners in the program, they will not participate as subrecipients of funds but rather participate in a stakeholder capacity.

## Matching funds

DRCOG will coordinate with CDOT to use toll credits to eliminate the match requirement on the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for this program. As such, no additional match will be required from program participants.

## Letter of interest

A two-step proposal solicitation process will be utilized wherein interested stakeholders will first submit a letter of interest including the partner agency's contact information, a brief description of their project proposal and a high-level estimate of resources required. Supplemental materials will be accepted if they contribute to the understanding of the project proposal. The set-aside manager will make a letter of interest form available on the website prior to the proposal solicitation opening. Interested stakeholders are required to reach out to the set-aside manager prior to developing their letter of interest for informal discussions about their project concept.

Following submittal of the proposals, DRCOG staff will review the letter of interest and request additional information if needed. Nominating agencies will then meet with the set-aside manager to discuss their submitted proposal(s), project details, eligibility, resource assumptions and potential issues, outcomes and partnerships. Based on the

letter of interest and discussions, DRCOG staff will evaluate and score proposals and invite eligible stakeholders to submit a formal application, if necessary.

## Application

If needed, DRCOG staff will invite stakeholders to submit a formal, detailed project request following the letter of interest process. Staff will make the form, required attachments and any other requirements available on the website prior to opening the application process. If the letter of interest phase was able to narrow down the list of proposals to the number able to be managed by the program than the application period may be unnecessary, and DRCOG staff will work directly with the agencies that submitted the successful letters of interest to gather any additional information necessary. Data that will assist applicants in completing their application form will be linked from the individual set-aside page.

## Evaluation process

Once the proposal solicitation closes, DRCOG staff will review submitted proposals for eligibility and initiate the evaluation process. The evaluation process can involve DRCOG staff and/or an external panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. DRCOG requires that a minimum of four scorers conduct the evaluation, although at least six are preferred. To ensure consistency, each scorer must individually evaluate and score each application. Panel members may not score any applications from or closely associated with their own agency, to avoid potential bias.

For the Innovative Mobility Set-Aside proposal solicitation, DRCOG will establish a review panel to assist in the evaluation of submitted proposals. Participants may include staff from DRCOG divisions:

- Transportation Planning and Operations.
- Regional Planning and Development.
- Communications and Marketing (Way to Go).
- Area Agency on Aging.
- Executive Office.

The review panel may also include external stakeholders and subject matter experts who may represent public and nonprofit agencies related to:

- Local, regional and statewide transportation.
- Transit and mobility services.
- Education and research.

Each member of the panel will review the submittals and assign points to the criteria based on the information provided. The panel will convene to discuss the submittals and reach consensus on the final criteria points and total score for each project and develop a recommendation of projects to be included in the program.

## Evaluation criteria

Each criterion in the table will be scored by members of the review panel.

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Vision alignment | The project's ability to contribute to the implementation of Metro Vision and its related outcomes. | Low – This project does not contribute to the implementation of Metro Vision.<br><br>Medium – This project contributes to some aspects of the implementation of Metro Vision.<br><br>High – This project has a strong relationship to the implementation of Metro Vision. | 10% |
| Alignment with RTP priorities | The project's ability to contribute to priorities as outlined in the RTP, including multimodal mobility, safety, air quality, regional transit, active transportation and freight. | Low – This project does not address any RTP priorities and/or it is not clear how priorities will be addressed.<br><br>Medium – This project addresses RTP priorities in some capacity, but potential for impact is limited.<br><br>High – This project addresses RTP priorities and potential for impact is strong. | 10% |
| Collaboration and partnerships | The extent to which the project involves multi-agency and/or multi-jurisdictional collaboration and learning. | Low – This project does not include partnerships or collaboration.<br><br>Medium – This project acknowledges the potential for partnerships and/or collaboration, but it is not clearly defined.<br><br>High – Partnerships and collaboration are clearly defined and integral to the project. | 15% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Innovation | The extent to which the project involves an innovative and/or new practice, technique, concept, technology or mode. | Low – The project is not innovative.<br><br>Medium – The project demonstrates some innovative components.<br><br>High – The project is very innovative. | 25% |
| Transferability | The extent to which the solution(s) and/or lesson(s) can be scaled and replicated to other jurisdictions, contexts and/or situations within the DRCOG boundaries. | Low – There is no or extremely limited potential to scale and replicate this project/solution regionally.<br><br>Medium – There is some potential to implement project/solution in other regional contexts, but it is not strongly demonstrated.<br><br>High – There is strong potential to implement the project/solution in a variety of regional contexts. | 15% |
| Project readiness | The extent to which the project partner(s) demonstrates they are prepared to complete the project and support subsequent implementation. | Low – Agency or project shows no signs of preparedness; lack of pre-planning and/or necessary experience.<br><br>Medium – Agency or project has completed some prerequisites or planning but has not completed all necessary steps.<br><br>High – Agency or project demonstrates full preparedness, including completing all necessary prerequisites. | 10% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Community Impact | The extent to which the project benefits marginalized communities.<br><br>DRCOG defines marginalized communities to include people of color, people with low-income, older adults over 60, youth 17 and younger, people with limited English proficiency, people with a disability, people born outside of the United States, housing cost-burdened households, households with no motor vehicle and single parent households. | Low – Project will not benefit marginalized communities.<br><br>Medium – Project has potential to benefit marginalized communities, but benefits are not clear or proven.<br><br>High – Project will have clear and proven benefits to marginalized communities and/or those communities have confirmed or expressed interest and/or need for project. | 15% |

## Approval process

The recommended project proposal(s) will be considered by the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and the Board of Directors.

## Website management

The most current version of this guideline document will be available publicly on the set-aside webpage. Prior to opening the proposal solicitation, DRCOG staff will post the necessary form(s) and any other resource information for applicants publicly on the set-aside webpage, along with contact information for nominating agencies to reach out with any questions. A link to this webpage will be included with any notices sent out to alert potential applicants to the location of these resources. Notices will be sent to members of DRCOG's TIP Notification List and other relevant email lists. Resultant products may be linked at this page as a future reference for other agencies in the region interested in similar issues.

## Stakeholder notification

Following Board action, DRCOG staff will notify project partners and other stakeholders of the project selection. Project partners will be consulted as scopes of work and projects are kicked off.

## Intergovernmental agreement

DRCOG will enter into an intergovernmental agreement with CDOT. Other involved local agencies will not need to participate in the intergovernmental agreement as DRCOG will remain the funding recipient and lead agency.

## Delays

DRCOG commits to meeting the requirements set out in the TIP Policy for all TIP funding. This includes meeting the requirements in the delays policy. The policy stipulates that for planning/study funds, the intergovernmental agreement must be executed and a kick-off meeting held by September 30 of the year in which funds are programmed in the TIP.

On October 1 (beginning of the next fiscal year), DRCOG will review progress and determine if a delay has occurred. If a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG, along with the stakeholders, will determine the reasons for its delay. The result will be an action plan, which will be reported to the DRCOG committees and Board.

DRCOG staff will appear before the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board to explain the reasons for the delay(s) and receive committee recommendation and ultimately DRCOG Board approval to continue. Any conditions established by the DRCOG Board in approving the delay become policy.

On the following July 1, nine months after the project phase(s) was initially delayed, DRCOG staff will review the project status to determine if the phase is still delayed. If the project is still delayed, the future course of action and penalty will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Board action may include, but is not limited to:

- Establish a deadline for initiating the phase.
- Cancel the phase or project funding and return to DRCOG for reprogramming.

# Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside

## Program purpose

The Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside works to identify and address the needs of marginalized communities in the region. These plans will center marginalized voices through creative community engagement, including partnering with community organizations.

## Program goals

- Expand access to opportunity for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities.
- Address the needs of disproportionately impacted and marginalized communities in the region.
- Support diverse, livable communities.
- Center voices of marginalized communities in transportation planning both in their community and around the region.
- Develop innovative engagement methods to center marginalized voices, including partnering with respected community-based organizations.

## Eligible participants

While DRCOG will remain the sponsor of the funding, stakeholders eligible to submit project ideas include the following government agencies:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies, including RTD, the Regional Air Quality Council and DRCOG.
- State of Colorado offices and agencies (including CDOT) and Colorado public colleges and universities.
- Nonprofits, including community-based organizations, may submit project ideas, however they must also include a letter of support from the impacted local government detailing their support for submission and their intention to implement the project.

## Eligible project locations

All projects funded through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area.

Projects are expected to be located in areas with a high number of residents from the region's marginalized communities including: people with low-income, people of color, older adults over 60, youth 17 and younger, people with limited English proficiency, people with a disability, people born outside the United States, households that are housing cost-burdened, households without a vehicle and single-parent households.

## Eligible project types

The Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside is funded with federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. As such, projects must, at a minimum, meet federal eligibility guidelines. These are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 2 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy.

Sponsors are encouraged to consider the program goals in developing project concepts. A non-exhaustive list of examples of community-based planning projects is included below.

- Community-based transportation plans that help identify needs of marginalized communities in the region and center marginalized voices.
- Site assessments to determine the feasibility of projects, such as first/last mile strategies and infrastructure improvements.
- Local Vision Zero or safety-related planning.
- Small-area active transportation planning.
- Corridor plans.
- Transit or microtransit studies.
- First/last mile studies.

Please note that all proposed projects must deliver an implementation strategy, such as:

- A plan for adoption of the plan, policies or ordinances developed.
- A project list (to inform capital improvement program prioritization, which could include future Transportation Improvement Program project development).
- An implementation matrix with near-, mid- and long-term priorities associated with appropriate stakeholders.

The Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside program also seeks to center the voices of community members throughout the development of the plan. As such, all studies or plans will also include community engagement as a substantial part of the scope of work given the focus on marginalized communities.

## Funding requirements

Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside funds will be retained by DRCOG. DRCOG will serve as the recipient of funds and develop an intergovernmental agreement with CDOT for DRCOG-led work. DRCOG may contract with consultants, vendors and others to develop plans within this program. While local agencies will be integral partners in the program, they will not participate as subrecipients of funds but rather participate in a stakeholder capacity. This format is anticipated to allow for improved cross-jurisdictional coordination on major planning projects, reduce the burden on local agencies and better integrate DRCOG staff expertise into regional planning initiatives.

## Matching funds

DRCOG will coordinate with CDOT to use toll credits to eliminate the match requirement on the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for this program. As such, no additional match will be required from program participants.

## Letter of interest

A two-step proposal solicitation process will be utilized wherein interested stakeholders will first submit a letter of interest including the nominating jurisdiction's contact information, a brief description of their proposed project and high-level estimate of resources required. Supplemental materials will be accepted if they contribute to the understanding of the project being proposed. The set-aside manager will make a letter of interest form available on the website prior to the proposal solicitation opening. Interested stakeholders are required to contact the set-aside manager before developing their letter(s) of interest for informal discussions about their project concept.

Following submittal of the proposals, DRCOG staff will review the letter of interest and request additional information if needed. Nominating agencies will then meet with the set-aside manager to discuss their submitted proposal(s), project details, eligibility, resource assumptions and potential issues, outcomes and partnerships. Based on the discussions, DRCOG staff may invite eligible stakeholders to apply to participate in the Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside.

## Application

If needed, DRCOG staff will invite stakeholders to submit a formal, detailed request following the letter of interest process. Staff will make the form, required attachments and any other requirements available on the website prior to opening the application process. If the letter of interest phase was able to narrow down the list of projects to the number able to be managed by the program than the application period may be unnecessary and DRCOG staff will work directly with the agencies that submitted the successful letters of interest to gather any additional information necessary. Data that will assist applicants in completing their application form will be linked from the individual set-aside page.

## Evaluation process

Once the proposal solicitation closes, DRCOG staff will review submitted projects for eligibility and initiate the evaluation process. The evaluation process can involve DRCOG staff and/or an external panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. DRCOG requires that a minimum of four scorers conduct the evaluation, although at least six are preferred. To ensure consistency, each scorer must individually evaluate and score each application. Panel members may not score any applications from or closely associated with their own agency, to avoid potential bias.

For the Community-Based Transportation Planning Set-Aside proposal solicitation, DRCOG will establish a project review panel to assist in the evaluation of submitted project concepts. Participants may include staff from DRCOG divisions:

- Transportation Planning and Operations.
- Regional Planning and Development.
- Communications and Marketing (Way to Go).
- Area Agency on Aging.
- Executive Office.

The review panel may also include external stakeholders and subject matter experts who may represent agencies such as the following:

- CDOT (Region 1, Region 4 and Division of Transportation Development).
- RTD.

Each member of the panel will review the submittals and assign points to the criteria based on the information provided. The panel will convene to discuss the submittals and reach consensus on the final criteria points and total score for each project and develop a recommendation of projects to be included in the program.

## Evaluation criteria

Each criterion in the table below will be scored on a scale from 0-5. These will then be multiplied by the weighted percentage and totaled to create a weighted average score.

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Vision alignment | Will a study of this corridor advance overarching themes and outcomes outlined in Metro Vision? | 0 – Not discussed or no impact.<br><br>5 – The project has clearly defined goals tied to Metro Vision themes and could help make a significant impact. | 10% |
| Alignment with RTP priorities | Will this corridor study advance goals outlined in the RTP, in particular safety, regional transit, multimodal options and air quality? | 0 – Not discussed or no impact.<br><br>5 – The project has clearly defined goals tied to RTP themes and could help make a significant impact. | 10% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Community need/ level of disadvantage | Is community identified disadvantaged? Does nominated community focus on areas with a high number of low-income people, people of color, people without access to a vehicle, people with limited English proficiency or people with disabilities? What is the average DRCOG Index score for the community? | 0 – This project will not benefit marginalized communities or will negatively impact marginalized communities.<br><br>5 – This project will have a large positive benefit to marginalized communities. | 25% |
| Community engagement | Has the project sponsor considered the importance of engaging the community and how the engagement will impact the study? Are engagement opportunities and challenges identified? Are any community-based organizations identified as partners? | 0 – Limited or no consideration for engagement or how to reach target population. Minimal focus or attention on importance of engagement.<br><br>5 – Clear plan, consideration and/or desire for reaching community. | 20% |
| Readiness | Is there a clear goal and scope for this study? Is the nominating agency prepared to partner for this study? Is there capacity at the identified community organization to support this project? If this project is nominated by a nonprofit, is there strong and clear support from the local government for the study and implementation. | 0 – This study is not ready to proceed in a timely manner. Additional relationships, planning or coordinating are required. This project is not focused on an implementable outcome.<br><br>5 – This study has a clearly defined scope and is ready to proceed. Related planning efforts have outlined a clear need for this study. Local partners are engaged and available to support this effort as a top priority. Outcome is likely highly implementable. | 15% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Planning need | Is there a clear transportation need identified in the focus community? Are there specific transportation barriers or challenges identified? Is there a lack of planning capacity within the local jurisdiction for this project? | 0 – There is little to no urgent planning need.<br><br>5 – There are clearly defined transportation challenges or barriers faced by the target population that could be addressed through a community-based transportation plan. The need is very urgent. | 20% |

## Approval process

The recommended planning project(s) will be considered by the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and Board of Directors.

## Website management

The most current version of this guideline document will be available publicly on the set-aside webpage. Prior to opening a proposal solicitation, DRCOG staff will post the form(s) and any other resource information for interested stakeholders publicly on the set-aside webpage, along with contact information for nominating agencies to reach out with any questions. A link to this webpage will be included with any notices sent out to alert potential stakeholders to the location of these resources. Notices will be sent to members of DRCOG's TIP Notification List and other relevant email lists. Resultant planning projects may be posted to this page as a future resource for other agencies seeking guidance on similar issues.

## Stakeholder notification

Following Board action, DRCOG staff will notify impacted local agencies and other stakeholders of the community's selection and invite them to participate in a stakeholder committee for the plan.

## Intergovernmental agreement

DRCOG will enter into an intergovernmental agreement with CDOT. Other involved local agencies will not need to participate in the intergovernmental agreement as DRCOG will remain the funding recipient and lead agency.

## Delays

DRCOG commits to meeting the requirements set out in the TIP Policy for all TIP funding. This includes meeting the requirements in the delays policy. The policy stipulates that for planning/study funds, the intergovernmental agreement must be

executed and a kick-off meeting held by September 30 of the year in which funds are programmed in the TIP.

On October 1 (beginning of the next fiscal year), DRCOG will review progress and determine if a delay has occurred. If a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG, along with the stakeholders, will determine the reasons for its delay. The result will be an action plan, which will be reported to the DRCOG committees and Board.

DRCOG staff will appear before the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board to explain the reasons for the delay(s) and receive committee recommendation and ultimately DRCOG Board approval to continue. Any conditions established by the DRCOG Board in approving the delay become policy.

On the following July 1, nine months after the project phase(s) was initially delayed, DRCOG staff will review the project status to determine if the phase is still delayed. If the project is still delayed, the future course of action and penalty will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Board action may include, but is not limited to:

- Establish a deadline for initiating the phase.
- Cancel the phase or project funding and return to DRCOG for reprogramming.

# Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside

## Program purpose

The goal of this program is to advance local planning in and around centers and nodes to support increasing livability, connectivity, and multimodal access in key centers and corridors. Metro Vision establishes a wide range of these centers as important locations for new and existing housing and jobs. These centers are connected by the region's multimodal transportation system or will be connected as identified in the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan.

## 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/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 participants

Project ideas may be submitted by the following agencies:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies, including RTD, DRCOG, transportation management organizations/associations and other nonprofits serving a regional 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 government(s), due to the connection between planning outcomes and implementation of projects by governmental partner agency(ies).

## Eligible project locations

All projects funded through DRCOG must be located in and/or provide benefits to the metropolitan planning organization geographical area.

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.
- Rapid transit station areas.
- Other employment, activity and housing centers which would benefit from 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. These are outlined by the Federal Highway Administration as well as in Section 2 of Appendix B of the TIP Policy.

Sponsors are encouraged to consider the program purpose and 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 that are connected by the region's multimodal transportation system 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 components:

- First and final mile access studies and plans.
- Transit-oriented development plans.
- Redevelopment plans.
- Zoning and design standards.
- Market analysis.
- Development feasibility analysis.
- Parking studies.
- Infrastructure improvement prioritization.
- Implementation planning.
- Placemaking.
- Access to opportunity analysis.
- Housing assessments and analysis.
- Cost/benefit analysis.

DRCOG may organize cohorts of potential sponsors interested in a common topic, issue or opportunity to work in parallel with a technical assistance team.

Regardless of the project type, if the plan, study or analysis is to focus on public infrastructure improvements, it should include a list of prioritized near- and long-term investments. Similarly, if the plan is to focus on development or redevelopment, it should identify barriers to additional housing and business development.

Eligible plans and studies should not advance specific infrastructure investments to any full or partial design phase, nor include work toward environmental clearances. Consideration of infrastructure investment alternatives must involve the asset/right-of-way owner in the project scope.

## Matching funds

DRCOG will coordinate with CDOT to use toll credits to eliminate the match requirement on the federal Surface Transportation Block Grant funds for this program. As such, no additional match will be required from program participants.

## Letter of interest

A two-step proposal solicitation process will be utilized wherein interested stakeholders will first submit a letter of interest including the nominating jurisdiction's contact information, a brief description of their proposed project and high-level estimate of resources required. Supplemental materials will be accepted if they contribute to the understanding of the project being proposed. The set-aside manager will make a letter of interest form available on the website prior to the proposal solicitation opening. Interested stakeholders are required to contact the set-aside manager before developing their letter(s) of interest for informal discussions about their project concept.

Following submittal of the proposals, DRCOG staff will review the letter of interest and request additional information if needed. Nominating agencies will then meet with the set-aside manager to discuss their submitted proposal(s), project details, eligibility, resource assumptions and potential issues, outcomes and partnerships. Based on the discussions, DRCOG staff may invite eligible stakeholders to apply to participate in the Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside.

## Application

If needed, DRCOG staff will invite stakeholders to submit a formal, detailed request following the letter of interest process. Staff will make the form, required attachments and any other requirements available on the website prior to opening the application process. If the letter of interest phase was able to narrow down the list of projects to the number able to be managed by the program than the application period may be unnecessary and DRCOG staff will work directly with the agencies that submitted the successful letters of interest to gather any additional information necessary. Data that will assist applicants in completing their application form will be linked from the individual set-aside page.

## Evaluation process

Once the proposal solicitation closes, DRCOG staff will review submitted projects for eligibility and initiate the evaluation process. The evaluation process can involve DRCOG staff and/or an external panel selected by DRCOG staff for their expertise in relevant fields. DRCOG requires that a minimum of four scorers conduct the evaluation,

although at least six are preferred. To ensure consistency, each scorer must individually evaluate and score each application. Panel members may not score any applications from or closely associated with their own agency, to avoid potential bias.

For this proposal solicitation, DRCOG will establish a project review panel to assist in the evaluation of submitted project concepts. Participants may include staff from DRCOG divisions:

- Transportation Planning and Operations.
- Regional Planning and Development.
- Communications and Marketing (Way to Go).
- Area Agency on Aging.
- Executive Office.

The review panel may also include external stakeholders and subject matter experts who may represent agencies such as the following:

- CDOT (Region 1, Region 4 and Division of Transportation Development).
- RTD.

Each member of the panel will review the submittals and assign points to the criteria based on the information provided. The panel will convene to discuss the submittals and reach consensus on the final criteria points and total score for each project and develop a recommendation of projects to be included in the program.

## Evaluation criteria

Each criterion in the table will be scored on a scale from 0-5. These will then be multiplied by the weighted percentage and totaled to create a weighted average score.

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project information | Background information on the project, plan or study. | This section is not scored. | None |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Marginalized communities | The potential for the plan, project or study to expand access to opportunity for marginalized communities. | Low – Outcomes of plan, project or study would minimally expand access to opportunity for marginalized communities.<br><br>Medium – Outcomes of plan, project or study would somewhat expand access to opportunity for marginalized communities.<br><br>High – Outcomes of plan, project or study would significantly expand access to opportunity for marginalized communities. | 15% |
| Metro Vision – Set-aside goals | The potential for the plan, project or study to contribute towards the set-aside purpose and goals which are derived from Metro Vision. | Low – Clear nexus with at least one of the set-aside goals derived from Metro Vision.<br><br>Medium – Clear nexus with at least two set-aside goals derived from Metro Vision.<br><br>High – Clear nexus with at least three set-aside goals derived from Metro Vision. | 20% |
| Metro Vision – Integration of land use, housing and multimodal transportation | The extent to which the proposed planning effort meaningfully integrates land use and/or housing strategies with multimodal transportation strategies. | Low – Limited integration; primarily transportation or primarily land use without clear linkage.<br><br>Medium – Clear relationship between land use and multimodal elements.<br><br>High – Strong, mutually reinforcing integration of land use, housing, and multimodal strategies that advance Metro Vision outcomes. | 20% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Metro Vision – Transportation objectives | The potential for the plan, project or study to contribute towards other transportation-related objectives from Metro Vision. | Low – Clear nexus with at least one additional transportation-related objective from Metro Vision.<br><br>Medium – Clear nexus with at least two additional transportation-related objectives from Metro Vision.<br><br>High – Clear nexus with at least three additional transportation-related objectives from Metro Vision. | 5% |
| 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) priorities | The extent to which the plan, project or study has a clear nexus with the priorities identified in the DRCOG 2050 RTP: multimodal mobility, freight, active transportation, safety, air quality, and regional transit. | Low – Clear nexus with at least one priority.<br><br>Medium – Clear nexus with at least two priorities.<br><br>High – Clear nexus with at least three priorities. | 10% |
| Project readiness | The extent to which the sponsor demonstrates that they are prepared to participate in and support the plan, project or study and that the plan, project or study is identified as a local priority. | Low – Limited commitment to support the project and limited connection to adopted plans or upcoming planning and development activity.<br><br>Medium – Substantial commitment to support the project or substantial connection to adopted plans or upcoming planning and development activity.<br><br>High – Substantial commitment to support the project and substantial connection to adopted plans or upcoming planning and development activity. | 20% |

| Category | Description | Scoring range | Weight |
|---|---|---|---|
| Innovation or transferability | The extent to which the project involves an innovative practice or technique and/or potential transferability of project process or products. | Low – No potential for outcome to provide proof of concept for a process or practice. No transferability locally or regionally.<br><br>Medium – Limited potential for outcome to provide proof of concept for a process or practice. Concept may prove transferable to other projects locally or regionally.<br><br>High – Strong potential for outcome to provide proof of concept for a process or practice including potential transferability to other projects locally and regionally. | 10% |

## Approval process

The recommended planning project(s) will be considered by the DRCOG Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee, and Board of Directors.

## Website management

The most current version of this guideline document will be available publicly on the set-aside webpage. Prior to opening a proposal solicitation, DRCOG staff will post the form(s) and any other resource information for interested stakeholders publicly on the set-aside webpage, along with contact information for nominating agencies to reach out with any questions. A link to this webpage will be included with any notices sent out to alert potential stakeholders to the location of these resources. Notices will be sent to members of DRCOG's TIP Notification List and other relevant email lists. Resultant planning projects may be posted to this page as a future resource for other agencies seeking guidance on similar issues.

## Stakeholder notification

Following Board action, DRCOG staff will notify impacted local agencies and other stakeholders of the project's selection and invite them to participate in a stakeholder committee for the plan. In the case of a cohort project, each agency identified as interested in the cohort topic and capable of participating will be invited to participate.

## Intergovernmental agreement

DRCOG will enter into an intergovernmental agreement with CDOT. Other involved local agencies will not need to participate in the intergovernmental agreement as DRCOG will remain the funding recipient and lead agency.

## Delays

DRCOG commits to meeting the requirements set out in the TIP Policy for all TIP funding. This includes meeting the requirements in the delays policy. The policy stipulates that for planning/study funds, the intergovernmental agreement must be executed and a kick-off meeting held by September 30 of the year in which funds are programmed in the TIP.

On October 1 (beginning of the next fiscal year), DRCOG will review progress and determine if a delay has occurred. If a delay is encountered (project phase being analyzed has not been initiated by September 30), DRCOG, along with the stakeholders, will determine the reasons for its delay. The result will be an action plan, which will be reported to the DRCOG committees and Board.

DRCOG staff will appear before the Transportation Advisory Committee, Regional Transportation Committee and DRCOG Board to explain the reasons for the delay(s) and receive committee recommendation and ultimately DRCOG Board approval to continue. Any conditions established by the DRCOG Board in approving the delay become policy.

On the following July 1, nine months after the project phase(s) was initially delayed, DRCOG staff will review the project status to determine if the phase is still delayed. If the project is still delayed, the future course of action and penalty will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Board action may include, but is not limited to:

- Establish a deadline for initiating the phase.
- Cancel the phase or project funding and return to DRCOG for reprogramming.