



MEMBERS:

- City of Lacey
- City of Olympia
- City of Rainier
- City of Tenino
- City of Tumwater
- City of Yelm
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Town of Bucoda
- Thurston County
- North Thurston Public Schools
- Olympia School District
- Tumwater School District
- Intercity Transit
- LOTT Clean Water Alliance
- Port of Olympia
- PUD No. 1 of Thurston County

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

- Lacey Fire District #3
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- The Evergreen State College
- Thurston Conservation District
- Thurston Economic Development Council
- Timberland Regional Library

MEMORANDUM

TO: Transportation Policy Board

FROM: Paul Brewster, Interim Planning Manager

DATE: April 1, 2026

SUBJECT: 2026 Call for Projects Process Final Review and Recommendation

PURPOSE

To present the final 2026 Call for Projects process for Transportation Policy Board (Board) review and action, including a recommendation to the Council.

Summary:

- In 2026 TRPC will award approximately \$16 million in federal transportation grant funds to priority projects
- An additional \$1,242,000 will be awarded through the Rural Community Support Program (RCSP).
- Minor refinements to the evaluation criteria are recommended based on Board direction and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) input.
- For more detail, reference the attached “Draft 2026 Call for Projects Process Guidance and Application Instructions.”
- Staff request the Board take action on April 8 to approve a recommendation to the Council to approve the 2026 Call for Projects Process.
- The Council is scheduled to take action on the Call for Projects on May 1.

REQUESTED ACTION

1. Approve a recommendation to the Council to approve the 2026 Call for Projects Process outlined in this memorandum, including:
 - a. Final revisions to the Evaluation Criteria
 - b. Rural Community Support Program administrative changes
 - c. Regional priority set-asides
2. Identify up to five Board members to serve on the Project Evaluation Subcommittee



Elissa Gertler
Executive Director

pb:ss
Attachment

2411 Chandler Court SW
Olympia, WA 98502
360-956-7575
360-741-2545 Fax
www.trpc.org

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

The updated Title VI, ADA, and Transportation Barriers criterion (formerly titled 'Equity') aligns with TRPC's adopted Title VI Plan and federal nondiscrimination requirements. The refinement clarifies how benefits and burdens to protected populations and individuals experiencing transportation barriers are evaluated within TRPC's Call for Project's existing scoring framework.

BACKGROUND

TRPC conducts a regional Call for Projects to allocate federal transportation funding to projects that advance adopted regional priorities. This competitive, performance-based process ensures that limited federal resources are directed toward projects that improve system efficiency, safety, accessibility, and resiliency.

The Board plays a central role by:

- Confirming the policy framework for project selection,
- Validating project scoring, and
- Forwarding a funding recommendation to the Council.

This memorandum summarizes the final process elements requiring Board action.

Regional Funding Priorities (No change)

The 2026 Call for Projects will invite proposals that advance TRPC's adopted Regional Funding Priorities.:

1. **Active Transportation** – Projects that support walking and bicycling and improve connectivity to public transportation services.
2. **Efficiency** – Projects that support adopted vehicle level-of-service standards; support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) goals; and decrease annual per-capita vehicle miles traveled in the Thurston Region.
3. **Maintenance** – Projects that support cost-effective preservation (e.g., a pavement "Best First" approach), meet Transit Asset Management targets, keep bridges in a state of good repair, and maintain the transportation system in a state of good repair.
4. **Planning** – Planning activities that identify recommendations and project lists, support regional coordination, or provide data to inform project development and efficient system operations.
5. **Resiliency** – Projects that improve operational and structural resiliency of the transportation system to natural and technological hazards and disruptions.

Federal Funding Programs and Distribution (No Change)

TRPC anticipates awarding approximately \$16 million through Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) programs. Funding is distributed by geographic area, with a portion available as flexible funding (Table 1).

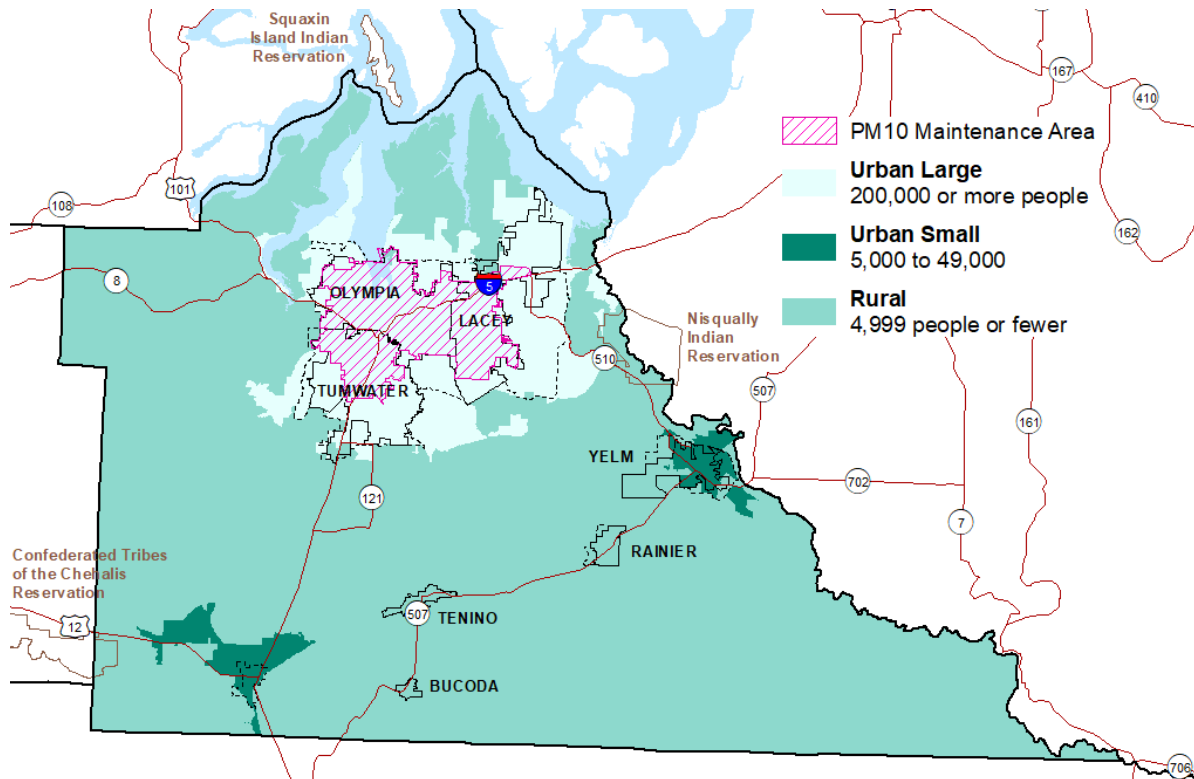
Table 1. Estimated 2026 Federal Funding Distribution by Program and Geographic Area

Geographic Area	STBG (FFYs 2030–2032)	CMAQ (FFYs 2028–2030)	Total
<i>Urban Large</i>	\$7,124,141 (65%)	N/A	\$7,124,141
<i>Urban Small</i>	\$812,258 (7%)	N/A	\$812,258
<i>Rural</i>	\$822,149 (8%)	N/A	\$822,149
<i>Flexible</i>	\$2,241,452 (20%)	N/A	\$2,241,452
<i>PM10 AQMA</i>	N/A	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000
Total	\$11,000,000	\$5,000,000	\$16,000,000

Notes:

- Flexible STBG funds may be awarded in any geographic area to support priority projects and maximize federal fund utilization.
- CMAQ funds must be used within the PM10 Air Quality Maintenance Area (AQMA).
- STBG funds are programmed for obligation in FFYs 2030–2032; CMAQ for FFYs 2028–2030.

Map 1: Geographic Areas for Federal Transportation Grant Funding Distribution



Evaluation Criteria – Final Recommendations

All federal applications are evaluated using TRPC's adopted criteria, which are aligned with regional transportation goals and policies. Refer to the attached "Draft 2026 Process Guidance and Application Instructions" for more detail.

Projects are scored and ranked within their designated geographic category (Urban Large, Urban Small, or Rural – see Map 1). Each criterion is rated from minus one-point to a maximum of two-points.

- **Urban Large projects:** Maximum of 12 points (six criteria).
- **Urban Small and Rural projects:** Maximum of 10 points (five criteria; Urban Centers criterion does not apply).

Key Updates Based on Board Direction and TAC Input

On March 11, the Board provided staff direction on proposed refinements to the evaluation criteria. Staff presented these updates to the TAC on March 17 and requested feedback.

The following reflects the final recommended updates:

- **Urban Centers and Corridors (Neighborhood Centers):** Maintain the one-point criterion for projects located within one-half mile of a Neighborhood Center. Applicants must demonstrate consistency with an adopted plan, policy, or zoning code, replacing the map-based approach used in prior cycles.
- **Title VI, ADA, & Transportation Barriers** – Reframe the "Equity" criterion to strengthen outcomes with TRPC's Title VI Plan. Projects improving water quality and fish habitat will receive one-point. No additional changes are proposed.
- **Active Transportation** – Recognize rural improvements for one-point and require complete street treatment for two-points. No additional changes are proposed.
- **Safety** – Recognize trail safety improvements for one-point. No additional changes are proposed.

Criteria Not Recommended for 2026

Both TAC members and staff recommend not introducing new evaluation criteria for the 2026 Call for Projects. Maintaining a stable evaluation framework for 2026 supports fairness, transparency, and consistency for applicants, while allowing time for more deliberate development and evaluation of potential future criteria updates.

Specific feedback on the Board's proposed new one-point criteria is summarized below:

- **Existing Federal Investment:**
The intent of this proposal is already addressed under the Efficient Use of Federal Funds criterion, which awards up to two points for projects with prior federal investment. Adding an additional point would duplicate scoring and disproportionately advantage projects that have already received funding.
- **Multijurisdictional Partnerships/Benefits:**
TAC members expressed support for the concept and its alignment with regional collaboration goals. However, both TAC and staff determined that additional time is needed to define what qualifies as a meaningful partnership or regional benefit and how it would be applied consistently across project types. This criterion is better suited for consideration in a future update to the process.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend the Board consider the following:

1. *The Board defer consideration of new criteria until after completion of the 2026 Call for Projects cycle.*
2. *The Board forward a recommendation to the Council to approve the proposed refinements to the existing evaluation criteria.*

Rural Community Support Program (RCSP) Administrative Change Recommendation

The RCSP provides targeted funding for rural and tribal communities. Eligible applicants include:

- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- City of Rainier
- City of Tenino
- Town of Bucoda

Since the Board's February 11 briefing, staff have met with eligible communities to discuss their project needs. The Nisqually Tribe, the cities of Rainier and Tenino, and the Town of Bucoda value this funding program and plan to submit proposals in 2026.

Key Details:

- Applicants support TRPC splitting the funding equally among the communities
- The City of Lacey will administer the 2026 funds and retain 13.5 percent for program administration, consistent with pas practice and level of effort required.
- Thurston County will continue administering the 2024 set-aside.

Table 2. 2026 Combined Rural Community Support Program (RCSP) Funding

Reimbursement Lead	Amount	Availability For Reimbursement
<i>2024 Set Aside (preapproved) - Thurston County</i>	\$550,000	Beginning CY 2027
<i>2026 Set Aside (recommended) - City Of Lacey</i>	\$692,000	Half in 2030; Remainder in 2031
Total to Award	\$1,242,000	

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend the Board forward a recommendation the Council to approve the City of Lacey as the administrator for the 2026 RCSP set-aside.

Regional Set-Aside Recommendation

Regional set-asides provide the Council an opportunity to prioritize funding for specific initiatives or programs that advance regional goals outside of the competitive scoring process.

This is the Board's final opportunity to identify and recommend any regional set-asides for inclusion in the 2026 Call for Projects. Any set-asides recommended at this stage will be forwarded to the Council for consideration and approval on May 1, 2026.

Staff Recommendation

Staff request the Board review and finalize any priority regional set-asides, including whether to establish additional set-asides beyond what is proposed below.

Staff recommend the Board forward a recommendation to the Council to:

- *Approve an \$800,000 STBG set-aside to fund the 2026 Rural Community Support Program.*
 - *This set-aside enables the City of Lacey to submit a priority, non-competitive proposal to administer the program and distribute funds to eligible rural and tribal applicants.*
 - *The City of Lacey will retain 13.5% of program funds for administration, consistent with past practice and the level of effort required to manage contracting, invoicing, and reimbursement.*

Project Evaluation Subcommittee Recommendation

Staff recommend the Board create a Project Evaluation Subcommittee consisting of up to five representatives, like structure used for the 2024 Call for Projects. At least two meetings are expected:

1. Meet mid-June to early July to review and validate project scores.
2. Meet in the early fall to follow up with applicants and provide staff guidance on developing a funding recommendation for the Board to review and act on in October.

This two-step approach ensures timely validation of scores and provides sufficient time for thoughtful evaluation of proposals before the Board makes its recommendation.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend the Board identify up to five members to form a Project Evaluation Subcommittee.

2026 Call for Projects Schedule (No Changes)

The 2026 Call for Projects Schedule applies to both the federal and the Rural Community Support Program grant programs. The following schedule provides a structured timeline for application development, review, public input, and policy maker action.

DATES – 2026	ACTIVITY
May 4 – June 5	Federal Grant and Rural Community Support Program Applications Accepted
May 7, 14	Applicant Workshops
June 15-July 3	Staff & TPB Subcommittee Application Review and Scoring
July 16	Technical Peer Review (TRPC staff, TAC, and applicants)
July 27 – August 9	Public Comment Period
September 3	TAC Public Comment Review
September 9	Transportation Policy Board (TPB) First Review
TBA Sept-Oct	TPB Subcommittee Review
October 2	Council First Review
October 14	TPB Second Review and Funding Recommendation Action
November 6	Council Project Selection and Approval

REQUESTED ACTION

1. Approve a recommendation to the Council to approve the 2026 Call for Projects Process outlined in this memorandum, including:
 - a. Final revisions to the Evaluation Criteria
 - b. Rural Community Support Program administrative changes
 - c. Regional priority set-asides
2. Identify up to five Board members to serve on the Project Evaluation Subcommittee

**DRAFT 2026 Regional Federal Transportation Grant
Program and Rural Community Support Program
Call for Projects Process**

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) for FFYs 2030-2032

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program FFY 2028-2030

Rural Community Support Program for CYs 2027-2031

Process Guidance and Application Instructions

Thurston Regional Planning Council



March 2026

NOTICE OF TITLE VI RIGHTS (FHWA)

Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) hereby gives public notice that it is the agency's policy to assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. Title VI requires that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) program or other activity for which the agency receives federal financial assistance. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice under Title VI has the right to file a formal complaint with TRPC. Any such complaint must be filed with the TRPC Title VI Coordinator within 180 days following the date of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. Title VI Complaint Forms may be obtained from TRPC at no cost to the complainant.

To file a Title VI discrimination complaint, contact:

Chelsea Embree, Title VI Coordinator
2411 Chandler Ct SW Olympia, WA 98502
(360) 956-7575
info@trpc.org

Washington State Department of Transportation
Office of Equity and Civil Rights – Title VI
Box 47314 Olympia, WA 98504-7314
(360) 705-7090
TitleVI@wsdot.wa.gov

General Information	4
Process Support	4
2026 Call for Projects Schedule	4
Application Submission Deadline.....	5
Total Funding Availability by Grant Program	5
Regional Funding Set-Asides.....	5
Geographic Distribution Requirements for Federal Grant Funds.....	6
Regional Funding Priorities	9
Regional Evaluation Criteria	9
Efficient Use of Federal Funds.....	10
Sustainable Thurston Urban Corridors AND Centers	11
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction.....	14
Title VI, ADA, and Transportation Barriers	18
Active Transportation	23
Safety.....	25
Federal Grant Program Eligibility Information	27
Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG).....	27
CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ).....	28
Federal Application Limits and Urban Funding Cap.....	29
Urban Small and Rural STBG Maximum Awards	29
CMAQ MAXIMUM AWARDS	30
Urban Large Funding Cap	30
Rural Community Support Program (RCSP)	32
RCSP eVALUATION pROCESS.....	33
Development of Proposals	33
Important Information - Call for Projects Process	36
Project Obligation Timing.....	36
Proposal Review and Selection Process	36
Key Terms and Concepts	39
Frequently Asked Questions	42

2026 Process Guidance and Application Instructions

GENERAL INFORMATION

This document provides guidance and application instructions for Thurston Regional Planning Council’s (TRPC) 2026 Regional Federal Transportation Grant Program Call for Projects, from here on referred to as the Call for Projects. This document provides information about the process schedule, funding availability, funding priorities, project evaluation criteria, applicant and project eligibility, application instructions, and frequently asked questions.

PROCESS SUPPORT

Applicants may request application support from TRPC staff through June 5, 2026. Staff are available to answer questions and provide prospective applicants assistance with application development. Contact Paul Brewster, Interim Planning Manager: brewstp@trpc.org or 360.741.2526.

2026 CALL FOR PROJECTS SCHEDULE

TRPC’s 2026 Call for Projects Schedule applies to both the federal and the Rural Community Support Program grant programs. The following dates and deadlines apply to all applicants.

DATES – 2026	ACTIVITY
May 4 – June 5	Federal Grant and Rural Community Support Program Project Applications Accepted
May 7, 14	Applicant Workshops
June 15-July 3	TRPC Staff & TPB Subcommittee Application Review and Scoring
July 16	Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Peer Review
July 27 – August 9	Public Comment Period
September 3	TAC Public Comment Review
September 9	Transportation Policy Board (TPB) First Review
TBA Sept-Oct	TPB Subcommittee Review
October 2	Council First Review
October 14	TPB Second Review and Funding Recommendation Action
November 6	Council Project Selection and Approval

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE

- Application materials are available on TRPC’s website at:
 - <https://www.trpc.org/879/Federal-Funding-Call-for-Projects>
- All applications are due Friday, June 5, 2026, by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time. TRPC will not consider applications submitted after the deadline.
- All applicants must submit an editable electronic version of the pdf application form (. Printed copies are not a substitute for the electronic file.
- Applicants must fully complete all sections in the Project Verification and Endorsement section.
- Supporting materials such as maps and letters of support must be submitted in an electronic file format.
- Send completed applications and supporting materials to Paul Brewster at brewstp@trpc.org.

TOTAL FUNDING AVAILABILITY BY GRANT PROGRAM

In 2026, TRPC expects to award a combined total of \$16 million in federal grant funds administered by the Federal Highway Administration and \$1,242,000 in non-federal funding administered by TRPC, Thurston County, and the City of Lacey through the Rural Community Support Program. Table 1 shows the amount of funding available by grant program and the federal fiscal or calendar years that projects will be programmed for obligation.

Table1: 2026 Regional Transportation Call for Projects Grant Program Availability

Grant Program	Years to Program	Funding Available
Federal Surface Transportation Grant Program (STBG)	FFYs 2030-2032	\$11,000,000
Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)	FFYs 2028-2030	\$5,000,000
Total Federal Funding Available		\$16,000,000
Rural Community Support Program (RCSP)	CY 2027	\$550,000
	CY 2030	\$692,000
Total RCSP Available		\$1,242,000

REGIONAL FUNDING SET-ASIDES

Two funding set asides are allocated for the 2026 Call for Projects:

1. **2024 Rural Community Support Program Set Aside (pre-approved):** \$600,000 from the 2024 Call for Projects
2. **2026 Rural Community Support Program Set Aside (approval pending):** \$800,000 proposed from the STBG allocation (Table 2) to support the Region's 2026 Rural Community Support Program (RCSP).

FUNDING FOR NON-TRADITIONAL PARTNERS

There is no Regional Set-Aside established for Non-Traditional Partners, however TRPC encourages proposals from eligible applicants. Non-traditional applicants are encouraged to coordinate with a Certification Acceptance (CA) approved agency for application sponsorship. Proposals must comply with the same federal eligibility requirements as those from traditional partners. See Key Terms and Concepts for a description of partners and project administration requirements.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) allocates federal funds to TRPC based on population-defined geographic areas established by the U.S. Census. As a result, Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds must be programmed within designated Urban Large, Urban Small, and Rural areas, with a portion reserved as flexible funding that may be awarded in any geographic area.

CMAQ funding is available for eligible projects that meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act. Projects must be situated within the Thurston County PM10 Air Quality Maintenance Area which is identified by the magenta hashed area depicted on Map 1.

Table 2 offers a summary of the grant programs’ geographic funding distribution estimates. The 2026 RCSP \$800,000 set aside will come from the STBG allocation.

Table 2. 2026 Call for Projects Percent Distribution of Grant Funds by Geographic Area

	STBG*	CMAQ	RCSP**
Total Available	\$11 million	\$5 million	\$1,242,000
Urban Large	65% \$7,124,141	N/A	N/A
Urban Small	7% \$812,258	N/A	N/A
Rural	8% \$822,149	N/A	\$1,242,000
Flexible	19% \$2,241,452*	N/A	N/A
Years to Program	2030-2032	2028-2030	2027 & 2030

Notes:

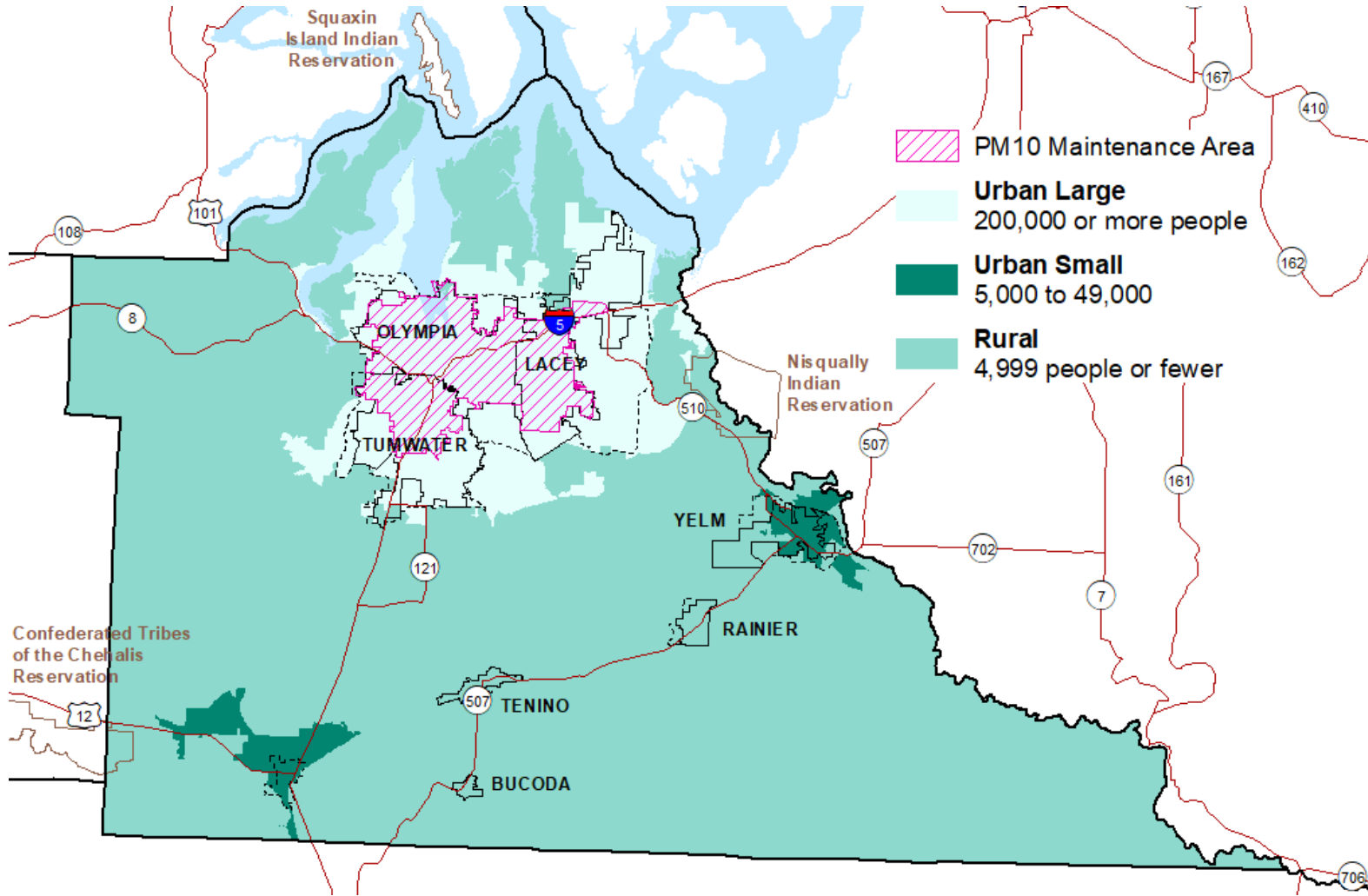
* The RCSP set aside would reduce the STBG funds by \$800,000.

** RCSP is non-federal funding. \$550,000 from Thurston County starting in 2027; \$692,000 from the City of Lacey starting in 2030.

FLEXIBLE GRANT PROGRAMMING

TRPC reserves the right to award funding from either STBG or CMAQ grant programs for eligible projects and activities. For example, TRPC may award CMAQ funding in lieu of an applicant's STBG request for eligible activities depending on project eligibility and funding need. The ability to exchange funding sources allows TRPC to maximize its grant programs, award multiple projects, and meet the region's yearly obligation targets.

Map 1: U.S. Census Geographic Areas for Federal Transportation Grant Funding Distribution



REGIONAL FUNDING PRIORITIES

TRPC seeks grant proposals that align with TRPC’s Regional Funding Priorities. Although applicants are not required to fulfill multiple funding priorities, projects that meet more than one priority are encouraged.

1. **Active Transportation** – Projects that support active transportation such as walking and bicycling and connectivity to public transportation services.
2. **Efficiency** – Projects that support meeting adopted vehicle level of service standards; projects that help support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) goals; and projects that decrease annual per capita vehicle miles traveled in the Thurston Region.
3. **Maintenance** – Projects that support a pavement “Best First” approach recognizing that regular maintenance is much more cost effective than allowing a roadway to deteriorate and then rebuilding it; projects that support Transit Asset Management targets; projects that keep bridges in a state of good repair; and projects that keep other portions of the transportation system in a state of good repair.
4. **Planning** – Planning activities that identify recommendations and project lists; planning activities support regional coordination or provide data to inform project development and efficient system operations.
5. **Resiliency** – Projects that improve the operational and structural resiliency of the transportation system from natural and technological hazards and disruptions.
6. **Safety** – Projects that help reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads to zero by 2030; projects that help reduce the number of non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads (e.g., bicyclists and pedestrians) to zero by 2030; and projects that help reduce transit-related fatalities, serious injuries, and safety incidents.

REGIONAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

OVERVIEW

All federal grant proposals are evaluated using TRPC’s adopted Evaluation Criteria. Each criterion is directly tied to a Regional Funding Priority, regional transportation goal, or adopted policy to ensure funding decisions are performance-based and policy-driven.

There are multiple levels of review to ensure consistency, technical accuracy, and transparency in scoring and ranking.

The six evaluation criteria are:

1. Efficient Use of Federal Funds
2. Sustainable Thurston Urban Centers and Corridors (applies only to the Urban Large geographic category)
3. Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Goal
4. Title VI, ADA, and Transportation Barriers
5. Active Transportation
6. Safety

Projects are scored and ranked within their designated geographic category (Urban Large, Urban Small, or Rural). Each criterion is weighted equally at two points.

- Urban Large projects: Maximum of 12 points (six criteria)
- Urban Small and Rural projects: Maximum of 10 points (five criteria; Urban Centers criterion is not applicable)

This structured scoring framework promotes accountability, transparency, and alignment with adopted regional priorities.

Evaluation Process

1. **Application Submission**
Applicants submit proposals using TRPC’s standardized federal grant application forms.
2. **Staff Scoring**
TRPC staff independently score each application based on the adopted criteria.
3. **Technical Review**
TRPC staff and the TAC review project scope, budget, federal eligibility, and implementation considerations to identify technical issues or risks.
4. **Policy Review and Recommendation**
A subcommittee of the Transportation Policy Board (TPB) reviews and confirms staff scoring, considers each project’s alignment with Regional Funding Priorities, and develops a funding recommendation. The full TPB reviews and forwards its recommendation to the Council for final project selection.

EFFICIENT USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS

BACKGROUND

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) (23 U.S.C. 133) is the main sources of flexible federal funding available for roadway/highway, transit, and active transportation projects. However, federal funding comes with many specific requirements that may increase the cost of the projects. For planning projects, the increase in requirements is negligible; for construction projects it can be high. For this reason, many jurisdictions prefer to use federal funds only when the project is large enough – and the funding level sufficient – for the scope of work to allow the project to efficiently absorb the increased administrative costs.

EFFICIENT USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS CRITERIA SCORING

TRPC will evaluate the efficient use of federal funds based on the project type and the total dollar cost. Four categories for ranking a project’s efficient use of federal funds:

1. Project type and funding level is the best use of federal funds, 2 points.
2. Project type and funding level is a reasonable use of federal funds, 1 point.
3. Project type and funding level is an acceptable use of federal funds, 0 points.
4. Project type and funding level is not an efficient use of federal funds, -1 point.

Table 3: Project Criteria Ranking for Efficient use of Federal Funds* (values are in thousands of dollars).

Project/funding level is not an efficient use of federal funds	Acceptable use of federal funds	Reasonable use of federal funds	Best use of federal funds
-1 Point	0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any construction or pavement maintenance (all phases) total project cost <250k. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standalone sidewalk construction (all phases) total project cost >250k. Standalone Crosswalk (all phases) total project cost <250k. Electric vehicle charging stations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pavement maintenance (urban streets) >250k. Trail construction (all phases) total project cost >250k. Signal upgrades. Fish passage barrier removal (all phases) total project cost >250k. Stormwater improvements >250k. Crosswalk (bundled) (all phases) total project cost >250k. Trail Pavement Preservation > \$250k and < \$500k. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add funding to a project with existing federal funds (federalized project) at any funding level. Street/road construction (all phases) total project cost >250k. Roundabout or signal construction (all phases) total project cost >250k. Pavement maintenance (rural roads) total project cost >250k. Transit building facility construction (all phases) total project cost >250k. Transit bus stop/other facility construction (all phases) total project cost >250k. Vehicle replacements. Transportation Demand Management programs. Planning/feasibility studies. Trail pavement preservation >\$500K.

* Other projects not listed in this table will be evaluated at the time of review.

SUSTAINABLE THURSTON URBAN CORRIDORS AND CENTERS

BACKGROUND

TRPC’s *Creating Places -- Preserving Spaces: A Sustainable Development Plan for the Thurston Region (2013)*, aims to integrate sustainability into all regional decision-making to achieve a healthy economy, society, and environment. Known as Sustainable Thurston, the plan identifies multiple priority goals, targets, and first action steps. The Council chose the Preferred Land Use Scenario as one of the regional priorities to evaluate a proposed project’s performance in supporting vibrant centers and corridors in TRPC’s Federal Call for Projects Process.

One of Sustainable Thurston’s priority goals is to create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth. Creating places supports equal access to quality education, services, amenities, and infrastructure, as well as attract and retain employers and residents who desire an active urban environment. The plan set the following target:

By 2035, 72 percent of all (new and existing) households in our cities, towns, and unincorporated growth areas will be within a half-mile (comparable to a 12-minute walk for most people without a disability that limits walking) of an urban center, corridor, or neighborhood center with access to goods and services to meet some of their daily needs.

Achieving this target is expected to support the following outcomes:

- Greater Efficiency in the Delivery of Services and Provision of Infrastructure.
- Greater Access to Jobs, Shopping, Food, and Services.
- More Efficient Use of Resources.
- Greater Protection of Environmental Quality.

RANKING

TRPC will use a two-factor approach, based on: (1) A project's location within a Sustainable Thurston Urban Corridor, and Urban Centers (see Map 2) or as described on the applicant's proposal; and (2) Project type, as criteria for prioritizing a project's ability to create vibrant urban centers.

PREFERRED PROJECT TYPES THAT SUPPORT THE SUSTAINABLE THURSTON PRIORITY GOAL

1. **Urban corridor, or urban center planning projects** that integrate land use and transportation, such as the Martin Way Corridor Study or the SR507 Main Street Study.
2. **Safety Projects** that reduce bicycle and pedestrian injuries and fatalities on arterials, collectors, and urban corridors. Projects could include speed reduction/management, medians, and roundabouts.
3. **Pedestrian street crossing improvements** that provide direct and safe street crossings on urban corridors. Projects could include pedestrian signals, flashing beacons, refuge crossing islands, multi-use trail connections, bulb outs, and new or replacement ramps.
4. **Active transportation projects** that support walking and bicycling on urban corridors. Projects could include non-motorized bridges and tunnels, navigation or wayfinding signage, multi-use paths, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bicycle corridors, and other bicycle infrastructure such as community bicycle repair stations. Projects may also include community-focused active transportation safety, education, and encouragement programs. Projects may be standalone or a component of a larger road improvement project.
5. **Bus Stop Enhancements** that improve safety and both ADA and public accessibility to transit stops on urban corridors.
6. **Transit route infrastructure improvements** for existing or new routes on urban corridors that support Bus Rapid Transit or other modes of high-capacity transportation.
7. **Intelligent Transportation Systems and traffic signal operations** that improve the operating efficiency of transit services, projects that improve traffic signal operating efficiency for the movement of goods and services on urban corridors, and traffic signal efficiency that better serves ADA accessibility or bicycle and pedestrian intersection crossings where new demand is projected.
8. **Maintenance projects** that reduce life cycle costs and preserve existing infrastructure on urban corridors.

URBAN CENTERS/CORRIDORS RANKING

Projects will be evaluated based on their location within the [Sustainable Thurston Urban Corridors and Urban Centers](#) (see Map 2). The criteria is only applicable to projects located in the U.S. Census Urban Large area; the criteria will not affect projects located in Urban Small or Rural areas. For projects within the Urban Large area, but not located in an urban center or urban corridor.

Four categories for ranking a project’s support for Sustainable Thurston Urban Centers/Corridors:

1. Project supports Sustainable Thurston within a quarter mile of an urban center or urban corridor, 2 points.
2. Project supports Sustainable Thurston within a half mile of an urban center, urban corridor, or neighborhood center 1 point.
3. Project does not directly support Sustainable Thurston but improves access to goods and services, 0 points.
4. Project does not support Sustainable Thurston, -1 point.

Table 4 shows how proposals will be evaluated and ranked with the Urban Centers and Corridors criteria.

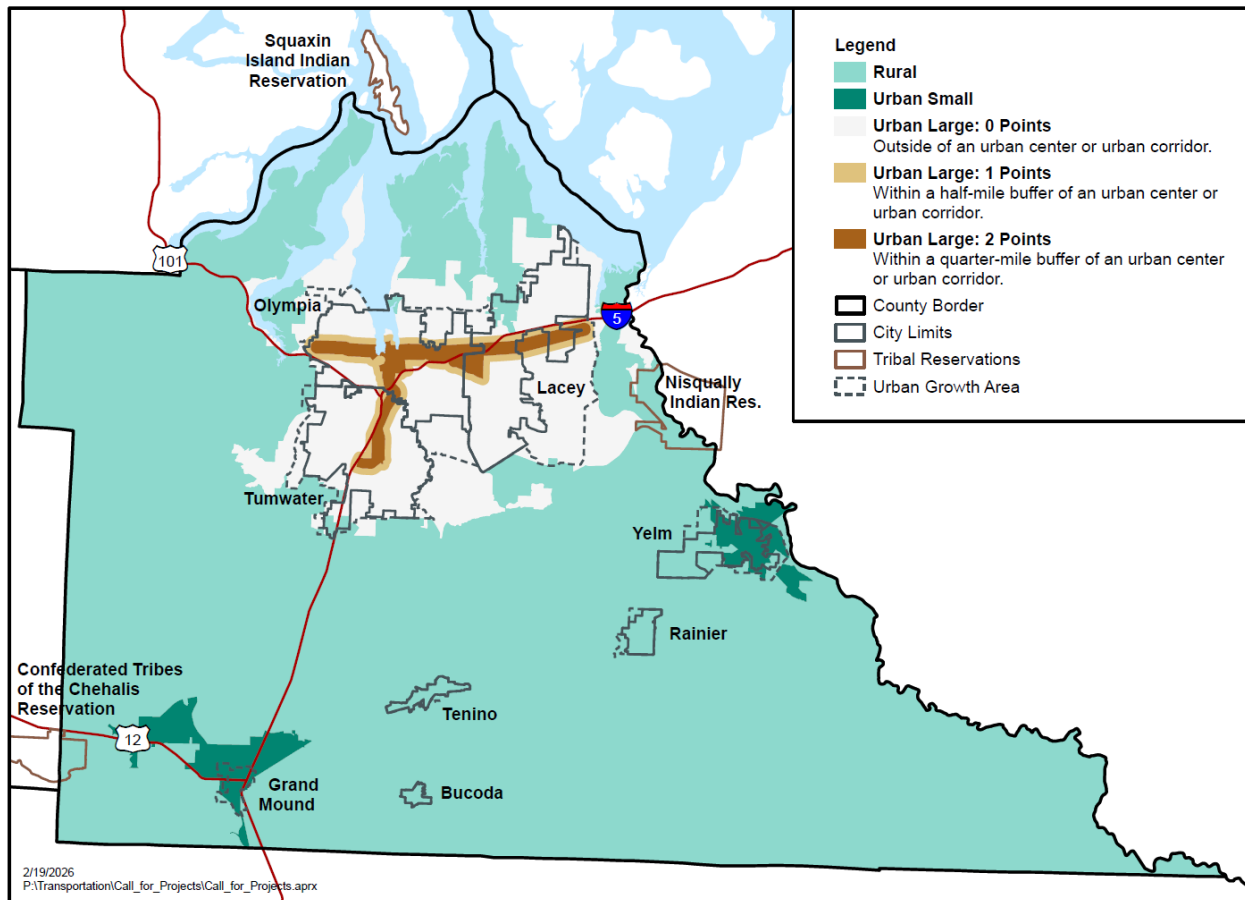
Table 4: Project Criteria Ranking for Sustainable Thurston Urban Corridors and Centers Land Use Goal.

Project does not support Sustainable Thurston	Project does not directly support Sustainable Thurston, but improves access to goods and services	Project supports Sustainable Thurston within a half mile of an urban center or urban corridor	Project supports Sustainable Thurston within a quarter mile of an urban center or urban corridor
-1 Point	0 Points	1 Point	2 points
The project proposal is not included as an eligible project type and the project is located outside of an urban center or urban corridor.	Project is within an urban corridor or urban center but is not a preferred project type; or the project is outside of an urban center or urban corridor but is a preferred project type.	The majority of the project is within a half mile of an urban center, urban corridor, or neighborhood center ¹ and is a preferred project type.	The majority of the project* is within a quarter mile of an urban center or urban corridor and is a preferred project type.

¹ Applicants must demonstrate that the project’s Neighborhood Center designation is supported by an adopted Comprehensive Plan, zoning code, or other adopted plan or policy. TRPC staff will review and determine eligibility, with final concurrence provided by the Transportation Policy Board Subcommittee.

* Other projects not shown in the list of preferred project types will be evaluated at time of review

Map 2: Sustainable Thurston Urban Corridors and Urban Centers (online map: <https://arcg.is/WKTmm>)



GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION

BACKGROUND

Transportation makes up an estimated 33 percent of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in Thurston County. TRPC is committed to reduce GHG emissions through its transportation investments. The Council adopted the following targets in February 2021: achieve 45% reduction of 2015 levels by 2030 and achieve 85% reduction of 2015 levels by 2050. To help achieve these targets, TRPC is incorporating GHG reduction potential into its Call for Projects Process.

TYPES OF PROJECTS

Transportation emission reductions strategies typically fall into four different categories:

- **Cleaner Vehicles/Vehicle Improvement Strategies.** Replace high emission generating vehicles with cleaner vehicles.
- **Transportation Demand Management Strategies.** Policies or programs that reduce the number of vehicles on the road.
- **Transportation System Management Strategies.** Increase the person-trip capacity of the existing system.
- **Land Use Strategies.** “Smart Growth” development practices.

Table 5 shows examples of emission reduction project types, including some that are commonly awarded by TRPC.

Table 5: Examples of GHG Emissions Reduction Strategies.

Cleaner Vehicles / Vehicle Improvement Strategies	Transportation Demand Management & Active Transportation Strategies	Transportation System Management Strategies	Land Use Strategies*
Replace high emission generating vehicles with cleaner vehicles	Reduce the number of vehicles on the road	Increase the person-trip capacity of the existing system	“Smart Growth” development practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle retrofits. • Fleet upgrades. • Feebates. • Scrappage Programs. • Tax Incentives for Cleaner Vehicles . • Heavy-Duty Vehicle Retrofits. • Eco-Driving Education and Training and Dynamic Eco-Driving. • Truck Stop Electrification and Auxiliary Power Units . • Anti-Idling Regulations and Campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach / education. • Expanded transit routes or schedules. • Transit Incentives. • Telework. • Youth TDM Programs. • Road Pricing (including distance-based fees and cordoning). • Car Sharing. • Pay-as-You-Drive Insurance . • Ridesharing and HOV Lanes. • Bus Stop Improvements. • Bicycle and Pedestrian facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic Signal Optimization. • Ramp Metering. • Incident Management. • Speed Limit Reduction and Enforcement. • Roundabouts. • Capacity expansion. • Resurfacing Roads. • Alternative Construction Materials. • Traffic Calming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning regulations, including projects that support increasing infill, mixed use, and density. • Parking policies, including pricing. • Studies to align land use and transportation. • Affordable housing on High Density Corridors.

Table 5 contents adapted from:

1. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) 2012. *Reference Sourcebook for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Transportation Sources* [<https://trid.trb.org/view/1285484> 7/9/2021].
2. Victoria Transport Policy Institute (VTPI) 2017. *Smart Transportation Emissions Reduction Strategies* [<https://www.vtpi.org/ster.pdf> 7/9/2021].

ESTIMATING EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

TRPC uses several resources to estimate emissions reductions for transportation projects, namely tools from the Federal Highway Administration (https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/toolkit/) and a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality and Improvement Program reporting tool developed by Puget Sound Regional Council. TRPC also uses data from traffic counts or from the regional travel demand models. Most estimates rely on assumptions such as:

- Reduced vehicle miles traveled.
- Reduced intersection delay.
- Number of people targeted by outreach efforts.
- Number of people changing their travel behavior due to new infrastructure (e.g., bicycle lanes, trails, vehicle charging stations, transit service).

Emissions from transportation projects, including GHG emissions, are difficult to quantify, especially prior to project implementation. The best estimates account for emissions over the life cycle of the project, including construction, manufacturing, implementation, and any side effects. However, many resources for estimating emissions only consider a subset of these factors since their scope can be difficult to trace and quantify. How effectively a project reduces GHG emissions will depend on:

- Socioeconomic and behavioral factors, such as income, type of employment, and willingness to change travel behavior.
- Land use factors such as housing density, proximity to jobs and services, and alternative modes/routes in the project vicinity.
- Induced demand created by the project over the long term.
- Whether the project stands alone or is paired with other strategies. The ability to monitor and measure emissions reduction performance upon project or program implementation.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION RANKING

TRPC will use a qualitative approach for evaluating GHG emissions reductions, based on the project type and its benefits, as a criterion for project prioritization. Four categories for ranking a project's ability to reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

1. GHG reduction is one of the primary purposes of the project, 2 points.
2. Project addresses another transportation need but may have a GHG reduction benefit, 1 point.
3. Project is unlikely to increase or decrease GHG emissions, 0 point.
4. Project will likely increase GHG emissions, -1 point.

Table 6 shows how proposals submitted to TRPC will be evaluated and ranked under the criteria.

Table 6: Project Criteria Ranking for GHG Emissions Goal.*

Project will increase GHG emissions	Neutral	Project may have GHG reduction benefits	GHG reduction is one of the primary intentions of project
-1 Point	0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street widening without multimodal elements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersection improvements at non-congested areas.** • Pavement maintenance. • Fish passage barrier improvement. • Studies/plans without land use element. • Vehicle replacement without emissions reduction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus stop improvements serving a corridor with >15-minute headways. • Intersection improvements in congested areas.** • Studies/plans with land use element or with the intent to reduce GHG. • Building facility construction that supports Transit operations and maintenance; traffic management; or other efficient travel. • New street connections without multimodal facilities. • Replacement of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure without significant design modification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New street connections with multimodal elements. • New Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. • Enhancement or replacement of existing active transportation infrastructure that increases active transportation trips. • TDM projects (Walk and Roll, CTR). • Vehicle replacement or retrofit resulting in lower emissions. • Electric vehicle charging station. • Vanpool/carpool investments. • Bus stop improvements serving a corridor with <=15-minute headways. • Transit corridor infrastructure and operational improvements. • High-capacity transportation.

**Other projects not listed in this table will be evaluated at time of review.*

***Based on jurisdictions' methodology for evaluating Level of Service.*

TITLE VI, ADA, AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS

BACKGROUND

By integrating public input, demographic analysis, and a structured benefit-burden assessment, TRPC strengthens its commitment to equitable transportation investment and compliance with federal civil rights requirements.

To strengthen the Thurston region’s compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)—and to better understand and address transportation barriers experienced by underserved populations—TRPC developed a Transportation Priorities Survey to collect direct public input.

The countywide survey was open to all residents. Demographic questions allowed TRPC to analyze responses by population group and determine whether transportation priorities differ for people who may be disproportionately affected by transportation decisions.

Demographic characteristics included:

- Household income
- Race and ethnicity
- Whether a person has a disability affecting mobility
- Whether a person experiences difficulty finding or keeping a job due to transportation barriers (“job barriers”)
- Whether a person has difficulty accessing essential destinations such as work, school, healthcare, or services (“transportation barriers”)

This approach allows TRPC to better align transportation investments with the needs of populations protected under Title VI and ADA, as well as individuals who experience systemic transportation disadvantages.

SURVEY RESULTS FOR UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

Public input was sought on a wide range of project types, grouped into Project Priority categories, as shown in Table 7. TRPC analyzed survey results and weighed responses that align with Title VI affected respondents to identify their priority transportation investments. The outcomes of this assessment are shown in Table 7. The top five projects are shown in green.

Survey respondents were asked to rate a wide range of project types, organized into Project Priority categories (see Table 7). TRPC analyzed overall responses and compared them to responses from Title VI–affected and ADA populations, as well as respondents who reported low income, transportation barriers, or job barriers.

For the purposes of this analysis, TRPC focused on the percentage of respondents who rated each project type as a priority. This allowed for a consistent comparison across respondent groups.

Table 7. Survey Results for Title VI Affected Populations on Project Priorities.

Percentages are based on the percent of respondents (or weighted responses) who indicated a project was “Somewhat Important” or “Very Important”					
Green = Top 5 Projects Red = Bottom 5 Projects					
Project	All Respondents	Title VI & ADA Populations ¹	Respondents with a Household Income less than \$35,000	Respondents who have Transportation Barriers	Respondents who have Job Barriers
Planning and Studies					
Conduct planning studies, with public involvement, that address current and future transportation challenges	95%	95%	95%	96%	97%
Safety					
Make intersections safer	97%	96%	93%	96%	94%
Make crossing the street safer	96%	95%	94%	96%	93%
Make bus stops more convenient and safe for bus riders, especially for people with disabilities	93%	92%	94%	97%	96%
Efficiency					
Add turning lanes or center lanes	89%	87%	86%	83%	77%
Invest in new transportation technologies (improved traffic signals, real-time travel information)	90%	89%	88%	86%	84%
Invest in projects that reduce the need to travel, such as encouraging working from home	81%	80%	83%	80%	84%
Maintenance					
Increase road maintenance (fix pavement/potholes)	97%	96%	96%	94%	90%
Replace transit vehicles or bus stop shelters	80%	78%	87%	87%	87%
Resiliency					
Improve roads that are detour routes to Interstate 5 (I-5)	91%	90%	88%	86%	85%
Improve roads that are more likely to be impacted by hazards such as flooding or landslides	93%	92%	93%	92%	87%
Complete missing roads/street connections	83%	82%	84%	86%	84%
Help improve water quality and/or fish habitat by fixing places where roads and bridges impact natural areas	93%	93%	96%	95%	95%
Active Transportation					

¹ Responses received were weighted to ensure better representation for populations protected under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

<p>Percentages are based on the percent of respondents (or weighted responses) who indicated a project was “Somewhat Important” or “Very Important”</p> <p>Green = Top 5 Projects Red = Bottom 5 Projects</p> <p>Project</p>	All Respondents	Title VI & ADA Populations ¹	Respondents with a Household Income less than \$35,000	Respondents who have Transportation Barriers	Respondents who have Job Barriers
Add sidewalks and safe street crossings to existing streets	95%	95%	96%	96%	95%
Add bike lanes to existing streets	83%	82%	88%	87%	86%
Complete the regional trail network	87%	68%	87%	86%	90%
Invest in school/public awareness programs to reduce travel trips and increase safety	80%	79%	87%	84%	80%

REMOVING BARRIERS TO UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

An essential component of equitable transportation planning is evaluating both the benefits and burdens of proposed projects.

Transportation investments can generate significant public benefits, such as improved access, safety, and mobility. However, they can also create or exacerbate burdens—particularly for low-income communities, communities of color, and people with disabilities—if projects reduce access, increase exposure to hazards, or create physical or economic barriers.

Table 8 provides examples of transportation-related benefits and burdens that TRPC will consider when evaluating projects.

When evaluating projects, TRPC will assess:

- Whether a project increases access to essential destinations and economic opportunity
- Whether it improves safety and mobility for vulnerable users
- Whether it reduces pollution or environmental risk
- Whether it avoids creating disproportionate impacts on underserved communities

This benefit-burden framework helps ensure that transportation investments advance equity rather than unintentionally reinforcing disparities.

Table 8. Examples of Transportation Benefits and Barriers

Benefits	Burdens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to social, educational, and economic opportunities. • Increased access to high-quality mobility options. • Travel time savings . • Cost savings. • Congestion mitigation. • Reduction of pollution. • Improved connectivity within communities. • Opportunities for physical activity through active transportation modes. • Reduction in traffic injuries and fatalities. • Local hiring and job training for jobs in construction, maintenance, and operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced access to essential opportunities and services. • Restricted or no access to high quality transportation. • Long/increased travel times. • Financial burdens. • Traffic congestion. • Increased pollution. • Physical division of communities. • Creation of barriers to bicycling and walking. • Exposure to traffic-related safety risks. • Vulnerability to climate impacts. • Inequitable enforcement.

TITLE VI, ADA, AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS PROJECT RANKING

To strengthen compliance with Title VI and ADA requirements and to prioritize projects that reduce transportation barriers, TRPC will use a two-tiered scoring approach.

1. Base Points (-1 to 1 Point)

- 1 point if they align with the top five priority project types identified by Title VI–affected populations in the survey (see Table 7).
- 0 points if they do not align with these priority project types.
- –1 point for projects that create or impose a disproportionate burden on an underserved population, as defined in the benefit-burden framework (see Table 8).

2. Demonstrated Benefit (+1 Point)

Projects will also be evaluated based on their demonstrated impacts on underserved populations:

- +1 point for projects that clearly remove or reduce transportation barriers for affected populations.
 - This may be demonstrated through geographic proximity (e.g., a sidewalk project serving a school with a high proportion of students receiving free and reduced lunch).
 - Or through a targeted service or program (e.g., ADA-accessible transit improvements or dial-a-lift vehicles).

Table 9 shows how proposals submitted to TRPC will be evaluated and ranked under the criteria.

Table 9: Project Criteria for Title VI, ADA, and Transportation Barriers Ranking

Base Points			Bonus Point
Disproportionate Burden	All other Projects	Priority Projects for Affected Populations	Bonus Point: Demonstrated Benefit
-1 Point	0 Points	1 Point	+1 Point
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that have a disproportionate burden on an underserved population, regardless of project type. 	<p>Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add turning lanes or center lanes. Invest in new transportation technologies (improved traffic signals, real-time travel information). Invest in projects that reduce the need to travel, such as encouraging working from home. <p>Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace transit vehicles or bus stop shelters. <p>Resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve roads that are detour routes to Interstate 5 (I-5). Improve roads that are more likely to be impacted by hazards such as flooding or landslides. Complete missing roads/street connections. <p>Active Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add bicycle lanes to existing streets. Complete the regional trail network. Invest in school/public awareness programs to reduce travel trips and increase safety. 	<p>Planning and Studies with public involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety Make intersections safer. Make crossing the street safer. Make bus stops more convenient and safer for bus riders, especially for people with disabilities. <p>Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase road maintenance (fix pavement). <p>Active Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add sidewalks and safe street crossings to existing streets. <p>Resiliency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that improve water quality and/or fish habitat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects that have a demonstrated benefit for an underserved population.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

BACKGROUND

The Regional Transportation Plan includes goals and policies to expand and improve access and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists. Active transportation infrastructure provides people safe access across our urban and rural areas with greater connectivity in neighborhood centers to promote more walk and bike trips to schools, workplaces, commercial areas, and transit services.

TRPC's Call for Projects aims to select projects that will help communities increase the share of trips that can be made by walking, riding a bike, or a micromobility device such as an electric powered wheelchair or scooter, or improve access to transit stops.

The Call for Projects will evaluate and rank projects on their ability to:

- Create safe spaces that separate bicyclists and pedestrians from higher speed traffic so people can more safely and conveniently meet their daily travel needs without a vehicle.
- Integrate bicycle and pedestrian facilities with public transit or public-school transportation services.
- Increase peoples' level of physical activity by choosing healthier and sustainable modes of travel.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION RANKING

TRPC will evaluate Active Transportation based on project types. There are four categories for ranking a project's enhancement or expansion of walking, biking, and micromobility modes in the region:

1. Type of project greatly improves active transportation, 2 points
2. Type of project expands active transportation, 1 point.
3. Type of project offers minimal active transportation benefits, 0 point.
4. Type of project adversely impacts active transportation, -1 point.

Table 10 shows how the criteria and number of points will be applied.

Table 10: Active Transportation Ranking

Project adversely impacts active transportation	Project offers limited active transportation elements	Project expands active transportation	Project significantly expands active transportation
-1 Point	0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New streets without multimodal features or complete streets elements • Roadway or interchange studies that principally address vehicular level of service. • Projects that add or widen existing vehicle lanes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sidewalk or bicycle infrastructure replacement without significant upgrades to the design of the original bicycle and pedestrian facilities (i.e. pavement preservation, intersection redesign) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus route expansion • Bus stop shelters and enhancements including ADA treatments such as level boarding platforms. • Completing gaps in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure (includes new street connections) • Replacing existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure with upgraded design • Pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding signs or systems • Safe Routes to School Education and Encouragement Programs • TDM programs that encourage the use of active transportation. • Regional Trails Plan trail study or PE phase • Active transportation planning project or study. • Adding wide shoulders on rural routes 	<p>New construction or reconstruction must include both pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority projects in an adopted active transportation or bicycle/pedestrian plan. • Pedestrian street crossings aligned with transit stops; or enhanced street crossing such as refuge islands or flashing beacons. • Residential 6'+ sidewalks with a minimum 4' enhancement or buffer zone such as a stormwater swale landscape treatment. • Commercial 8-12' sidewalks with a minimum 4' wide enhancement or buffer zone. • Active transportation infrastructure improvements on school walk routes • Regional Trails Plan ROW or construction project • Off street and on-street pedestrian and bicyclist facilities and features that are consistent with recommendation in the following resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WSDOT Active Transportation Program Design Guide • NACTO Urban Street Design Guide • NACTO Urban Bicycle Guide • Or other current best practice design guides from FHWA or AASHTO

SAFETY

BACKGROUND

Safety is paramount in transportation, affecting all modes and aspects from design to system users' behavior. Like elsewhere in the United States, the Thurston region faces a traffic safety crisis with rising roadway deaths, particularly among pedestrians and cyclists. Acknowledging this urgency, safety is a key focus in applying safety evaluation criteria to promote projects that will help the region achieve its safety goal.

TRPC's 2045 Regional Transportation Plan Goal 4, System Safety and Security is to "Enhance the safety and security of those who use, operate, and maintain the transportation system."

In lieu of an adopted Regional Transportation Safety Plan, TRPC will evaluate projects based on their ability to:

1. Make people safer regardless of the mode in which they travel.
2. Make roadways safer by designing and building multimodal transportation infrastructure that accounts for human behavior and separates people traveling at different speeds.

TRPC's Call for Projects aims to select projects that will help the region achieve the following safety objectives:

- a. Projects that help reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads to zero by 2030.
- b. Projects that help reduce the number of non-motorist fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads (e.g., bicyclists and pedestrians) to zero by 2030.
- c. Projects that help reduce transit-related fatalities, serious injuries, and safety incidents.

SAFETY RANKING

TRPC will evaluate safety based on the project type. There are four categories for ranking a project's safety:

1. Type of project offers greater risk reduction and is a priority outcome from a system or project safety analysis performed by the applicant, 2 points.
2. Type of project reduces risk for collisions, serious injuries, or fatalities, 1 point.
3. Type of project offers minimal safety benefits, 0 point.
4. Type of project may increase risk for collisions, serious injuries, or fatalities, -1 point.

Table 11 shows how the criteria and number of points will be applied.

Table 11: Safety Ranking

Project may increase risk for collisions, serious injuries, or fatalities	Minimal Safety Benefits	Project reduces risk for collisions, serious injuries, or fatalities	Priority Project that offers greater risk reduction
-1 Point	0 Points	1 Point	2 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase capacity or widen lanes • New construction without multimodal features or complete streets elements • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standalone pavement preservation projects such as rehabilitation and reconstruction • Stand-alone chip seals or overlay projects • Vehicle procurement or replacement projects • Stormwater projects • TDM projects without traffic safety education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge structural retrofit or replacement with multimodal elements. • Bus stop enhancements • Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure • Intersection or corridor improvements for safety reasons. • Roadway lighting that contributes to safety of vulnerable users such as pedestrian and bicyclist illumination at crossings, intersections, and segments • Sight distance, clear zone improvements. • Street or trail crossing improvements • Pedestrian/bicycle signal improvements. • Traffic Safety Education Programs and Activities. • Speed management features. • Pavement marking repair/replacement • ADA features such as Accessible Pedestrian Signals, curb ramp upgrades, tactile markings on crossings. • Shared-use trail reconstruction or pavement repair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project identified through systemic safety analysis. • A project included in an applicant's adopted or officially referenced safety plan.

FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligibility criteria and descriptions of project and program activities are provided for the federal STBG and CMAQ grant programs and TRPC's Rural Community Support Program.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT (STBG)

STBG PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

TRPC will fund a variety of projects throughout the urban and unincorporated rural areas of the region. The flexibility inherent in STBG means that most types of transportation projects other than general-purpose capacity projects are eligible for consideration.

Projects must be located on federal-aid routes (exceptions apply for TA projects funded with STBG funds and certain plans and studies). Projects located on rural minor collectors and local roads are ineligible. Visit WSDOT's Federal Functional Classification Map App to view federal-aid routes:

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/data/tools/geoportal/?config=FunctionalClass>

STBG eligible projects and activities include:

- Construction of highways, bridges, and tunnels.
- Construction of ferry boats and terminal facilities.
- Transit capital projects.
- Infrastructure-based intelligent transportation systems capital improvements including vehicle-to-infrastructure communication equipment.
- Truck parking facilities.
- Wildlife crossing structures.
- Operational improvements and capital and operating costs for traffic monitoring, management, and control facilities and programs.
- Highway and transit safety infrastructure improvements and programs.
- Fringe and corridor parking facilities.
- Recreational trails projects.
- Planning, design, or construction of boulevards and other roadways.
- Protection for bridges and tunnels.
- Surface transportation planning programs, highway and transit research and development, and workforce training.
- Surface transportation infrastructure modifications to facilitate direct intermodal interchange, transfer, and access into and out of a port terminal.
- Projects and strategies designed to support congestion pricing.
- Projects and strategies designed to reduce the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions.
- The installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and vehicle-to-grid infrastructure.
- The installation and deployment of current and emerging intelligent transportation technologies, including the ability of vehicles to communicate with infrastructure, buildings, and other road users.

- Planning and construction of projects that facilitate intermodal connections between emerging transportation technologies.
- Protective features, including natural infrastructure, to enhance the resilience of a transportation facility otherwise eligible for assistance under STBG.
- Measures to protect a transportation facility otherwise eligible for assistance under STBG from cybersecurity threats.

For details on Implementation Guidance for the STBG Program as revised by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, visit <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/>

STBG ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include both Traditional and Non-Traditional Partners. All applicants must have projects administered by a CA agency.

CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ)

The CMAQ program plays a pivotal role in addressing two critical challenges facing urban areas: traffic congestion and air pollution. Established under the Clean Air Act, CMAQ funding aims to support projects that reduce emissions from transportation sources, improve air quality, and alleviate traffic congestion. Projects must be situated in Thurston County's PM10 Air Quality Maintenance Area (see Map 1).

Eligible project types include:

1. Implementation of public transit improvements, such as bus rapid transit (BRT) systems, light rail, or commuter rail projects.
2. Development and implementation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, including bike lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and bike-sharing programs.
3. Deployment of alternative fuel vehicles (e.g., electric, hybrid, natural gas) and associated infrastructure, such as charging stations or refueling stations.
4. Promotion of ridesharing, vanpooling, and other transportation demand management (TDM) strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips.
5. Installation of traffic signal synchronization systems and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) to optimize traffic flow and reduce congestion.
6. Implementation of congestion pricing schemes or tolling initiatives to manage traffic demand and reduce vehicle emissions.
7. Deployment of clean vehicle technologies, such as diesel retrofits, particulate traps, or emission control systems, for existing fleets.
8. Introduction of telecommuting programs, flexible work schedules, and other initiatives to reduce peak-hour traffic congestion and vehicle emissions.
9. Support for land use and transportation planning efforts that promote transit-oriented development (TOD), mixed-use zoning, and compact urban design to minimize vehicle travel and enhance air quality.

10. Project planning activities are eligible only if the project leads directly to construction of a CMAQ project; that is, system planning and other non-project specific planning is not eligible.

CMAQ ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include cities, counties, transit agencies, MPOs, tribes, special purpose governments, and non-profit organizations with a public agency sponsor.

For more information about the CMAQ program, visit:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/Environment/air_quality/cmaq/reference/cmaq_essentials/

FEDERAL APPLICATION LIMITS AND URBAN FUNDING CAP

OVERVIEW

TRPC's Call for Projects process acknowledge the differences in capabilities among jurisdictions when it comes to developing plans, submitting grant applications, and managing projects awarded with federal funding.

To ensure a fair balance in the selection process of projects to be funded, there are limits on the amount of funding that applicants may request and a funding cap that applies to projects located in the Urban Large geographic area. These limits aims to support both larger and smaller jurisdictions by providing opportunities for their grant proposals to be considered, as long as they align with regional goals.

By implementing the Urban Funding Cap, regional policymakers can distribute funding across various jurisdictions over multiple funding cycles, thereby promoting equitable allocation and supporting a diverse range of projects. This approach helps to advance the overall goals of the region more effectively.

URBAN SMALL AND RURAL STBG MAXIMUM AWARDS

FUNDING REQUESTS

There are no specific limits placed on the amount of funding that applicants from Urban Small and Rural areas can request for STBG and TA grants. However, the awards cannot exceed the maximum available funding levels allocated for each specific geographic area. Applicants have the flexibility to apply for funding in Urban Small, Rural, or a combination of both areas if their project spans across these regions. For instance, a project like pavement preservation in the Grand Mound area that extends into adjacent Rural areas is eligible.

The funding maximum for STBG encompasses the total flexible funding available for these grant programs across Urban Small, Rural, and combined areas.

MAXIMUM FUNDING LEVELS

Table 12a shows the STBG funding available for Urban Small, Rural, and combined areas, based on the federal funds available to program in 2026.

Table 12a. STBG Maximum Award for 2026 Urban Small, Rural, and Combined Projects

	Urban Small	Rural	Urban Small & Rural Combined Project
STBG	\$812,258	\$822,149	\$1,634,407
Flexible	\$1,441,452	\$1,441,452	\$1,441,452
Maximum Possible Award*	\$2,253,710	\$2,263,601	\$3,075,859

Note: The amount of flexible funding shown is the remaining balance after \$800,000 is withdrawn to support the Rural Community Support Program.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT FLEXIBLE FUNDS

- Funding for the Rural Community Support Program is drawn from the STBG flexible category.
- Remaining Flexible funds can fund projects in any geographic area.

CMAQ MAXIMUM AWARDS

Each proposal seeking CMAQ program funding cannot exceed \$2 million for a single project phase to be allocated within one fiscal year. For the Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2028-2030, applicants have the option to submit multiple proposals for CMAQ funding. Additionally, it is advisable for applicants to include contingency proposals in the event TRPC receives CMAQ allocations in future funding cycles.

URBAN LARGE FUNDING CAP

The Urban Large Funding Cap exclusively applies to proposals that will be implemented within the Urban Large area (see Map 1). Specifically, the funding cap stipulates that no one applicant can accumulate more than 33 percent of the funding available in the first two Calls for Projects, over a three-Call for Projects cycle.

The Funding Cap applies only to STBG and TA Urban Large area grant allocations. The flexible share of funding from these programs is excluded from the Funding Cap as this could be awarded to proposals located in the Urban Small and Rural areas. All CMAQ and CRP funding is also excluded from the Funding Cap. The current funding cap spans the 2022, 2024, and 2026 Call for Projects funding cycles.

An applicant's cumulative balance of awards over the funding cycles is used to determine if they have reached the cap.

In 2024, TRPC recalculated the Funding Cap to account for changes in funding levels between the funding that was forecast for 2024 and the actual 2024 allocation and current programming levels.

For the 2026 Call for Project Process, an applicant cannot exceed \$4,995,276 in combined STBG and TA Urban Large awards. Figure 1 shows the estimated funding cap that would be in effect for

the 2024 and 2026 Call for Projects (see Tables 14a-143 for the calculation of the 33% funding cap derived from the 2022 and 2024 funding cycles).

Figure 1. Funding Cap for Urban Large Area for the 2022-2026 Call for Projects (33% of Funding Cycles 1&2 Combined).

STBG	\$4,283,829
TA	\$711,447
STBG and TA Urban Large Funding Cap	\$4,995,276

FUNDING CAP PENALTY

If an applicant’s combined Urban Large STBG and TA awards exceed the Funding Cap over the three cycles, they become ineligible for additional Urban Large STBG and TA awards for the remainder of the three-cycle period.

NEW THREE-CALL FOR PROJECTS CYCLE

The funding cap levels are reset at the beginning of each new three-cycle period, regardless of whether an applicant exceeded the cap in previous cycles.

FUNDING CAP PENALTY EXCEPTIONS

The penalty does not apply to an applicant who declines or de-obligates funding, allowing them to reapply for funding up to the balance of the funding cap. Contingency project awards or redistributed funding awards do not count against the funding cap. Applicants who reach the funding cap remain eligible to apply for new contingency projects, apply as a lead or a partner for a joint project, or apply as a sponsor for a non-traditional partner project.

LIMIT ON APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED

Applicants can submit up to four proposals (STBG and TA combined) for each geographic category (see Map 1). Applicants can submit up to three joint projects. Applicants are asked to rank their proposal from one (highest) and so on.

Applicants should indicate if their priority proposals could be added to TRPC’s contingency list if it is not selected for a grant award.

LIMIT ON CONTINGENCY PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

There is no limit on the number of contingency list project applications an applicant can submit. TRPC’s [“Obligation Authority Policy and Procedures”](#) provides guidance on how contingency proposals are prioritized for funding.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

To reduce the region’s risk of failing to meet its obligation target, TRPC encourages applicants to split large construction project requests (over \$2.5 million) into project phases that can obligate in differing years. This retains TRPC’s ability to maintain a flexible project list to achieve annual obligation target requirements.

RURAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM (RCSP)

OVERVIEW

The Rural Community Support Program (RCSP) was established by TRPC in partnership with Thurston County to create a reliable funding program for the region’s smaller rural communities and tribal governments. The program can fund small but impactful projects while simplifying the grant application and project implementation processes with minimal barriers.

RCSP AWARD DISTRIBUTION

Thurston County Public Works and the City of Lacey will serve as the fiscal agents for projects awarded in the 2026 Call for Projects. Thurston County will reimburse awardees up to \$550,000 and Lacey up to \$692,000 for eligible project expenses. Successful applicants will receive an award letter from TRPC. A memorandum of understanding between the applicants and Thurston County or the City of Lacey will specify projects’ funding schedule and the process for requesting grant funds. Funds will be distributed as reimbursement upon the successful completion and documentation of project phases. Projects awarded RCSP funds will be eligible for reimbursement over a two-year period as shown:

- Thurston County, \$550,000 available in 2027
- City of Lacey, \$346,000 available by 2030 and \$346,000 in 2031

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The federal STBG, TA, and CRP eligible project types offer general guidelines for RCSP project proposals. Because projects will be reimbursed with non-federal funds, applicants have greater flexibility to submit project proposals that align with their community’s priorities. Applicants are encouraged to coordinate with TRPC and Thurston County staff for technical assistance and guidance on their prospective proposals prior to submitting their applications.

RCSP ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include the Nisqually Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, the Town of Bucoda, the City of Rainier, and the City of Tenino.

ELIGIBILITY RESTRICTIONS

All RCSP applicants may submit federal grant applications in lieu of an RCSP funding request, however all federal grant requirements will apply to all project implementation phases. TRPC's Federal Transportation Grant Program Call for Projects stipulates that RCSP communities that receive a federal grant award are ineligible to apply for RCSP funding in TRPC's subsequent call for projects cycle.

RCSP EVALUATION PROCESS

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

RCSP projects are funded by local revenue and therefore are not subject to TRPC's Regional Evaluation Criteria. RCSP applications will undergo both a technical and policy review process.

TECHNICAL REVIEW

The technical review, conducted by TRPC's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), will focus on several key aspects of each proposal:

- **Scope:** This involves examining the intended objectives and extent of the proposed project.
- **Cost:** Evaluation of the budget and financial aspects associated with the project's scope of work.
- **Timeline:** Assessment of the proposed schedule and milestones for project completion.
- **Right of Way:** Examination of the necessary land or property rights required for the project.
- **Environmental Needs:** Consideration of environmental factors and permit requirements related to the proposed project.

POLICY REVIEW

The Transportation Policy Board (TPB) advises the Regional Council on transportation policies and objectives. The TPB will examine each RCSP proposal to evaluate how it aligns with regional transportation policies. The TPB will focus on the following project aspects:

- Direct benefits to the applicant community.
- Broader implications for the community, economy, environment.
- Supporting the overall multimodal transportation network.

The TPB will forward a recommendation for RCSP awards to the Council for project selection.

DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSALS

Applicants will identify their highest priority project(s) and may also consider contingency proposals that fully support the established TRPC transportation funding priorities. Projects will reflect each applicant’s own internal prioritization processes and procedures. TRPC assumes that all projects submitted have the full support and financial commitment of sponsoring agencies and organizations.

EVIDENCE OF LOCAL PUBLIC PROCESS

Local government applicants must demonstrate their priority proposals originated in or have been open to public involvement process. For example, the proposal may be the implementation step of a planning or study process that involved the public, or it may have been vetted through a transportation improvement plan (TIP) or capital facilities plan (CFP) development process. Applicants should describe any previous opportunity the public has had to provide input on the proposal itself and/or the problem or need the proposal addresses.

APPLICATION COMPLETENESS

All relevant application sections, lines, fields, boxes, and signature requirements must be fully completed and checked for accuracy. For questions that are not applicable, mark “N/A” and skip to the next question. Applicants should develop comprehensive but concise descriptions for each application submitted. Policy makers will review each proposal for how it supports TRPC’s Regional Funding Priorities. Applicants should describe how their proposals will support the Regional Transportation Plan’s goals and policies . Applications should make distinct connections between characteristics of the proposal, issues or needs the proposal addresses, and established Regional Funding Priorities.

CA AGENCY SPONSORSHIP

Applicants without Certification Acceptance (CA) agency status require a CA agency sponsor to administer their project. A CA agency will incur additional administrative cost in assuming CA responsibility, so typically plan for up to 20 percent of the total federal funding requested to cover those costs. The applicant may be expected to contribute to the additional costs that an agency would incur if it acts as your CA agency. Clarify expectations on this up front with CA sponsors and be sure it is factored into proposal cost estimates. *Neither federal law nor TRPC requires local jurisdictions to serve as CA agencies for any other agencies or organizations.*

CA Agency Contact Information

Prospective applicants may contact the following Certification Acceptance agencies for consultation or seeking a CA sponsor for proposals:

Lacey	Chris Stohlberg	Chris.stolberg@cityoflacey.org	360.438.2640
Olympia	Joey Jones	jjones1@ci.olympia.wa.us	360.753.8307
Tumwater	Jeffrey Cook	jcook@ci.tumwater.wa.us	360.754.4048
Yelm	Elizabeth Jones	ElizabethJ@Yelmwa.gov	360.400.5008
Thurston County	Becky Conn	Becky.conn@co.thurston.wa.us	360.867.2349
Intercity Transit	Jessica Gould	jgould@intercitytransit.com	360.705.5808
TRPC	Paul Brewster	brewstp@trpc.org	360.741.2550
WSDOT Olympic Region	John Ho	hojohn@wsdot.wa.gov	360.705.7383

APPLICATION FORMS AND OPTIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Proposals must be submitted using the TRPC application forms. A single fillable Adobe Acrobat form is available to submit both STBG and CMAQ proposals. A separate application form is available for RCSP proposals.

Applicants may submit no more than five pages of additional documentation to establish support for their proposal such as a vicinity map, photos, illustrations, cross-sections, or letters. Additional pages to document Title VI information or to report on the status of existing federal projects does not count toward the five-page limitation.

Application materials are available for download from www.trpc.org. Applicants are encouraged to review the entire application form prior to filling it in. Questions about the application materials may be directed to Paul Brewster, brewstp@trpc.org or 360.741.2526.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - CALL FOR PROJECTS PROCESS

Some general process guidance applies to the Surface Transportation Block Grant, Transportation Alternatives, and Carbon Reduction Program.

PROJECT OBLIGATION TIMING

CMAQ OBLIGATIONS

- Selected CMAQ proposals will obligate no earlier than October 1, 2027 and must obligate no later than June 30 for each subsequent year, through 2030.

STBG OBLIGATIONS

- Selected STBG proposals will obligate no earlier than October 1, 2029 and must obligate no later than June 30 for each subsequent year, through 2032.

RCSP REIMBURSEMENT

- Selected RCSP project timing and reimbursement is subject to the terms and conditions that will be specified in an agreement between the applicant and Thurston County or Lacey.

STATED OBLIGATION PREFERENCE

Applicants must state their committed year of project obligation on the application form. TRPC staff will coordinate with successful grant recipients to determine the appropriate year of obligation for each project, which will be specified in a project's award letter.

Applicants are encouraged to become familiar with [TRPC's Obligation Authority Policy](#). Failure to meet the committed year of obligation without a committed effort to mitigate the situation with TRPC and WSDOT may result in the awarded funds being withdrawn from the project.

PROPOSAL REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Thurston Regional Planning Council is responsible for administering these federal funds in a way that fully supports the Regional Transportation Plan, Sustainable Thurston Plan, and established funding priorities, and which is consistent with all applicable state and federal requirements. This process is intended to facilitate that administration of funds.

Proposals will be evaluated for how well they support the Regional Funding Priorities. Projects will be scored and ranked based on their total Regional Evaluation Criteria points. Familiarity with established funding priorities, linkage to existing plans and policies, and clarity in writing for a policy maker audience are all important factors in successful project reviews.

TECHNICAL REVIEW OF PROPOSALS

TRPC staff will conduct the first round of application reviews. Staff will validate each application's eligible points on TRPC's Evaluation Criteria. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will review applications for their technical and financial feasibility, compliance with federal and regional eligibility requirements, and verification of obligation commitments.

After this review, TRPC may guide applicants to make minor refinements to a proposal for clarification. Applicants are encouraged to participate in the review meeting currently scheduled for July 16, 2026, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Notice of this meeting will be sent to all applicants. TRPC staff will follow up with those who are unable to attend.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PROCESS

TRPC will make all proposals available for public review and comment. TRPC will post an announcement on www.trpc.org. Proposals will be available on-line for review or available in hard copy upon request. All comments will be shared with applicants and included in the proposal review package submitted to the Transportation Policy Board and Thurston Regional Planning Council. Public Comments should be submitted in writing to Paul Brewster, brewstp@trpc.org.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD REVIEW AND FUNDING RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation Policy Board (TPB) is scheduled to consider all proposals during their regular meeting on September 9, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

The TPB will convene a subcommittee to perform a policy maker review of the proposals, including scoring each proposal, and forwarding a ranked list of projects for the full TPB's consideration. The TPB will consider all TAC recommendations and public comments. On October 14, 2026, the TPB is scheduled to forward a funding recommendation to the Council.

Applicants are encouraged to attend TPB meetings to answer policy makers' questions about their proposals. TRPC staff will notify all eligible applicants of meeting dates.

COUNCIL REVIEW AND FINAL SELECTION

TRPC will conduct a preliminary review of all proposals at its regular meeting on Friday, October 2, 2026. Any questions generated will be forwarded to the TPB or TAC for their consideration. It is not necessary for applicants to attend this meeting, though all are welcome to do so.

On Friday, November 6, 2026, the Council will consider the TPB recommendation, and any public comments received before project selection. The Council will identify those projects to be funded in the 2026 Regional Call for Projects Process. The Council retains final decision-making authority on the distribution of STBG, CMAQ, and RCSP funds to priority projects.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AMENDMENTS

The selected proposals will be programmed as funding secure or contingency projects in the 2028-2032 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). Approval of TRPC's RTIP and subsequent amendments will program eligible projects in the State Transportation Improvement Program. The programming and administration of the RTIP is necessary for projects to be eligible for obligation in the applicant's desired year. TRPC staff will work with successful applicants to meet these programming requirements.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Successful applicants are requested to acknowledge TRPC in press releases and other project notifications that their projects are funded with federal transportation dollars awarded by Thurston Regional Planning Council.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The following terms and concepts apply to the federal transportation funding programs as administered by TRPC.

Traditional Transportation Partner

Any local agency that provides general purpose, surface transportation facilities, programs, and services as a part of its core mission. For this process, Traditional Transportation Partners include only Bucoda, Lacey, Olympia, Rainier, Tenino, Tumwater, Yelm, Thurston County, the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation, the Nisqually Indian Tribe, and Intercity Transit.

Non-Traditional Transportation Partner

Any agency or organization other than those identified above that provides surface transportation facilities, programs, or services that directly support the goals and policies of the Regional Transportation Plan. Examples of these partners include TRPC, the Port of Olympia, school districts, state and federal natural resource agencies, fire districts, and non-profit organizations.

Eligibility Requirements

Within the constraints of federal guidelines, TRPC has adopted funding priorities and project requirements that serve as regional eligibility criteria. Applicants must also meet all federal requirements, as determined by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Local Programs staff.

Project Administration

Federal Transportation Grant recipients are required to adhere to the policies, standards, and procedures described in the WSDOT Local Agency Guidelines (known as the [LAG Manual](#)).

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through a Stewardship Agreement, delegates authority to WSDOT for approving project development and construction administration. WSDOT has the option of delegating some or all this authority to qualified local agencies, state or federal agencies, or tribal governments. This procedure permits an agency to retain more of the approval authority at the local level when developing FHWA assisted transportation projects. WSDOT delegates this authority through a Certification Acceptance (CA) program. The CA program allows a local agency to save time and money, since the agency has the authority to develop, advertise, award, and manage its own projects.

Prior to submitting their application, applicants must identify a CA agency that will sponsor the proposal(s) and obtain a signature of a representative with CA status.

Contingency Proposals

In addition to submitting high priority proposals, applicants are encouraged to submit lesser priority proposals that could be funded should additional funding become available. Consideration will be given to contingency proposals that can quickly obligate, are scalable in scope so as to accept more or less funding and have fewer permitting requirements.

The Council may subsequently select contingency proposals and award funding as conditions allow. Additional funding may become available through a future annual allocation, redistributed STBG funds from states that did not meet their obligation targets, or a local need to quickly reprogram the timing of projects to meet obligation targets.

Jurisdictions with selected contingency proposals will receive a conditional award letter. Selected contingency proposals will be programmed as projects in Appendix A: Other Secured and Planned TIP Projects in the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).

Obligation Targets

Obligation targets refer to state-mandated annual targets for federal funding obligation that TRPC must attain. Targets reflect federal fiscal year constraints (October 1 through September 30). TRPC award letters will specify each project's required obligation date.

Funding Awards by Phase

With rare exceptions, projects with multiple phases – Preliminary Engineering (PE), Right-of-Way (ROW), and Construction (CN) – will be awarded funds for one phase at a time. Completion of milestones that enable funding for a subsequent phase to be obligated is required before additional funds will be awarded. For most projects, this entails completion of federal level permitting requirements. Applicants are required to submit a separate application for each project phase if they occur in separate years.

Readiness to Proceed

Recognizing that different phases of a project have different federal requirements before they can obligate, project sponsors will be asked to demonstrate that their projects have or will meet all necessary federal requirements needed to complete obligation. For the preliminary engineering phase of projects, vehicle acquisition, planning, design-only, or corridor study projects, this requires no additional documentation. For right-of-way and construction phases, readiness to proceed will be demonstrated by completion of federal level permitting. Note the details on the STBG application that addresses information about construction and right-of-way project readiness.

For a federal application to be considered in the Call for Projects process, the applicant must coordinate in advance with WSDOT Olympic Region Development Services offices if the project is adjacent to a state route, crossing a state route; or within WSDOT's rights of way.

Sanctioning of Funds

TRPC is required to meet annual obligation targets mandated by WSDOT. WSDOT implemented a 'use it or lose it' policy in 2013 to: 1) Reduce the amount of federal funds tied up on projects that are not progressing as planned; and 2) Increase the rate of project delivery. To achieve its annual targets, TRPC reserves the right to rescind awarded funds from projects that fail to meet scheduled obligation dates. Conditions of TRPC's Obligation Authority will be specified in the award letters of selected projects and guided by TRPC's Obligation Authority Policy.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section includes commonly asked questions about these federal funding programs and the TRPC funding process.

Does a proposal have to address all regional funding priorities for a STBG grant?

No, to be eligible, a proposal must only demonstrate how it addresses one of the funding priorities identified by TRPC. However, a proposal that addresses multiple priorities is likely to score as a high priority project.

Does a proposal have to be a construction project to be considered a priority?

No, proposals do not have to include construction activities to be considered a regional priority. Examples of other potential priority project types include corridor or sub-area plans; development of street design standards to incorporate “complete street” concepts; transit vehicle acquisitions; park-and-ride facility planning; systems analysis; signal systems; and traffic safety education activities. A good investment in construction begins with a good investment in analysis and planning. Applicants are not bound to a single type of project in this process.

Does a proposal that meets regional and federal eligibility requirements guarantee funding?

No, compliance with eligibility requirements only means that TRPC will consider the proposal for funding.

To be successful in securing funds, a proposal should have a positive impact on the community and be competitive with TRPC’s Regional Evaluation Criteria. The completeness and accuracy of an application increases a proposal’s likelihood of receiving funding. To increase the appeal of your proposal:

- **Familiarize yourself with the region’s transportation priorities, TRPC’s Regional Transportation Plan, and Sustainable Thurston’s Action Plan (*Creating Places, Preserving Spaces*).** Make sure that your proposal and description clearly speak to the funding priorities in the context of overarching regional policies.
- **Make sure your proposal is well thought out and the description is easy to understand.** Policy makers will have a hard time recognizing a great project if the description is unorganized or incomplete. Use plain English to clearly convey the intent and benefits of your proposal.
- **Be clear and concise.** Making a great pitch for your proposal doesn’t mean writing pages and pages of description. Applicants are limited to 150, 300, or 500 word counts for most sections on the application forms. Information should be succinct and compelling. Tip – edit your narrative content in Microsoft Word, perform a word count, and paste the final version in the application form.
- **Be prepared.** If you haven’t lined up your Certification Acceptance (CA) agency, or verified federal eligibility requirements, your proposal will not be considered eligible.

- **Be ready to answer questions.** The technical and policy reviews may generate specific questions about your proposal or how you plan to implement it. This is the reviewers' responsibility and is meant to ensure that they fully understand what you are proposing to do with a regional grant.
- **Don't over commit!** Federal grant funds place a heavy emphasis on accountability. Be realistic in your assessment of project obligation schedules considering your other agency commitments and availability of match resources. Don't lose your grant by being unaware of what obligation entails or how long it takes. The technical review will pay attention to the ability to deliver project obligation schedules.

TRPC has a responsibility to allocate these public funds wisely. Policy makers will look for innovative, resourceful, and competitive proposals that will generate significant return on the investment for the traveling public. They are likely to be hesitant about proposals that seem too experimental or are not well thought out.

I have an idea for a proposal, and I know it will really work! How do I find out if it is eligible for funding?

Remember that this is a federal funding program – lots of flexibility, but many administrative requirements are attached to the revenue. You need to ensure that your proposal meets regional and federal eligibility requirements.

Your best strategy is to discuss your proposal with knowledgeable staff at TRPC, WSDOT Olympic Region, or local agencies as soon as possible. Learn about possible pitfalls early in the project development process so that you have time to make course corrections or rethink your proposal.

Once applications have been submitted, TRPC prohibits major rewrites of proposals to address eligibility issues. Minor revisions after the technical review may be accepted case-by-case.

The final authority on federal eligibility is the WSDOT Office of Highways and Local Programs. Applicants are strongly advised to contact John Ho at WSDOT Olympic Region to confirm that proposals are fully eligible under federal funding guidelines (by phone at 360.705.7383 or by email at hojohn@wsdot.wa.gov).

Why does this process distinguish between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' transportation partners?

Every local jurisdiction in the region has unfunded safety, preservation, efficiency, and enhancements projects. These projects are needed to support the regional transportation system, but there is simply not enough money to fund them. Policy makers established a process that will enable some of these highest priority projects to move forward in every jurisdiction.

However, policy makers wanted to make sure that other agencies or organizations could also participate in these funding programs. Therefore, TRPC encourages proposals from non-traditional

transportation partners. In the context of this process, non-traditional partners may include, but are not limited to, certain nonprofit organizations or service providers, state agencies, Port of Olympia, and school districts.

Note that most non-traditional partners must apply as project co-sponsors for Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program grants.

If my proposal is selected, will TRPC give me the money to do the work?

No, you will not receive any money up front. STBG and TA grants are reimbursement-type grant programs. Grant recipients must follow [WSDOT's Local Agency Guidelines](#) to administer their projects. Project sponsors will submit approved invoices to the Federal Highway Administration via WSDOT Local Programs Olympic Region. You will be reimbursed for all eligible work up to the amount awarded in your grant. If you receive funding, you will work with WSDOT on the frequency of invoice submittal.

I have more questions. Who can I contact for more information?

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact TRPC staff with any questions or project ideas. TRPC staff may also be available to meet with your project team.

Contact

Paul Brewster, Interim Planning Manager

Email: brewstp@trpc.org

Phone: 360.741.2526