Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

CMAQ and TAP-L
FFY 2028-2032
Program Application Booklet

October 19, 2026

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Introduction

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the metropolitan planning organization for the seven counties of northeastern Illinois, announces the availability of funding for transportation projects through the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program and the locally programmed Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP-L). Both programs are funded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The CMAQ program is designed to fund several types of surface transportation projects which improve air quality and mitigate congestion. Northeastern Illinois receives CMAQ funding because the region does not meet federal air quality standards for ozone emissions.

The TAP-L program is designed to fund non-motorized transportation projects. In northeastern Illinois those funds are focused on funding bicycle facility projects that help in the completion of the Regional Greenways and Trails Plan.

This application booklet provides details on how to apply for funding, eligibility, and project evaluation, selection, and programming processes.

Throughout this document, instructions that relate the policies and processes to the completion of an application can be found emphasized as shown here.

Deadlines and How to Apply

The call for projects begins on **Monday, October 19, 2026**, and ends at 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, December 18, 2026**. Applications are to be submitted through the eTIP database[1], which is the region's repository of information for all surface transportation projects funded by federal programs or deemed to be regionally significant. The eTIP has a Call for Projects (CFP) portal which will collect the applications' work type, location, and financial information. Additional forms will still be required and those must be uploaded as attached documents to eTIP.

An eTIP User Guide[2] is available and additional guidance for submitting projects is available with all the relevant materials posted at cmap.is/2026callforprojects. Application materials are only accepted through eTIP.

Project applications submitted by local sponsor agencies are required to be reviewed by their Council of Mayors' Planning Liaison before the eTIP submission will be accepted. The review process will occur within the eTIP database, and no project materials should be sent directly to the Planning Liaison. To give the Planning Liaisons time to review the applications, **all locally sponsored applications should be "submit for review" by close of business on Monday, December 7, 2026**. The Planning Liaison will review the application and if the application has missing information, they will notify the applicant. The applicant will then be able to amend the

[1] https://portal-cmap.ecointeractive.com/
[2] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/eTIP-User-Guide.pdf

application before the final due date. A list of the Councils and Planning Liaisons[3] is available online.

The eTIP database requires users to request login credentials and have those credentials approved by CMAP staff. Although CMAP staff will attempt to review user requests as soon as they are received, it may take up to three business days for CMAP staff to review and approve accounts. Applicants are encouraged to request credentials as soon as the call for projects opens, rather than waiting until they are ready to complete the application. Procedures for requesting credentials are included in the eTIP User Guide[4].

Eligibility

CMAQ Applicants and Project Types

For the CMAQ programs, eligible sponsors include any state agency or unit of government having the authority to levy taxes and those agencies authorized to receive FTA Section 5307 funding. Sponsors include but are not limited to counties, municipalities, townships, park districts, forest preserve districts, and transit agencies. Private for-profit and non-profit organizations are welcome to submit proposals, but they are required to partner with a public sponsor that meets the previously stated conditions.

Projects are eligible for CMAQ if they are a surface transportation project that provides an air quality benefit without increasing single occupancy vehicle capacity and do not simply maintain an existing facility. Projects considered are generally one of the following types:

- Transit Improvement Projects
    - Transit Facility Projects
    - Transit Service and Equipment
    - Access to Transit Projects
- Traffic Flow Improvement Projects
    - Bottleneck Eliminations
    - Intersection Improvements
    - Signal Interconnects
- Bicycle Facility Projects
- Direct Emissions Reduction Projects
- Demonstration Projects
- Other – for projects not described above

More details on the eligible CMAQ project types are in the Program Description[5] located on CMAP's CMAQ webpage[6].

[3] https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/25427/Municipalities+by+Council.pdf/a56a95c2-3160-783b-0a97-0445822f85a9?t=1660063740021
[4] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/eTIP-User-Guide.pdf
[5] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/CMAQ-Program-Description.pdf
[6] https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/mobility/strategic-investment/cmaq

TAP-L Applicants and Project Types

For the TAP-L program, eligible sponsors include local governments, regional transportation authorities, transit agencies, natural resource or public land agencies, school districts, and any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is not an eligible sponsor of TAP-L-funded projects but may partner with an eligible project sponsor to carry out a project. The same is true for non-profit agencies.

For TAP-L funding, only bicycle facility projects are eligible. The bicycle facility should serve a transportation purpose and not be solely a recreational facility. Some cost items will not be eligible for TAP-L funding even if the overall project is approved. Examples of cost items that will not be approved include trash bins, picnic tables, campgrounds, and general park facilities. These are cost items that are not required for the operation of a bicycle facility.

Eligible Project Phases

Phase 1 (preliminary) engineering (for projects to be processed through IDOT) and activities defined by FTA as "pre-engineering" (for projects to be processed through an FTA grant) will be the responsibility of the project sponsor to complete without funding from CMAQ or TAP-L programs.

All other phases -- including phase 2 (design) engineering, land acquisition, and construction (including construction engineering) -- are eligible for CMAQ or TAP-L funding based on the degree of completion of preliminary engineering at the time of application. Engineering design, land acquisition, and construction activities that are eligible for funding based on the degree of completion of preliminary engineering may be combined into "implementation" for transit projects that will be processed through an FTA grant.

Applicants may request funding for phase 1 engineering based on a hardship. If phase 1 engineering funding is sought, funding for the later phases of the project cannot be requested until the next call for projects following completion of the CMAQ/TAP-L funded phase 1 engineering, and such funding for later phases is not guaranteed.

To be considered eligible to request phase 1 engineering funding based on hardship, the project sponsor must be identified as a Cohort 4 (very high need) community in the FY26 Community Cohorts[7]. The project for which funds are being requested must be entirely within the boundaries of that community, however extensions beyond the boundary will be allowed to meet "logical termini" requirements. Sponsors seeking funding for phase 1 engineering should contact CMAP staff to confirm eligibility before doing so. If an alternate implementing agency, such as a County DOT, DOH, or DOTH or IDOT will be leading the implementation of any phase of a project located on a facility owned and/or maintained by a Cohort 4 community, that alternate agency may serve as the sponsor and applicant for the project. Counties and IDOT are not eligible to request or receive phase 1 engineering funding for projects on county or state highways, regardless of the project location.

[7] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/Community_Cohorts_FY26.pdf

Remaining Phases

All eligible phases will be programmed at a maximum level of 80 percent federal funding for CMAQ and TAP-L funding. The following exceptions only apply to the CMAQ program.

1. For transit project proposals where phase I and phase II engineering are not clearly defined, 70 percent of the engineering costs will be eligible for CMAQ funding at an 80 percent federal participation rate. All the costs of the remaining phases are eligible for up to 80 percent federal participation.

2. For signal interconnect projects, phase II engineering costs will not be eligible for CMAQ funding.

3. For proposals involving private corporations in which an entire vehicle or engine is being purchased to replace a higher-emitting vehicle or engine, the funding levels will be addressed on a case-by-case basis up to a maximum 65 percent federal share. For proposals involving private corporations in which only the cost difference between a lower-emitting version of a vehicle/engine and a conventional one is being funded, an 80 percent federal share is acceptable.

4. Projects which qualify for a higher federal participation rate under federal guidelines will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Local Match

A local match that is a minimum of 20 percent of the total cost, by phase, is required. The sponsor must have already committed matching funds when the project application is submitted. Proposals which indicate that the sponsor will pay more than the minimum local match will be identified for the CMAQ Project Selection Committee and may be given extra consideration. The local match does not necessarily have to be provided directly by the sponsor, but it must be a non-federal fund source to qualify as match.

To ensure that all communities within the region have reasonable access to federal funds without an undue burden caused by lack of resources for required local matching funds, on September 3, 2020, the CMAQ Project Selection Committee approved a Policy[8] for the use of Transportation Development Credits – Highways (TDCHs, also known as "toll credits") for CMAQ and TAP-L funded projects. Sponsors that are identified as a Cohort 4 (very high need) community in the FY26 Community Cohorts[9] may request the use of TDCHs in lieu of local match. If an alternate implementing agency, such as a County DOT, DOH, or DOTH or IDOT will be leading the implementation of any phase of a project located on a facility owned and/or maintained by a Cohort 4 community, that alternate agency may request the use of TDCHs in lieu of local match on behalf of the qualifying community. Counties and IDOT are not eligible to request or receive TDCHs in lieu of local match for projects on county or state highways, regardless of the project location.

[8] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/CMAP_TDCH_Policy_IDOTapproved11-20-2020.pdf
[9] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/Community_Cohorts_FY26.pdf

The use of federal funds for local projects is subject to the policies and procedures of IDOT and FHWA or FTA. These procedures may require local agencies to pay 100% of costs up front, with reimbursement occurring when the local agency invoices IDOT or FTA. For more information, see IDOT's LPA Project Development and Implementation[10] web page and the IDOT Local Roads and Streets Manual[11], Part III – Policies and Procedures for Federal-Aid Projects.

Document local match in the Proposed Funding Information section of the eTIP application.

Screening Criteria

1. For projects requiring phase I engineering, see the following "completion of preliminary engineering" section for requirements.

2. For transit projects that require engineering, see the following "completion of preliminary engineering" section for requirements.

3. Bicycle facility projects must be featured in at least one formally adopted or approved bike plan, comprehensive plan, or other plan by a local government, subregional council, CMAP, or the State of Illinois.

4. All projects considered for CMAQ funding must have an expected air quality benefit, as demonstrated by an emissions analysis completed by CMAP staff.

Completion of Preliminary Engineering

The preliminary engineering phase of a transportation project establishes the purpose and need for a project, determines the potential for environmental and cultural impacts from the project, analyzes alternatives, and provides an opportunity for the public to be involved in decision-making about the project. This work solidifies the scope of a project, the schedule for design, land acquisition, and construction, and the estimated cost of the project. For these reasons, substantial completion of preliminary engineering plays a critical role in ensuring accurate programming of project funding.

However, it is also recognized that there is an expense to completing preliminary engineering, and that not all project sponsors are willing or able to risk these expenses when no funding has been identified for completing a project. There is also a time limit to the validity of environmental and cultural clearances and having to update these clearances adds additional

[10] https://idot.illinois.gov/doing-business/public-agency-marketplace/local-public-agencies/lpa-project-development-and-implementation.html
[11] https://public.powerdms.com/IDOT/documents/2096656

time and cost to projects. Finally, completing preliminary engineering for unfunded projects puts a review burden on IDOT and other regulatory agencies for projects which may not be viable.

To balance these concerns, applications will be accepted for projects that have started, but not substantially completed preliminary engineering, however the phases eligible for funding consideration and future cost increases will be limited based on the degree of completion of preliminary engineering.

For projects selected for funding with a preliminary engineering status of "substantially complete" or "underway", the status will be reassessed prior to the next scheduled call for projects cycle, and if that status has not been elevated to "complete" or "nearly complete", the funding programmed in the previous cycle will be withdrawn, and the project will have to reapply for funding.

Funding and future cost increase eligibility based on degree of completion of preliminary engineering

Degree of completion	Design (Phase 2) Engineering	Land Acquisition	Construction and Const. (Phase 3) Eng.
Complete	Eligible for funding Eligible for increases up to 100%	Eligible for funding Eligible for increases up to 100%	Eligible for funding Eligible for increases up to 100%
Nearly Complete	Eligible for funding Not eligible for increases	Eligible for funding Eligible for increases up to 50%	Eligible for funding Eligible for increases up to 50%
Substantially Complete	Not eligible	Eligible for funding Not eligible for increases	Eligible for funding Eligible for increases up to 25%
Underway	Not eligible	Not eligible	Eligible for funding Not eligible for increases
Not Started	Not eligible	Not eligible	Not eligible

Definitions: Degree of Completion

Degree of completion	Milestones achieved and requested attachments
Highway (projects processed through IDOT)	
Complete	Design approval received *Attach: Design approval letter/form*
Nearly complete	IDOT has confirmed that a final Project Development Report has been submitted for signatures *Attach: Transmittal letter/email*

Degree of completion	Milestones achieved and requested attachments
Substantially complete	A preliminary PDR (or equivalent) has been submitted to IDOT for review, the project has been presented at a State/Federal Coordination meeting, a CE determination has been made, and FHWA concurrence of environmental processing has been given (not required for State Approved Categorical Exclusions), and the IDOT Bureau of Design and Environment (BDE) has completed the Environmental Survey Request (ESR) review (if required) and documentation of the environmental investigations, associated coordination, and any commitments made are included in the draft PDR *Attach: Kick-off meeting minutes (for State Approved CE), FHWA Coordination Meeting minutes, ESR transmittal and correspondence from BDE, draft PDR transmittal cover or email and appropriate section(s) of draft PDR including documentation of investigations, coordination, and commitments*
Underway	The project has been presented at a State/Federal Coordination meeting, a CE determination has been made, and FHWA concurrence of environmental processing has been given (not required for State Approved Categorical Exclusions), and the IDOT Bureau of Design and Environment (BDE) has begun the Environmental Survey Request (ESR) review (if required). *Attach: Kick-off meeting minutes (for State Approved CE), FHWA Coordination Meeting minutes, ESR transmittal and correspondence from BDE showing review has begun* --OR-- A final Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) report prepared in accordance with IDOT Bureau of Design and Environment (BDE) Manual section 11-7.04 has been completed documenting the project Purpose and Need, Alternatives to Be Carried Forward, and public involvement and there are no further comments from any Federal or state resource agencies *Attach: Appropriate documentation (forms and/or emails) demonstrating completion of the PEL and that there are no further comments*

Degree of completion	Milestones achieved and requested attachments
Transit (projects processed through FTA)	
Complete	For projects requiring an EIS or EA, a Record of Decision (ROD) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been obtained; for "D-list" CEs (see FTA's "Preparing Environmental Documents" webpage[12] and 23 CFR 711.118(d)[13]), FTA has classified the action as a categorical exclusion with no unusual circumstances; and for "C-list" CEs (see 23 CFR 711.118(c)[14]), a basic project description confirming the project falls within the C-List has been provided to FTA. *Attach: ROD signature page(s) or CE documentation (e.g., letter, email, meeting, or phone call notes) demonstrating the above*
Nearly complete	The sponsor has coordinated with FTA to develop documentation supporting processing the project as a CE (C-list or D-list). *Attach: Documentation (e.g., letters, emails, meeting, or phone call notes) demonstrating the above*
Substantially complete	Draft EIS or Draft EA has been released for public and regulatory agency reviews; or, for CEs with potential unusual circumstances, all appropriate environmental studies are complete. *Attach: Announcement of availability for review or documentation that environmental studies are complete*
Underway	For projects requiring an EIS or EA, project scoping is complete (purpose and need, range of alternatives and impacts, and significant issues to be addressed are defined). For CEs with potential unusual circumstances, drafts of all appropriate environmental studies are under public and/or regulatory agency review. *Attach: Appropriate documentation (forms, emails, announcements) demonstrating the above*

Indicate the status of preliminary engineering in the Project Information section of the eTIP application, complete the Preliminary Engineering – All tab of the application workbook, and attach the documentation noted above to support the status of completion in the eTIP database.

[12] https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/environmental-programs/preparing-environmental-documents

[13] https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-H/part-771#p-771.118(d)

[14] https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-H/part-771#p-771.118(c)

CMAQ Project Selection Process

If CMAQ project applications meet the screening criteria, they will be evaluated on a 100-point scale using the criteria discussed below.

The primary consideration for CMAQ projects is the cost-effectiveness of the air emissions reductions, measured as the cost per kilogram of emissions reduced. For CMAQ projects the emissions measured will be either volatile organic compounds (VOC) or fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) reduced. The cost per kilogram of emissions reduced is scored on a 60-point scale.

Additional criteria will be measured for projects as secondary to the air quality cost-effectiveness and will be taken into consideration when evaluating projects for potential funding. These are referred to as Transportation Impact Criteria and will be scored on a 30-point scale by project type category. The Transportation Impact Criteria and their weights are as follows.

Project type	**Criteria and Weights**		
Highway	Reliability 15	Safety 10	Corridor/Transit Improvement 5
Transit	Ridership 10	Reliability (transit service) or Asset Condition (transit facilities) 10	Transit Supportive Land Use 10
Bicycle	Safety & Attractiveness 10	Transit Accessibility 10	Facility Connectivity 10
Direct Emissions Reduction	Benefits Underserved Area 25		Improves Public Fleets 5

Projects will also be evaluated for their support of Equity principles that can increase access to opportunity for low-income residents and people of color and help the region to be stronger and more successful economically. This is scored through an inclusive growth criterion that looks at the percent of travelers using a facility that are people of color below the poverty line. The criterion is measured on a 10-point scale.

Scoring for Highway Projects

Travel Time Reliability

Improving travel time reliability is a critical aspect of congestion relief. A project's ability to address travel time reliability is evaluated with a quantitative and a qualitative component. The quantitative portion is based on the planning time index (95^{th} percentile travel time divided by free flow travel time) and has a maximum of **10 points**. The score is calculated based on the percentile shown in the middle column in the table below. The PTI is measured using the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) and points are assigned for each project as follows:

Maximum Approach PTI*	Percentile	Score
<= 1.40	0 - 50th	2
1.41 to 1.81	51st to 75th	4
1.82 to 2.55	76th to 90th	6
2.56 to 3.35	91st to 95th	8
3.36 and greater	>95th	10

* Maximum corridor PTI for signal interconnects and for bottleneck eliminations; maximum intersection leg PTI for intersection improvements.

Select all roadway links on which improvements will occur on the eTIP map.

The qualitative dimension of the score has a maximum of **5 points** and is developed by determining whether the project has any of the following characteristics or helps implement any of the following as part of a larger program:

Systematic Improvements	**Score**
Integrated Corridor Management	5
Work zone management (traveler information improvements)	5
Truck travel information systems	4
Strategies to improve transit on-time performance	4
Ramp metering	4
Road weather management systems	2
Special event management	3
Traffic signal interconnect	4
Adaptive signal control	5
Spot improvements:	
Highway-rail grade separation with more than 10K AADT and more than 10K annual minutes of delay lasting > 10 minutes	5
Implementation of effective crash reduction strategy (e.g., access management) as part of highway improvement	3
Highway-rail grade separation in ICC top 20 delay list	3
Highway-rail grade separation with more than 5K AADT and >5K annual minutes of delays lasting > 10 minutes	2
Implementation of an access management strategy	2
Other highway-rail grade separation	1
Incident Detection:	
Traffic Management Center (TMC) to TMC Communications	4
Computer-aided dispatch (911 call center) to (TMC) communications	4
Extension or improvement of real-time traffic surveillance on regional expressways and tollways, including video and detectors	3
Integration of real-time probe data into incident detection procedures	3

Establishment of detector health program	3
Incident Response:	
Expansion of response operations capabilities (e.g., minutemen)	5
Dispatch improvements, including center-to-operator and supervisor-to-operator communications (including supervisor-bus communications)	4
Response equipment (e.g., minuteman vehicles)	4
Incident Recovery:	
Expediting coroner's/medical examiner's accident investigation process	5
Dynamic message signs (DMS, multiple, including arterial DMS)	3
Incident-responsive ramp meters	3
Speed Management Systems	2
On-scene communication, coordination, and cooperation	2
Development and improvement of highway closure detour routes	2

Safety

Safety is a consideration for all highway projects, so if a project addresses a location with significant safety problems, it should be treated as a higher funding priority, other things being equal. Highway project types will be evaluated using county-level High Injury Networks (HINs) and the systemic risk typologies identified in the county Safety Action Plans (SAPs). Projects will be scored on a 100 point safety scale based on their location within the respective county High Injury Network (HIN) (25 percent) and the presence of systemic risk factors identified in the relevant county SAP (75 percent).

The safety need points will be weighed as follows:

Safety need points	Safety TIC score
76 – 100	10
51 – 75	8
26 – 50	6
1 – 25	4
0	0

Complete Questions 13 on the Road Projects tab and Safety tab of the Application Workbook.

Corridor and Transit Improvement

To encourage corridor and/or transit improvements, points will be awarded to projects that are part of a corridor improvement or have a transit element in the project design/scope. **2.5 points** will be given to project applications that are corridor level improvements or are part of a corridor improvement. Applicants will need to provide evidence of the corridor improvement either through a corridor study, Transportation Improvement Projects (TIP) that make up the corridor or the corridor project is in the TIP.

Projects that include transit improvements as part of the overall project scope would receive **2.5 points**. This could include, but is not limited to, transit signal priority, cue jumps, dedicated bus lanes, fixed station/stop improvements, and pedestrian access to transit.

Complete Questions 4-5 on the Road Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Scoring for Direct Emissions Reduction Projects

Improving the Condition of Public Fleets

Given the funding challenges of public agencies and the condition of public fleets, a project improving public sector vehicles will be a higher priority than one benefiting the private sector. The score is **5** if the project improves publicly owned fleets and **0** if it does not.

Benefits Underserved Area

The Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Development (DCEO) uses an Underserved Area designation for determining access to development grants and tax credits. DCEO defines an underserved area as a Census tract that meets one of the following criteria:

- Poverty rate of at least 20%; or
- 35% or more of the families with children in the area are living below 130% of the poverty line according to the latest American Community Survey; or
- At least 20% of the households in the area receive assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); or
- Average unemployment rate that is more than 120% of the national unemployment average, for a period of at least two consecutive calendar years preceding the date of the application.

The Benefits Underserved Areas criterion will be scored using DCEO's online interactive map[16] to determine if a project's census tract(s) is underserved and points will be awarded based upon the number of underserved areas criteria that a project's location meets. Projects that involve more than one census tract will receive points based on the census tract with the highest number of criteria met.

Benefits underserved area criteria scores	
# of Criteria	**Score**
0	0
1	6.25
2	12.5
3	18.75
4	25

Complete the Direct Emissions Reductions tab of the Application Workbook.

Scoring for Bicycle Facility Projects for CMAQ

Safety and Attractiveness Rating

The "safety and attractiveness rating" scores the improvement in conditions for biking that result from building a facility. A project score is calculated as the safety and attractiveness rating after project less the rating before project, as shown in the table below. For example, a protected bike lane built on an arterial with no bicycle accommodation presently would receive a score of 10 – 2 = 8. The score has a maximum value of **10**.

Narrative description	Score
Impassable barrier for walking and bicycling	0
Arterial road with no bicycle accommodation	2
Arterial road with some bicycle accommodation, including marked shared lanes, and collector streets with no accommodation;	4
Low-speed, local streets with no bicycle accommodation	6
Unprotected bike lane; local and collector streets with full accommodation	8
Trail or arterial sidepath, cycletrack, protected bike lane, buffered bike lane	10

Connectivity

Connectivity measures how much a bicycle project improves the ability to get from place to place by bicycle. The connectivity score is the greater of either (a) the connectivity of bikeways resulting from the project (shown in the first table below), or (b) level of traffic stress (LTS) for the connected roadways at a facility's termini (shown in the second table below). The score has a maximum value of **10**.

The following table shows the assignment of points related to improving bikeway connectivity:

Connectivity of bikeways resulting from the project	Value assigned
Project fills a gap between existing bikeways	10
Project intersects an existing bikeway	6
Project extends an existing bikeway	3
Project is a new isolated bikeway segment	0

The following table shows the assignment of points related to connected roadways level of traffic stress (LTS):

LTS of termini connected roadways	Value assigned
Low LTS	10
Medium-Low LTS	6
Medium-High LTS	3
High LTS	0

Transit Availability Index

Measuring transit availability helps ensure that a bicycle facility provides a realistic alternative to auto use by evaluating the potential to link bicycling with transit for longer trips. The maximum score on this measure is **10** (since the transit accessibility index ranges from 1 – 5, the index is weighted by 2 to produce the score). Area scores can be viewed on the Transit Availability Map[15] and for more information see the ON TO 2050 Indicators Appendix.

Complete the Bicycle Facility Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Scoring for Transit Projects

Ridership Increase

Increasing ridership is one of the key indicators in ON TO 2050, and it also helps indicate the overall benefits of a transit project. With a maximum score of **10 points**, projects are scored on their ability to increase transit ridership, as follows:

Increased ridership	Score
<254	2
255 - 436	4
437 - 1,002	6
1,002 - 1,829	8
>1,830	10

Complete Questions 9-13 on the Transit Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Travel Time Reliability

The travel time reliability score is composed of a quantitative measure of on-time performance (OTP) on the particular route with a qualitative evaluation of the project's impact on reliability.

[15]https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/BP-TransitAvailabilityMap.pdf

The travel time reliability criterion only applies to transit service and equipment. It takes a maximum of **10 points**, with 5 points coming from the quantitative measure.

On-time performance	Score
< 60%	5
60% - 70%	4
70% - 80%	3
80% - 90%	2
>90%	1

Complete Questions 4-8 on the Transit Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

The qualitative element of the score is based on the presence of the reliability-enhancing features in the table below. Projects can receive up to 5 points in this area.

Rail	**Score**
New Vehicles	1.00
Upgraded Switches	1.00
Upgraded Power Supply	1.00
Positive Train Control	1.00
Station Consolidation	1.00
Track Improvements	2.00
Reduction of Freight/Vehicle/Pedestrian Interference	3.00
Bus	
New Vehicles	1.00
Queue Jump/Bypass Lanes	1.00
Off-board Fare Collection	1.00
Reduced Stops/Express Service	1.20
New Dispatching/Decision Support Systems	1.00
Passenger Vehicle Movement Restrictions	1.00
Transit signal priority	2.40
Multi-Door Boarding with Off-board Fare Collection	2.00
Bus-on-Shoulders	3.20
Managed Lanes	4.00
Dedicated Bus Way	5.00
Far-side Stops	1.00
Bus Stop Upgrades	1.00
Near Level Boarding	1.60

For new service, an upgrade to conventional fixed route service will take a score based on the OTP of the local service on the route plus a qualitative score based on the reliability-enhancing features of the project.

Complete Question 16 or 17 on the Transit Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Existing Asset Condition

Other things being equal, it is more important to fund a transit facility or purchase new equipment where these assets are in worse condition. On the project application form, sponsors will need to provide the condition of the asset they are improving from the RTA asset inventory. Condition is rated based on a 1 – 5 scale. This criterion only applies to transit facilities. Entirely new facilities and assets that score ≥ 2.5 on FTA's five-level condition rating scale will receive a score of **0**.

Rating Scale	Narrative Description	Score
≥2.5	State of Good Repair	0
2.4	Marginal	0.7
2.3	Marginal	1.3
2.2	Marginal	2.0
2.1	Marginal	2.7
2.0	Marginal	3.4
1.9	Worn	4.0
1.8	Worn	4.7
1.7	Worn	5.4
1.6	Worn	6.0
1.5	Worn	6.7
1.4	Worn	7.4
1.3	Worn	8.0
1.2	Worn	8.7
1.1	Worn	9.4
1.0	Worn	10

Complete Question 18 on the Transit Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Transit-Supportive Land Use

One of the Regional Priorities is to promote transit investments in areas where zoning and urban design requirements are transit supportive. This will be scored as follows:

<table>
<tr><th>Max Score</th><th>Criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>Up to 4.5 points will be awarded based on the permitted density for residential and non-residential land uses within one-half mile of the transit station. If more than one residential or non-residential classification is zoned within the station area, points will be assigned to the classification with the highest permitted density.

Points will be assessed based on both residential and non-residential densities. If the two categories yield different point totals, the average of the two-point totals will be awarded.

Permitted Densities:
<table>
<tr><th>Residential (DU/buildable acre)</th><th>Non-Residential (Building Height*)</th><th>Points</th></tr>
<tr><td>< 6</td><td>1 story (12 ft.)</td><td>0</td></tr>
<tr><td>> 6 and ≤ 10</td><td>2 story (24 ft.)</td><td>1.0</td></tr>
<tr><td>> 10 and ≤ 16</td><td>3 story (36 ft.)</td><td>2.0</td></tr>
<tr><td>> 16 and ≤ 24</td><td>4 story (48 ft.)</td><td>3.0</td></tr>
<tr><td>> 24</td><td>> 4 story (> 48 ft.)</td><td>4.5</td></tr>
</table>
*Building height given in feet based on 12 feet per story.

AND

Up to 2.5 points will be awarded based on innovative parking requirements, which supports denser development by increasing space available for other uses (one point for each strategy implemented):

• Reduced minimum parking requirements
• Enacted maximum parking requirements
• Shared parking permitted
• In-lieu parking fees permitted
• Enacted bicycle parking requirements
• Off-street parking is required behind or underneath buildings
• Off-street parking is permitted off-site</td></tr>
<tr><td>3.0</td><td>Up to 3 points will be awarded for the presence of mixed-use zoning within one-half mile of transit project (1 point for each strategy implemented):

• Zoning allows vertical mixing of uses (e.g., residential units above ground-level retail or office).</td></tr>
</table>

Max Score	Criteria
	• Zoning allows pedestrian-friendly diverse land uses (e.g., drugstores, groceries, dry cleaning, banks, restaurants, gyms, hardware stores, etc.). • Zoning excludes car-dependent land uses (e.g., drive-through stores, strip malls, etc.). Communities that have implemented form-based codes may require additional qualitative analysis from CMAP staff to ensure their zoning meets the above standards.

Complete Questions 26-29 on the Transit Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Scoring Other CMAQ Projects

Some projects may not fit neatly into any of the categories above, and the CMAQ program at CMAP has an "Other Projects" submission form to accommodate these funding requests. For these projects, no transportation impact criteria would be used, and the project will only be evaluated on the cost-effectiveness of emissions reduction for a maximum of **90 points**.

Complete the Other Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Inclusive Growth

Long-term regional prosperity requires economic opportunity for all residents and communities. Equity, one of the ON TO 2050 plan principles, focuses on strategies, including transportation investments, that can increase access to opportunities for residents, and help the region to be stronger and more successful economically.

All projects are evaluated based on the percent of travelers using a facility that are people of color below the poverty line, as modeled by the CMAP travel demand model. Projects can receive a maximum of **10 points**, which are awarded as follows for both roads and transit facilities:

% of facility users who are nonwhite and under poverty line	Score
0%-5%	0
5%-10%	2
10%-15%	4
15%-20%	6
20%-25%	8
25% or more	10

TAP-L Project Selection Process

Bicycle facility projects are eligible to apply for both CMAQ and TAP-L funding. The application in eTIP should select both programs in the Major Implementation Group field. If bicycle facility projects meet the screening criteria, they will be evaluated on a 100-point scale using the criteria discussed below. When developing the proposed program, timely implementation will be considered as a major factor in project selection. Staff may request to have discussions with sponsors to verify project details and assess complications that might affect project readiness.

Scoring Bicycle Facility Projects for TAP-L

The scoring criteria and their weights are as follows.

Evaluation Criteria	Weights
Completion of Regional Greenways and Trails Plan	30
Market for Facility	25
Safety and Attractiveness Rating	25
Inclusive Growth	10
Project Readiness	10

Complete the Bicycle Facility Projects tab of the Application Workbook.

Completion of Regional Greenways and Trails Plan

ON TO 2050 specifically recommends implementing the Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trails Plan (RGTP). ON TO 2050 also uses miles of RGTP trails completed as an indicator of plan implementation. Thus, completion of the regional trail network is an important criterion. More information and the 2018 Greenways and Trails Plan Update map is available on the Greenways and Trails Plan webpage[16].

Narrative description	Score
Connects two existing trail sections	30
Extends an existing regional trail	25
Builds a new isolated section of planned regional trail	20
Builds a new facility that intersects an existing regional trail	10

Market for Facility

Other things being equal, a better facility is one that is likely to receive more use. Population and employment density in the area served by the facility is the criterion used to evaluate

[16] http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/bike-ped/greenways-and-trails

anticipated usage. Points are assigned by quintile which are available in a map of density quintiles[17] for the region.

Population and employment density	Score
Top quintile of region	25
Second quintile	20
Third quintile	15
Fourth quintile	10
Lowest quintile	5

Safety and Attractiveness Rating

The design of a bicycle or pedestrian facility influences the likelihood and safety of using it. The "safety and attractiveness rating" awards points for improvements in conditions for biking that result from building a facility. Project scores are calculated by taking the safety and attractiveness rating after the completion of a project less the rating before the project is initiated. For example, a protected bike lane built on an arterial with no bicycle accommodation presently would receive a score of 25 – 5 = 20. The score has a maximum value of **25**.

Narrative description	Score
Impassable barrier for walking and bicycling	0
Arterial road with no bicycle accommodation	5
Arterial road with some bicycle accommodation, including marked shared lanes, and collector streets with no accommodation;	10
Low-speed, local streets with no bicycle accommodation	15
Unprotected bike lane; local and collector streets with full accommodation	20
Trail or arterial sidepath, cycletrack, protected bike lane, buffered bike lane	25

Inclusive Growth

Long-term regional prosperity requires economic opportunity for all residents and communities. Equity, one of the ON TO 2050 plan principles, focuses on strategies, including transportation investments, that can increase access to opportunities for residents, and help the region to be stronger and more successful economically.

All projects are evaluated based on the percent of travelers using a facility that are people of color below the poverty line, as modeled by the CMAP travel demand model. Projects can receive a maximum of **10 points**, which are awarded as follows for both roads and transit facilities:

[17] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/PopEmpDensityMap.pdf

% of facility users who are nonwhite and under poverty line	Score
0%-5%	0
5%-10%	2
10%-15%	4
15%-20%	6
20%-25%	8
25% or more	10

Project Readiness Bonus

Given the importance of timely project implementation, bonus points will be awarded to projects that have no ROW or easements to obtain (**5 points**) and for which phase II engineering is already complete (**5 points**).

Complete the milestone questions on the Project Questions tab in eTIP. Indicate design engineering and land acquisition status in the Project Information section of the eTIP application and attach a copy of preliminary plans (PDF format only!) or a copy of the letter or e-mail transmitting pre-final plans to IDOT.

Selection Process Timeline

The timeline below represents the general flow of the application and approval process. This schedule is subject to change. If changes occur, those changes will be posted on the call for projects[18] web page.

Schedule	Action
October 19, 2026	Call for projects open
December 7, 2026	Local applications due in eTIP for Planning Liaison review
December 18, 2026	All applications and attachments due
TBD based upon PSC schedule	Summary of applications available
March 2027	Evaluation results and preliminary scores available for review
April 2027	Staff recommended program presented to Project Selection Committee
April-May 2027	Public comment period open
May 2027	Project Selection Committee review of public comment and considers final program for approval
May/June 2027	CMAP Transportation Committee considers TIP changes incorporating approved program
June 2027	MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board consider final approval of TIP changes for the program
June/July 2027	Federal eligibility determination (CMAQ only) and funding notification

Once a project is found eligible by the required federal agencies, sponsors will be notified that they may initiate the project. The sponsor at that time will also be notified with the information needed to initiate their projects.

[18] https://cmap.is/2026callforprojects

Accomplishment Goals and Milestones

Each phase of an approved CMAQ or TAP-L funded project will be subject to an accomplishment goal. An individual phase will have the year in which it is originally programmed in plus two additional years (3 years total) to meet the accomplishment goal for the phase. For projects administered through FHWA, the accomplishment goals are defined as:

1. Phase I engineering – design approval
2. Phase II engineering – pre-final plans submitted to IDOT
3. Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition – ROW certified by IDOT
4. Construction – construction has been let for bid
5. Implementation – received federal authorization

For projects administered through FTA, the accomplishment goal is simply FTA grant approval for the phase.

If a phase is not accomplished in the year, it is programmed plus two additional years, all remaining funding that is not federally obligated will be removed from the guaranteed program and the project will be considered deferred.

Deferred project phases can be brought back into the program, but only if readiness is demonstrated as defined in the CMAQ Programming and Management Policies[19] and there is unprogrammed funding available. If a project has multiple phases that have been deferred, only one phase at a time may come back into the program and subsequent phases will remain deferred until they are able to demonstrate readiness. More information on deferred projects and project scope and cost changes can be found at https://cmap.illinois.gov/funding-assistance/transportation-improvement-program/congestion-mitigation/cmaq-crp-tap-program-management/.

Complete the Project Questions tab and Schedule Info tab in eTIP, including the dates that the milestones were completed.

General Considerations for Federal Funding

Projects carried out using CMAQ and TAP-L funds must comply with applicable provisions in Title 23 of the United States Code dealing with Federal-aid highways, such as project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to incurring costs, prevailing wage rates, Buy America, competitive bidding, and other contracting requirements. Applicants are urged to familiarize themselves with title 23 requirements.

Federal aid, including CMAQ and TAP-L funding, is generally most efficiently used for substantial facility improvements. The administrative burden of a federal-aid project can be substantial. Thus, a small project is often best accomplished with local funds to avoid this burden.

[19] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/CMAQ_Policies_Approved_20141008.pdf

Application Checklist

The application process is completed online using CMAP's eTIP database. Please ensure the following steps are completed.

- ☐ Creation of project application in eTIP with project work type, location, and financial information. Be sure to complete the Map, Project Question, Attachments, Schedule Info and IDs/Contact tabs in eTIP.

- ☐ Application Workbook (Excel) – sections specific to the project type are completed and the entire workbook is uploaded to eTIP as an **Excel workbook.**

- ☐ Detailed cost estimate completed and uploaded to eTIP.

- ☐ Project milestone questions completed on the Project Questions tab of the eTIP project application.

- ☐ Input Module Worksheets for traffic flow improvement projects only - before and after the improvement completed and uploaded to eTIP

- ☐ Copy of pages from formally adopted or approved plan if not available online for bicycle facility projects only uploaded to eTIP

All forms are available at cmap.is/2026callforprojects. Applications submitted that are missing any of the following **will not be considered for funding**:

- Project financing & funding request in eTIP with all project phases.
- Completed Application Workbook (MS Excel format)
- Detailed Estimate of Costs.
- The Input Module Worksheet (for intersection improvement and bottleneck elimination projects only).

For any other missing information, CMAP staff and/or the applicant's Planning Liaisons will contact the applicant, and the applicant will have no less than ten business days from the time of the request to provide the missing information.

Contact Information

If you have a question or need assistance, please review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the call for projects[20] web page, contact your Planning Liaison[21], or CMAP staff at transportation@cmap.illinois.gov..

[20] https://cmap.is/2026callforprojects

[21] https://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/25427/Municipalities+by+Council.pdf/a56a95c2-3160-783b-0a97-0445822f85a9?t=1660063740021

Appendix A: FY26 Cohort 4 Communities

These communities were designated as Cohort 4 communities in the FY26 Community Cohorts[22] document and are eligible to request Phase 1 Engineering funding and to request the use of Transportation Development Credits – Highways (TDCHs, also known as "toll credits"), as described in the Eligibility section of this document.

Municipalities

Bellwood
Blue Island
Braceville
Broadview
Burnham
Calumet City
Calumet Park
Chicago Heights
Cicero
Diamond
Dixmoor
Dolton
East Hazel Crest
Ford Heights
Glenwood
Godley
Harvey
Hazel Crest
Holiday Hills
Hometown
Justice
Kaneville
Lisbon
Markham
Maywood
McCullom Lake
Millington
North Chicago
Park City
Park Forest
Phoenix
Posen
Riverdale
Robbins
Round Lake Heights
Round Lake Park
Sauk Village
South Chicago Heights
Steger
Stickney
Stone Park
Summit
Winthrop Harbor

Chicago Community Areas

Auburn Gresham
Austin
Brighton Park
Chicago Lawn
East Garfield Park
East Side
Englewood
Fuller Park
Gage Park
Greater Grand Crossing
New City
North Lawndale
Oakland
Riverdale
Roseland
South Chicago
South Lawndale
South Shore
Washington Heights
Washington Park
West Elsdon
West Englewood
West Garfield Park
West Pullman
Woodlawn

[22] https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/Community_Cohorts_FY26.pdf