



MEMORANDUM

To: CMAP STP Project Selection Committee

From: CMAP Staff

Date: July 6, 2023

Subject: Staff Recommended FFY 2024 - 2028 STP Shared Fund Active and Contingency Programs for Public Comment

Purpose: Staff will summarize the evaluation and program development process and staff recommended program.

Action Requested: Approval to proceed with public comment from July 13 - August 11, 2023.

A call for projects was issued in January 2023 for the FFY 2024 – 2028 Surface Transportation Program (STP) Shared Fund, held jointly with the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and local Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP-L) call for projects. A total of 60 applications were received from 41 unique applicants throughout the region. Staff evaluated the applications according to the methodology contained in the [Application Booklet](#) published with the call for projects to determine preliminary scores. Applicants were then given an opportunity to review those scores. Final project scores were developed based on comments received from applicants. Staff utilized the final scores and the funding requests by federal fiscal year (FFY) contained in project applications to develop the staff recommended program to be released for public comment from July 13 – August 11, 2023.

This memo contains an overview of the scoring, program development process, and staff recommended program, along with links to detailed documentation, where appropriate. The committee is being asked to approve staff's release of the draft active and contingency programs for public comment. Public comments and any recommended adjustments to the programs will be considered by the committee at its August 31st meeting. Following the committee's approval, staff will prepare TIP amendments reflecting the approved active program for consideration by the CMAP Transportation Committee on September 22nd, and with the recommendation of that committee, consideration for approval by the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee at their joint meeting on October 11th.

Eligibility Determination

Staff reviewed the 60 applications for compliance with the program's eligibility rules for total project cost or partner participation and inclusion in plans. Seven (7) applications were

eliminated from further consideration due to not meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria. Staff also reviewed the status of preliminary engineering for all projects, finding that among projects seeking funding beyond preliminary engineering, Four (4) projects did not meet the requirement for preliminary engineering to at least be underway, and were therefore ineligible for further consideration.

Initial Scoring

Applicants had the option of requesting consideration in more than one of the nine (9) project type categories. Including projects that requested consideration in multiple categories, staff conducted 80 evaluations of the 49 eligible projects to determine preliminary scores. The evaluations started with an examination of the need for the project within each project type. 21 projects were determined to be ineligible within specific categories, including six (6) bike/pedestrian barrier elimination applications that did not include a physical barrier, one (1) bridge project for which no sufficiency rating was available, one (1) road expansion project where the facility has “little congestion”, is “generally reliable” and has less than three congested hours per weekday, eight (8) road reconstruction projects where the latest available pavement condition is reported as “excellent” or “good”, four (4) safety projects where the worst SRI is “low” or “minimal”, and one (1) safety project that had a scope that was not reasonable for the safety project type. Of these, seven (7) projects were eliminated from all consideration for the Shared Fund and the rest remained eligible for consideration in other project categories. For projects evaluated in multiple categories, the category resulting in the highest score was identified and the project was removed from further consideration in other lower-scoring categories. Since individual project scores within each project category are calculated relative to all other projects in that category, all scores were recalculated after lower scoring versions of projects were removed to determine final draft scores.

The detailed procedures for each scoring element are contained in the STP Shared Fund [Scoring Documentation](#). This documentation was provided to project applicants, City of Chicago staff, and subregional councils of mayors’ staff and posted on the call for projects [web page](#) along with the [draft scores](#) on June 19th. Following the posting of draft scores, staff responded to project applicants that provided comments and asked questions regarding the scoring. Several applicants requested to have scores adjusted based on changes to project status since the call for projects closed, or requested changes to scores based on additional documents that were not included in the applications. However, no new information provided after the call for projects closed was considered, and none of the comments resulted in any changes to project scores.

Program Development

The program development process began by creating a [table of project funding requests](#) by federal fiscal year (FFY), arranged in rank order. Minimum acceptable funding indicated by applicants was also included. Additionally, adjustments to funding requests were made based on matching requirements, eligibility for TDCHS in lieu of match, and for projects that were awarded Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) funding by IDOT in April.

Starting with the highest ranked project, staff programmed funds for each phase of the projects in the requested FFY, keeping a tally of the available funds in each FFY, moving down the list in rank order until a requested phase(s) could not be accommodated in the requested FFY(s). If the request could be accommodated in a later FFY than requested, the funds were

programmed in the later year(s). If the full funding request could not be accommodated in any FFY, staff referred to the minimum acceptable funding amounts and programmed the remaining funds available.

As part of this process, staff also considered alternative approaches to accommodating applicants that were seeking cost increases for existing active program projects. In one case, the project requesting additional funding was let in 2021 and is nearing the completion of construction. This project is very likely to be able to obligate the requested funding prior to the end of FFY 2023, therefore staff has accommodated the request in the existing active program. Two other projects, ranked 3rd and 17th, are targeting the January 2024 letting and are both large, complex projects involving multiple agencies and railroads. Rather than delay these projects two or three years, allowing costs to continue to escalate and agreements to potentially be re-negotiated, staff is recommending funding the requested increases, together \$20.2 million, in FFY 2024 using a portion of the significant regional redistribution balance. This balance, accumulated from unprogrammed and unobligated funds in both the Shared Fund and Local STP programs, is expected to be at least \$30.6 million at the start of FFY 2024 and could be as high as \$168 million if projects in the region that are ineligible to have their funding carried forward are not obligated prior to September 30, 2023.

Throughout this program development process collaboration with staff developing recommendations for the CMAQ, CRP, and TAP-L programs also occurred, and two projects were not considered for the Shared Fund because they are being recommended for funding in one of the other programs. Four additional projects, which could not have been funded with the Shared Fund, are also being recommended for at least partial funding in the other programs.

Staff Recommended Programs

In addition to the ten (10) projects currently programmed in FFYs 2024 – 2026, the [Staff Recommended Active Program](#) includes \$20.2 million for cost increases for two (2) existing projects in FFY 2024, \$14.9 million for nine (9) new projects in FFYs 2025 and 2026, and \$65 million for eight (8) new projects in FFYs 2027 and 2028. \$40 million is recommended for two (2) projects located within the City of Chicago, \$33.6 million for nine (9) projects within suburban Cook County, and \$26.5 million for eight (8) within the collar counties.

Over \$20 million is proposed for six (6) projects in communities with the highest need (Cohort 4), including \$1.7 million in Transportation Development Credits and \$4.8 million for phase 1 engineering only. One-third of the projects recommended (7 of 19) are within municipalities with populations of less than 25,000. The facilities selected serve over 19.7 million jobs and households combined. More than one-third of the projects improve facilities where more than 10% of the users are minorities below the poverty line.

Funding of projects that support the goals of ON TO 2050 is desired in the STP Shared Fund and the planning factors portion of the project evaluation supports this desire. All of the recommended projects include complete streets elements or are within jurisdictions with complete streets policies. Of the projects evaluated for resilience, three (3) of seventeen (7) have policies in place, and thirteen (13) included resilience elements in the project scope. Eight (8) of the sixteen (16) projects evaluated for freight impacts are within jurisdictions with freight supportive policies and procedures and six (6) projects are located on a regional freight network.

All eligible projects that applied for the STP Shared Fund that were not recommended for full funding through the Shared Fund, CMAQ, CRP, TAP-L or other programs (such as ITEP and RAISE) are recommended by staff for inclusion in the [Staff Recommended Contingency Program](#), where they may be considered for funding that becomes available through September 30, 2025 according to the region's [Active Program Management](#) policies. More detailed listings of final project scores and recommended funding can be found on the call for projects [web page](#) in both PDF and Excel format.

Next Steps

Staff is requesting committee discussion of the staff recommendation and approval to proceed with the planned public comment period from July 13 through August 11, 2023. Following the public comment period, staff will present a summary of comments and any recommended changes to the draft programs for committee discussion and consideration at its August 31st meeting. Upon approval of a final program by this committee, a TIP amendment will be prepared for CMAP Transportation Committee consideration on September 22nd for a recommendation for approval by the MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board at their October 11, 2023 joint meeting.