



MEMORANDUM

To: CMAQ, CRP, and TAP-L Project Selection Committee

From: Douglas Ferguson, Senior Analyst

Date: July 9, 2026

Subject: Direct Emissions Reduction – Transportation Impact Criteria

Action Requested: Discussion

Prior to the FFY 2026-2030 programming cycle, the transportation impact criteria (TIC) scoring for CMAQ direct emissions reduction (DER) projects included “Benefits Sensitive Population” and “Improves Public Fleets”. With the FFY 2026-2030 cycle, the underlying data for the Benefits Sensitive Population criterion was no longer available, causing a shift in project scoring to allocate all TIC points to the cost benefit of emissions reduced. Since this data remains unavailable, staff is considering replacing the Benefits Sensitive Population criterion with a Benefits Underserved Areas criterion and is seeking feedback from the Project Selection Committee on this proposal. Both current and proposed scoring criteria are provided for reference below.

Current DER project scoring

Cost Benefit of Emissions Reduced	50 points
TIC	30 points
Equity	20 points

Current TIC scoring for DER projects

Project Type	Criteria and Weights	
Direct Emissions Reduction	Benefits Sensitive Populations	Improves Public Fleets
	25 points	5 points

Improves 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 Sensitive Populations

Impacts from fine particulate matter emissions may be more pronounced in children and older adults, who are especially susceptible to illnesses caused or exacerbated by exposure to fine particulate matter. Minority and poverty status likely influence susceptibility as well. The sensitive population score shows diesel particulate concentrations in relation to persons who are over 65, under 5, minority, and low-income by census tract. The [sensitive populations score map¹](#), provides an indication of a project's score. Higher index values indicate greater sensitivity. To score a project, the sensitive population index is then multiplied by an estimate of the population benefiting from the project, the magnitude of the emissions reduction, and the time of exposure. The final project score is assigned **0** to **25** scale.

Proposed Benefits Underserved Area criterion

The Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Development (DCEO) uses an [Underserved Area²](#) 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:

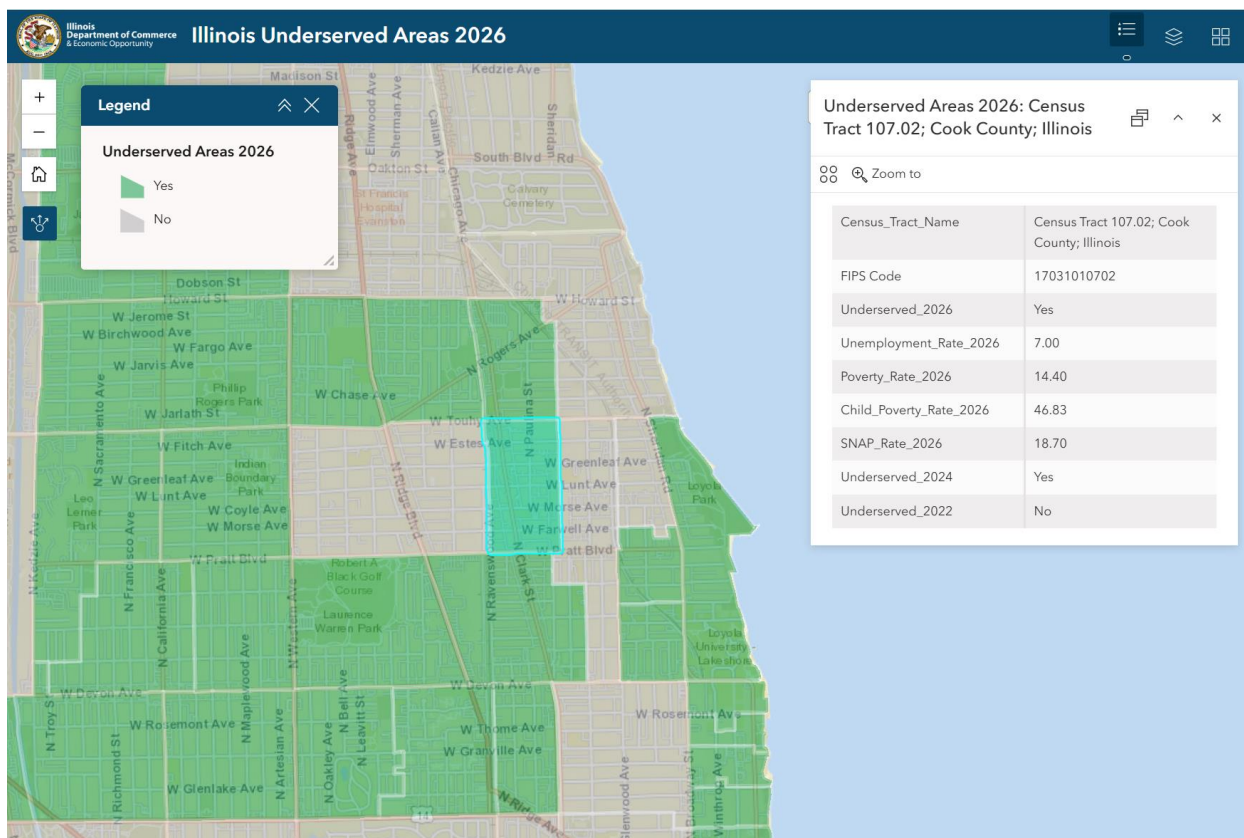
- Poverty rate of at least 20%; or
- 35% or more of the families with children in the area are living below 130% of the poverty line according to the latest American Community Survey; or
- At least 20% of the households in the area receive assistance under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (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.

DCEO presents the Census tracts which meet the underserved area criteria through an [online interactive map³](#) as shown below. When clicking on a census tract, the results for the criteria are presented along with if the tract was considered underserved in the previous two evaluations. For the example below, the underserved area meets the criteria for families with children living below 130% of the poverty line and the average unemployment rate that is more than 120% of the national unemployment average.

¹<https://cmap.illinois.gov/wp-content/uploads/DER-SensitivePopScoreMap.pdf>

² <https://dceo.illinois.gov/expandrelocate/incentives/edge/edge-underserved-area.html>

³ <https://dceo.illinois.gov/expandrelocate/incentives/underservedareas.html>



Proposed TIC scoring for DER projects

Project Type	Criteria and Weights	
Direct Emissions Reduction	Benefits Underserved Areas	Improves Public Fleets
	25 points	5 points

The Benefits Underserved Areas criterion will be scored using DCEO's evaluation shown above and points will be awarded based upon the number of underserved areas criteria that a project's location meets. For example, the area highlighted above would meet two (2) of the underserved areas criteria and would be assessed 12.5 points. 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 Areas Criteria Scores	
# of Criteria	Score
1	6.25
2	12.5
3	18.75
4	25