

CMAP



# Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program

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## CMAQ Project Application Information Booklet

Federal Fiscal Year 2014-2018

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## New and Important:

- **Phase I Engineering** (preliminary engineering) is no longer eligible for CMAQ funding in northeastern Illinois. Transit projects requiring engineering will only be eligible for 50% federal funding under the CMAQ program. See page 11.
- Signal interconnect projects will not be eligible for phase I or II engineering (preliminary or design engineering) funding. Construction engineering (CE) will continue to be eligible as a part of the construction phase.
- Sponsors must have submitted a preliminary design review (PDR) document to IDOT for design approval by July 1, 2013 to be considered for inclusion in the draft proposed program.
- Information on **Focused Programming Approach and Focus Groups** – see page 16.
- Locally sponsored projects require a subregional **Planning Liaison Review** – see page 13.
- Questions? Visit [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts).

# Application Checklist:

## What to do to meet the February 8, 2013 application deadline?

### FY 2014-2018 CMAQ Application Completeness

All application forms and supplemental forms are available at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development). **Failure to submit any required materials will result in an application not being considered for funding.**

- ☐ Project application form, chosen from among the following:
  - a. Traffic flow improvement projects (intersection improvements and bottleneck elimination)
  - b. Signal interconnects
  - c. Transit projects
  - d. Bicycle and pedestrian facility projects
  - e. Bicycle parking/bicycle encouragement projects
  - f. Commuter parking projects
  - g. Demonstration projects
  - h. Diesel emission reduction projects
  - i. Other projects
- ☐ Supplementary forms specific to the type of project:
  - a. Input Module Worksheets (traffic flow improvement projects only) - before and after the improvement
  - b. Commuter Parking Structure Supplement (parking structure projects only)
- ☐ Detailed cost estimate for all project types.
- ☐ Project milestone schedule (bicycle/pedestrian facility, commuter parking and traffic flow improvement projects only)



## Subregional Planning Liaison Review of Applications

All local project sponsors need to submit their applications to their subregional planning staff ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts)) before submitting them to CMAP for consideration. The application materials are due to the subregional planning staff by January 22, 2013. See page 13.

## Phase I Engineering Requirements

Starting with the FY 2014-2018 program development, phase I engineering is no longer a CMAQ eligible phase for funding. Projects that require phase I engineering must fund that phase with non-CMAQ funds. For projects that do not require phase I engineering there may be other restrictions. See page 11.

Project proposals are required to demonstrate that phase I engineering has been initiated prior to the Project Selection Committee releasing a draft program recommendation (July 1, 2013) to be considered for the inclusion in the program. This can be demonstrated by either having received design approval from IDOT or having submitted to IDOT a Preliminary Design Report (PDR) or equivalent as appropriate for the project type.

## Project's Support of GO TO 2040 and Aligned Plans and Programs

Projects will be evaluated, in part, on their ability to help implement the goals and objectives of the region's adopted comprehensive plan, GO TO 2040. Review the evaluation criteria of the GO TO 2040 Focused Programming Approach and the focus groups (page 16). Applicants are asked to supply information on the relationship of their proposed project and GO TO 2040 in the Project Description section of application. Project proposals that are included in an adopted local, county or regional plan or program that supports GO TO 2040 are also encouraged.

## Missing Application Information

Applications submitted that are missing any of the following sections will not be considered for funding:

- A complete **Project Financing & CMAQ Funding Request** section on the first page of the main application form.
- Detailed Estimate of Costs
- The **Input Module Worksheet** for traffic flow improvement projects only.
- Subregional planning liaison signoff certifying that applications from local agency sponsors have been reviewed for completeness.

CMAP staff or the subregional planning liaisons will contact sponsors regarding any other missing information and the sponsor will have 30 days from contact to provide the missing information.



## **Application Format**

Submit one electronic copy of all application materials in a **Portable Document Format (PDF)** to the email contact, Doug Ferguson at [dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov). A confirmation email will be sent notifying the applicant of receipt. **DO NOT** send paper copies of application materials. If you are unable to email your application in the requested format, please contact Doug Ferguson.

## **Application Deadline**

Project applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. on February 8, 2013**. If the sponsor of the project is a local sponsor the form must be received by the subregional planning liaison for review (<http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts>) by **January 22, 2013**.

Send completed project applications to Doug Ferguson at the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, [dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov).



# Program Development Schedule

<b>December 10, 2012</b>	<b>Open Call for Project Applications</b> Application materials are released.
<b>January 22, 2013</b>	<b>PL Review Deadline</b> All locally sponsored projects must submit their applications for review to their respective Council of Mayors planning liaison (PL) by this date (page 13).
<b>February 8</b>	<b>Close Call for Project Application</b> 5:00 p.m. deadline to submit application materials for consideration.
<b>February - May</b>	<b>Project Evaluation</b> CMAP staff evaluates the submitted applications for potential air quality and congestion reduction benefits (page 16). <b>Program Focus Groups Review of Applications</b> Focus groups evaluate project applications (page 16).
<b>June 27</b>	<b>Preliminary Review of Applications Released</b> The Project Selection Committee will release the preliminary emissions benefit rankings of the applications (page 16). The focus groups will present their recommendations to the Project Selection Committee. Sponsors will be allowed to present their projects, if necessary.
<b>July 18</b>	<b>Release of Draft Proposed Program</b> The Project Selection Committee will release a draft proposed program for consideration by the Transportation Committee for a public comment period (page 20).
<b>August 2</b>	<b>Public Comment Period Begins</b> The Transportation Committee will release the proposed program for public comment (page 20).
<b>August 25</b>	<b>Public Comment Period Ends</b> The public comment period on the proposed program closes.
<b>September 10</b>	<b>Project Selection Committee Consider Public Comments and Proposed Program</b> The Project Selection Committee will review public comments received before recommending a proposed program.
<b>September 20</b>	<b>Transportation Committee Considers Proposed Program</b>
<b>October 9</b>	<b>Regional Coordinating Committee, CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee Consider Proposed Program</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>Federal Eligibility Determination and Funding Notification</b> FHWA/FTA will review projects in the approved program for federal eligibility. Sponsors will be notified to proceed to project implementation once the determination is made (page 21).





# Summary of the CMAQ Program

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) is a federally-funded program of surface transportation improvements designed to improve air quality and mitigate congestion. The CMAQ Program was created in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Continuation of the program was authorized in subsequent transportation reauthorizations. The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for the CMAQ program is 20.205.

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) CMAQ Project Selection Committee selects CMAQ projects in northeastern Illinois, with subsequent approval by the Transportation Committee, Regional Coordinating Committee, MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board. CMAP staff performs technical analyses of all projects. The Illinois Department of Transportation administers the program.

Northeastern Illinois is a marginal non-attainment area for the 8-hour ozone standard and a non-attainment area for annual fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Therefore, federal guidance and the CMAQ Project Selection Committee give priority to projects that reduce emissions that contribute to ground level ozone or reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

The CMAQ program is an important vehicle to implement aspects of the region's adopted comprehensive plan, GO TO 2040. The CMAQ Project Selection Committee will also give consideration in the selection process to projects that have a strong link to GO TO 2040 and aligned regional and local plans and programs.

The overall goals of the CMAQ Program are to improve air quality and reduce congestion, as established in the Federal authorizing legislation. To carry out these goals, four objectives have been identified:

- Localized Congestion Relief
- Operational Improvements
- Mode Shift
- Direct Emissions Reduction

To implement these goals, CMAP approved the GO TO 2040 Focused Programming Approach ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/focused-programming](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/focused-programming)) in January 2011. The approach established four focus groups, that review project applications that are relevant to their group's project type(s), evaluate them based upon relevant action areas from GO TO 2040 and make non-binding recommendations to the Project Selection Committee. More information on the individual focus groups and their evaluation of applicants is discussed later in this document (page 16).



# Eligible Projects

Many types of projects are eligible for CMAQ funding. The Federal Highway Administration makes the final determination of project eligibility following MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board approval of a program of projects.

Historically and again for this round, the CMAQ Project Selection Committee has directed that the call for projects be open to all eligible project types. However, the Committee may select few (if any) projects of some types.

## Transit Improvements

The CMAQ program finances various transit improvements:

### ***Transit System Start-ups***

These projects are new rail systems, bus service or vanpools. Examples include the Orange Line to Midway and the North Central Service commuter rail line to Lake County. Operating expenses for new systems can be reimbursed for up to three years.

### ***Transit Transfer Facilities***

These projects increase the convenience of transferring between transit services.

### ***Transit Facility Improvements***

These projects enhance the existing transit system through adding or improving facilities such as stations.

### ***Transit Service and Equipment***

These projects enhance the existing transit system through improvements such as increasing the frequency or operating speed of service on bus routes or rail lines. Operating expenses can be reimbursed for up to three years. Bus and bus engine replacements above and beyond standard fleet replacement schedules are eligible for CMAQ funding.

## Commuter Parking Facilities

New or expanded park-n-ride or park-n-pool facilities are eligible. Parking structures may also be funded through the CMAQ program. Sponsors proposing parking structures need to supply additional information on the Commuter Parking Structure Supplement form.

## Traffic Flow Improvements

The CMAQ program finances three types of traffic flow improvements:





### ***Bottleneck Eliminations***

These projects remove existing bottlenecks to traffic flow. Under current guidelines, a bottleneck is defined as a point along a roadway that restricts traffic flow. Road segments, even if relatively short, are not eligible. Bottleneck eliminations may be reviewed for eligibility on a case-by-case basis, since CMAQ funds cannot be used to fund “general purpose through lanes.”

### ***Intersection Improvements***

These projects ease the flow of traffic through existing intersections without adding capacity. Such projects include addition of turn lanes (including continuous bi-directional left turn lanes) or traffic signal installation.

Please note that signals to be installed with federal assistance must meet signal warrants. If the proposed signal is on the State highway system, IDOT will review the project sponsor’s warrant study as part of the application process to verify that warrants are met. However, meeting signal warrants alone is not sufficient to merit award of CMAQ funds. Some projects may show no emissions benefits even though signal warrants are met, since signal warrants may take into account factors other than delay reduction. In addition, the specifics of the project design (e.g., signal timing) may reduce emissions benefits. Exhibit 10-15 in the *Highway Capacity Manual 2000* shows, at a minimum, the range (i.e., the stop control intersection ranges) in which emissions benefits should not be expected. However, intersections in the traffic signal control range may still not show emissions benefits.

### ***Signal Interconnects***

These projects reduce delays through a series of intersections by coordinating the signal phases, thereby reducing emissions.

## **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Projects**

The CMAQ program finances both bicycle and pedestrian facilities that reduce automobile travel. Recreational facilities often do not make good CMAQ project candidates. Pedestrian facility projects will not be considered for funding unless they provide direct access to a transit stop or station. See the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force review criteria for more requirements (page 17).

## **Bicycle Parking and Bicycle Encouragement Projects**

These projects create or increase the availability of parking facilities for bicycles and promote the use of bicycles, thereby eliminating auto trips.

## **Direct Emissions Reduction Projects**

These projects reduce emissions through a variety of measures, including idle reduction, purchase of fuels that produce less emissions (beyond fuels required by law or regulation), retrofitting existing diesel engines with catalysts or filters, repowering vehicles with cleaner



engines, or vehicle replacement. The engines may be in on-road vehicles, off-road vehicles used in construction of highway projects, or locomotives used within the non-attainment area. Applications for diesel emission reduction projects on behalf of private rail road companies require a 10 year minimum commitment that any equipment will remain in the region and the local match will be determined by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee after applications are received. In the past a 35 percent minimum contribution was required from private railroads. During this application cycle the potential for a higher match will be considered. As with other projects, an application that proposes a match at a higher rate is given extra consideration.

## **Other Projects**

These projects do not fit into the above categories, but result in emissions reductions and are otherwise eligible for CMAQ funds. Examples have included public information campaigns, rideshare incentive programs, interoperable emergency communications equipment, projects to reduce motor vehicle cold starts, and various intelligent transportation system projects.

## **Demonstration Projects**

These are projects believed to have potential air quality or congestion benefits but have not been widely implemented so that benefit can be quantified. These projects require sponsors to conduct a study to determine whether air quality benefits anticipated for the project were actually achieved. Before submitting a demonstration project application, contact CMAP staff for further guidance.



# Ineligible Projects

## **Transit Operations (other than the first three years)**

Transit operating expenses may be eligible for CMAQ funding for the first three years of operation. However, CMAQ funds may not replace existing funding sources for transit operations or increase the general subsidy of existing operations.

## **Routine Maintenance**

CMAQ funds cannot be used on projects which are considered routine maintenance, including retiming existing signals and interconnects.

## **Mandated Private Sector Demand Management Activities**

CMAQ funds cannot be used on activities that are the mandated responsibility of the private sector under the Clean Air Act.

## **Programs to Encourage Removal of Pre-1980 Vehicles**

CMAQ funds cannot be used on programs that encourage the removal of pre-1980 vehicles.

## **Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Fuel for On-Road Vehicles**

EPA regulations require that only ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel may be sold for on-road motor vehicle use. Because of this, purchases of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel for on-road use will not be funded.

## **Projects Phases Already Underway**

Project phases for which funds have already been expended are not eligible for CMAQ funding. Phase-funded contracts are eligible for CMAQ funding. These are contracts in which there is an obligation limit based on funds in hand and further obligation authority requires formal notification by the sponsor.

If one project phase has been completed, other phases are still eligible for CMAQ funding as long as those phases will not be obligated before the funds are programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).



# Program Participation and Responsibilities

## General principles

The MPO Policy Committee ISTEA Subcommittee promulgated principles for this region's CMAQ program in November 1992. Some of these principles, which expand on federal guidance, are:

- Projects must lead to quantifiable reductions in auto emissions and/or congestion.
- No pre-ordained distribution of funding is assumed. Future year funding is not guaranteed unless specifically agreed to by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee.
- Sponsors must commit local match to apply for CMAQ funding (at least 20% of the total project cost in most cases).
- All projects must be constructed to federal standards.

## Phase I Engineering Requirements

The CMAQ program in northeastern Illinois is no longer considering phase I engineering (design engineering) an eligible phase for CMAQ funding. Phase I engineering will be the responsibility of the project sponsor to complete without CMAQ funding.

Project proposals are required to demonstrate that phase I engineering has been initiated prior to the Project Selection Committee releasing a draft proposed program (July 1, 2013) to be considered for inclusion in the program. This can be demonstrated by either having received design approval from IDOT or having submitted to IDOT a Preliminary Design Report (PDR) or equivalent as appropriate for the project type.

For transit projects where phase I and II engineering are not clearly defined, 50% of the engineering costs will be eligible for CMAQ funding. For signal interconnect projects, phase II engineering costs will not be eligible for CMAQ funding.

A sponsor can request funding for phase I engineering based on financial hardship or if the proposal is directly identified by a GO TO 2040 Focused Programming group. A request should be made in writing through your planning liaison ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts)). Do not just indicate this on the application forms as staff will not recognize this as a request for hardship consideration. The Project Selection Committee will decide if an exemption to fund phase I engineering is granted. If the committee does grant the exemption then the phases beyond phase I engineering will not be eligible for CMAQ funding until a PDR has been submitted to IDOT for approval.

## Project Scale

Federal aid, including CMAQ funding, is generally most efficiently used for substantial facility and service improvements. There are two points related to scale to bear in mind in pursuing a



federal-aid project. First, the administrative burden of a federal-aid project is substantial. Thus, a small project is often best accomplished with local funds to avoid this burden. The benefits of securing federal funds must be weighed against the work required to expend them. For help understanding the federal-aid process IDOT has developed the *Mechanics of Project Management: FHWA Process for Project Implementation* which is available at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development) under the Applicant Resources heading.

Second, the project scope and scale may expand because of federal procedures and standards. Federal-aid procedures are not intended to implement limited, quick fixes for immediate problems. Rather, the problem has to be looked at systematically over a twenty-year planning horizon. For example, village engineers may have identified a left-turn bay that needs to be lengthened to assure adequate storage without blocking through travel lanes. However, if the project is submitted for the CMAQ program, all movements for all legs of the intersection will have to be analyzed and may require changes that significantly increase the cost of the project (and the amount of matching funds provided by the sponsoring agency).

Locally-sponsored CMAQ projects have sometimes been withdrawn by their sponsors because of the effort required to implement them using federal procedures. Please be cautious in determining whether a project is of an appropriate scale for federal aid. If you're in doubt, your Planning Liaison ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts)) can assist you.

## Project Sponsors

Project proposals from the public and private sector are welcome. However, all projects not submitted by a state agency or local government must have an appropriate sponsor. A sponsor is 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 library districts.

With emphasis on projects supportive of GO TO 2040, and the new programming procedures in which four program focus groups make recommendations of key projects that support regional plans, potential sponsors may be contacted by a representative of a CMAP committee or program focus group and encouraged to sponsor a regionally beneficial project. Any shared responsibilities and funding arrangements should be identified before applying for CMAQ funding.

Sponsoring a project brings on a number of responsibilities. Some responsibilities listed below are discussed in more detail later in this booklet.

Sponsors are responsible for the following:

- ensuring that the proper forms are submitted with the proposal by February 8, 2013;
- committing the local matching funds (usually at least 20% of the total project cost);



- ensuring that plans, specifications, and estimates are in accordance with federal standards, and that the estimated costs in the application reflect those standards;
- assuring completion of projects for which federal funds have been expended (failure to do so may require the repayment of expended funds); maintaining all records and receipts as required by FHWA, FTA, and IDOT;
- resolving any jurisdictional issues;
- overseeing technical work to ensure professional standards are maintained. For capital projects, oversight specifically includes:
  - project design
  - project construction
  - right-of-way purchases and utility adjustments where applicable
  - environmental assessment where applicable
  - providing a schedule of anticipated completion dates for the items listed above
- maintaining the project after completion (if applicable);
- conducting studies to determine whether air quality benefits anticipated for the project were actually achieved. This is required for a demonstration project; other projects may require study as needed.

## Planning Liaison Review of Locally Sponsored Project Applications

Project applications submitted by local sponsor agencies are required to be reviewed by their subregional planning area staff (Council of Mayors' Planning Liaisons). The planning liaison will review a sponsor's application and sign the application as having been reviewed and note any missing information to the sponsor. The planning liaison will be responsible for collecting missing information and providing the application to CMAP by the deadline. Local sponsor agency applications will not be considered without the planning liaison review. The **deadline** for local sponsor agencies to submit their applications to the planning liaisons is **January 22, 2013**.

A list of the planning liaisons and their contact information is available at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts). If you are unsure of which [subregional council](#) that you need to contact, a list of the councils can be accessed at the web address above.

Local sponsor agencies are defined as any municipal government (village or city), county government, park district, school district, township or similar body.

## Logical Termini

One of the federal requirements for project implementation is that the project has logical termini. For example, a signal interconnect may logically extend on an arterial between two intersecting arterials in municipalities other than the sponsoring municipality. The cost estimates, scoping, and project application forms should reflect this. This may require extensive cooperation among governments. For more information on logical termini for non-





transit projects, contact the IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets staff ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts)).

## Project Scoping

As noted previously, it is the responsibility of the project sponsor to adequately scope the project. For non-transit facility improvements, this should be done through the preliminary engineering process or similar effort. A detailed estimate of costs is required of all projects.

## Milestone Schedule

Milestone schedules are required for all non-transit projects that involve construction of a transportation facility project. The milestone schedule in conjunction with the project scoping document will help applicants develop a project timeline that incorporates the federal engineering requirements. Completing the schedule now will reduce project delays.

Applications for bicycle/pedestrian facility projects, commuter parking projects (both surface and structures), and traffic flow improvements projects should include a milestone schedule.

For help with the sequence of events and estimated review time see the [Federal Aid Project Flow Chart: Initiation to Completion](#) and [IDOT Local Roads and Streets' Mechanics of Project Management](#) available at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development) with the other Applicant Resources.

## Local Match

The sponsor must have already committed matching funds when the project is submitted to CMAP. 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. Local match is a minimum of 20 percent of the total CMAQ funds being requested; exceptions apply for a few project types. The local match does not necessarily have to be provided by the sponsor. Several avenues exist through which other funding may be available, but it must be a non-federal source to qualify as match. Soft match (in-kind services donated materials, services or land/right-of-way) can be used instead of hard matching (cash resources) under very limited circumstances. If soft matching funds are intended to be used, please contact Doug Ferguson ([dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov) or (312) 386-8824) to discuss in advance. It should be pointed out that the use of soft match adds extra review steps and often significant delays to project progress.

In general, IDOT does not provide local match for highway-related CMAQ projects.

## Project Completion and Timely Implementation

Project sponsors sometimes choose not to proceed with approved CMAQ projects. This is generally not a problem unless federal funds have already been expended on parts of the project. In this case, the project sponsor may be required to refund the federal funds expended on the uncompleted project, although there are exceptions.



Project phases will need to meet accomplishment goals within a 3 year time period from the phase's original program year. Failure to meet an accomplishment goal will lead to deferral. This is discussed in more detail under Accomplishment Goals and Phase Sunset (page 22). The committee assesses projects' status twice a year in May and October. More information on sponsor responsibilities for timely implementation is provided in the [CMAQ Programming and Management Policies](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/active-program-management-policies) (Revised-June 2012) available at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/active-program-management-policies](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/active-program-management-policies).

## Engineering Standards

As noted above, projects must be designed and built to federal standards and utilizing federal procedures. If there is any doubt about these standards and procedures contact an engineer with wide experience in engineering federal transportation projects. The [IDOT Bureau of Local Roads & Streets Manual](#) establishes uniform policies and procedures for the location, design and environmental evaluation of highway construction projects on the local highway system and a link can be found under Applicant Resources at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/program-development).

## Inclusion of the Project as a Transportation Control Measure in the State Implementation Plan

The CMAQ program was created primarily to finance the implementation of Transportation Control Measures (TCMs), which are transportation projects incorporated in an Illinois State Implementation Plan for reducing pollution that exceeds National Ambient Air Quality Standards. In Illinois, these pollutants are ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter. Currently TCMs are not required by the SIP to meet Illinois air quality budgets. If TCMs are needed for a SIP, projects will be considered for inclusion after construction or implementation has taken place. More information on TCMs can be found on FHWA's website at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air\\_quality/conformity/policy\\_and\\_guidance/tcm.cfm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/policy_and_guidance/tcm.cfm).



# Evaluation and Approval Process

Once an application is submitted, the following approval process takes place. Applications for proposed projects that do not include a request for federal fiscal year 2014-2018 CMAQ funding will not be considered.

## Staff Review and Project Ranking

Projects are ranked primarily by the cost per kilogram of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) eliminated over the life of the project. Projects are also ranked by cost per kilogram of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) eliminated, cost per thousand vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) eliminated, and cost per thousand trips eliminated. Diesel Emission Reduction proposals are ranked on cost per kilogram of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) eliminated as their primary measure. The project rankings use the total cost of all phases of the project and not just the CMAQ applied for portion.

## Program Focus Group Review and Recommendations

The GO TO 2040 Focused Programming Approach ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/focused-programming](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/focused-programming)) employs four program focus groups, the Regional Transportation Operations Coalition, the Bicycle/Pedestrian Taskforce, an ad-hoc group for Direct Emission Reduction, and an ad-hoc group for Transit to review and evaluate applications. These program focus groups will also have the opportunity to identify candidate CMAQ projects directly that will advance the implementation of GO TO 2040 and create a cohesive network of projects. Members of those four groups may be contacting potential sponsors for directly identified projects.

The four program focus groups will make **direct non-binding recommendations to the CMAQ Project Selection Committee** which the committee will consider in the development of a draft proposed program. The following information on the four focus groups presents the review criteria that they intend to use when evaluating proposed projects and making their recommendations. More details on the focus groups' approaches to advancing GO TO 2040 can be found in their evaluation memos to the CMAQ Project Selection Committee ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/focused-programming](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/focused-programming)).

### ***Regional Transportation Operations Coalition (RTOC)***

RTOC identified 4 types of projects that it perceived as being especially beneficial, and which would receive support above other project types.

1. System Modernization and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are projects which will improve the information available to highway system managers and to travelers. These projects advance the development of the region's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) by adopting best practices in new technologies. Some examples of these



types of projects are: roadside equipment needed to implement transit signal priority, traffic signal interconnects and adaptive signal control.

2. Corridor Recommendations are multiple projects which are implemented in proximity to each other within specific arterial corridors and provide more focused and discernible benefits. RTOC identified these projects among the submitted applications by mapping them and identifying multiple projects in a corridor. Some examples of projects which could be included in a corridor recommendation are access management programs, intersection improvements, new or improved interchanges, and ITS type projects.
3. Special Projects are unique projects which the region's system operators identified as important for a variety of operational reasons.
4. Operations Program Projects consist of strategies and projects which the RTOC believes should be undertaken by the region. Some examples of these projects are:  
Data Integration: Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP)/ Traffic Management Center (TMC) Integration
  - a. Incident Management Programs, including arterial incident management,
  - b. Traveler Information (Variable Message Signs, Web sites, Highway Advisory Radio, System Monitoring (Signal-Based Detectors, Closed Circuit Television, Mid-block Detection, Third Party Sources), Traffic Management,
  - c. Arterial On-Street Parking Management,
  - d. Speed Harmonization,

In addition, RTOC determined that resources are best allocated to the region's primary transportation system facilities, which includes expressways and tollways, the Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) system, other principal arterials, National Highway System (NHS) intermodal freight connectors and GO TO 2040 planned capital additions. This has been outlined within the region's Congestion Management Process (CMP) as the [CMP Highway System](#). CMAQ roadway project applications which are not on the CMP system will generally not be supported by the RTOC.

To provide additional project background and compare projects, system operations performance measures are collected for the locations of proposed projects. The approved system performance measures are:

1. Congestion – Travel time index, speed, person delay, intersection queuing and intersection delay
2. Reliability – Planning time index
3. Safety – Crash rate

### ***Bicycle and Pedestrian Taskforce (BPTF)***

BPTF identified a two-tier approach in evaluating proposed bicycle and pedestrian facility projects. The first tier gives the proposed minimum criteria which bicycle and pedestrian facility projects would need to meet in full in order to be recommended. The second tier identifies data that will help CMAP and implementers identify potential projects, evaluate



project proposals, and estimate the impact of built projects over time. Note that the criteria and measures apply to facilities, not to programmatic projects, which may require evaluations specific to the proposal.

First, BPTF has adopted criteria, all of which would need to be met, for facility project recommendations:

1. Project is either a bikeway,<sup>1</sup> or
2. Project is a pedestrian facility providing direct access to high ridership transit stops and stations).<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the proposed facility must:

1. Be included in an adopted or approved plan, and
2. Provide direct access to a CBD, activity<sup>3</sup> center, transit service, school, or a regional-scale park or recreation facility (including trails); and
3. Show major improvement in safety and attractiveness criteria from “before” to “after”, as a result of the proposed improvement (see 2011 memo about these criteria<sup>4</sup>); and

Second, BPTF has adopted evaluation measures to identify potential projects, evaluate project proposals, and estimate the impact of built projects over time:

1. Bicycle and pedestrian facility user counts (before and after, annual for four years),<sup>5</sup>
2. Journey-to-work non-motorized mode share,
3. Bicycle and pedestrian crashes,
4. Total crashes (including motor vehicles),
5. Transit boardings and alightings,
6. Population (2010) + Employment (2000).

### ***Transit Focus Group (TFG)***

TFG will be using the following criteria and evaluation measures in its GO TO 2040 focused program work supporting development of the upcoming CMAQ Program.

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<sup>1</sup> A bikeway may include a bike lane, buffered bike lane, protected bike lane, bicycle-friendly shoulder signed as a route, a bicycle boulevard (sometimes referred to as a neighborhood greenway), or an off-street multi-use path. See the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (2012) and the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide (2011).

<sup>2</sup> The evaluation of ridership is dependent on the context, highly urban, urban, suburban, and ex-urban. A CTA ridership area is not comparable to a Pace ridership area. The goal is to connect pedestrian facilities to those transit stations/services that serve high numbers of riders for the context in which they exist. Also, for clarification, the “high-ridership” transit criterion does not apply to bikeways.

<sup>3</sup> Activity center is understood to include employment centers for this purpose.

<sup>4</sup> Entitled, “CMAQ Focused Programming -- May 2011 Memo: Project Evaluation for Safety/Facility Attractiveness,” posted at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/bicycle-and-pedestrian-task-force/minutes](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/bicycle-and-pedestrian-task-force/minutes).

<sup>5</sup> In no case would counts be part of the application process, but would be conducted by the sponsor agency for programmed projects. “Before” counts would apply only to on-street facilities, sidewalks, and sidepaths.



Projects will be evaluated on a scale of 1 to 4 on how they advance the following GO TO 2040 action areas:

1. Implementing Major Capital Transit Projects,
2. Including transit components of major highway projects,
3. Featuring transit service increases, extensions, or new service that has been prioritized using regionally consistent criteria,
4. Investing in modernization,
5. Adopting best practices in new technologies,
6. Implementing traveler information systems,
7. Establishing seamless coordination between modes, or
8. Considering user perception in vehicle purchases and station design

Transit proposals will be assessed on a route, corridor, or sub-regional basis with the following performance measures:

1. Ridership
2. On-Time Performance
3. Service Speed
4. State of Good Repair

Performance measure data should be adequate to depict the existing transit performance needs addressed by the project and provide a basis for post-implementation evaluation of the project's effectiveness. Performance data should be consistent with the published performance measures used by the RTA service boards.

### ***Direct Emissions Reduction Focus Group (DER)***

The Direct Emissions Reduction Focus Group considers CMAQ proposals that reduce emissions by improving engine technology, reducing idling, using alternative fuels and similar measures that focus on the vehicle itself. The Focus Group considers how these proposals can best advance the recommendations of GO TO 2040, the region's comprehensive plan.

For the current funding cycle, the Focus Group will concentrate efforts as follows:

Electric vehicles: Alternate public and private funding sources are readily available for electric vehicle charging stations. Sponsors contemplating EV infrastructure projects should check with those sources before applying for CMAQ funds. For more information see the contacts for Diesel Retrofits/Alternative Fuels at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts). Applicants should have a deployment plan or be part of a regional deployment plan, and should show the basis for utilization estimates.

Electric vehicle purchases will also be considered. An electric vehicle should be suitable for the use proposed. Replacement of vehicles at or near the end of their useful life is discouraged; much of the benefits of such a replacement will come from replacing the older engine with a newer engine, rather than from improving the engine technology.





Idle reduction efforts will also be considered. Technology solutions need to be US EPA or CARB verified; outreach efforts should demonstrate their ability to be implemented in a timely fashion.

Private railroad repowers: Either GenSet or single-engine prime movers will be considered. Applicants are expected to install US EPA- or CARB-certified engines. Since project approval will occur in the late fall of 2013, applicants should consider what technologies are likely to be certified at that time. Preference will be given to projects that use more aggressive PM-reduction strategies. The preference will also be to concentrate larger projects at a smaller number of locations rather than having smaller projects at a larger number of locations. Potential applicants should come to the Direct Emissions Reduction Focus Group to discuss their plans.

Bus and municipal fleet projects: US EPA- or CARB-certified engines or verified technologies will be required for retrofit, repower or vehicle replacement projects. Sponsors should be aware that vehicle replacements will be funded only to cover the difference between the cost of the lower-emitting vehicle and the standard replacement vehicle. Replacement of a vehicle with the current standard engine technology will not be considered. In addition, replacement of vehicles at or near the end of their useful life is discouraged; much of the benefits of such a replacement will come from replacing the older engine with a newer engine, rather than from improving the engine technology.

## **CMAQ Project Selection Committee Review and Approval of Recommended Project List**

The CMAQ Project Selection Committee will consider the Program Focus Groups' recommendations along with emissions and congestion reduction rankings when developing a list of projects for the draft proposed program. The Committee uses project rankings as the primary input, but the members also use their collective judgment to select projects that may not have ranked as high as other projects in the staff analysis. For example, the Committee may consider regional equity, project readiness and project mix in developing its recommendation.

## **Public Comment Period**

A public comment period is held for the proposed program. Following the end of the comment period the CMAQ Project Selection Committee will review and respond to the comments. Sponsors whose proposals receive adverse comments may be asked to respond to such comments at this time.



# **CMAQ Committee Structure Approval of Program and the Federal Government**

The Transportation Committee, Regional Coordinating Committee, CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee must approve the CMAQ program in its entirety. The federal government must find that the projects are eligible for CMAQ funding. In addition, the Transportation Committee must add each project to the project listing used to produce the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Additional federal TIP approval is not required for projects exempt from regional emissions analysis (“Exempt Projects”), since they are approved as a group by federal agencies. Typical exempt projects are: transit station improvements; transit transfer facilities; parking served by transit; bus and bus engine replacements; minor transit fleet expansions; intersection improvements; and bicycle-pedestrian projects.

If the MPO Policy Committee selects projects that are not exempt from regional emissions analysis, they will be included in the TIP after the biennial conformity analysis is conducted to determine that these projects do not cause the region to exceed air quality standards. Non-exempt projects eligible for CMAQ funding include new transit stations and major transit service expansions. A conformity determination may require additional analysis, a public comment period, and MPO Policy Committee and federal approval of the conformity finding.

## **Notification of Approval**

Once a project is found eligible by the federal agencies, CMAP staff, through planning liaisons when applicable, will contact the project sponsor so that it may initiate the project. For municipalities, the notification of project approval will be sent to the project contact listed on the project application form, with a copy to the mayor or president.

After the notification of approval, the project sponsor is responsible for timely project implementation. The notification will include the appropriate regional planning staff and/or IDOT staff to contact to begin implementation. It is important to begin implementation as soon as possible after notification. Project progress is reviewed in May and October; if the phase programmed in the current year is not obligated within that year it will be moved. However, the phase must be accomplished by the three-year sunset deadline as described in the next section.



# Implementation Process

## Mandatory Implementation Meetings

After eligibility determination is received from FHWA, mandatory CMAQ initiation meetings will be held for all agency sponsors responsible for the accomplishment of projects included in the program. Sponsor agency staff is required to attend. These meetings will provide sponsors with the information needed to initiate their projects. Details of the meetings will be provided with project notification. Consultants may also attend, but may not substitute for sponsor staff. If your agency is not represented by agency staff, the project will be considered for removal from the program.

## Accomplishment Goals and Phase Sunsets

Every phase of an approved project will be subject to an accomplishment sunset. 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. Depending on the type of project the accomplishment goals are defined as:

Project Administered through Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

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

Projects administered through Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

1. FTA grant approval for phase

If a phase is not accomplished in the year it is programmed plus two years, all remaining funding that is not federal 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 the phase is able to demonstrate readiness as defined in the CMAQ Programming and Management Policies which can be found at [www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/active-program-management-policies](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/active-program-management-policies), 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.

## Transit Projects: Fund Transfers to FTA

We strongly encourage sponsors contemplating transit improvement, station, and parking projects to work closely with Pace, Metra, the Chicago Transit Authority and the Regional



Transportation Authority in developing their projects. These agencies then typically implement the projects through the FTA grant process, with funding transferred to FTA and compliance with FTA procedures. However, since IDOT administers the CMAQ Program, all decisions regarding funding source and procedures must be reached by joint accord between the sponsor and IDOT. This determination will be made once a project is approved by the MPO Policy Committee.

## Locally-Sponsored Projects

The process for implementing federal-aid projects through IDOT's Bureau of Local Roads and Streets is summarized in the [Federal Aid Project Flow Chart](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-development) available at <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-development>. The process follows federal procedures, which are typically more rigorous and time-consuming than, for example, motor fuel tax-funded projects. A few things need to be highlighted:

- Phase I engineering will take one to three years. (Phase I engineering is not eligible for CMAQ funding.)
- Phase II engineering (plans, specifications, and estimates) will take an additional three to sixteen months.
- If right-of-way is required, the acquisition process takes more than a year if condemnation is unnecessary, and up to three years if condemnation is necessary. However, five months of this process may occur during Phase I engineering, and the remainder can occur simultaneously with phase II engineering.
- Thus, to prepare a project for letting, *fifteen months to six years* may be required, assuming the project is pursued diligently. Most projects end up in the middle part of that range.
- To speed the project along, we strongly encourage sponsors to accomplish multiple tasks simultaneously where indicated on the flowchart.
- Just as importantly, start project work as soon as possible. Contact the subregional planning liaison to help assist with getting started with IDOT Bureau of Local Roads and Streets. (See <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts> for contacts.)

The District One Bureau of Local Roads and Streets periodically holds project implementation workshops to introduce sponsors and engineers to federal procedures. Local sponsors are strongly encouraged to attend one of these workshops.

## Projects Administered Directly through IDOT's Central Office in Springfield

For some projects (particularly those not involving construction) IDOT may choose to administer the grant directly from the central office in Springfield.



## Projects Sponsored by IDOT Districts One and Three

IDOT Districts One and Three may submit projects through their bureaus of programming. Approved projects are administered using the same procedures as other federally-funded IDOT projects.

## Scheduled Availability of Funds

FY 2014-2018 CMAQ project funds will be available to sponsors following the execution of a project agreement with IDOT or grant agreement with the Federal Transit Administration, as appropriate. This can occur once sponsors have been notified that their projects have received funding and it is the year in which the funding is programmed. Federal Fiscal Years run from October 1 – September 30. The availability of funds is always contingent upon congressional appropriation of the federal fiscal year transportation funds. If the phase is scheduled for 2014 but the local agency is prepared to begin early please contact the sub-regional staff <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts> to make a request to move the phase into an earlier fiscal year. Availability of funds within the region to accelerate implementation must be confirmed by CMAP staff.

## Project Change Procedures

The maximum federal CMAQ participation for CMAQ projects is capped at the amount programmed through the CMAQ Project Selection Committee. However, even when a project has been thoroughly scoped, its cost estimate may escalate or the scope may need to change. The CMAQ Project Selection Committee has adopted procedures to allow for project changes.

When a sponsor requests a project change, the revised project is re-evaluated to determine how it would have ranked under the changed conditions. To discourage unrealistically low cost estimates, staff will not recommend cost increases if the re-ranked project would have ranked lower than projects not selected.

If the project passes the re-ranking test and its change is approved by the CMAQ Project Selection Committee, funds are drawn from projects let below cost estimates or funds may be made available from withdrawn or deferred projects.

When a project is selected for funding, the CMAQ Project Selection Committee is selecting the project submitted and only the project and project phases submitted. Scope changes that propose different project limits that do not overlap with the previous scope, or a different type of project, will not be considered. Funds cannot be transferred between project phases without the approval of the Project Selection Committee.

Questions about this procedure may be addressed to subregional planning staff ([www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/cmaq/project-contacts)) or Doug Ferguson, [dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov](mailto:dferguson@cmap.illinois.gov).





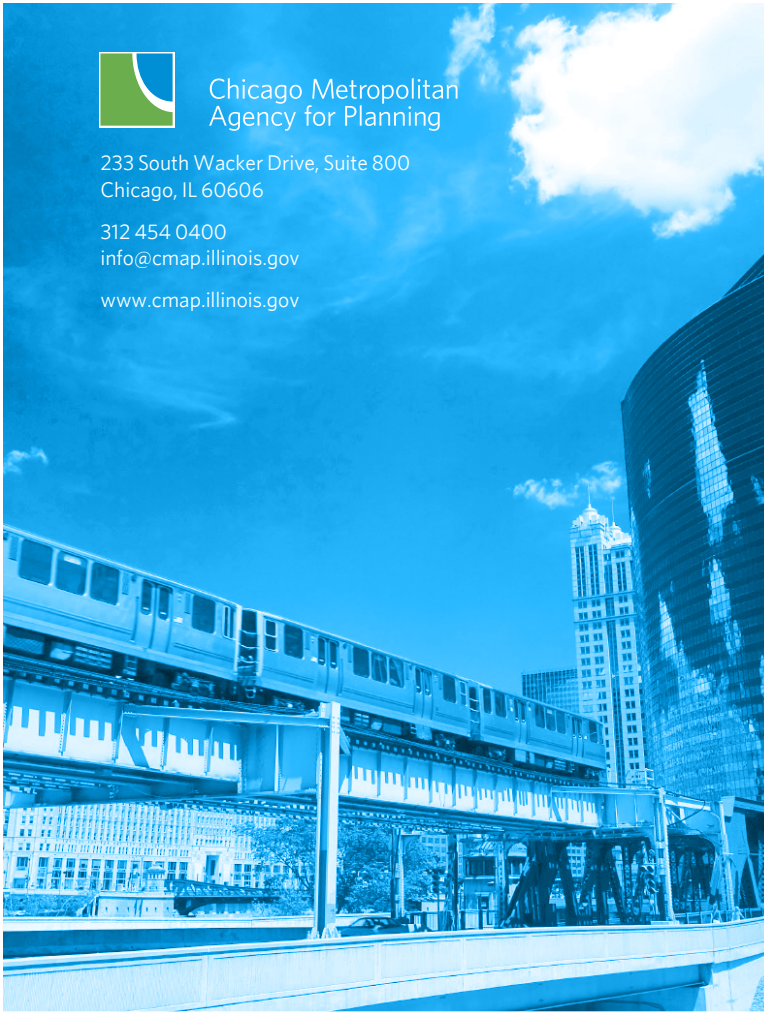


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The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is the region's official comprehensive planning organization. Its GO TO 2040 planning campaign is helping the region's seven counties and 284 communities to implement strategies that address transportation, housing, economic development, open space, the environment, and other quality of life issues. See [www.cmap.illinois.gov](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov) for more information.

### Cicero

