



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** CMAP Working Committees

**From:** CMAP Staff

**Date:** September 2013

**Re:** Criteria for selecting projects for Transportation Alternatives funding

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Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21) created a new Transportation Alternatives program (TAP) by consolidating the Transportation Enhancements, Safe Routes to School and Recreational Trails programs. Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) with populations over 200,000 were given the responsibility to program part of each state's apportionment under TAP. The CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee directed staff to program both years of funding with bicycle and pedestrian projects by holding an abbreviated call for projects in summer 2013. Bicycle and pedestrian projects that were submitted for consideration in the FY 14 – 18 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program are also being considered for funding under TAP without requiring a separate application. Staff intends to have a program of projects for consideration by the CMAP Board and the Policy Committee at their January 2014 meetings.

The TAP call for projects was open from July 19 to August 20 and yielded 11 proposals. In addition, 28 projects from the earlier CMAQ call were not funded under that program, bringing the universe of projects for consideration to 39. Staff is now seeking committee input on the criteria with which to evaluate proposals. Two screening criteria will be applied based on earlier direction from CMAP committees. First, projects must have substantially completed Phase I engineering by October 15, 2013, meaning that either IDOT has granted design approval or a final Project Development Report has been submitted to IDOT. Second, projects must be featured in an approved or adopted local, state, or regional plan.

The recommended evaluation criteria are as follows. With some minor modifications, they are a subset of those used previously by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force in its evaluations of CMAQ projects. These criteria are intended to be simple and understandable while meaningfully distinguishing projects from one another. Data availability and the need to avoid "double-counting" benefits have also been taken into account.

- **Completion of Regional Greenways and Trails Plan.** GO TO 2040 specifically recommends prioritizing greenway trails in the programming of Transportation

Enhancements (now Transportation Alternatives) funding. GO TO 2040 also uses miles of trails completed as an indicator of plan implementation. Thus, completion of the regional trail network is an important criterion. Filling a gap in the regional trail network would score highest, followed by extending a regional trail or intersecting a regional trail. More information is available on the [Greenways and Trails Plan webpage](#).

- **Market for facility.** Other things being equal, a better facility is one that is likely to receive more use. Other MPOs and DOTs have used the proximity of certain land uses and activity generators in their evaluations, but CMAP staff believes that the likelihood of users being drawn from these is dependent on local access conditions which are difficult to evaluate. Population and employment density in the area served by the facility is the proposed criterion for evaluating anticipated usage.
- **Facility design quality.** The design of a bicycle or pedestrian facility influences the likelihood and safety of using it. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force has developed a “safety and attractiveness score” that awards points for the improvements in conditions for walking and biking that result from building a facility. More information is available in a [memo on the safety and attractiveness score](#).

These criteria would be scored on a 100-point scale, with the three criteria above weighted equally and receiving 90 points total. The remaining 10 points would be assigned on one or more of the categories below as a “bonus:”

- **Additional consideration for project readiness.** Various points in the project development process may become bottlenecks. The requirement that projects have Phase I engineering complete removes one bottleneck, but right-of-way acquisition can also slow projects considerably. To help choose projects that are most ready to proceed, bonus points may be awarded for having no ROW to acquire or for having Phase II Engineering complete.
- **Additional match.** TAP is a small funding source. It is worth trying to leverage federal funding by giving points to projects that can provide more than the 20-percent match required by the program.

The draft scoring template would be as below:

<b>Completion of Regional Greenways and Trails Plan (30 points max)</b>	
30 Points	Connects two existing trail sections
25	Extends an existing regional trail
20	Builds a new isolated section of planned regional trail
10	Builds a new facility that intersects an existing regional trail
<b>Population + Employment Density within Buffer Area [proxy for usage] (30 max)</b>	
30	Top quartile of region
24	Second quartile
16	Third quartile
8	Lowest quartile
<b>Facility Design Quality (30 max)</b>	
(Score after less score before) * 6	Safety/attractiveness rating improvement: 0: Impassable barrier for walking and bicycling 1: Arterial road with no bike/ped accommodation 2: Arterial road with some bike/ped accommodation, including marked shared lanes, and collector streets with no accommodation; 3: Low-speed, local streets with no bike/ped accommodation 4: Unprotected bike lane; local and collector streets with full accommodation 5: Trail or arterial sidepath, cycletrack, protected bike lane, or buffered bike lane
<b>Bonus (10 max)</b>	
5	No ROW to acquire or Phase II Engineering complete
5	Sponsor match at least 30%
<b>100</b>	<b>Points total</b>

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion.