

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** CMAP STP Project Selection Committee

**From:** CMAP Staff

**Date:** June 28, 2021

**Re:** Revised Staff Recommended STP Shared Fund Active and Contingency Programs

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A call for projects was issued in January 2021 for the FFY 2022 – 2026 Surface Transportation Program (STP) Shared Fund, held jointly with the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP-L) call for projects. A total of 61 applications were received from 42 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 1 – July 30, 2021.

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 support staff's release of the draft active and contingency programs for public comment. Public comments and any recommended adjustments to the programs will be discussed by the committee at its August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and considered for approval by the committee at its September 9<sup>th</sup> 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 24<sup>th</sup>, and with the recommendation of that committee, consideration for approval by the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee at their joint meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Eligibility Determination**

Staff reviewed the 61 applications for compliance with the program's eligibility rules for total project cost or partner participation, inclusion in plans, and substantial completion of phase 1 engineering. Five (5) applications were eliminated from further consideration due to not meeting one or more of the eligibility criteria. A list of these [ineligible projects](#) was posted on the call for projects web page on June 11, 2021.

### 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 108 evaluations of the 54 eligible projects to determine preliminary scores. 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 the committee, City of Chicago staff, subregional councils of mayors' staff, and project applicants and posted on the call for projects web page along with the [preliminary scores](#) and [final draft scores](#) on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Comments, Adjustments, and Final Scores

For approximately two weeks 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.

During the review by applicants, the phase 2 engineering portion of the project readiness score was adjusted for six (6) highway projects and one (1) transit project, increasing these projects' scores by 2.5 points each. Affected applicants were notified of the adjusted scoring.

When updating the draft scoring to reflect these changes, staff mistakenly applied the changes to the preliminary scores, rather than to the final draft scores. This error led to development and release of a staff recommended program based on incorrect project ranking. The erroneous final scores and program were posted to the call for projects and committee meeting materials web pages on the afternoon of June 24<sup>th</sup>. This error was discovered on June 25<sup>th</sup> and the materials posted were removed from the CMAP web pages. Staff corrected the error and posted revised [final scores](#) on June 28<sup>th</sup>.

### 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, funding requests for projects that were awarded Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) funding by IDOT earlier this month were adjusted in consultation with the affected applicants.

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. Throughout this process collaboration with staff developing recommendations for the CMAQ and TAP-L programs occurred and one project was recommended for a combination of STP Shared Fund and TAP-L.

### Staff Recommended Programs

In addition to the eight (8) projects currently programmed in FFYs 2022 – 2024, the staff recommended [Active Program](#) contains nine (9) new projects in FFY 2025 and 2026, including three (3) within the City of Chicago, five (5) within suburban Cook County, and one (1) within the Collar Counties. Over \$4 million is proposed for communities with the highest need (Cohort 4), including \$386,000 in Transportation Development Credits for two (2) projects requesting funding for phase 1 engineering only.

One-third of the projects recommended (3 of 9) are located in municipalities with populations of less than 25,000. The facilities selected serve over 7.9 million jobs and households combined. More than half (5 of 9) of the projects improve facilities where more than 20% 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 and are located in jurisdictions with complete streets policies. Eight (8) of the nine (9) projects are in communities with green infrastructure policies in place and eight (8) include green infrastructure elements in the project scope. Four (4) of the seven (7) projects evaluated for freight impacts are located in jurisdictions with freight supportive policies and procedures and one (1) project is 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, TAP-L and/or ITEP programs are recommended by staff for inclusion in the [Contingency Program](#), where they may be considered for funding that becomes available through September 30, 2023 according to the region's [Active Program Management](#) policies. A more detailed listing 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 1 through July 30, 2021. Following the public comment period, staff will present a summary of comments and any recommended changes to the draft programs for committee discussion at its August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and approval at its September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Upon approval of a final program by this committee, a TIP amendment will be prepared for CMAP Transportation Committee consideration on September 24<sup>th</sup> for a recommendation for approval by the MPO Policy Committee and CMAP Board at their October 13<sup>th</sup> joint meeting.

ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion and release for public comment.