



MEMORANDUM

To: Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

From: CMAP staff

Date: September 2014

Re: Upcoming call for projects for Transportation Alternatives program and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement program

Two federal fund sources used to support non-motorized travel are programmed through CMAP: the Transportation Alternatives program (TAP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program. It is expected that CMAP will hold a joint call for projects for both TAP and CMAQ in January 2015. While the project evaluation criteria and certain requirements differ between the programs, projects will be considered for both programs using one application. This memo describes the expected process for developing the next program of TAP and CMAQ projects.

Overall Process for TAP

TAP is still relatively new, having been created by the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) transportation bill. Based on [previous guidance](#) from the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee, the TAP program would focus on bicycle facilities. The funding available is anticipated at approximately \$7.5 million per year. Because of uncertainty around longer-term authorization of the program, staff recommends programming only two years of funding.

Projects would be scored by first applying a set of basic screening criteria, then ranking the remaining projects according to evaluation criteria. It is proposed that the criteria remain the same as in the FFY 2013-14 program. The prospects for timely implementation will continue to be a major factor in project selection. Staff will hold one-on-one meetings or phone calls with the sponsors of the higher-ranking projects to verify project details and assess complications that might affect project readiness. The CMAP Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force will be consulted during the development of the recommended program.

The recommended program would be presented to the Transportation Committee during the summer of 2015 with a request to release the program for public comment. After addressing comments, the proposed program will be considered by the Regional Coordinating Committee

followed by the CMAP Board, as well as by the MPO Policy Committee. The anticipated date for final program approval is October 2015.

Project Scoring for Transportation Alternatives

The screening criteria would be as follows:

1. Sponsors must have substantially completed Phase I Engineering prior to the programming of funds (the anticipated date is mid-June to early July 2015).
2. Sponsors must show that their project is featured in at least one formally adopted or approved bike plan, comprehensive plan, or other plan by a local government, subregional council, CMAP, or the State of Illinois.

Following screening, projects would be evaluated on a 100-point scale using the same criteria as in the FY 13-14 program shown below:

Completion of Regional Greenways and Trails Plan (30 points max)	
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
Population + Employment Density within Buffer Area [proxy for usage] (30 max)	
30	Top quartile of region
24	Second quartile
16	Third quartile
8	Lowest quartile
Level of accommodation for non-motorized transportation (30 max)	
(Score after less score before) * 6	Safety/attractiveness rating: 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
Bonus (10 max)	
5	No ROW or easements to obtain
5	Phase II Engineering complete
100	Points total

These criteria were originally chosen because 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. The level of accommodation for non-motorized transportation, as measured by the “safety/attractiveness rating,” has been used successfully by the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task

Force, and density in the vicinity of the project is a basic proxy for the market for the facility. Other things being equal, a better facility is one that is likely to receive more use.

Overall Process for CMAQ

Over the last year, staff and various CMAP committees have been reviewing how projects are evaluated in the CMAQ program. As a result, some modest changes are expected for the upcoming cycle. It is anticipated that the upcoming CMAQ program will utilize the traditional cost-effectiveness of air emissions reduction measure and supplement it with additional “transportation impact criteria” that are drawn from previous work by the BPTF and other focus groups. During program development, the BPTF will be consulted for feedback such as project benefits not captured by quantitative criteria or any “fatal flaws” with the projects. The BPTF will not be asked to make a separate recommendation to the CMAQ Project Selection Committee. Following a similar timeline as for TAP discussed above, the anticipated date for final program approval is October 2015.

Project Scoring for CMAQ

As with TAP, Phase I Engineering should be substantially complete and the project must be found in an adopted/approved state, local, regional, or subregional plan. For bicycle projects, the transportation impact criteria are:

1. The **safety/attractiveness rating** (as discussed above).
2. **Transit accessibility.** Measuring transit accessibility helps ensure that a bicycle facility provides a realistic alternative to auto use by evaluating the potential to link bicycling with transit for longer trips. The measure was developed by CMAP for the GO TO 2040 update to provide a uniform measure of transit level of service available across the region during an average week (see [Indicator Methodology](#), page 56-59). Previously the BPTF used a simple count of transit boardings/alightings near bike facilities to evaluate this. The applicant must show that the facility is designed to integrate with transit service (e.g., a bike facility must lead directly into a transit center).
3. **Bikeway connectivity.** At its March 2014 meeting, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force suggested that a measure of connectivity be included in the bikeway project evaluations, and that this measure include either street network connectivity or connectivity to the bikeway system itself. The proposed measure is the greater of either (a) the project’s street network connectivity rating, measured with the Pedestrian Environment Factor (PEF), or (b) the connectivity of bikeways resulting from the project. This includes all bikeways, not just Regional Greenways and Trails Plan projects. This maximum is then partially weighted by the CMAP land use diversity index, which helps emphasize locations likely to generate short trips between nearby land uses conducive to cycling, to arrive at a final score. The measure is designed to recognize project proposals with substantial connectivity benefits along the full spectrum of rural to urban locations. The BPTF previously ranked projects based on whether they helped to implement the Regional Greenways and Trails Plan. However, the mostly off-street trails in the

Regional Greenways and Trails Plan are not as conducive to shifting travelers away from cars as would be on-street facilities, so it is not included as a criterion for bicycle projects funded under CMAQ.

To give a sense of how the bikeway connectivity would play out, the following examples are based on a 0 – 10 scale, with 10 representing the maximum connectivity score. Bikeway connectivity would be scored as follows:

Project's Facility Connectivity Characteristics	Value Assigned
Project fills a gap between existing bikeways	10
Project intersects an existing bikeway	6
Project extends an existing bikeway	3
Project is a new isolated bikeway segment.	0

Combining facility connectivity with PEF and land use diversity results in the final score, as below with several example projects:

Column	A	B	C	D	E	F
Example project	Facility Connectivity	PEF	Greater of PEF or Bikeway Connectivity	Half of Column C	Avg. Land Use Diversity	Score = $D \times (E + 1)$
Urban, Isolated Facility	0	9.67	9.67	4.84	0.58	7.64
Urban, Connected Facility	6	7.41	7.41	3.70	0.61	5.99
Suburban or Rural, Isolated Facility	0	2.25	2.25	1.12	0.44	1.62
Suburban or Rural, Connected Facility	10	1.61	10	5	0.57	7.86

The procedures for calculating the Pedestrian Environment Factor and the Index of Land Use Diversity in the Chicago Region are described in documents linked to the CMAP [Performance Measurement](#) web pages.

Lastly, the staff review also resulted in some recommended changes to non-motorized project categories. Since the review found the standard methodology CMAP has used in the past in evaluating bicycle parking projects to be problematic, sponsors should submit any bicycle parking projects under the "other" category and use a methodology of their choosing, subject to staff review. Furthermore, although the past cycle's application materials stated that pedestrian projects would not be funded unless they served high ridership transit stations, several applications were still submitted for neighborhood infill sidewalk projects. To reduce confusion and develop a more coherent project type, the pedestrian facility project type is expected to be merged into a subcategory of transit improvements projects that would deal specifically with pedestrian and other forms of transit access.

Action requested: Discussion