

***Northwest Council of Mayors
Surface Transportation Program
Handbook***

Approved on 10/27/23

**I. INTRODUCTION:
A GUIDE FOR STP FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

The following municipalities form the Northwest Council of Mayors:

Arlington Heights	Niles
Barrington	Palatine
Bartlett (Cook County portion only)	Park Ridge
Buffalo Grove (Cook County portion only)	Prospect Heights
Des Plaines	Rolling Meadows
Elk Grove Village	Schaumburg
Hanover Park (Cook County portion only)	South Barrington
Hoffman Estates	Streamwood
Inverness	Wheeling
Mount Prospect	

As a member of the Northwest Council of Mayors, you are eligible to submit project proposals to the Council for federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding. The STP utilizes funds from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or "FAST Act" federal transportation legislation to assist sponsoring municipalities with implementing eligible transportation projects.

The Northwest Council of Mayors has assembled this guidebook, which is divided into the following sections, in order to help facilitate the application process:

- Background description of the Surface Transportation Program
- Program Development
- Program Management
- Description of eligible projects
- Project selection criteria used by the Council's Technical Committee

Please note that in order for a potential project to be eligible for STP funding, the following criteria need to apply:

1. The project is on a Surface Transportation Program eligible route.
2. The project work type is eligible under the STP component of the FAST Act.
3. The project sponsor can fund the required local match.

Your main point of contact for initiating the STP funding process is the Planning Liaison to the Northwest Council of Mayors. The Liaison should be contacted to begin the process or answer any questions regarding the program. The Liaison can be reached through the Northwest Municipal Conference at (847) 296-9200 or via email NorthwestPL@NWMC-cog.org.

II. THE NORTHWEST COUNCIL OF MAYORS SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM

A. Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act or "FAST Act"

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act," provides federal funding, guidelines and requirements for all transportation projects seeking federal funding. Within the FAST Act there are various funding programs. The most important of these sources, from the Council of Mayors' perspective, is the Surface Transportation Program (STP).

The STP allocates funding directly to state departments of transportation. In Illinois, the Illinois Department of Transportation designates a portion of this funding for the Council of Mayors system. Northeastern Illinois is comprised of eleven regional Councils of Mayors and the City of Chicago. Each local Council oversees the planning and programming of these STP funds within their own region.

B. The Council's Role in the Surface Transportation Program

Each year the Council receives federal funds to be programmed for transportation projects within the Northwest region. Local municipalities apply for these funds during a call for projects by contacting the local Council Planning Liaison at the Northwest Municipal Conference, and by completing the appropriate application form. See section III c., "New Project Programming" for more details.

Each Council has developed a set of project selection guidelines. As its name implies, these guidelines set the parameters by which the Councils select which of the locally submitted projects will receive federal funding.

C. How the Council Utilizes STP Funding

The Northwest Council funds Phase II engineering, right-of-way acquisition, construction, and Phase III engineering (also known as construction engineering) for highway, transit, bicycle and other transportation projects. See section Vb., "Eligible Project Types," for more information. A 20% local match is required for construction and Phase III engineering phases. For Phase II engineering and right-of-way acquisition, a 50% local match is required. Phase I engineering will be the responsibility of the municipal sponsor.

D. Technical Committee Membership

The Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee shall be comprised of four mayors and four managers from municipalities within the Northwest Council of Mayors. Alternates may be chosen by members, with notification given to the Technical Committee and the Planning Liaison. No municipality shall have more than one representative on the Technical Committee.

The Chair of the Technical Committee, elected by the members of the Technical Committee, will serve as one of the Northwest Council's two representatives on the Council of Mayors

Executive Committee. The second Executive Committee representative shall be chosen by the Council as a whole.

When a vacancy occurs on the Technical Committee, the whole Northwest Council will be asked for nominations. Only a mayor may fill a vacancy left by a mayor, and only a manager can fill a vacancy left by a manager. The seats on the committee belong to the individual, not the municipality. A municipality's replacement for a departing Technical Committee member does not by default become their replacement on the Technical Committee.

The nominees will be voted on by the Technical Committee. The chosen nominee must then receive the approval of the Northwest Council of Mayors and the president of the Northwest Municipal Conference.

III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

A. Match Ratio

Roadways and Intersections

The match ratio for the construction phase of a roadway or intersection project is an 80/20 federal/local split. Federal funds may be used for up to 80% of the eligible expenses. The sponsoring agency is responsible for the remaining 20%. Phase II engineering and right-of-way acquisition are funded at 50% federal funds and 50% local funds. A sponsor may elect to provide a local match greater than the minimum required for each phase.

Resurfacing, LAFOs, and LASOs

The match ratio for the construction phase of a resurfacing, Local Agency Functional Overlay (LAFO), or Local Agency Structural Overlay (LASO) project is a 75/25 federal/local split. Federal funds may be used for up to 75% of the eligible expenses. STP funding may not be used for Phase II engineering or right-of-way acquisition for resurfacing, LAFO, or LASO projects.

If it is determined during the course of Phase I engineering that the project's scope will expand to a full reconstruction, the funding ratio for the construction phase of the project will remain at 75/25.

B. Maximum Federal Participation

The maximum total amount of federal STP participation for Roadway and Intersection projects is \$5,000,000, inclusive of all phases. The maximum total amount of federal STP participation for any other project is \$3,500,000, inclusive of all phases, with the option to request up to \$5,000,000 with approval from the technical committee. Any expense over the maximum federal STP participation amount will be the sole responsibility of the sponsoring agency.

C. New Project Programming

The Council will hold a call for projects every two years, with the first call occurring in January 2020. Each call will solicit projects covering the next five federal fiscal years (FFYs). The call will

open in January, and final applications will be due on March 15th of each call year. From April to August, applications will be scored by NWMC staff using the methodology outlined in the project selection criteria section of this document. Recommended active and contingency programs will be released after scoring has been complete, which will be followed by Technical Committee review and a public comment period. A CMAP TIP Amendment to incorporate the recommended program will be prepared in the fall for CMAP Transportation Committee consideration, with final approval of the program occurring when the MPO Policy Committee takes action in October. The project application workbook will be posted on the NWMC website prior to the opening of the call for projects.

Proposed new projects and previously programmed projects with significant changes to scope and/or schedule that include not exempt work types cannot be included in the TIP until the next semi-annual conformity analysis. Work types that will require a project to undergo conformity analysis include adding or widening lanes, constructing a new road or bridge, signal interconnect projects, and other miscellaneous projects that may affect roadway capacity. These projects will be identified and recommended for inclusion in the Northwest Council of Mayors program, contingent upon the next conformity determination. Based on the semi-annual conformity amendment schedule, not exempt projects cannot be programmed within the first year of either an active or contingency program. Please see the [conformity analysis](#) page on the CMAP website for more information.

D. Active Programs

The result of each Call for Projects will be the development of a fiscally constrained, multi-year program of projects to be completed, in whole or in part, with STP funds. Active programs will be included in the region's TIP and are therefore subject to fiscal constraint. The amount of funding programmed in a given fiscal year of the active program may not exceed the Northwest Council's projected available funding levels provided by CMAP. The first year of the active program will be considered the "current year" and will be subject to obligation deadlines described in the Program Management section of this document. The next four years will be considered the "out years." Project phases programmed in out years are not subject to obligation deadlines and can be actively reprogrammed in other out years at any time, subject to each year of the multi-year program maintaining fiscal constraint at all times.

Since the active program contains projects selected through a performance-based ranking process, sponsors of project phases that are programmed in out years should reaffirm their commitment to the scheduled implementation in subsequent calls, but should not be required to re-apply, as described in the program management section of this document.

E. Contingency Programs

It is anticipated that during each call for projects there will be more applications than can be programmed within the years of the call cycle. Additionally, in order to facilitate the region's goal of obligating 100% of available funding each year, the Northwest Council of Mayors can effectively "over program" by developing a contingency program of projects during each call cycle. The contingency program should include, in rank order, the next highest ranked projects

that were unable to be funded in the call for projects (CFP) due to fiscal constraint. Sponsors of contingency projects must be committed to keeping projects active and moving forward toward obligation of federal funding in the two years between calls for projects. If sponsors of potential contingency program projects are not committed to moving forward, for example because funding was requested in an out year, those projects should not be included in the contingency program. Projects requiring a conformity determination that are not already included in the current conformed TIP may be included in contingency programs, but cannot be reprogrammed into the current year of the active program after the TIP change submittal deadline for the spring semi-annual conformity analysis. These projects can be reprogrammed into an out year of the program at any time. Projects, or phases of projects, that did not apply for funding during a call for projects cannot be added to a contingency program until the next applicable call for projects. **No applications will be accepted outside of a regular call for projects.**

Inclusion of a project in a contingency program is not a guarantee of future federal funding for any phase of a project. The contingency program will expire with each subsequent call for projects. Projects included in the contingency program from the prior CFP must reapply for funding consideration during the next call. If the first phase of a project in the contingency program is moved to the active program, there is no guarantee that the subsequent phases will be funded via the contingency program or future active programs. There shall be no “automatic” reprogramming of subsequent phases from the contingency program to the active program.

Active projects that are reprogrammed in the contingency program, either voluntarily or due to missing an obligation deadline, must also reapply for funding consideration during the next call. This reapplication will reset all deadlines associated with project phases and make phases eligible for obligation deadline extensions, as discussed in more detail in the Program Management section of this document. If unsuccessful with future applications for STP funding, the sponsor may complete the project using another fund source. If the project is not completed within the timeframe required by federal law, the sponsor will be required to pay back federal funds used for previous phases of the project.

IV. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

A. Training

Stakeholders throughout the region, including public and private sector implementers, have indicated that a thorough understanding of the project implementation process is critical for the successful completion of projects. An understanding of the process leads to realistic expectations and better overall scheduling and project planning. NWMC staff will work with CMAP, FHWA, and IDOT to develop an STP workshop and training materials for project sponsors and consultants. While not required, it is strongly recommended that project sponsors attend a training session prior to their project being formally adopted into the Northwest Council of Mayors STP program. Details on training will be transmitted to project sponsors after the conclusion of the STP application period in March.

B. Designated Project Managers

Communication is critical at all levels of project implementation. Throughout project implementation there are a number of agencies and individuals involved in the process, including state and federal staff, CMAP programming staff, councils of mayors' staff and officials, consulting firms, sponsor staff, elected leaders, and the public. The staff of the various agencies will monitor project progress and finances. To facilitate comprehensive understanding and communication regarding projects, each sponsor shall designate the following from their staff upon inclusion in an active or contingency program:

1. A Technical Project Manager that will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the project, managing any consultants involved in the project, ensuring that all federal, state, and local requirements are met and, in conjunction with the Financial Project Manager, ensuring that the required agreements between the sponsor agency and IDOT are approved and executed in an appropriate and timely manner.
2. A Financial Project Manager that will be responsible for ensuring that any required local matching funds are included in the sponsor agency budget in the appropriate fiscal year(s) in which federal obligation and/or project expenditures will occur, and, in conjunction with the Technical Project Manager, that the required agreements between the sponsor agency and IDOT are approved and executed in an appropriate and timely manner.

The Technical Project Manager and Financial Project Manager generally should not be the same person, unless the Technical Project Manager has a direct role in developing the sponsor's budget and/or securing local funding. For each project phase utilizing consulting services, a Consultant Project Manager must also be designated.

The project managers must be reported to the Northwest Council of Mayors Planning Liaison and should also be documented in the CMAP eTIP database. In the event of staff changes, a new designee(s) shall be assigned as soon as possible. These managers should be familiar with the federally funded project implementation process and are strongly encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities. Required project status updates described below may only be submitted by one of these managers, and all managers are jointly responsible for the content and timely submittal of updates. Correspondence from the Northwest Council of Mayors and/or CMAP regarding project status, upcoming programming deadlines, or any other information regarding the programming status of projects will be sent to each of these managers. Correspondence from the Northwest Council and/or CMAP regarding the technical details of projects may be sent only to the Technical Project Manager and/or Consultant Project Manager, as appropriate.

C. Status Updates

Upon inclusion of any phase of a project within an active or contingency program, quarterly status updates detailing initial (time of application) estimated dates, current adjusted estimated

dates (based on progress made since the application was submitted), and actual accomplishment dates of all project milestones, regardless of the phase(s) programmed with STP funds, shall be submitted by one of the project's designated project managers through CMAP's eTIP website. These updates are required to be submitted in December, March, June, and September of every federal fiscal year. The Northwest Council Planning Liaison will send out reminder notices to each community with a project in the active or contingency program at the beginning of each month in which a status update is due. Updates submitted any day within the required month will be considered to have met the deadline. Updates submitted in any other month of the year will not be considered an official quarterly update.

Submittals shall be verified by the Northwest Council Planning Liaison assigned to the project sponsor in consultation with IDOT District 1 Bureau of Local Roads and Streets (BLRS) staff. Status updates may be submitted more often than required, at the sponsor's discretion. Status updates must be submitted even if no progress has been made since the prior update. Failure to submit required status updates, as outlined in Table 1, may result in significant project delay or the loss of funding for current and subsequent phases of projects.

Table 1

	If required quarterly updates are not submitted...
Projects with any phase programmed in the current FFY	The project phase, and all subsequent phases, will be moved from the active program to the contingency program. Funds programmed in the CMAP TIP for these phases will be moved to "MYB", and a formal TIP amendment will be required to reinstate these phases
Projects with any phase(s) programmed in an out year (years 2-5)	The project phase, and all subsequent phases, will be removed from the active program. Out year projects removed will not be placed in the contingency program, and must re-apply for funding during the next CFP.
Contingency projects	The project phase, and all subsequent phases, will be removed from the contingency program, and must re-apply for funding during the next CFP.

D. Obligation Deadlines

Any project phase programmed in the current FFY on or after the first day (October 1) of that FFY is required to fully obligate the programmed federal funds prior to the end of that FFY. For the purposes of obligation deadlines, a project phase is considered to be obligated if federal funds have been authorized as "current" or "Advance Construction (AC)" in FHWA's FMIS database. The entire phase must be obligated, up to the programmed amount or the final

engineer’s estimate, whichever is less, to be considered fully funded. “Staged” construction, or “combined” engineering phases are not considered fully obligated until all stages/phases under a single State Job or Federal Project Number are fully obligated. The table below describes the actions necessary to obligate each federally funded phase, and the milestone deadlines that should be met in order to meet the obligation requirement. Please note that milestone deadlines may need to be adjusted based on IDOT agreement review times.

Table 2

Federally Funded Phase	Federal Obligation Action	Milestone(s)	Milestone Deadline
Phase II Engineering	Execution of Local Agency Agreement and Engineering Agreement	1. Phase II QBS Completed	1. Before submitting draft agreements (may be completed with Phase I QBS; may begin before DA received).
		2. Phase I Design Approval (DA) received	2. Before submitting draft agreements
		3. Draft agreements	3. April 30 th (approx.)
Right-of-Way	Execution of Local Agency Agreement	1. Phase I Design Approval (DA) received	1. Before submitting documents
		2. Approved plats and legals, cost estimates, and documentation of use of approve firms	2. Before submitting draft agreement
		3. Draft agreements submitted to IDOT district 1	3. April 30 th (approx..)
Construction (state let)	Execution of Local Agency Agreement (approx. 6 weeks prior to letting)	1. Phase II pre-final plans submitted	1. Date specified on the IDOT region 1 Letting schedule for the November State Letting (typically late May-early June)
Construction (local let)	For construction phases that will be locally let, the sponsor must reasonably demonstrate that construction funds will be authorized within the federal fiscal year.		

If these milestones are not anticipated to be achieved, based on the March status update, the project sponsor may by April 15th:

1. Request a six (6) month extension of the phase obligation deadline.

a. For Phase 1 Engineering, Phase 2 Engineering, and Right-of-Way, the extended deadline will be March 30 of the following calendar year.

b. For Construction/Construction Engineering, the extended deadline will be the federal authorization date for the April state letting in the following calendar year.

Programmed funds will be eligible to be carried over (subject to carryover limitations described later in this document) to the next FFY if the request is approved. Each project phase may only be granted one extension. If an extended project phase misses the extended obligation deadline, the phase, and all subsequent phases of the project, will immediately be moved to the contingency program, and the funds programmed in the current year will be removed from the selecting body's programming mark. If not moved back into the active program prior to the next call for projects, the sponsor must reapply for funding consideration. If the end of the six-month extension period has been reached, and the phase remains unobligated solely due to agreement review and the agreement was submitted to IDOT before August 1st of the prior year in a good faith attempt to ensure timely obligation of funds within the programmed FFY, an additional three-month extension will be automatically granted for that phase. The additional extension will be to June 30 for engineering and right-of-way phases, and to the federal authorization date for the August state letting for construction/construction engineering phases.

2. Request the current phase and all subsequent phases be immediately removed from the active program and placed in the contingency program. Programmed funds will not be automatically carried over, but will be available for immediate active reprogramming in the current FFY as described below. The obligation deadline for the phase will be removed, and the phase will remain eligible for a future extension request. If not moved back into the active program prior to the next call for projects, the sponsor must reapply for funding consideration.

3. Proceed at their own risk. If the programmed funds are not obligated as of September 30, the programmed phase and all subsequent phases will be removed from the active program, and will not be added to the contingency program. Programmed funds will not be carried over or available for reprogramming, and will be permanently removed from the Northwest Council's programming mark. The sponsor may reapply for funding during the next call for projects.

Requests for extensions will be reviewed by NWMC staff, in consultation with CMAP, IDOT, and/or FHWA staff as needed. Extension requests will be granted based only on the ability of the sponsor to meet the extended obligation deadline. Program updates including extension requests will need to be approved by the Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee

before being published. The reason for delay, whether within sponsor control or not, shall not be a factor in decisions to grant extensions, except as it pertains to the likelihood that the phase will be obligated before the extended obligation deadline. If an extension request is denied by staff, the sponsor may appeal to the Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee, or may choose another option. Following review of the March status updates, and any subsequent requests for extensions, sponsors of project phases included in the Contingency Program that have indicated potential for current year obligation of funds will be notified of the possible availability of funding and will be encouraged to take necessary actions to prepare for obligation of funds between June and October. Program changes to move project phases from the Contingency Program to the Active Program will occur no later than June 30. Formal TIP Amendments will be required to move contingency project phases into the current year of the TIP, therefore the current CMAP TIP Amendment schedule should be considered when making reprogramming decisions.

E. Active Reprogramming

It is the goal of the region to obligate 100% of the federal STP funding allotted to the region each year. Recognizing that implementation delays can and do occur, the Northwest Council of Mayors shall have the flexibility to actively reprogram funds. Staff will provide a recommendation to the committee when an opportunity to actively reprogram funds presents itself. However, all program updates will need to be approved by the Northwest Council of Mayors Technical Committee prior to the updates being published. If necessary, the Technical Committee may approve of program updates electronically via email correspondence with the Planning Liaison. This may be done in order to ensure that TIP revision deadlines are met and projects remain on schedule. TIP revision deadlines typically fall four to five months before the target construction letting date for a project.

Within the current FFY, active reprogramming can be used for:

- Cost changes for already obligated phases
- Cost changes for current FFY phases that are expected to meet the obligation deadline
- Accelerating phases programmed in out years of the active program that are ready to obligate in the current FFY
- Accelerating phases included in the contingency program that are ready to obligate in the current FFY

When considering active reprogramming, the fiscal constraint of the program must be maintained at all times. No active reprogramming decision can be made that would push the council over its projected amount of available funds in any year of the active program, unless funds have been authorized for carry over. It may be necessary to move another project phase(s) out of the current FFY in order to accommodate ready to obligate phases.

Within out years of the active program, reprogramming from one out year to another out year or making cost changes in out years shall be limited only by fiscal constraint in those years. Any project moved into the current FFY through active reprogramming is subject to the same obligation deadlines as all other current year phases.

Each call for projects is an additional opportunity to request reprogramming in a different FFY. Sponsors may request to have project phases reprogrammed in a different FFY, based on the implementation status of those projects, without the need to re-apply or be re-ranked as long as the sponsor reaffirms their commitment to completing the project according to the requested schedule. Sponsors may reaffirm their commitment by doing one of the following:

1. Submitting a resolution specific to the project(s) and schedule(s);
2. Submitting a resolution or appropriate record of elected body action within one year of the CFP adopting a Capital Improvements Program (CIP), or similar, containing the project(s).
3. Submitting a letter signed by the Village Manager/Administrator, Clerk, Mayor/President, or similar, that addresses the sponsor's commitment to the project(s) and schedule(s).

For sponsors with multiple projects being reaffirmed, a single resolution or letter may be submitted that addresses each project.

In the event that a project included in the active program has not started phase 1 engineering (or equivalent) since the prior call for projects, whether that phase is to be federally or locally funded, that project must re-apply in the next call, except if the project is for pavement preservation techniques that were selected and programmed in out years to align with sponsor/subregional/regional pavement management system recommendations.

F. Cost Increases

A project that has already received the maximum federal funding allowed by the Northwest Council of Mayors is not eligible for a cost increase. All cost increases will be considered by the Technical Committee on a case-by-case basis, subject to the availability of additional STP funding within the requested Federal Fiscal Year. The cost increase will need to be approved by the full Northwest Council of Mayors before it can be included in a published program update. The Technical Committee may also vote to approve a cost increase that is lower than the amount requested. Cost increases can only be requested for project phases which have already been obligated, or which are targeting obligation in the current federal fiscal year.

Obligation deadlines must be met for each phase requesting an increase. Any phase of a project that does not meet the relevant obligation deadline will not be eligible for a cost increase within the current year.

If the Northwest Council is projected to have a balance of STP funds at the end of the fiscal year, cost increase requests will be reviewed by the Technical Committee at its next scheduled meeting. If requests for cost increases are greater than the Council's remaining balance of STP funds, the Technical Committee will determine approval based on project ranking, prioritization of construction phases, and the potential for timely obligation of federal funds. Increases will continue to be reviewed until funds are exhausted. If Northwest Council funds have been

exhausted, cost increases will be requested through the STP Shared Fund. If funds are not available through the Northwest Council or the STP Shared Fund, sponsors must notify the Northwest Council Planning Liaison about how they intend to proceed with the project. By June 1st, sponsors must declare their intent to:

1. Delay the project phase and actively reprogram it into either an out year of the current program or onto the contingency list; or
2. Keep the project in the current year and fund the increased project cost with local funds.

G. Carryover Limitations and Redistribution of Unobligated Funding

The Northwest Council is responsible for obligating 100% of the funding available to it each FFY. The amount of unobligated funding at the end of each FFY that can be carried over to the next year shall be limited to the Northwest Council's allotment (not including prior year carryover) for the year. Funds can only be carried over under the following circumstances:

1. The unobligated funds were programmed for a project that was granted an extension.
2. The unobligated funds are the result of an "obligation remainder" that occurs when the actual federal obligation was less than the funding programmed for the project phase.
3. The unobligated funds were unprogrammed at the end of the FFY due to one of the following:
 - a. The cost of ready to obligate project(s) exceeds the unprogrammed balance available, no funds are available from the shared fund to fill the gap, and the Northwest Council has not accessed the shared fund in the current FFY; or
 - b. No projects are ready to obligate the available funds, but the Northwest Council can demonstrate a reasonable expectation for using the carried over funds in the following FFY.

The Northwest Council must "pay back" any shared funds used in the current FFY before carrying over any unprogrammed balance. Any unobligated funding resulting from other circumstances, or in excess of the maximum allowed, will be removed from the Northwest Council's programming mark and redistributed to the shared fund, where it will be available to all selecting bodies as described below.

Funds carried over with an extended project will expire on the obligation deadline of the extension. All other funds carried over will expire on March 31 of the following calendar year. Expired carryover that remains unobligated will be removed from the selecting body's balance on the expiration date and will be placed in the shared fund where it will be available to all selecting bodies as described below.

H. Accessing Unobligated Funds

Unobligated funds which are redistributed to the shared fund can be used for project cost increases or to advance ready to obligate local program and shared fund projects if all of the selecting body's current year funds have been obligated, including any funds carried over from the previous FFY. Access to funds redistributed to the shared fund will be on a "first ready, first funded" basis. Requests can only be made when obligation of funds is imminent. CMAP staff will determine if funds are available and will approve requests upon verification of obligation readiness. In the event that there are more requests for funds than those available, priority shall be given as follows:

- Regional program projects shall be accommodated before local program projects
- Construction phases shall be accommodated before right-of-way, right-of-way shall be accommodated before phase 2 engineering, and phase 2 engineering shall be accommodated before phase 1 engineering
- Cost increases shall be accommodated before advancing active or contingency project phases
- Active out year phases shall be accommodated before contingency project phases
- Readiness for obligation will have more weight than the date of the request for funding

Shared funds may be requested for increases in STP-eligible costs at the time of obligation, based on the IDOT approved estimated cost at the time, or for cost increases after obligation due to higher than estimated bids, change orders, or engineering supplements. STP funds cannot be requested for increased costs on project elements specifically funded with other sources (such as CMAQ, TAP, Economic Development, ICC, Invest in Cook, etc.). Cost increases from the shared fund are limited to 20% of the programmed STP funds. Cost increases from the shared fund cannot be used to exceed the Northwest Council funding limit of \$5,000,000 for Roadway and Intersection projects and 3,500,000 for any other project that had not received Technical Committee approval for an increase beyond that amount. Shared funds may also be requested to advance ready to obligate phases from out years of the Northwest Council's active program or from the contingency program.

If a project sponsor requests and receives shared funds, but is unable to obligate those funds by the end of the current FFY, future requests from that sponsor may be denied. Extended phases that missed the extended obligation deadline are never eligible to utilize shared funds.

I. Council Prerogative

The Northwest Council of Mayors has the authority to grant special exceptions to any of the above guidelines if in its opinion the circumstances so dictate and the exceptions are within federal and state guidelines, the provisions of the October 2017 agreement between the Council of Mayors, Chicago DOT, and CMAP Active Program Management policies.

V. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

A. STP Eligible Routes

All projects must be on STP eligible routes. STP eligible routes serve a regional purpose and must serve more than a local land access function. Routes must be designated as a "collector" or higher. The IDOT Road Classification shall govern. Please contact the Planning Liaison if you are unsure if a project is along an STP eligible route.

Agencies may ask the Council to request a reclassification of a particular route by IDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Council shall decide if such a request is appropriate, using the Council's Functional Classification Change Request scoring form as a guide. Approval of a functional classification change request by IDOT and FHWA can be a lengthy process, so please consider this when deciding on the timing of the project's implementation.

B. Eligible Project Types

The following list provides a general description of the types of projects eligible for STP funding:

- Construction, reconstruction, restoration and rehabilitation of roads and bridges
- Local Agency Functional Overlays (LAFO), Local Agency Structural Overlays (LASO), and Resurfacings
- Highway and transit safety improvements
- Traffic signalization projects
- Intersection improvements
- Facilities that provide access to transit, if undertaken in conjunction with a different approved project type (e.g. park and ride facilities, pedestrian accommodations, commuter parking lots, etc.)
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities if undertaken in conjunction with a different approved project type.
- Lighting improvements if undertaken in conjunction with a different approved project type.
- Phase III engineering for any eligible project
- Right-of-way acquisition for any eligible project
- Phase II engineering for any eligible project

If you are unsure of a project's eligibility, contact the Council Planning Liaison.

C. County and Transit Agency Access

County transportation departments and regional transit agencies (CTA, Metra and Pace) may have access to Surface Transportation Program funds for capital costs of projects by obtaining the co-sponsorship of the project from at least one member of the Northwest Council of Mayors. This municipality would ultimately need to submit the application to the Northwest Council of Mayors for consideration.

VI. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA – ROADWAYS AND INTERSECTIONS

The following scoring methodology shall be used to score all roadway and intersection projects, except for resurfacings, Local Agency Functional Overlays (LAFOs) and Local Agency Structural Overlays (LASOs). Although roadway and intersection projects will be scored using a different system than resurfacing, LAFO, and LASO projects, all projects will ultimately be ranked in a single program of projects in order to generate the staff recommended program.

The maximum amount of points a project can receive is 200, and each category is worth a subset of the total maximum amount of points. Scoring will be carried out by Northwest Council staff once all applications have been received. Draft rankings will be released one month prior to the final rankings, during which time project sponsors will have the opportunity to provide comments on their scores. Staff will consider these comments and adjust rankings as necessary, before releasing final rankings and a draft recommended program to the Technical Committee for review. If staff is unable to come to a decision on a project’s ranking, it may refer the issue to the Technical Committee for review and approval.

The Technical Committee will review the project rankings and draft recommended program before they are released for a 30-day public comment period. After the comment period, Northwest Council staff will revise the recommended program if necessary and will bring the final program before the Technical Committee for approval.

Regional Transportation Significance	35 points (17.5%)
Safety	35 points (17.5%)
Prior Agency Funding	5 points (2.5%)
Complete Streets/Multimodal Improvements	50 points (25%)
Congestion Mitigation	30 points (15 %)
Project Readiness	40 points (20 %)
Inclusion in Current Northwest Council STP Program	5 points (2.5%)

A. Regional Transportation Significance (35 Points)

Points for regional transportation significance will be based off of both the existing annual average daily traffic of the subject roadway and the number of participants who are financially contributing to the project, either directly or in-kind.

Traffic Volume

Points for annual average daily traffic will be awarded using the following formula:

$$Points = \frac{AADT}{800}$$

(Maximum 25 possible points)

Projects occurring on roadways with an AADT of 20,000 or greater will receive the maximum 25 points.

If the project is at an intersection, the higher AADT will be used. If the traffic volume of a project changes within the project's limits, the higher count will be used. The planning liaison will use AADT data from the Illinois Department of Transportation's [Getting Around Illinois](#) website to evaluate points for this category. If not available, the planning liaison may ask project sponsors to provide AADT data.

Contributing Participants

Participants must either make a direct financial contribution to the project or contribute in-kind via the donation of right-of-way or the granting of easements. Projects will not earn points for having additional sponsors who are not financially contributing. A letter of intent or other documentation of financial or in-kind support must be submitted in order for a project to receive points in this category.

Number of Contributing Participants	Points
3 or more participants	10
2 participants	5
1 participant	0

B. Safety (35 Points)

Safety scores are calculated based on both need and improvement. Safety need is calculated using IDOT's safety road index (SRI) for roadway segments, which is based on a road segment or intersection's Potential for Safety Improvement score. PSI scores are categorized within peer groups, ensuring that crash rates are compared across similar road types. IDOT has developed SRI scores for local and state routes, and that data will be available to NWMC staff.

The safety improvement score is based off of the expected benefit from the safety improvements included in the project. CMAP staff is developing a list of common safety improvements and their related crash reduction factors (CRFs). CRFs will be developed based on information from IDOT, the Crash Modification Clearinghouse, and the Highway Safety Manual. If multiple countermeasures are included in the project, NWMC staff will use the highest CRF when scoring the project's safety improvement. Only countermeasures which address type K and/or A (fatal or serious injury) crashes will be considered when assigning scores for this section.

More information on the calculation of SRI is available [here](#). More information on the SMART SCALE Safety Factor Evaluation is available [here](#).

Safety Need

SRI Category	Points
Critical	20
High	15

Medium	10
Low	5
Minimal	0

Safety Improvement

CRF	Points
Above 50%	15
36%-49%	11.25
26%-35%	7.5
16%-25%	3.75
15% and under	0

C. Prior Agency Funding (5 points)

In an effort to allow all communities equal access to funding, projects will earn points in this category based on the amount of STP-Local funding per capita that the sponsor agency has had obligated or federally authorized (i.e. in Advance Construction status in the eTIP database) in the past three federal fiscal years (FFYs). Funding data will be taken from the CMAP Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) database. Population figures will be based on the most recent U.S. Census. Funding which was originally programmed in a year prior to 2017, but which was eventually obligated between 2017-2019 due to the conversion of phases in advance construction, will not count toward a community's total. Funding allocated to a municipality through the STP-Shared Fund also will not count toward a community's total.

Any project being undertaken on a minor arterial or higher will receive the full five points in this category, regardless of the sponsor agency's previous level of STP funding.

STP Funding Per Capita in Previous Three Years	Points
≤ \$100	5
> \$100 and ≤ \$300	2.5
> \$300	0
Project on roadway classified as a minor arterial or above	5

D. Complete Streets/Multimodal Improvements (50 Points)

Projects can receive up to 50 points in this category. 25 points will be awarded if a community has adopted a complete streets policy or ordinance. NWMC staff will use guidelines from Smart Growth America to evaluate each complete streets policy. Based on these guidelines, policies should include as many of the following as possible:

- **Vision and Intent** – includes an equitable vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets. Specifies need to create complete and connected network and specifies at least four modes, two of which must be walking or biking.
- **Diverse Users** – Benefits all users equitably, particularly vulnerable users and the most underinvested and underserved communities.
- **Commitment in all projects and phases** – Applies to new, retrofit/reconstruction, maintenance and ongoing projects.
- **Clear, accountable expectations** – Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval and public notice prior to exceptions being granted.
- **Jurisdiction** – Requires interagency coordination between government departments and partner agencies on Complete Streets.
- **Design** – Directs the use of the latest and best design criteria and guidelines and sets a time frame for their implementation.
- **Land use and context sensitivity** – Considers the surrounding community’s current and expected land use and transportation needs.
- **Performance Measures** – Establishes performance standards that are specific, equitable, and available to the public.
- **Project Selection Criteria** – Provides specific criteria to encourage funding prioritization for Complete Streets implementation.
- **Implementation steps:** Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy.

Examples of Complete Streets policies from around the region are available on the [Active Transportation Alliance website](#).

15 points will be awarded if the project includes incorporation of new complete streets elements. 10 points will be awarded if the project only involves the replacement or maintenance of existing complete streets infrastructure. If the project involves a substantial change to the design or function of a pedestrian, bicycle, or transit facility (i.e. replacing an on-street bicycle facility with an off-street multi-use path, or replacing sidewalks with a multi-use path), the project will receive the 15 points for the incorporation of new complete streets elements.

If the project has documented an exception to the inclusion of complete streets elements in Phase I or Phase II engineering, the project will receive 10 points in this category. Possible exceptions include, but are not limited to:

- The costs of including accommodations for bicyclists, pedestrians, or transit are excessively disproportionate to the need for those accommodations.
- Construction of multimodal accommodations is not possible due to environmental concerns or surrounding land use.
- The use of certain modes of transportation is prohibited by law along the affected roadway.

- An existing project along the same corridor provides a comparable level of multimodal service to similar destinations as the proposed project.

Exceptions must be documented and submitted to the Planning Liaison as part of the application process. Ideally, these exceptions would also be documented in a municipality's Complete Streets policy. NWMC staff will evaluate each exception on a case-by-case basis, subject to approval by the Technical Committee. More information on Complete Streets policies and design elements can be found in the [CMAP Complete Streets Toolkit](#).

Action Taken	Points
Community has adopted a Complete Streets policy	25
Project includes new or upgraded Complete Streets elements	15
Project includes replacement or maintenance of existing Complete Streets infrastructure OR sponsor has documented an exception in Phase I or Phase II	10
Additional points to the Top 3 projects in this category	10

E. Congestion Mitigation (30 Points)

Congestion mitigation points will be awarded based on the subject roadway's existing level of service, projected level of service improvement and congestion mitigation infrastructure implemented. Applicants will be required to demonstrate a projected level of service improvement in order to receive points. If the subject project does not address congestion mitigation, the project will receive zero points in this category.

Existing Level of Service

Level of Service	Points
F	7.5
E	5
A-D	0

Level of Service Improvement

Improvement	Points
3 levels	7.5
2 levels	5
1 level	2.5
No improvement	0

Congestion Mitigation

Aims to prioritize projects that are anticipated to improve air quality through reduction in idling or motorist delay. Points will be awarded based on the specific types of work being completed as part of the project

High – 15 points	Medium 7.5 points	Low – 0 points
Signal Interconnects	Improve/modernize existing traffic signals	Resurfacing
New traffic signals (warranted)	Auxiliary Lane (Turn Lane) Additions	Shoulder improvements
Modern Roundabout	Realignment of offset intersection	Curb and gutter installation or repair
Full Channelization improvement	Consolidation of access	Reconstruct in kind
Bottleneck Elimination	Minor Channelization improvement (1 or 2 leg addition)	
Add lane project	Widening and resurfacing	

F. Project Readiness (40 Points)

Points will be awarded in this category based on the status of Phase I or Phase II Engineering, as well as the completion of right-of-way acquisition. Projects will also earn points if right-of-way acquisition is not required. Documentation will need to be submitted to the Planning Liaison in order for the project to earn points in any of the following categories.

Current Project Status

Project Status	Points
Phase II engineering contract executed	25
Design Approval granted by IDOT	20
Draft Phase I Engineering Report (PDR) Submitted to IDOT	10
Applicant has entered into Phase I engineering contract, or has committed to completing Phase I locally	3
Project has not started Phase I	0

Right-of-Way Acquisition Status

Right-of-Way Status	Points
ROW acquisition is complete or not required	15
ROW acquisition underway*	5
ROW acquisition has not started	0

*Right-of-way acquisition will be considered as “underway” if the applicant is able to provide documentation that appraisal of the subject properties has been completed and can reasonably demonstrate that negotiation is underway. An executed Right-of-Way agreement with IDOT will also be sufficient to earn points in this category, if land acquisition is being federally funded. Documentation must be submitted as part of the application process.

G. Inclusion in Current Northwest Council STP Program (5 Points)

Projects which are included in the current Northwest Council STP Contingency Program will receive five points.

VII. PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA – RESURFACINGS

The following scoring methodology shall be used for LAFO, LASO, and resurfacing projects. The maximum amount of points a project can receive is 200.

Regional Transportation Significance	50 points (25%)
Complete Streets/Multimodal Improvements	50 points (25%)
Project Readiness	40 points (20%)
Pavement Condition	50 points (25%)
Prior Agency Funding	5 points (2.5%)
Inclusion in Current Northwest Council STP Program	5 points (2.5%)

A. Regional Transportation Significance (50 Points)

Points for regional transportation significance will be awarded based on the existing annual average daily traffic of the subject roadway.

Points for annual average daily traffic will be awarded using the following formula:

$$Points = \frac{AADT}{400}$$

(Maximum 50 possible points)

Projects occurring on roadways with an AADT of 20,000 or greater will receive the maximum 50 points.

If the project is at an intersection, the higher AADT will be used. If the traffic volume of a project changes within the project’s limits, the higher count will be used. The planning liaison will use AADT data from the Illinois Department of Transportation’s [Getting Around Illinois](#)

website to evaluate points for this category. If not available, the planning liaison may ask project sponsors to provide AADT data.

B. Complete Streets/Multimodal Improvements (50 Points)

Projects can receive up to 50 points in this category. 25 points will be awarded if a community has adopted a complete streets policy or ordinance. NWMC staff will use guidelines from Smart Growth America to evaluate each complete streets policy, which are listed in section VI D. of this handbook. 15 points will be awarded if the project includes incorporation of new complete streets elements. 10 points will be awarded if the project only involves the replacement or maintenance of existing complete streets infrastructure. If the project involves a substantial change to the design or function of a pedestrian, bicycle, or transit facility (i.e. replacing an on-street bicycle facility with an off-street multi-use path, or replacing sidewalks with a multi-use path), the project will receive the full 15 points for the incorporation of new complete streets elements.

Projects will also earn 10 points in this category if an exception to the inclusion of complete streets infrastructure has been documented by the project sponsor in Phase I or Phase II engineering. More information on possible exceptions is provided in section VI D. An additional 10 points are available in a “bonus” category for the Top 3 projects in terms of the number of new or upgraded complete street elements.

Action Taken	Points
Community has adopted a Complete Streets policy	25
Project includes new or upgraded Complete Streets elements	15
Project includes maintenance or replacement of existing Complete Streets infrastructure OR sponsor has documented an exception in Phase I or Phase II	10
Additional points to the Top 3 projects in this category	10

C. Project Readiness (40 Points)

Points will be awarded in this category based on the status of Phase I or Phase II Engineering, as well as the completion of right-of-way acquisition. Projects will also earn points if right-of-way acquisition is not required. Documentation will need to be submitted to the Planning Liaison in order for the project to earn points in any of the following categories.

Engineering Status

Project Status	Points
Phase II engineering contract executed	25
Design Approval granted by IDOT	20
Draft Phase I Engineering Report (PDR) Submitted to IDOT	10
Applicant has entered into Phase I engineering contract, or has committed to completing Phase I locally	3
Project has not started Phase I	0

Right-of-Way Acquisition Status

Right-of-Way Status	Points
ROW acquisition is complete or not required	15
ROW acquisition underway*	5
ROW acquisition is required and has not started	0

*Right-of-way acquisition will be considered as “underway” if the applicant is able to provide documentation that appraisal of the subject properties has been completed and can reasonably demonstrate that negotiation is underway. An executed Right-of-Way agreement with IDOT will also be sufficient to earn points in this category, if land acquisition is being federally funded. Documentation must be submitted as part of the application process.

D. Pavement Condition (50 points)

Points in this category will be awarded based on IDOT’s Condition Rating Survey data provided by IDOT’s pavement data collection. Condition ratings range from poor to good, and are based on ratings for the International Roughness Index (IRI), percent cracking, rutting, and faulting. Data will be provided for all federal-aid eligible routes. Data collection is consistent with federal pavement performance measures. Communities are eligible to use their own pavement condition data if it is more up to date than when the IDOT data was collected.

Pavement Condition Rating	Points
Poor (0-45)	50
Fair (46-70)	25
Good (71-100)	0

E. Prior Agency Funding (5 points)

In an effort to allow all communities equal access to funding, projects will earn points in this category based on the amount of STP-Local funding per capita that the sponsor agency has had obligated or federally authorized (i.e. in Advance Construction status in the eTIP database) in the past three federal fiscal years (FFYs). Funding data will be taken from the CMAP Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) database. Population figures will be based on the

most recent U.S. Census. Funding which was originally programmed in a year prior to 2017, but which was eventually obligated between 2017-2019 due to the conversion of phases in advance construction, will not count toward a community's total. Funding allocated to a municipality through the STP-Shared Fund also will not count toward a community's total.

Any project being undertaken on a minor arterial or higher will receive the full five points in this category, regardless of the sponsor agency's previous level of STP funding.

STP Funding Per Capita in Previous Three Years	Points
≤ \$100	5
> \$100 and ≤ \$300	2.5
> \$300	0
Project on roadway classified as a minor arterial or above	5

F. Inclusion in Current Northwest Council STP Program (5 Points)

Projects which are included in the current Northwest Council Contingency Program will receive five points.