



Surface Transportation Block Grant Program

2019 Regular Call for Projects

The Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) is a federal-aid transportation program, which provides flexible funding that may be used by states and localities for transportation improvement projects. Eligible projects range from general planning, planning and constructing projects on Federal-aid highways, bridge projects, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects.

The last, regular call for projects occurred in 2017 and resulted in seven (7) awards being made to local agencies. A special call for projects was held in early 2019 to re-distribute one of the 2017 awards that was returned. This regular call for projects is primarily intended to program projects for two years (FFY 2022 and FFY 2023).

Funding Levels

A formula is used to apportion STBGP funds to each State based on its population as a ratio of the nation's total population. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) then provides allocations of the STBGP funds to the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG), relative to census population information, to advance local priorities within Cowlitz County. Through a call for projects, CWCOG distributes funds to priority projects within Cowlitz County based on criteria derived from the goals and policies in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The 2019 allocation is \$1,516,405. Sixty-four percent (64%) can be spent in the county's cities over 5,000 in population, 18.2% percent can be spent in the county's cities with less than 5,000 in population, and the remaining 17.8% percent can be spent anywhere across the county. The estimate of funds available to be programmed through this regular call for projects, based on the assumption that the funding allocation will remain constant with the current estimated allocation, is **\$3,625,410** (see table at the top of the next page).

Please be aware that all funds programmed as a result of this regular call for projects are subject to modification, pending Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) confirmation of funding availability.

	Urban Areas > 5,000	Rural Areas < 5,000	Any Area	Total
Estimated Carry Forward ¹	\$338,729	\$96,326	\$94,209	\$529,264
FFY 2022	\$969,749	\$276,052	\$270,604	\$1,516,405
FFY 2023	\$969,749	\$276,052	\$270,604	\$1,516,405
Estimated 25% of FFY Allocation ²	\$242,625	\$68,996	\$67,480	\$379,101
Estimated Future De-Obligations ³	--	\$234,700	--	\$234,700
Estimated Adjustments ^{4 5}	(\$590,000)	\$39,535	--	(\$550,465)
Total STBGP Funds Estimated to be Available for Programming	\$1,930,852	\$991,661	\$702,897	\$3,625,410

Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for STBGP funding, a project must meet the **minimum criteria** outlined in this section. These criteria below follow federal and state funding requirements. Projects that do not meet these criteria will not be considered for funding.

- Project must be consistent with the goals and policies of the RTP.
- Project must be located on a road functionally classified as equal or higher than rural minor collectors (bicycle and pedestrian projects can be located on any public roadway or off-road trail). For more information on eligible project locations, please refer to 23 U.S. Code § 133(c).
- Project must be locally administered. By submitting a project for STBGP funding, the municipality or local government entity is committing funds to sponsor said project. The applicant (if awarded) shall be responsible for all federal and state reporting requirements associated with STBGP funding. The local government entities are also expected to make quarterly progress reports to CWCOG.
- Applicant must be an eligible agency. All projects must be administered by a certification acceptance (CA) agency. Non-CA agencies can apply for STBGP funds but must have a CA agency sponsor for the project. The sponsorship must be in place prior to project selection.
- Project proposal includes a minimum local match of 13.5 percent. Agencies that receive STBGP funding are responsible for providing the required matching funds.

¹ The amount listed is what the estimated carry forward would be had \$590,000 not been awarded to the Downtown Transit Center on March 28, 2019. The award to the Downtown Transit Center is shown as an adjustment to the urban area estimate.

² The CWCOG is authorized to obligate 25% above the yearly allocation in an effort to fully meet obligation targets each year. CWCOG will award and plan to obligate as much as 25% more than the yearly allocation of funds.

³ Per 2019 CWCOG Annual Report, City of Castle Rock anticipates returning \$234,700 when the Huntington Avenue South Overlay project closes.

⁴ The Port of Kalama project was awarded funds (\$912,359) during the 2017 regular call for projects, but the funds were returned. These funds were re-distributed in February 2019 special call for projects to two rural projects, but \$21,838 of the original award to the Port of Kalama was not re-programmed. See also Footnote 1.

⁵ The City of Kalama was awarded \$264,222 on December 10, 2014. The City obligated \$246,525. The remaining \$17,697 that was not obligated was released.

Project Review, Prioritization, and Award Process

CWCOG has the responsibility to administer STBGP funds in a way that supports the RTP and established funding priorities. Projects must be regionally significant or considered important to the local transportation network. The intent of the project review, selection, and award process is to provide the opportunity to fund regional/countywide-funding priorities, while implementing the RTP's goals, policies, and strategies.

Review. Each project submitted will be evaluated by CWCOG staff against the eligibility criteria and ranked by Cowlitz Area Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC) members based on the evaluation criteria contained in this guidance document (see pages 5 and 6 for evaluation criteria). Please note that CATAC members will not be able to evaluate their own projects. The evaluation criteria are based on the RTP's goals, policies, and strategies and focuses on those projects that promote safety, mobility, the preservation and enhancement of existing transportation facilities, and economic vitality. The criteria weights were set based on CATAC discussion of project priorities and there are different weights for rural and urban.

Prioritization. Projects will be ranked based on how well they meet the evaluation criteria.

Award. Staff and CATAC members will make funding recommendations based upon the estimated amount of available STBGP funds (**\$3,625,410**), the project's rank/prioritization, and the funding requests for each project. All ranked/prioritized projects will be forwarded to the CWCOG Board for consideration. CWCOG staff will present the CATAC's recommendation to the CWCOG Board for consideration. The CWCOG Board will make the final funding selections.

Recipients of STBGP funds will receive written notification of the funding approval within 14 days of the award. All projects funded with STBGP funds must be included or amended into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) showing full phase/project funding prior to authorizing federal funding. These RTIP amendments are the responsibility of the applicant to provide to the CWCOG. Selected projects will also need to enter into a Local Agency Agreement (LAA) with WSDOT's Local Program office to authorize the funding.

Project Scope Changes

Any project scope changes will need to be reviewed by CWCOG Staff. If a project scope change would result in the need for a formal amendment or administrative modification to the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), the scope change must be approved by the CWCOG Board of Directors. For project scope changes requesting additional STBGP funds, a new project application will be required. A new project application to request additional funds will be referred to the Cowlitz Area Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC) for consideration and recommendation to the CWCOG Board of Directors. The CWCOG Board of Directors has the sole authority to grant additional STBGP funds and is not required to provide additional funds to any projects with a previous award. Please note there is no guarantee an additional allocation of funds for scope changes or cost overruns will be approved.

Contingency List

A list of contingency projects may be developed in addition to the selected project list. A project from the contingency list will be chosen to move forward if one of the selected projects fails to obligate or returns the funds. CWCOG is not required to provide funding for any project listed on the contingency list. The CWCOG Board of Directors may consider additional projects through a new call for projects in addition to contingency list projects.

Project Programming and Obligation

Programming. Projects awarded STBGP funding through this regular call for projects will be programmed in 2021, 2022, or 2023. Project readiness will be considered in the award process. The award letter will clearly specify the year(s) that a projects' phases are programmed. It is important that STBGP funding is programmed in the RTIP and STIP as specified in order for the CWCOG STBGP program to be fiscally constrained.

Obligation. The timely obligation of awarded funds is critical for the CWCOG to be able to meet regional and statewide obligation delivery targets. To ensure delivery targets are met, all STBGP funding must be obligated by June 30th of the year the funds are programmed in the RTIP and STIP. Earlier obligation is strongly encouraged.

Timeline

July 25, 2019	CWCOG Board Consideration of 2019 STBGP Regular Call for Projects Guidance
July 26, 2019	Call for Projects Opens
September 20, 2019	Call for Projects Closes
September 23 - 30, 2019	CWCOG Staff Completes Initial Review & Forwards Applications to CATAC
October 22, 2019	CATAC Reviews, Ranks, & Prioritizes Applications at a Special Meeting
November 21, 2019 or December 19, 2019	CWCOG Board of Directors Reviews CATAC Recommendation / Makes Funding Awards
By December 31, 2019	Award Letters Mailed

Rural Evaluation Criteria	Weight	Score ⁶	Weighted Score
Economic Vitality (Maximum Points - 10)			
A. Provides access to new economic opportunities	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
B. Aligns with the regional goals for growth in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
System Preservation and Enhancement (Maximum Points – 30)			
A. Preserves/rehabilitates existing facilities and networks	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
B. Improves/rebuilds existing facilities and networks	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
C. Improves the design and operation of intersections	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
Safety (Maximum Points – 40)			
A. Reduces frequency and/or severity of roadway crashes	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
B. Other safety hazards the project might eliminate or minimize	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
Choice and Mobility (Maximum Points – 10)			
A. Creates or improves connection to park and ride lots, local bus routes, and/or bicycle and pedestrian facilities	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
B. Improves connection of population centers with employment and activity centers	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
Schedule (Maximum Points – 10)			
A. Project readiness and high likelihood of meeting proposed schedule	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Maximum Points			100

⁶ Applications may receive a score of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0 for all evaluation criteria.

Urban Evaluation Criteria	Weight	Score ⁷	Weighted Score
Economic Vitality (Maximum Points - 15)			
A. Provides access to new economic opportunities	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
B. Aligns with the regional goals for growth in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
System Preservation and Enhancement (Maximum Points – 35)			
A. Preserves/rehabilitates existing facilities and networks	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
B. Improves/rebuilds existing facilities and networks	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
C. Improves the design and operation of intersections	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Safety (Maximum Points – 25)			
A. Reduces frequency and/or severity of roadway crashes	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
B. Other safety hazards the project might eliminate or minimize	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Choice and Mobility (Maximum Points – 15)			
A. Creates or improves connection to park and ride lots, local bus routes, and/or bicycle and pedestrian facilities	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
B. Improves connection of population centers with employment and activity centers	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
Schedule (Maximum Points – 10)			
A. Project readiness and high likelihood of meeting proposed schedule	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Maximum Points			100

⁷ Applications may receive a score of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0 for all evaluation criteria.