

Frequently Asked Questions

Project Call

Fiscal Years (FY) 2026 through 2029

Carbon Reduction Program
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside

Update: November 15, 2024



Overview

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) is requesting applications for transportation projects that serve the six-county CAMPO region. This competitive project call will select projects for federal transportation funding through the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside (TASA) and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funding programs.

As part of the project call process, CAMPO is providing additional information and clarification to support the information provided in the Guide to the Project Selection Process for Regional Transportation Projects and Webinar presentations. The information below provides summarized responses to questions submitted by potential project sponsors. (These statement responses are organized in the order received with the general subject matter in bold)

Response Summary

Eligibility

All non-profit agencies are eligible for Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) funding.

Direct State Costs

Sponsors must account for the direct state costs in their budgets and indicate whether they are requesting federal assistance to cover this cost. Actual direct state costs are determined by TxDOT and are based on several factors including project size, complexity, and risk factors requiring additional oversight. For this project call, sponsors are being asked to use 15% of the total project cost as the standard rate to include in the project budget. CAMPO will make adjustments as determined by TxDOT's review and determination of the project's oversight requirements.

Schedule

Schedule formatting is flexible, but it must be clearly organized and include all aspects of the project development process as outline in the TxDOT Local Government Project Procedures.

Management

The Local Government Project Procedures (LGPP) Certification date field in the application is for the date of certification, or anticipated date of certification based on enrollment.

Management

The sponsor attachment field is for the Local Government Project Procedures (LGPP) Certification completion certificate, enrollment verification, resumes, organizational charts, and other documents that demonstrate that the sponsor has the appropriate project management experience and resources.

Project Cost (Planning Only)

For planning phase projects, the costs should be listed in the PE field of the Project Cost section. You can leave ROW and Construction blank.

Budget (Planning Only)

For planning projects, the scope and cost estimate do not have to be developed by a licensed engineer, a professional planner with experience developing scopes will suffice. See other responses for additional information.

Scope

The narrative section of the scope section is meant for a summary of the project. This can range from a sentence or two, to a few paragraphs. The supporting attachments will require full detail and include a line-item list of activities being proposed. These attachments may also be part of the budget but should be attached here as well. This section is for verifying eligibility and it is important to note that the provided scope is binding once selected for funding and any changes will need to be approved by the Policy Board. See other responses for additional information.

Attachments

Attachments are relative to the responses provided. Some responses have the potential to be self-evident and do not require attachments. Sponsors should think about attachments from the reviewer's perspective who is going to be looking at the narrative response and asking: 'Is this valid and true based on the information provided?' If the response alone doesn't provide an unequivocal 'Yes' then backup documentation is required. As a competitive process the goal is to receive the most points possible, and it's the job of the reviewers to make sure the points accurately represent the project. If there is doubt about a response and attachments are not provided, the project will not receive the points.

Match Requirements

Sponsors are required to have the 20% match for their projects. In-Kind contributions will not be considered as local match through this process. Additionally, the match requirements still apply even if you are applying for TDCs, due to the federal Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements.

Engineering Readiness Assessment

The amount of engineering required to be completed by sponsors to be considered ready will vary by project. Engineering readiness determination will be based on the complexity of the design and construction and associated risk-factors regarding implementation. As engineering progresses the more unknowns become known and cost estimates become more refined. The further along the engineering process a project is the more accurate the estimate and risk factors are mitigated which minimizes issues with implementation. The more complex a project, the higher threshold for engineering readiness will be applied.

Award Adjustments and Overages

Regarding the awards, the amount awarded to a project is definitive and will not be adjusted. Sponsors are responsible for all costs above and beyond the original amount and any activities outside of the approved scope.

Post-Award Progress

Sponsors must adhere to CAMPO's policy on continual progress. The original award amounts and fiscal year of implementation are binding. Any changes to project scope, schedule, or other factors from the original approval may be requested but must be approved by the Transportation Policy Board directly.

Resolutions

Resolutions from the Local Government authorizing the submittal of a project application are not required by CAMPO. However, resolutions are potentially required in other areas of the application including funding commitments and interlocal agreements.

Planning Projects

For planning projects, the sponsoring agency's responsibilities for planning studies are providing the local cash match, TxDOT administrative fees, and in-kind staff support as agreed upon with CAMPO prior to execution of the study. The agency is expected to participate in all aspects of the study including consultant procurement, joint-management activities, steering committee, and other support to help execute the project. The exact responsibilities are laid out in the negotiated Interlocal Agreement (ILA) executed between CAMPO and the sponsoring agency, but it's important to note that CAMPO is the lead agency in the planning effort and that the Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) will be executed between CAMPO and TxDOT.

Award Phases

For this call we are not combining multiple phases for awards (i.e. planning and engineering, or engineering and construction) because the success of the selected phase is dependent on the previous phase outcomes. For example, we would not want to fund PE for a project that does not have all environmental constraints identified because some constraints can kill a project. This also impacts the accuracy of the cost estimates underlying the funding requests. For these reasons we take a distinctly phase by phase approach in funding awards and only awarding the next very next phase in the process.

Transportation Planning

Transportation planning submissions may only be for activities eligible through the project call funding programs. For this project call, transportation planning studies must be for activities eligible through the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside (TASA) and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). For example, eligible transportation planning activities include active transportation studies, safety audits for Safe Routes to Schools, etc. Studies that include the planning phase of in-eligible elements, such as added capacity roadway elements, will not be considered.

Budget

The budget for each project should include the same elements regardless of the phase being requested. For example, a request for transportation planning, engineering, or construction phase all require a line-item budget with associated costs that reflect the scope of the project. These budgets serve several purposes in the project review process including ensuring project costs are reasonable and appropriate for the given scope, individual aspects of the scope are eligible for reimbursement, and that the numbers provided cover all aspects of the project and reflect a thorough process.

Emission Reduction Evaluation

Projects applying for Carbon Reduction Program funding that are directly listed as an eligible activity are not required to demonstrate emission reductions. For context, eligible activities listed in the CRP are included precisely because they have been demonstrated over time to reduce emissions. However, if the submitted project is not listed directly as an eligible activity, the sponsor may still submit for CRP funding but must provide a quantitative emission reduction evaluation of the project using the federally accepted [methodology](#).

Requesting Planning versus Engineering Phases

Sponsor trying to determine whether a project is ready for engineering versus needing additional planning funding should consider the extent of the planning activities conducted. For projects to be considered for engineering, they must have concluded project specific planning activities (as opposed to larger scale studies such as regional or local transportation plan). Projects will need to have completed a project level feasibility study and planning process that includes a sufficient alternatives analysis relative to the project scope, environmental constraint identification, a general alignment with associated ROW identified, and recommended typical section. These all get revisited/refined in the engineering phase, but without sufficient planning, a project will not have a sufficient basis for estimating the cost for engineering since these planning items detail the extent of engineering required.

Award Limitations (Updated Response)

There are no limitations regarding the award amounts on individual projects or number of projects to be awarded to a particular sponsor. The recommendation will be based on the regional value provided by a project regardless of sponsor or number of submissions.

Though there is no theoretical process limit related to how many awards a jurisdiction can receive, it is important to point out that the criteria is designed to promote different needs and areas of the region so it is unlikely that projects will be disproportionately concentrated in a single jurisdiction. Related to this, it is important to note that the Transportation Policy Board makes the final decision on project selection, so their view on whether the recommendation is balanced and appropriately distributed is something that may be considered as the recommendation is provided for review and approval.

Application Limits

There are no limitations regarding the number of applications a sponsor may submit.

Application Printing

To print the application, sponsors can highlight the application (or specific parts), right-click, and print.

Micro-Transit On-Demand Service Eligibility (CRP)

Micro-transit and on-demand service projects are not specifically outlined in any of the Carbon Reduction Program eligibility nor is it included in the Texas Carbon Reduction Strategy. The transit language eligibility is very specific to fixed route services. Unless otherwise confirmed by FHWA, these projects will not be considered eligible.

Application Saving (Updated Response)

Applications had a 30-day time limit to be submitted from the time they were started through the save and resume function as noted in the first webinar and notification email with application link. After hearing feedback from sponsors that they would like to continue working on their application for longer than 30-days, the development team has extended the application time limit to a recurring 90-day period from each save function. This change was instituted in early November, any applications started 30-days prior to this change, and have not been submitted, were still subject to the original data expiration date and may have expired)

As a best practice, all sponsors should maintain a local copy of the information to be submitted in the application to mitigate any risk of data loss in the event the application passes the expiration date or the sponsor loses the access link to the application.

Innovative Intersection Design

Innovative intersections use non-traditional methods to improve traffic flow at crossroads, leading to enhanced safety, operational performance, and resiliency. Sponsors need to demonstrate how the submitted design improves upon standard design elements. There are many resources available that demonstrate these types of projects that can be referenced in relation to this planning factor including TxDOT's [Innovative Transportation](#) webpage.

Submitting Elements of a Larger Project

If sponsors are only submitting certain elements of a larger overall project, they must provide sufficient information on the other elements so that CAMPO has a complete understanding of project implementation. For example, if a sponsor is submitting a shared-use path construction project that is part of larger roadway expansion project, they must submit information on the roadway project as well. This is because the implementation of the larger project will be considered in regard to the readiness and ability to implement the shared-use path project.

Requesting Engineering and Construction

As detailed in the webinar, CAMPO will not be awarding funding for BOTH engineering and construction phases. When evaluating your projects for which phase to submit, sponsors should consider that the expectation is for engineering to be complete, or substantially complete, for all construction funding requests. The threshold for engineering completeness depends on the complexity of each individual project which can be slightly different depending on all of the individual variables. In all cases, the guiding principle for this process is that engineering needs to be far enough along that should we fund the construction phase, we know what needs to be done, the costs are stable, and there is limited, to no, risk that construction can be completed as awarded.