



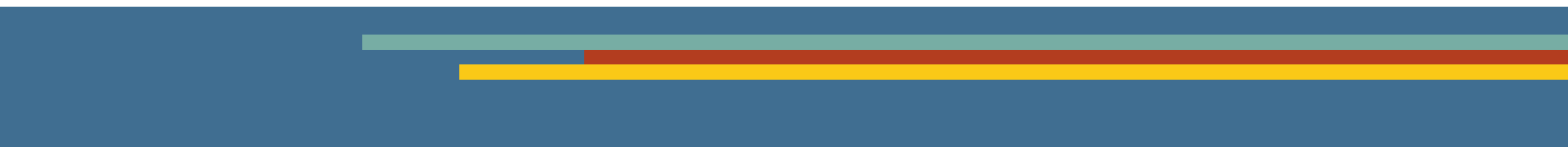
# **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM**

Funding Guidelines for Federal Fiscal Year 2026

December 2021

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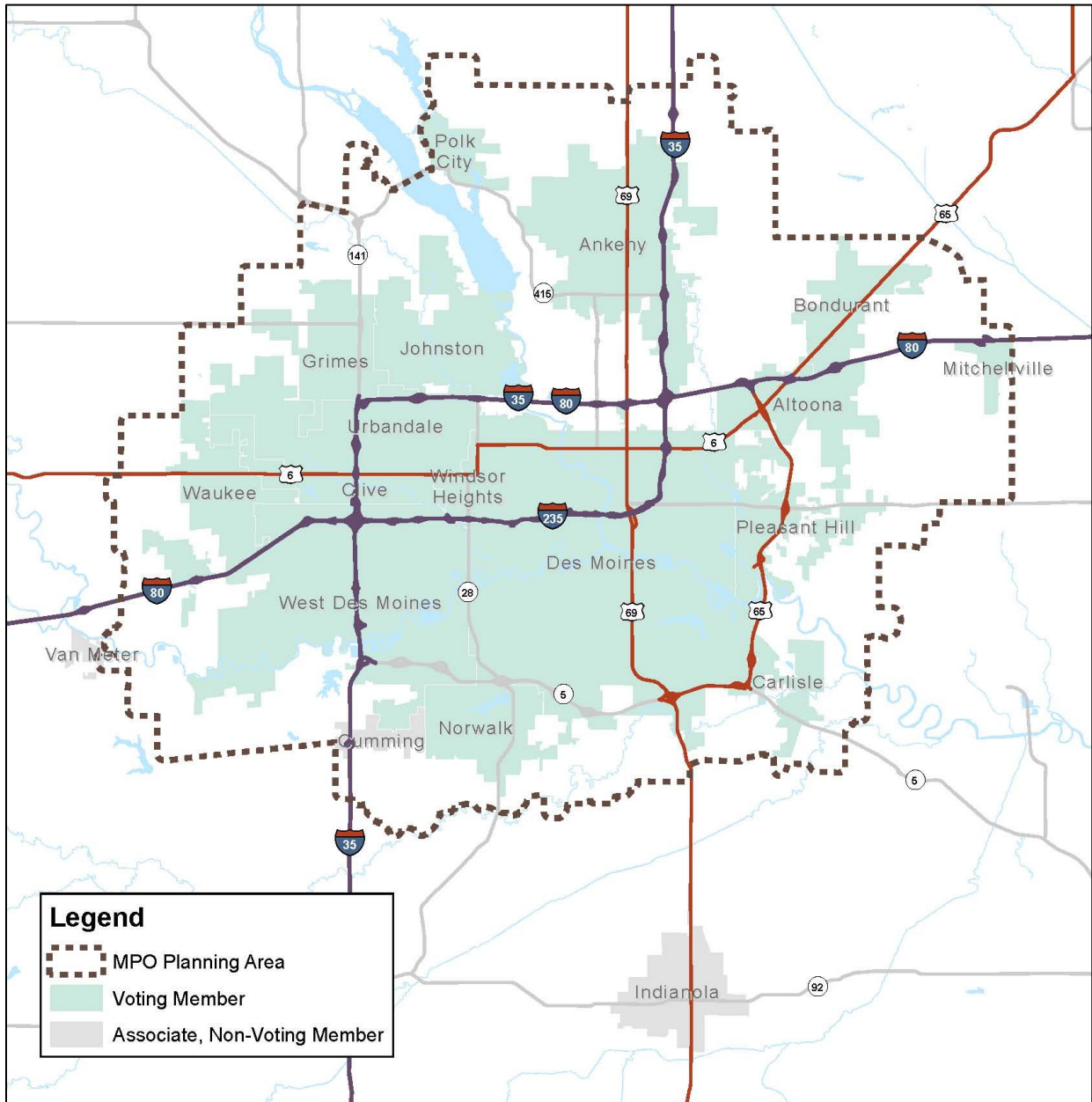
## Schedule and Decision Making Process

December 3, 2021	Applications posted to the MPO website.
<b><u>January 7, 2022</u></b>	<b>STBG applications due by 4:30.</b>
February 2022	STBG project evaluation and scoring by MPO staff. Staff will present projects and their respective scores at the February TTC, Environment, Freight, TMAC, Bike/Ped, TAG Public Transportation and Stakeholders Roundtable meetings. MPO will also conduct public outreach including a public meeting and on-line feedback mechanisms to gather input on the project applications.
March 2022	MPO Funding Subcommittee hears short project presentations given by sponsor communities.
March 2022	MPO Funding Subcommittee holds a public meeting to finalize the STBG funding recommendations before the February Executive and MPO meetings.
April 2022	STBG Recommendations to MPO TTC and MPO Policy for discussion.
May 2022	STBG Recommendations to MPO TTC and MPO Policy for action.
May 2022	Draft <i>Federal Fiscal Years 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program</i> (FFY 2023-2026 TIP) to MPO TTC and MPO Policy for review and comment. Public comment period and public meeting held.
June 2022	Draft FFY 2023-2026 TIP to MPO TTC and MPO Policy for action.
June 2022	Draft FFY 2023-2026 TIP transmitted to Iowa DOT and Federal Highway Administration.
July 2022	Draft FFY 2023-2026 TIP to MPO TTC and MPO Executive for action.
July 2022	Final FFY 2023-2026 TIP transmitted to Iowa DOT.

*\* All dates are tentative and subject to change.*



## Map of MPO Member Communities



# Grant Information and Guidelines

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## Eligibility

- All projects applying for MPO STBG funding must be sponsored by one or more of the nineteen MPO member governments, the Iowa Department of Transportation, or the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority. Other entities are eligible only with co-sponsorship by one of the organizations listed above.
- Projects must be consistent with the goals of the MPO's *Mobilizing Tomorrow* plan. The project must be listed in the plan unless it is a project that primarily:
  - Maintains and optimizes the transportation system
  - Addresses deficient or obsolete bridges
  - Focuses on multi-modal transportation
- Roads must be on the federal-aid system. Bridges must be on Structurally Deficient/Functionally Obsolete (SD/FO) list. Transit accommodations must be compliant with the DART 2035 plan.

## ***Mobilizing Tomorrow: Preparing the Grant Application***

Applicants are expected to refer to the approved long range transportation plan, *Mobilizing Tomorrow*, while preparing the grant application as well as the grant review criteria found in [Appendix A](#). Please give specific attention to the follow areas.

- [Chapter 2: Goals, Measures, and Targets](#)
- [Chapter 3: Investments Strategies](#)
- [Chapter 4: Policies and Best Practices](#)
- [Appendix A: Technical Resources:](#)
  - MPO Complete Streets Sample Policy
  - Local Complete Streets Sample Policy
  - Recommended Roadway Design Standards
  - Recommended On-Street Bicycle Facility Standards
  - Recommended Parking Guidelines
  - Recommended Transit Supportive Development Guidelines
  - Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Recommendations
- Trail Gaps

## Grant Application

- The application must be submitted on-line. The link to STBG grant applications and copies of the application questions can found on the MPO website [here](#).
- Each grant application must answer all of the questions including providing a detailed summary of expenditures.
- Email a scanned copy of the resolution from that sponsor's council, board of supervisors, or similar governing body, guaranteeing the local funds for the STBG match and authorizing the project. An example resolution can be found in [Appendix D](#).
- Email a PDF map of the project location to MPO staff.
- If your street is on a transit route, please submit a letter from DART with their review and comments on the project. A map of the transit route can be found [here](#).

- Applications are due on or before 4:30 p.m., January 24, 2020.
- For general STBG applications: Questions, scanned letters and maps should be sent to: Zach Young, [zyoung@dmampo.org](mailto:zyoung@dmampo.org).

## Grant Review Criteria

- The MPO, when considering project requests for STBG funds, shall place primary emphasis upon region-wide transportation system improvement needs as identified in the *Mobilizing Tomorrow* plan.
- Criteria used for evaluating the project's ability to meet targeted performance measures can be found in [Appendix A](#) for general STBG applications.

## Project Status Updates

If awarded the funds, the community is required to update the MPO on the status of the project. The status updates should follow the Iowa DOT's development progress in TPMS which includes the following steps:

1. Concept Statement
2. Preliminary Plans
3. Check Plans
4. Final Plans
5. Clearances
6. Development Certification
7. Plan Turn In

Project sponsors will include the MPO staff in their correspondence with the Iowa DOT at each stage in the development process. This will increase coordination and allow the staff to better serve its member governments.

## Funding Considerations

- Jurisdictions must bear the initial expenditures of the project, and receive reimbursement for eligible expenditures, as defined by the Iowa DOT. The agreement with the Iowa DOT provides for reimbursement of up to 80 percent of the project cost, or a set amount, whichever is less. Design and engineering costs are generally incurred in the early stages of a project.
- The MPO will strive to fund projects based on the following categories. These allocations serve as recommended minimums.
  - 30% for roadway projects
  - 20% bridge repair/replacement
  - 25% major reconstruction/replacement
  - 15% System Optimization
  - 10% Transit
- STBG funds shall be allocated to an individual project for a specific fiscal year in the TIP. For projects extending over multiple years for implementation, funds may be allocated to each of the necessary fiscal years within the TIP to complete the requested project.
- If the total amount of STBG funds received by the MPO for any given fiscal year is less than the total amount of STBG funds allocated by the MPO for that fiscal year, then the MPO shall re-evaluate all of the projects funded for that fiscal year and reallocate STBG funds to those projects

based upon the total amount of STBG actually available for that fiscal year, giving consideration to the higher ranking projects.

- Prior to review of new projects to be considered for STBG funding, the MPO shall determine the status of all prior commitments. All projects previously approved and for which some part of STBG funds have been obligated shall receive priority consideration for future or additional funding, except if reasonable progress to completion is not maintained as determined by the MPO. However, the MPO may reduce or eliminate multi-year funding commitments in response to revenue shortfalls, reductions in its STBG allocation, or new priorities.
- MPO staff shall submit to the STBG Funding Subcommittee a ranking of individual project based on the project's ability to meet targeted performance measures. Staff's recommendations for individual projects shall be used by the MPO in the MPO's decision-making process for assigning STBG funds to requesting transportation improvement projects. Staff's recommendations shall be based on the project's ability to support achievement of the MPO's performance measure targets.
- Once the MPO has selected projects for funding, the MPO shall forward a letter to recipient outlining the stipulations associated with acceptance of the MPO's funds, including the need for the recipient to provide periodic updates on the project to the MPO.
- Funding can support multi-year projects.
- The MPO receives federal funding and may not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, or national origin, according to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. By applying to receive these funds the applicant is acknowledging that they understand and adhere to the principles of Title VI when performing activities related to the funding they receive from the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

## Bridge Program

The STBG guidelines set aside a minimum of 20 percent of STBG funds to address bridges in the region that are on the Structurally Deficient list. Each year staff will contact the member governments that have bridges included on the list and request applications for those bridges that the member government is interested in receiving funds to repair/reconstruct. The MPO staff will provide a technical ranking of bridge projects to the STBG Funding subcommittee. The STBG Funding Subcommittee will use the bridge rating and their discretion to recommend a funding award for the bridge projects.

## Project Amendment Process

When a jurisdiction changes the scope of a project, after funds are awarded by the MPO, the project must be reviewed again by the TTC and the MPO Funding Subcommittee to determine whether the change in project scope would have materially changed the project's original performance to meet set performance measures and targets. Based on that determination, the Subcommittee will make a recommendation to the MPO Executive Committee, up to and including the withdrawal of MPO approval for STBG funding for the project. This is the same process that may occur when a project does not make appropriate, scheduled progress leading to recapture and reallocation of future funds previously designated for the project. The MPO Executive Committee will, after due consideration, make a recommendation to the full MPO for a final decision. Immaterial changes that would not affect the original performance of a project previously ranked and approved for MPO funding may be permitted in the sound discretion of the MPO Executive Director.

## TIP Amendment Process

### Amendments

An amendment is a revision to the TIP. An amendment can include an addition or deletion of a project or a major change in design concept or scope. Any proposed changes that meet any of the following criteria are considered amendments.

- **Project cost:** Projects in which the recalculated project costs increase federal aid by more than 30 percent or increase total federal aid by more than \$2 million from the original amount.
- **Schedule changes:** Projects added or deleted from the TIP.
- **Funding sources:** Adding an additional federal funding source.
- **Scope changes:** Changing the project termini, project alignment, the amount of through traffic lanes, type of work from an overlay to reconstruction, or a change to include widening of the roadway.

If the change to the TIP is an amendment, two primary procedural requirements exist: approval by the MPO's technical and policy boards and that the project follow the MPO's public participation process. When the TIP is amended, the MPO is required to re-demonstrate fiscal constraint of the TIP/STIP. An amendment is limited by the MPO's fiscal constraint determined by the projects programmed at the TIP's approval.

### Administrative Modifications

An administrative modification is a revision making a minor change to a project in the TIP. An administrative modification does not require public review and comment or board approval. In most instances, administrative modifications are also subject to re-demonstration of fiscal constraint of the TIP/STIP.

An administrative modification can include minor changes to project costs and project or project phase initiation dates. Any proposed changes that meet any of the following criteria are considered administrative modifications.

- **Project cost:** Projects in which the recalculated projects costs do not increase federal aid by more than 30 percent or do not increase total federal aid by more than \$2 million from the original amount.
- **Schedule changes:** Changes in schedules to projects included in the first four years of the TIP.
- **Funding sources:** Changing funding from one source to another.
- **Scope changes:** All changes to a project's scope require an amendment.

### Fiscal Constraint

Any change to the TIP, whether it is an administrative modification or an amendment, is subject to the fiscal constraints of the MPO. For example, if a community has a programmed project in the current construction year of the TIP has \$1 million in federal aid (FFY 2020 in the FFY 2020-2024 TIP) and another project in FFY 2022 has \$1.5 million in federal aid and they requested to move the FFY 2022 project up to FFY 2020, then the requesting jurisdiction would either have to move their currently programed project backwards and another project with at least \$500,000 in federal aid move backwards to FFY 2021 or later or find a project with at least \$1.5 million in federal aid and have that project move backwards.

Note that the MPO's fiscal constraint is by funding type. For example, if the MPO has \$10 million in STBG funding programmed in the construction year of the TIP, that is the total amount of STBG funding that is



available to be spent in that year. In the example in the previous paragraph, funding has to be the same type (e.g. STBG, CMAQ, TAP, etc.).

The requirement to ensure fiscal constraint does not apply to construction year projects that have already been programmed at their full federal aid participation rate and whose programming entry is being adjusted based on an updated cost estimate. That would include all projects that have been programmed with an 80/20 or 90/10 split. Fiscal constraint also does not apply to non-formula funds such as TIGER funding and reappropriated earmark funds.

## **Additional Fund Availability**


Each year the Iowa DOT provides the MPO with updated STBG targets. These updated targets often result in excess funding from previous years that is available to allocate to projects. As a rule, the MPO will hold around \$250,000 in reserve. The amount of STBG funds above the \$250,000 threshold will be presented to the Funding Subcommittee at their march meeting along with a list of TIP projects that were previously awarded STBG funds.

The Funding Subcommittee will make a recommendation for project funding and for the recommendation to be forwarded to the MPO Policy Committees for approval. Upon approval by the MPO Policy Committee, MPO staff will update the project in the TPMS system. The following summarizes the process:

1. The MPO staff will review excess STBG funding at the beginning of March of each year and determine if excess STBG funding exceeds the \$250,000 reserve threshold;
2. Staff will report the excess funding amount along with a list of eligible TIP projects to the Funding Subcommittee at their March meeting;
3. Funding Subcommittee will develop an excess funding recommendation; and,
4. The excess funding recommendation will be presented to and approved by the Policy Committee.

## **Termination of Funding: Considerations**

If a jurisdiction/agency's STBG funded project does not make satisfactory progress, does not follow the original scope of the project, or does not obligate the STBG funds provided within the year those funds were authorized by the MPO and noted for that project as previously documented, then the MPO may cancel the remaining STBG funding for that project and return those STBG funds for inclusion in the next fiscal year's STBG funding allocation for projects. Such action to cancel project funding shall be based on the following criteria:

- 1) The MPO strongly believes it necessary to maintain rapid turnover of funds and implementation of specific projects so as not to jeopardize the loss of any funding.
  - 2) The MPO strongly encourages jurisdictions/agencies to have at least preliminary project plans completed prior to submitting a project for the MPO's consideration for funding.
  - 3) The MPO strongly believes that such a stipulation shall cause jurisdictions/agencies to provide better and more accurate project cost estimates and detailed traffic and engineering data, enabling both the TTC and the MPO to evaluate a project's feasibility in a more detailed manner.
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## **Interpretation**

When and as necessary, the STBG Funding Subcommittee will exercise responsibility for interpreting the applicable Guidelines, subject to review and approval, disapproval, or modification by the MPO Executive Committee, subject to review and approval, disapproval, or modification by the full MPO Policy Committee.

## Appendix A: Performance Measure Evaluation Criteria

ANNUAL STBG FUNDING EVALUATION CRITERIA		
<b>Base Score by Application Category</b>		<b>45</b>
<b>Base Score</b>	System Capacity Category	15
	Major Reconstruction/Replacement Category	45
	System Optimization Category	30
<b>PM#</b>	<b>EVALUATION CRITERIA</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
<b>Transportation Infrastructure and Services are Well-managed and Optimized</b>		<b>45</b>
1	Project addresses major maintenance including pavement condition or replacement/repair of bridge.	10
	a. Pavement in Excellent or Good condition	0
	b. Pavement in Fair condition	5
	c. Pavement in Poor or Very Poor condition	10
2	Project is on a corridor with existing congestion (Point-Based System)	10
	a. CMP Score of 0-3	0
	b. CMP Score of 4-6	5
	c. CMP Score of 7+	10
4	Project scores points on PM# 8,9,10, or 11 and is partially or entirely located in a environmental justice area	10
	a. Number of EJ areas equals 0-3	0
	b. Number of EJ areas equals 4-5	5
	b. Number of EJ areas equals 6 or more	10
5	Project scores points on PM# 1 or 2 and is on a roadway with high traffic volumes	10
	a. Less than 5,000 AADT	0
	b. 5,000 - 10,000 AADT	5
	c. More than 10,000 AADT	10
6	Project includes digital infrastructure elements that serves a transportation or mobility-related function	5
<b>Enhance Multimodal Transportation Options</b>		<b>20</b>
7	Project scores points in PM# 8, 9, 10, or 13 and is located on an existing or planned transit route.	5
8	Project includes an addition to or improvement of the bicycle network	5
	a. Shared Facility (sharrows, bike route)	2
	b. Dedicated Facility (Shared-Use Path, Bike Lane, Protected/Buffered Bike Lane)	5
9	Project improves pedestrian access and facilities	10
<b>Improve the Region's Environmental Health</b>		<b>10</b>
10	Project increases the number of street tree plantings	5
11	Project is using permeable paving, vegetation or other green streets techniques to manage 1¼ inches of the average rainfall.	5
<b>Further the health, safety, and well-being of all residents in the region.</b>		<b>25</b>
12	Project is located on a high-crash corridor and the project incorporates traffic calming and proven counter measures.	15
	a. 0-50th Percential	5
	b. 50-75 percential	10
	c. 75+ percential	15
13	Project scores points in PM# 7, 8, or 9 and located in area with multimodal access to necessities (jobs, food, medical facilities, and parks)	5
14	Project scores points in PM# 7, 8, or 9 and is within 1/2 mile radius of a school	5
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>		<b>100</b>

## Appendix D: Example Formal Resolution

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (STBG) TO THE DES MOINES AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) FOR THE PARTIAL FUNDING OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF **[PROJECT NAME]** AND FURTHER APPROVING THE APPLICATION WHICH OBLIGATES THE **[CITY]** TO MATCHING FUNDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF SAID PROJECT

Whereas, the **[Member Government]** is a full member of the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization; and

Whereas, the Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Program provides funding to local jurisdictions for the construction of eligible projects; and

Whereas, the program is administered by the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization which prioritizes and ranks all project applications; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE **[GOVERNING BODY]** OF THE **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** that:

The **[Governing Body]** supports and approves the attached application for Federal Surface Transportation Program funding.

The **[Governing Body]** hereby commits to the **[Member Government]** matching monies as required by the Federal Surface Transportation Program funding.

The **[Member Government]** hereby commits to accepting and maintaining these improvements for a minimum of twenty (20) years following the completion.

The **[Designated Official]** is hereby authorized to approve and execute the application on behalf of the **[Governing Body]**.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS date \_\_\_\_\_

