

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT SET-ASIDE PROGRAM

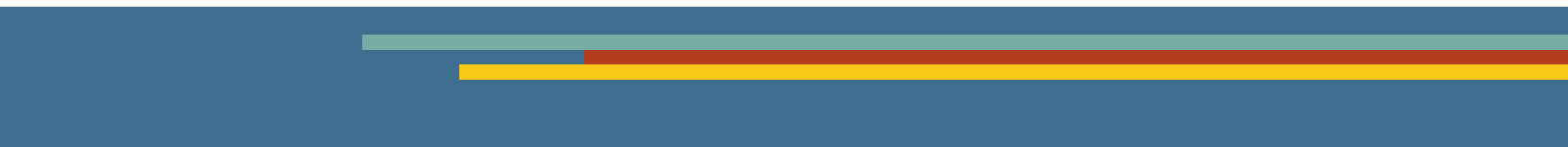
Funding Guidelines for Federal Fiscal Year 2028

December 2023



CONTENTS


Schedule and Decision Making Process	3
Eligibility	5
<i>Mobilizing Tomorrow: Preparing the Grant Application</i>	5
Grant Application	6
Grant Review Criteria	6
Project Status Updates	6
Funding Considerations	6
Safe Routes to School Program	7
Project Amendment Process	7
TIP Amendment Process	8
Additional Fund Availability	9
Termination of Funding: Considerations	9
Interpretation	10
Appendix A: STBG Set-Aside Scoring Matrix	11
Appendix C: Safe Routes to School Process and Schedule	13



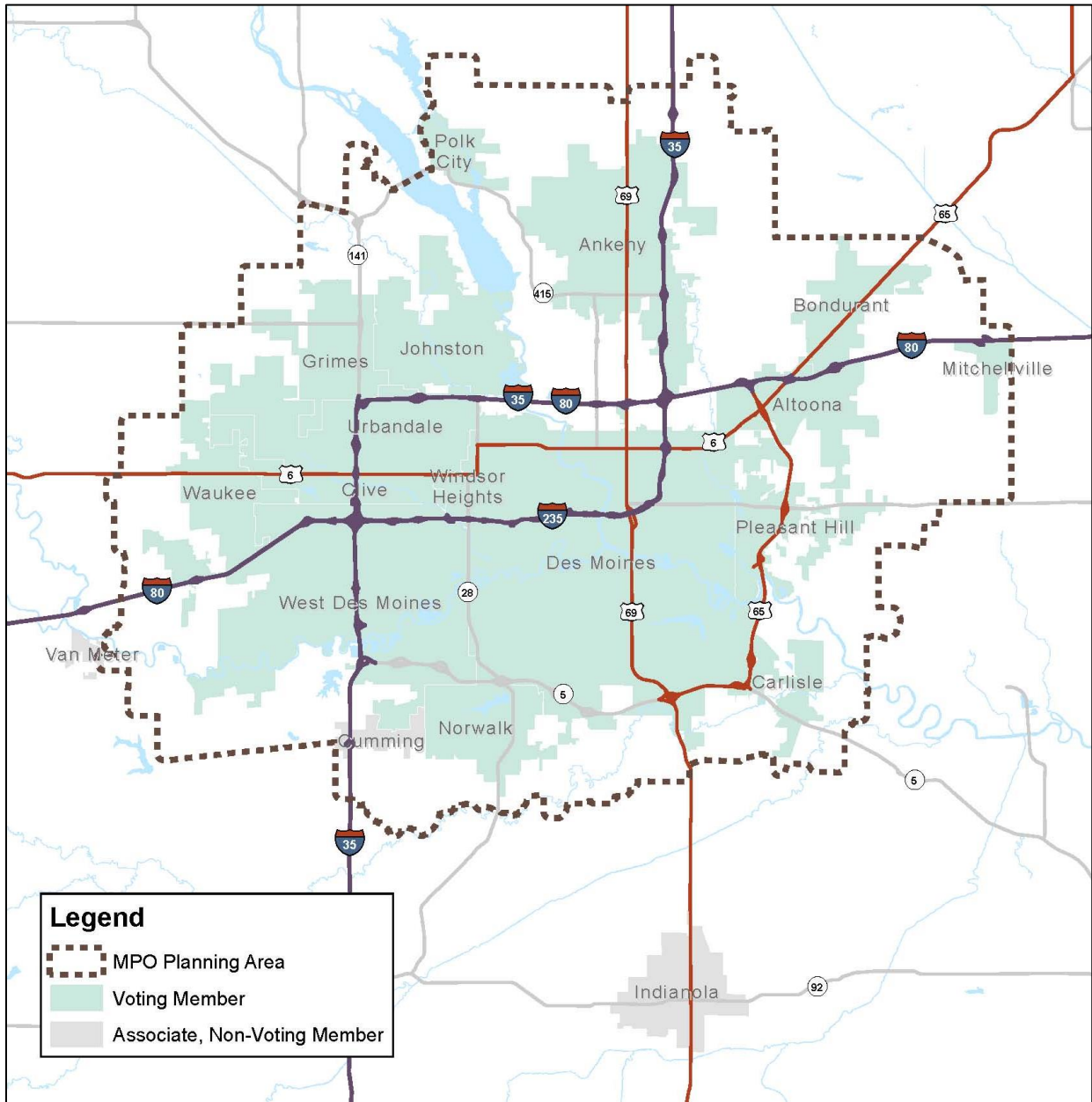
Schedule and Decision Making Process

December 1, 2023	Applications posted to the MPO website.
<u>January 5, 2024</u>	Applications due by 4:30.
February 2024	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 2024	MPO Funding Subcommittee hears short project presentations given by sponsor communities.
March 2024	MPO Funding Subcommittee holds a public meeting to finalize the STBG funding recommendations before the February Executive and MPO meetings.
April 2024	STBG Recommendations to MPO TTC and MPO Policy for discussion.
May 2024	STBG Recommendations to MPO TTC and MPO Policy for action.
May 2024	Draft <i>Federal Fiscal Years 2025-2028 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 2024	Draft FFY 2025-2028 TIP to MPO TTC and MPO Policy for action.
June 2024	Draft FFY 2025-2028 TIP transmitted to Iowa DOT and Federal Highway Administration.
July 2024	Draft FFY 2025-2028 TIP to MPO TTC and MPO Executive for action.
July 2024	Final FFY 2025-2028 TIP transmitted to Iowa DOT.

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



Map of MPO Member Communities



Grant Information and Guidelines

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 or a non-profit organization.
- Projects must be consistent with the goals of the MPO's *Mobilizing Tomorrow* plan.
- STBG Set-Aside may be used to fund new construction or maintenance of on and off-road bike facilities, pedestrian facilities, streetscapes, environmental mitigation/restoration relating to roadway impacts, historic preservation of transportation facilities, transit accommodations that improve pedestrian access and safe routes to school (non-infrastructure SRTS projects are eligible). For detailed eligibility requirements visit FHWA's FAST Act guidance page linked [here](#).

Mobilizing Tomorrow: Preparing the Grant Application

Applicants are expected to refer to the MPO's adopted 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.

- [Mobilizing Tomorrow Chapter 2: Goals, Measures, & Targets](#)
- [Chapter 4: Policies and Best Practices](#)
- [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](#) (Select correct map layer to view trail related data)
- [Proven Safety Countermeasures by FHWA](#)
- FHWA's Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System (PEDSAFE) - Countermeasures can be selected through [interactive selection matrices](#) (crash type or performance objective) or the [selection tool](#)
- Federal Highway Administration "[Guidebook on Identification of High Pedestrian Crash Locations](#)"
- Federal Highway Administration's [PedBikeInfo Safety Tools and Analysis](#)
- Iowa DOT's Iowa [Crash Analysis Tool \(ICAT\)](#)
- MPO [Environmental Justice Report](#)
- [Maps](#)
- [Iowa's Transportation Alternatives Program](#)
- [Iowa's Safe Routes to School Application](#)
- [USDOT Safe Routes to School Program](#)
- [Safe Routes Partnership](#)
- [Iowa Safe Routes to School](#)

Grant Application

- The application must be submitted on-line. The link to STBG Set Aside 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 B.
- 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 5, 2024.
- For STBG Set Aside applications: Questions, scanned letters and maps should be sent to: Carl Saxon, csaxon@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.

- 80% general multimodal projects
- 20% safe routes to school projects
- 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.

Safe Routes to School Program

The STBG guidelines set aside a minimum of 20 percent of STBG Set Aside funds to address the safety of kids walking or biking to schools. Projects eligible for Safe Routes to School funding must be located within 2 miles of an elementary or middle school. Projects selected for funding will apply for State Safe Routes to School Funding during the fiscal year of their programmed project to request 30 percent of the project cost. State SRTS applications are due on October 1 annually and is available [here](#). A detailed illustration of the SRTS process and schedule is included in [Appendix C](#).

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 2017 in the FFY 2017-2020 TIP) and another project in FFY 2019 has \$1.5 million in federal aid and they requested to move the FFY 2019 project up to FFY 2017, then the requesting jurisdiction would either have to move their currently programmed project backwards and another project with at least \$500,000 in federal aid move backwards to FFY 2018 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

In the event that STBG or Set-Aside funds become available which were previously awarded to transportation projects, become available through the reduction of the reserve amount, or become available by an increase in a particular fiscal year's obligation limit, the following steps will be followed, in order, until the situation is sufficiently resolved. All project information will be updated and considered based on the scores but no re-scoring of projects will take place. Projects currently in implementation will not be considered. Projects will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and funded based upon need or by a proportion of the funds available.

- 1) Additional funds will be offered to projects which were awarded funds yet were not fully funded.
- 2) Additional funds Award funds offered to projects which applied for funds but were not awarded funding.
- 3) Projects which have already been awarded funds, and which are programmed after the current program year in the TIP, will be considered for funding in the current program year if, upon review, the projects are ready to proceed with implementation.

Termination of Funding: Considerations

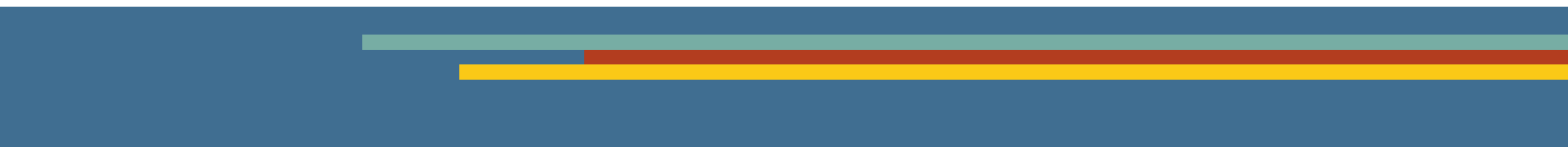
If a jurisdiction/agency's STBG funded project does not make satisfactory progress, does not follow the original scope of the project, or does not obligate the STBG funds provided within the year those funds were authorized by the MPO and noted for that project as previously documented, then the MPO 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.

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: STBG Set-Aside Scoring Matrix

L RTP Goal	Objectives	Scoring Criteria
Enhance Multimodal Transportation Options		
	Increase bike/ped and transit modeshare, Offer choices that increase opportunities to walk, bike or use transit for transportation, Reduce SOV trips, Improve air quality, Incentivize the use of non motorized modes for transportation	<p>Active Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - Project does not improve active transportation choices 1 - Project improves walking options 1 - Project improves biking options 1 - Project improves access to transit or shared micromobility <p>Multipurpose Aspects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - Project does not have a direct impact on facilitating non motorized transportation modes 1 - Project generates additional pedestrian-and/ or transit trips 1 - Project generates additional bike trips <p>Total Possible Points - 5</p>
System Connectivity		
	Close gaps in the regional trail network, Help build a continuous non motorized system, Improve connectivity from residential to commercial/ employment areas and schools, Enhance connectivity within and between modes, Improve walking and biking around schools through safer connections from neighborhoods	<p>Connectivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - Project does not provide system connectivity or fill a system gap 1 - Project connects residential areas to employment, schools, or commercial areas 1 - Project connects residential areas to parks and open spaces 1 - Project fills a regional trail gap <p>Safe Routes to School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - Project is beyond 2 miles from a school 1 - Project is located within 1/4 - 2 mile of school 2 - Project is within 1/4 mile of school <p>Total Possible Points - 5</p>
Health and Environmental Sustainability		
	Invest in transportation options that remove barriers and improves equity for all, Offer travel choices that provide safe, affordable and healthy alternatives to driving, Reduce environmental impacts through green design features, Coordinate between transportation design and storm water runoff	<p>Environmental Justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - Project is not within or does not benefit an EJ area 1 - Project benefits an EJ area 2 - Project is within an EJ area <p>Stormwater and Green Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - Project contains no green design or stormwater element 1 - Project contains 1 or more green design and/or stormwater element <p>Total Possible Points - 4</p>
Safety		
	Reduce the number and severity of non motorized crashes, Incorporate systemic safety improvements into project design, Prioritize investments in high crash locations involving bicyclists and pedestrians, Incorporate protected bike lanes for on street projects to improve safety for bicyclists	<p>Systemic Safety Features and High Crash Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 - Project does not include systemic safety features/ located in a high crash area/ protected or designated facilities 1 - Project includes systemic safety improvements/ countermeasures 2 - Project is located in a high crash area involving bike/peds <p>Project incorporates one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 - Protected Bike Lanes, Multiuse Trails 2 - Buffered Bike Lanes, Side Paths 1 - Conventional Bike Lanes, Bicycle Boulevards <p>Total Possible Points - 6</p>
Total Points		20

Appendix B: Example Formal Resolution

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE **[MEMBER GOVERNMENT]** TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING FROM THE FEDERAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT SET-ASIDE PROGRAM 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 Block Grant Set-Aside Program funding.

The **[Governing Body]** hereby commits to the **[Member Government]** matching monies as required by the Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant Set-Aside 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

