



**Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
Carbon Reduction Program
2023 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, transit capital projects, or Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

The Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) is a new federal-aid transportation program established in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act providing funding for projects designed to reduce transportation emissions, defined as carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from on-road highway sources. Eligible projects include replacement of street lighting and traffic control devices with energy-efficient alternatives; a transportation alternatives project such as bicycle/pedestrian improvements; a public transportation project under 23 USC 142; or acquisition, installation, or operation of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure.¹

The last, regular STBGP call for projects occurred in 2022 and resulted in four (4) awards being made to local agencies. This call for projects is intended to establish two ranked project lists, one for STBGP and one for CRP. The intent is to select projects for FFYs 2026 and 2027 for STBGP and FFYs 2022-2027 for CRP.

Funding Levels

A formula is used to apportion STBGP and CRP 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 and CRP funds to the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG), relative to census data, to advance local priorities within Cowlitz County. Through a call for projects, CWCOG distributes funds to priority projects in the county based on criteria derived from the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan (M/RTP) goals and policies.

STBG

The 2022 and 2023 allocations were \$1,694,591 and \$1,384,604, respectively. Fifty-nine percent (59%) is available to be spent in the Longview Urban Area (population over 50,000), 5% percent in the Woodland Urban Area (population 5,000 to 50,000), 18% percent in rural areas (population less than 5,000), and 17% anywhere in the county. The estimate of STBGP funds available to be programmed through this regular call for projects is **\$3,389,182** (see table on the next page).

¹ For complete list of CRP eligible projects refer to https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/crp_fact_sheet.cfm.

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP)					
	Urban Areas > 50,000	Urban Areas > 5,000 < 50,000	Rural Areas < 5,000	Any Area	Total
FFY 2026	\$1,003,038	\$91,937	\$311,699	\$287,917	\$1,694,591
FFY 2027	\$1,003,038	\$91,937	\$311,699	\$287,917	\$1,694,591
Total Estimated STBGP Funds Available	\$2,006,076	\$183,874	\$623,398	\$575,834	\$3,389,182

CRP

The 2022 and 2023 allocations were \$246,412 and \$214,174, respectively. Forty-six percent (46%) is available to be spent in the Longview Urban Area (population over 50,000), 11% percent in the Woodland Urban Area (population 5,000 to 50,000), and 44% percent in rural areas (population less than 5,000). The estimate of CRP funds available to be programmed through this regular call for projects is **\$1,460,807** (see table below).

Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)				
	Urban Areas > 50,000	Urban Areas > 5,000 < 50,000	Rural Areas < 5,000	Total
FFY 2022	\$112,795	\$26,422	\$107,195	\$246,412
FFY 2023	\$98,038	\$22,965	\$93,171	\$214,174
FFY 2024	\$112,795	\$26,422	\$107,195	\$246,412
FFY 2025	\$112,795	\$26,422	\$107,195	\$246,412
FFY 2026	\$112,795	\$26,422	\$107,195	\$246,412
FFY 2027	\$112,795	\$26,422	\$107,195	\$246,412
Other (FFY 2022-2024 Transfer from ODOT)	\$14,573			
Total Estimated CRP Funds Available	\$676,586	\$155,075	\$629,146	\$1,460,807

Note: FFY 2024-2027 allocations are based on FFY 2022. FFY 2023 was a one-time reduction due to USDOT providing states' a much lower obligation authority amount due to a large amount of unobligated funds in 2022 in several programs (such as INFRA). Allocations are anticipated to return to FFY 2022 levels or similar.

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

Screening Criteria

To be eligible for STBGP and/or CRP funding, a project must meet the **screening criteria** outlined in this section. The criteria below follow federal and state funding requirements. Projects not meeting these criteria will not be considered for funding.

- Submission must include a completed CWCOG application form and vicinity map. Other documents such as a detailed cost estimate, photos, maps, and/or conceptual designs are recommended, but not required. An application must be submitted online using the form available at this link (<https://wkf.ms/479BXEM>). The online form will allow required, and recommended, documents to be uploaded as attachments.
- Project must be consistent with the goals and policies of the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Plan. Please visit the CWCOG website (www.cwco.org) for a copy of the current plan.
- CRP projects must be consistent with the 2023 Washington Statewide Carbon Reduction Strategy (scheduled to be completed November 2023).
- STBGP projects must be located on a road functionally classified as equal to 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, 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 and CRP funding. The local government entity is also expected to make annual reports to CWCOG when requested.
- Applicant must be an eligible agency. All projects must be administered by a certification acceptance (CA) agency. Non-CA agencies can apply for 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 unless requesting use of toll credits in lieu of the non-federal share. Should toll credits no longer be available after a project is selected, a 13.5 percent match will be required. Agencies that receive funding are responsible for providing matching funds.

Project Review, Prioritization, and Award Process

CWCOG has the responsibility to administer STBGP and CRP 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 first by CWCOG staff using the screening criteria. All projects meeting the screening criteria will be forwarded to the Cowlitz Area Technical Advisory Committee (CATAC) for the second level of evaluation. CATAC members will review, and rank, projects based on the applicable evaluation criteria in this guidance document (see pages 5 and 6). Applicants will indicate on the application form whether the project is requesting funding under STBGP, CRP, or both. CRP projects where more than one set of evaluation criteria could apply must specify a preference for the criteria used to rank the project.

Please note CATAAC members will not be able to evaluate their own projects. The evaluation criteria for both programs are based on the RTP's goals, policies, and strategies as well as project readiness. The weights used for each criterion were determined based on CATAAC discussion about current project priorities. Weighting is different for the rural and urban STBGP evaluation criteria.

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

Award. Staff and CATAAC members will make funding recommendations based upon the estimated amount of available STBGP (\$3,389,182) and CRP (\$1,460,807) funds, the project's rank/prioritization, the funding requested by each project, and whether a project requests funding under one or either program. All ranked/prioritized projects will be forwarded to the CWCOG Board of Directors for consideration. The CWCOG Board of Directors has the sole authority to make project selections. Final project selections will specify the amount awarded under STBGP, CRP, or a mix of both.

Recipients of STBGP and CRP funds will receive written notification of funding approval within 5 to 6 days of the CWCOG Board of Directors decision. All projects funded with STBGP and/or CRP funds must be included or amended into the Metropolitan and Regional Transportation Improvement Program (M/RTIP) and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) showing full phase/project funding prior to being able to receive authorization for the federal funding. It is the responsibility of the applicant to coordinate with CWCOG to request an M/RTIP amendment. Selected projects will also need to enter into a Local Agency Agreement (LAA) with WSDOT's Local Programs office to authorize the federal funding.

Project Scope Changes

Any project scope changes will need to be approved by CWCOG staff or the CWCOG Board of Directors. The applicant is responsible to notify CWCOG staff of any scope changes. Minor scope changes will be reviewed by CWCOG staff. A major scope change will need to be reviewed by the CWCOG Board of Directors. The difference between a minor or major scope change is explained below.

- A minor scope change is when there is no change to the project limits and no request for additional STBGP and/or CRP funds.
- A major scope change is when there is a change to the project limits and/or a request for additional STBGP and/or CRP funds.

Contingency List

A list of contingency projects may be developed in addition to the selected project list. A project from the contingency list may be chosen to move forward if an existing project fails to obligate, an existing project returns the funds, or a new project is needed quickly to fill a regional obligation target shortfall. CWCOG is not required to provide funding for any project listed on the contingency list. The CWCOG Board of Directors may consider projects for funding through a new call for projects or by selecting contingency list projects. Any contingency list is only in place until the next regular call for projects.

Project Programming and Obligation

Programming. Projects awarded STBGP funding through this regular call for projects will primarily be programmed in 2026 or 2027. However, to be able to exceed regional obligation targets in future years one or more project phases may be programmed in 2025. Project readiness will be considered in the award process. The award letter will specify the year(s) that a projects' phases are programmed and the amount of STBGP and/or CRP funds. It is important to note the year(s) STBGP and CRP funds will be

programmed in the RTIP and STIP is for fiscal constraint purposes. Projects may obligate early and are strongly encouraged to do so.

Obligation. The timely obligation of awarded funds is critical for the CWCOG to meet the regional obligation authority delivery target set by WSDOT. To ensure delivery targets are met, the award letter will list the year obligation is planned. CWCOG wants local agencies to work towards having final authorization packets submitted to WSDOT Local Programs by June 30th of the year obligation is planned. Submittal to Local Programs by June 30th allows for potential delays in processing by WSDOT/FHWA. In no case shall an obligation occur later than September 15th of the year programmed. Failure to obligate funds by September 15th of the year programmed may result in the unobligated portion of an STBGP and/or CRP award being lost.

Timeline

Date(s)	Description
October 26, 2023	CWCOG Board of Directors Consideration of 2023 STBGP/CRP Regular Call for Projects Guidance
October 31, 2023	Call for Projects Opens
November 30, 2023	Call for Projects Closes
December 1 - 15, 2023	CWCOG Staff Completes Initial Review
December 28, 2023	CWCOG Staff Forwards Applications to the CATAAC
January 4, 2024	CATAAC Reviews, Ranks, & Prioritizes Applications During Regular Meeting (Note: Meeting start time will be earlier at 2:00 or 2:30 pm depending on applications submitted and any other CATAAC business.)
January 25, 2024	CWCOG Board of Directors Reviews CATAAC Recommendations / Makes Project Selections
By January 31, 2024	Award Letters Mailed
By February 16, 2024	Signed Award Letters Returned to CWCOG
January 2025 & Annually Thereafter Until Project Closed by WSDOT	CWCOG Annual Report to be Completed and Submitted

STBGP - Rural Evaluation Criteria	Weight	Score ²	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. Eliminate or minimize other safety hazards within the system	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 has a high likelihood of being able to remain on the proposed schedule.	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Maximum Points			100

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

STBGP - Urban Evaluation Criteria	Weight	Score ³	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. Eliminate or minimize other safety hazards within the system	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

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

Projects eligible for, and willing to accept, CRP funds will be ranked under one of the following three sets of evaluation criteria depending on type of project (bicycle/pedestrian, EV charging, or replacement of street lighting with energy-efficient alternatives).

CRP - Evaluation Criteria (Bicycle/Pedestrian Option)	Weight	Score	Weighted Score
Safety (Maximum Points – 40)			
A. Project addresses an existing safety concern. At least one of the following safety concerns must be identified as being addressed by the project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities for user groups ▪ Lack of safe bicycle and/or pedestrian crossing ▪ High volumes/speeds on (or near) transportation corridor ▪ Other identified safety concern(s) clearly identified and explained in application 	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
B. Project includes improvements to separate bicycles and pedestrians from vehicular traffic. (Note: Separation between bicycles/pedestrians and vehicles could include, but not be limited to, shared-use path, buffered bike lane, flexible delineator, or a wide shoulder.)	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
Connectivity (Maximum Points – 30)			
A. Project improves active transportation connections to park and ride lots, local bus routes, or traffic generators (retail, services, schools, parks, or recreational centers).	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
B. Project connects gaps between existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
Carbon Reduction (Maximum Points – 20)			
A. Project will reduce transportation emissions, defined as Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions.	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
Schedule (Maximum Points – 10)			
A. Project has a high likelihood of being able to remain on the proposed schedule.	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Total Points			100

CRP - Evaluation Criteria (EV Charging Option)	Weight	Score	Weighted Score
Economic Vitality (Maximum Points – 40)			
A. Project is located within easy walking distance of retail businesses, visitor services, or other amenities such as parks.	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
B. Project provides access to new economic opportunities.	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
Connectivity and Choice (Maximum Points – 30)			
A. Project addresses gaps in the existing, publicly accessible EV charging network.	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
B. Project provides multiple charging plugs, and a combination of Level 2 and DC Fast Charging.	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
Carbon Reduction (Maximum Points – 20)			
A. Project will reduce transportation emissions, defined as Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions.	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
Schedule (Maximum Points – 10)			
A. Project has a high likelihood of being able to remain on the proposed schedule.	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Total Points			100

CRP - Evaluation Criteria (Energy Efficient Street Lighting Option)	Weight	Score	Weighted Score
Safety (Maximum Points – 30)			
A. Project addresses an existing, identified safety concern.	6	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	30 Points Max.
System Preservation and Maintenance (Maximum Points – 40)			
A. Project preserves/rehabilitates existing facilities.	1	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	5 Points Max.
B. Project improves/rebuilds existing facilities.	3	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	15 Points Max.
C. Project will provide cost savings and operational efficiencies.	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
Carbon Reduction (Maximum Points – 20)			
A. Project will reduce transportation emissions, defined as Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions.	4	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	20 Points Max.
Schedule (Maximum Points – 10)			
B. Project has a high likelihood of being able to remain on the proposed schedule.	2	Significantly = 5 Moderately = 3 Slightly = 1 Not at All = 0	10 Points Max.
Total Points			100