

Preparation for the 2027 Project Selection Process

Transportation Policy Board
October 8, 2026



Puget Sound Regional Council

Today's Briefing



Continued discussion of PSRC's project selection process

- Key process details
- Highlights from prior processes
- Refinements for 2027 process
- Schedule



Project Selection Process

PSRC has project selection authority over several federal fund sources with specific eligibilities from:

- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
 - Competitive distributions – regional and countywide
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
 - Formula distributions based on regional policies and criteria



Policy Framework

- Policy direction from Board adopted in the *Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds*
- Based on VISION 2050 policies and consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan
 - Adopted policy focus = *support for centers and the corridors that serve them*
- Projects must be consistent with local comprehensive plans
- Process conducted every two-three years



Policy Framework



Project Selection Process

Prioritized investments based on VISION 2050 direction, consistency with Regional Transportation Plan and Regional Economic Strategy



Key Process Details – FTA Funding

- Funds split between an **Earned Share** distribution and a **Regional** distribution
 - “Unpacking” of federal formula
 - Earned Share based on transit agency operations
 - Regional funds based on regional attributes, distributed via key policy parameters
- Future funding estimates
- Project tracking policies



2024 FTA Awards – Project Outcomes



35 projects awarded FTA funds, including:

- High-Capacity Transit expansion
- Vehicle purchases
- Passenger access improvements and amenities
- Fast Ferry docking facility
- Transit infrastructure (e.g., trolley poles/switches)
- Vehicle and transit facility maintenance



Key Process Details – FHWA Funding

- Funds split between a **Regional** competition and **Countywide** competitions
- Set-Asides:
 - Preservation
 - Bicycle / Pedestrian
 - Kitsap County adjustment
 - Rural Town Centers & Corridors Program
- Future funding estimates
- Project tracking policies
- Caps on number of applications / funding requests



FHWA Project Evaluation Criteria Categories

- Based on VISION 2050 policies, board priorities
- Point values vary depending on funding source, competition

Criteria	Regional Competition Point Values	
	STBG	CMAQ
Development of Centers	28	13
Mobility & Accessibility	24	12
Outreach & Displacement	12	10
Safety & Security	16	15
Air Quality/ Climate Change	20	50
TOTAL	100	100

In 2024, enhanced criteria and increased point values for safety, supporting underserved communities



Criteria Details – Summary

Development of Centers

- Evaluates how projects support –
 - Housing and employment densities
 - Center plans
 - Jobs and businesses
 - Access to high & living wage jobs for underserved communities

Mobility and Accessibility

- Evaluates how projects –
 - Address gaps, barriers in the system
 - Provide travel options, including active transportation
 - Improve access
 - Address disparities / gaps for underserved communities



Criteria Details – Summary

Outreach and Displacement

- Evaluates the public outreach process leading to development of the project –
 - Including with underserved communities in the project area
- Identification of displacement mitigation policies for the jurisdiction in which the project is located

Safety and Security

- Evaluates how projects –
 - Improve safety conditions, address specific safety issues
 - Incorporate proven safety countermeasures
 - Reduce reliance on enforcement and/or design for decreased speeds
 - Address safety issues in underserved communities



Criteria Details – Summary

Air Quality / Climate

Evaluates the project's potential to reduce emissions, from –

- Eliminating vehicle trips
- Reducing vehicle miles traveled
- Shifting modes away from single occupant vehicles
- Improving traffic flow, particularly for freight vehicles
- Converting to cleaner vehicles
- Cost effectiveness included per federal requirements



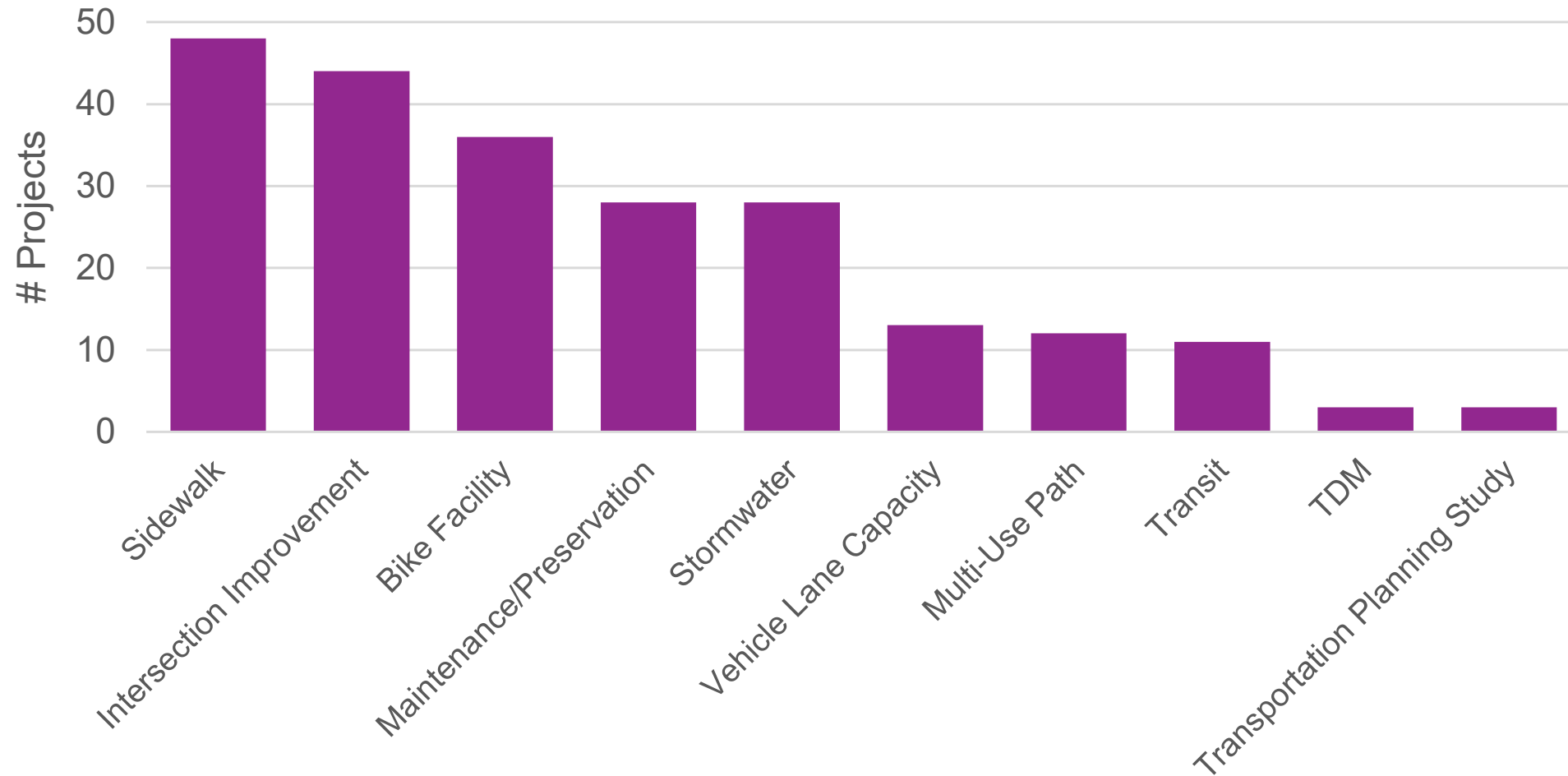
Criteria Details – Summary

Air Quality / Climate scoring process

- Technical project-level tool used by PSRC
 - Developed by ICF International
 - Every project evaluated for potential emission reductions, based on specific parameters of each project – scope, scale, timing
 - All pollutants analyzed – greenhouse gases and fine particulates prioritized in scoring
 - *Projects that increase emissions, or do not result in any emission reductions, do not receive any points*



2024 FHWA Awards – Multiple Project Outcomes



- 18 projects awarded in regional competition
- 83 projects awarded in four countywide competitions



2024 Highlights – Many Modes Supported



Transit

- Expand high-capacity transit
- Transit access improvements
- Zero-emission vehicle purchases
- Security upgrades



Freight Route Improvements

- Maintenance / preservation
- Improve flow / reduce conflicts
- Connect to MICs / port facilities



Pedestrian & Bicycle

- New walkways
- Buffered bicycle lanes
- Crossing improvements



2024 Analysis of GP Lane Capacity Projects

Detailed analysis of past few FHWA funding cycles found

- <15% of funding requests and subsequent awarded projects included general purpose lane capacity, majority on principal arterials
- Funded projects also included a variety of other elements
 - Sidewalks, bike lanes, lighting, stormwater, intersection improvements
 - Improved transit and freight routes
- Needs addressed → complete network gap, improve congestion bottleneck, break up superblock



Refinements for 2027

Board directed updates to inform project selection --

- *Prioritize regional and local high injury networks from the **Regional Safety Action Plan***
- *Incorporate facility typologies and level of traffic stress from the **Active Transportation Plan***
- *Align with current state and **federal requirements** and apply the **Opportunity Index** to address the needs of underserved communities*



Refinements for 2027

Safety

- Refinements to existing criteria =
 - *Addressing locations on the regional, state or a local High Injury Network*
 - *Addressing locations on the regional, state or a local Pedestrian / Bicycle High Injury Network*



Refinements for 2027

Active Transportation

- The *Mobility and Accessibility* criterion addresses “enhancing opportunities” for active transportation
- Refinements include:
 - Addressing PSRC’s **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Typology** and improvements appropriate to the speed and volume of adjacent roadway facilities
 - Addressing **Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress** and comfort of facilities for all users



Refinements for 2027

Opportunity Index

- Updated tool built in collaboration with the Equity Advisory Committee
- Supporting underserved communities, in alignment with current federal requirements
 - *Focused on outcomes / needs rather than individual / demographic characteristics -- areas of Low Opportunity*
 - *Combined Index built from four Index Categories – Transportation, Amenities, Housing, Economy*



Refinements for 2027

Opportunity Index

- Same criteria, updated tool
- For example:
 - *w/in Mobility and Accessibility*: How does the project address disparities or gaps in the transportation system for residents living in areas of Low / Lowest Opportunity from the Combined Index or one of the four Index Categories.

Support for centers is still the overarching policy foundation



Resyncing Future Cycles

- Normally a 2-year project selection cycle for 2 years of federal funding
 - *E.g., 2024 process distributed FFY 2027-2028 funds*
- Process postponed one year – now conducted in 2027
- State and federal requirement for a fully programmed 4-year TIP
- *2027 process will award three years of funding, 2029-2031*



Schedule and Next Steps

- Staff finalizing updates to criteria and guidance resources
- Continued briefings with PSRC Advisory Committees and countywide forums through Fall 2026
- *Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds:*
 - Summary and board discussion December 2026
 - Board adoption in January 2027
 - Call for Projects February 2027



An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely Seattle, showing a large shipyard with several large ships and cranes. The city is built on a hillside, and the background features a range of snow-capped mountains under a clear blue sky. The text "Questions and Feedback?" is overlaid in the center.

Questions and Feedback?

