

2024 Regional Project Evaluation Criteria For PSRC's FHWA Funds

PROJECTS IN REGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS

Introduction

As described in the adopted *2024 Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds*, the policy focus for the 2024 project selection process is to support the development of centers and the transportation corridors that serve them. The intent of this policy focus is to support implementation of VISION 2050, the Regional Transportation Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy. For the regional project competition, centers are defined as regional growth centers and manufacturing / industrial centers as identified in VISION 2050 and designated by PSRC.

Project Category

Projects may be located within a regional growth center, within a manufacturing / industrial center, or along a corridor serving centers. Since these categories represent three distinct types of projects that all support existing and new development in centers, sponsors will select which category best fits their project and respond to the corresponding criteria. The highest possible total score a project can receive is 100 points, and projects from all three categories will be ranked together based upon total points received for the final recommendation process.

Evaluation Criteria

A summary of the criteria that will be used to evaluate each project within ***Regional Growth Centers*** is included in the table below and described in greater detail in this document. Each criterion contains specific bullets that are of equal value within that criterion, unless otherwise specified. The questions in the application correspond to each of these bullets. As illustrated below, point values vary depending on the funding source requested – either Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) or Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ).

After each section, links are provided to additional guidance and resources to assist sponsors in understanding how projects may score highly under that criterion.

Sponsors will also have the opportunity to provide information that is not addressed in the evaluation criteria for additional consideration in the recommendation process.

SCORING FRAMEWORK REGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS PROJECTS	Points	
	STBG	CMAQ
Section A: Identification of Equity Populations	n/a	n/a
Section B: Development of Regional Growth Centers	28	13
Section C: Mobility and Accessibility	24	12
Section D: Outreach and Displacement	12	10
Section E: Safety and Security	16	15
Section F: Air Quality/ Climate Change	20	50
TOTAL	100	100

SECTION A: IDENTIFICATION OF EQUITY POPULATIONS

Using the resources provided in the Call for Projects, sponsors are asked to identify the equity populations (i.e., Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)) to be served by the project with supportive data. PSRC's defined EFAs are: people of color, people with low incomes, older adults, youth, people with disabilities, and people with limited English proficiency (click here for more details).

Sponsors will then identify the most impacted or marginalized populations within the project area. For example, areas with a higher percentage of both people of color and people with low incomes, and/or other areas of intersectionality across equity populations such as areas with low access to opportunity, areas disproportionately impacted by pollution, etc.

Each of the criteria in the following sections will refer to these identified EFAs and ask additional specific questions.

Click here for [Guidance and Examples](#) for responding to this section.

SECTION B: DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS

28 Points STBG, 13 Points CMAQ

- Describe how the project will support the existing and planned housing/employment densities in the regional growth center.
- Describe how the project will support the development/redevelopment plans and activities of the center.
- Describe how the project will support the establishment of new jobs/businesses or the retention of existing jobs/businesses including those in the industry clusters identified in the adopted Regional Economic Strategy. In addition, describe how the project supports a diversity of business types and sizes within the community.

- Describe how the project will expand access to high, middle and/or living wage jobs for the identified EFAs.
- Describe how the project will benefit a variety of user groups, including commuters, residents, and/or commercial users and the movement of freight.

Click here for [Guidance and Examples](#) for responding to this criterion.

SECTION C: MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

24 Points STBG, 12 Points CMAQ

- Describe how the project provides access to major destinations within the center, such as completing a physical gap, providing an essential link in the transportation network for people and/or goods, or providing a range of travel modes or a missing mode.
- Describe how the project will improve mobility within the center and enhance opportunities for active transportation that can provide public health benefits. For example, through providing or improving: walkability; public transit access, speed and reliability; bicycle mobility; streetscapes; traffic calming; TDM; ITS and other efficiencies, etc.
- Describe how the project remedies a current or anticipated problem (e.g., addressing incomplete networks, inadequate transit service/facilities, modal conflicts, the preservation of essential freight movement, addressing bottlenecks, removal of barriers, addressing redundancies in the system, and/or improving individual resilience and adaptability to changes or issues with the transportation system).
- Identify the existing disparities or gaps in the transportation system or services for the Identified EFAs. Describe how the project is addressing those disparities or gaps and will provide benefits or positive impacts to these EFAs by improving their mobility.

Click here for [Guidance and Examples](#) for responding to this criterion.

SECTION D: OUTREACH AND DISPLACEMENT

12 Points STBG, 10 Points CMAQ

Part 1. Addressing outreach

Describe the public outreach process that led to the development of the project. This could be at a broader planning level (comprehensive plan, corridor plan, etc.) or for the specific project. Include specific outreach or communication with the EFAs identified in the previous section, including activities reflective of best practices from PSRC's [Equitable Engagement Guidance](#).

These include, for example:

- Compensating community members for their input
- Effectively addressing language barriers
- Partnering and co-creating with community-based organizations

Describe how this outreach influenced the development of the project, e.g., the location, scope, design, timing, etc.

Part 2. Addressing displacement

Using PSRC's [Housing Opportunities by Place \(HOP\)](#) tool, identify the typology associated with the location of the project and identify the strategies the jurisdiction uses to reduce the risk of displacement that are aligned with those listed for the typology.

Click here for [Guidance and Examples](#) for responding to this criterion.

SECTION E: SAFETY AND SECURITY

16 Points STBG, 15 Points CMAQ

- Describe how the project addresses safety and security. Identify if the project incorporates one or more of [FHWA's Proven Safety Countermeasures](#), and specifically address the following;
 - How the project helps protect vulnerable users of the transportation system, by improving pedestrian safety and addressing existing risks or conditions for pedestrian injuries and fatalities, and/or adding or improving facilities for pedestrian and bicycle safety and comfort.
 - How the project reduces reliance on enforcement and/or designs for decreased speeds.
- Specific to the Identified EFAs, describe how the project will improve safety and/or address safety issues currently being experienced by these communities.
- Does your agency have an adopted safety policy? How did these policies inform the development of the project?

(not scored) USDOT is developing a framework for assessing how projects align with the Safe System Approach, and PSRC is developing a Regional Safety Action Plan due in early 2025. Does your agency commit to adhering to the forthcoming guidance and continuing to work towards planning and implementation actions under a Safe System Approach, to reduce fatalities and serious injuries?

- Please describe in greater detail your agency's current and future plans as they relate to this commitment. This could include plans to develop your own safety plan under a Safe System Approach, for example utilizing Safe Streets and Roads For All grant funding; a commitment to utilizing and planning under PSRC's upcoming Regional Safety Action Plan; planned updates as part of your agency's upcoming comprehensive plan; or other activities.

Click here for [Guidance and Examples](#) for responding to this criterion.

SECTION F: AIR QUALITY / CLIMATE CHANGE

20 Points STBG, 50 Points CMAQ

Projects will be evaluated for their potential to reduce emissions, particularly of greenhouse gases and diesel particulates, through one or more of the following:

- Eliminating vehicle trips;
- Inducing a mode shift away from single occupant vehicles (SOVs);
- Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT);

- Improving traffic flow (e.g., through signal coordination or by removing a bottleneck);
- Converting to cleaner fuels, equipment, fuel systems and/or vehicles.

Note: the application will provide specific questions for each applicable emissions reduction opportunity identified above.

For CMAQ projects only: What is the anticipated useful life of the project?

Projects will also receive points based on their location within an area identified as a 7 or higher for diesel pollution and disproportionate impacts in the Washington Environmental Health Disparities map, for a maximum of 5 of the 20 points for STBG, and 10 of the 50 points for CMAQ.

Click here for [Guidance and Examples](#) for responding to this criterion.

Other Considerations (no points)

Project sponsors have the opportunity to describe additional aspects of the project that are not addressed in the evaluation criteria that could be relevant to the final recommendation and decision-making process.

- Describe any additional aspects of your project not requested in the evaluation criteria that could be relevant to the final project recommendation and decision-making process.
- Describe any innovative components included in your project: these could include design elements, cost saving measures, or other innovations.
- Describe the process that your agency uses to determine the benefits of projects; this could include formal cost-benefit analysis, practical design, or some other process by which the benefits of projects are determined.
- Describe the jurisdiction's Apprenticeship Utilization Program / Ordinance in place for projects over \$1 million with at least 15% Apprenticeship Utilization or programs that prioritize the use of local hire and the diversification of the workforce.

GUIDANCE SECTION A: IDENTIFICATION OF EQUITY POPULATIONS

Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) refer to areas that have concentrations of underserved communities above the regional average. Project sponsors should use PSRCs [Project Selection Resource Map](#) or [Transportation System Visualization Tool](#) to identify the Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) within their project's location. Both tools allow sponsors to zoom to the area in which their project is located and identify EFAs in the area. When applicable, sponsors are also encouraged to identify areas of intersectionality across equity populations or areas with multiple EFAs (e.g., areas with a higher percentage of both people of color and people with low incomes). Five pairs of areas of intersection between different EFAs are provided as layers in the [Project Selection Resource Map](#).

Example Response:

The proposed project area is located within a diverse community of equity focus areas (EFAs), including People of Color, People with Low Incomes, People with Disabilities, Youth, and People with Limited English Proficiency.

Below please find a summary of the key findings from the PSRC Project Selection Resource Map:

- *Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) above the regional average:*
 - *People of Color: 56% of the total population; above the regional average of 35.9%*
 - *People with Low Incomes: 33% of total population; above the regional average 20.7%*
 - *People with Disabilities: 18% of total population; above regional average of 11%*
 - *Youth: 17% of total population; above regional average of 15.4%*
 - *People with Limited English Proficiency: 24% of total population; above regional average of 8.5%*
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GUIDANCE SECTION B: DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL GROWTH CENTERS

High: A project will receive a high rating if it:

- clearly supports a significant amount of existing and/or planned population/employment activity in the center, including employment within the industry clusters identified in the adopted Regional Economic Strategy
- implements specific policies or projects identified for the center in an adopted plan
- supports a diversity of business types and sizes within the center
- expands access to high, middle and/or living wage jobs for the identified EFAs
- provides benefits to a broad variety of user groups within the center

Medium: A project will receive a medium rating if it:

- supports a moderate amount of existing and/or planned population/employment activity and users in the center, including employment within the industry clusters identified in the Regional Economic Strategy
- implements adopted general or programmatic policies for the center
- supports a limited diversity of business types and sizes within the center
- expands access to high, middle and/or living wage jobs for the identified EFAs
- provides benefits to a variety of user groups within the center

Low: A project will receive a low rating if it:

- supports a limited amount of existing and/or planned population/employment activity and users in the center
- is consistent with the development goals for the center
- does not demonstrate support for a diversity of business types and sizes within the center
- does not demonstrate expanded access to high, middle and/or living wage jobs for the identified EFAs

- provides limited benefits to different user groups within the center

Regional growth centers are areas of compact, pedestrian-oriented development with a mix of uses supporting existing and future population and employment. PSRC and local jurisdictions have prioritized these areas for housing and job growth and regional investments.

Transportation projects are a fundamental part of implementing these plans by supporting land use decisions that accommodate this growth. Applicants should look to their jurisdiction's comprehensive plan or applicable subarea plan to develop an understanding of how their jurisdiction envisions the future of the regional growth center and use this guidance to address the criteria above.

A jurisdiction may have a comprehensive plan policy that states that roadways within the regional growth center should be redeveloped into multimodal, pedestrian friendly facilities. Proposed projects that introduce or advance additional transportation modes on existing roadways, such as new or improved sidewalks, landscaping, traffic calming, pedestrian crossings, bicycle lanes, and/or bus facilities, would accomplish this objective.

Another example might be a subarea plan that calls for better circulation in the center through improved cross-street connections and reduction in length of city blocks. A project proposing to create a new cross-street with multimodal facilities for more direct access to center services, where none previously existed, may meet this goal.

The applicant should review the project area and describe the current and planned densities and activities related to housing and employment. How is the project supporting these specific areas? A project proposing increased connectivity through a new pedestrian route could provide a new customer base for businesses within a center by providing a new mode of connection. A project may expand or improve person and goods carrying capacity within the center, improving a facility providing direct connection to employment, services, recreation, etc.

A project may improve travel time for goods delivery benefiting the retention or establishment of new jobs or businesses. The neighborhood surrounding the project may offer a diverse range of businesses and job opportunities, including grocery stores, restaurants, corporate offices, government offices, etc., and the project will improve access to these locations.

A project may be improving the ability of a business to draw its workforce and customer base from an identified EFA in the project area. For example, completing a gap in the sidewalk network or improving street crossings may provide better access for people with disabilities to access higher wage jobs in the area.

GUIDANCE SECTION C: MOBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

High: A project will receive a high rating if it:

- significantly improves safe and convenient access to major destinations within the regional growth center for a variety of modes
- significantly improves mobility within the center and enhances opportunities for active transportation
- remedies a clearly demonstrated existing or anticipated problem
- clearly addresses disparities and provides benefits to identified EFAs in the project area

Medium: A project will receive a medium rating if it:

- moderately improves access to major destinations within the center
- moderately improves mobility within the center, including opportunities for active transportation
- addresses an existing or anticipated problem
- moderately addresses disparities and provides benefits to identified EFAs in the project area

Low: A project will receive a low rating if it:

- improves access to a limited degree within the center
- provides limited mobility benefits and limited opportunities for active transportation
- does not clearly demonstrate resolution of an existing or anticipated problem
- does not clearly address disparities and provide clear benefits to identified EFAs in the project area

The applicant should describe how the proposed project provides access to destinations within the center such as sports or recreation facilities, arts venues, employment concentrations, government centers, transportation hubs, freight facilities, etc. Multimodal projects that consider the needs not just of automobiles but of pedestrians, public transit, and bicycles have positive benefits for a wider variety of users than do projects focusing on a single mode. These projects also provide opportunities for active transportation that can lead to public health benefits. Transit-related improvements should address all types and durations of service not just commuter routes.

Projects may provide mobility and accessibility improvements within the center by, for example, providing a missing link or mode, transportation demand management (TDM) programs or improving travel through the use of intelligent transportation systems (ITS). For example, projects that include TDM activities designed to mitigate travel disruptions during the construction of a project and/or to encourage desired use and performance upon the project's completion may influence travel behavior and provide long-term benefits. Projects completing networks and providing critical connections that did not exist previously will tend to score higher than those that do not.

The project should clearly identify the problem being remedied, and its impact on the center and the populations being served. For example, is there a physical barrier in the network that is being eliminated? Is there a gap that limits mobility that is being filled? Are there existing conflicts between modes, or are there missing modes now being provided? Will the project provide resilience to users when other aspects of the system break down, or improve the user experience?

The project should also have the potential to improve access and mobility of the disproportionately impacted equity populations in the project area. Additional resources are provided in the Call for Projects to assist sponsors in determining the location of these equity populations within their project area. Sponsors should also clearly describe how the project reduces disparities or gaps currently experienced by the most marginalized communities, rather than simply providing data on the location of any given group. Disparities are considered imbalances in access, condition, experience, etc., while needs or gaps are considered missing links in the transportation system. Additional resources, including an [interactive web map](#) and the [Transportation System Visualization Tool](#), are also provided in the Call for Projects to

assist sponsors in determining disparities and gaps experienced by equity populations within their project area. Further, sponsors should be specific to equity population groups within the project area and the relationship to the center, rather than at the jurisdiction level. Sponsors are also encouraged to include data highlighting disparities experienced by these unique populations.

GUIDANCE SECTION D: OUTREACH AND DISPLACEMENT

Part 1. Addressing outreach

High: A project will receive a high rating if it's shaped by feedback gathered using outreach strategies included in the Equitable Engagement Guidance and clearly addresses a demonstrated problem or need specifically identified by community members from the identified EFAs, either from general or project specific outreach.

Medium: A project will receive a medium rating if it's shaped by feedback gathered using outreach strategies **NOT** included in the Equitable Engagement Guidance and addresses a demonstrated problem or need identified through feedback provided by the wider community, either from general or project specific outreach.

Low: A project will receive a low rating if there is no clear connection demonstrated between the development of the project and outreach heard from members of the community.

Sponsors should clearly describe the feedback received from members of the EFAs within the project area during the general or project specific outreach process and highlight how it influenced the project, illustrating that this is a project these population groups want in their community. Pathways for outreach are different for different projects, so whether the outreach was at the planning or project level will not influence the score. For example, a sponsor for complete streets may reference a comment from members of an EFA for a plan that may state, "Please address the different needs of people using modes including but not limited to walking, wheelchairs, running, biking, e-scooters, strollers, etc." Or the sponsor may reference a comment from members of an EFA specific to the project that may state, "Please add sidewalks and bike lanes to Dakota St. so people with different needs can get from the bus stop on 42nd St. to Gramercy Park." Responses will be scored based on how well feedback from members of relevant EFAs were taken into consideration and how well best practices from PSRCs [Equitable Engagement Guidance](#) were implemented in this outreach.

Example of a High Scoring Project:

"The outreach process included creating an ad hoc committee comprised of older adults and people with disabilities (i.e., the EFAs for this project) that met several times to identify project needs and goals, review improvement options, and select recommended improvements. The agency engaged in meaningful conversations with the committee to better understand their needs and center the project on issues they shared with staff. Committee members were compensated for their time and expertise.

Committee members were interested in street designs that would address access and safety issues for older adults and people with disabilities who currently wait for the bus along the edge of the road. More specifically, they cited a need for improved lighting, sidewalks, traffic calming, and a street design that would keep residents safe from vehicle traffic. Many of the concerns raised by the committee would be addressed by this project."

Section 2. Addressing displacement (6 points)

- Using PSRC’s [Housing Opportunities by Place \(HOP\)](#) tool, identify the typology associated with the location of the project and identify the strategies the jurisdiction uses to reduce the risk of displacement that are aligned with those listed for the typology.

High: A project will receive a high rating if the sponsor identifies the [Housing Opportunities by Place \(HOP\)](#) typology (i.e., Promote Investment & Opportunity, Improve Access & Housing Choices, Improve Access & Affordability, Increase Access to Single Family Neighborhoods, Transform & Diversify, and Strengthen Access & Affordability) associated with the location of the project and demonstrates that it is located in a jurisdiction with at least one policy within each category in the typology (Supply, Stability, and Subsidy).

Medium: A project will receive a medium rating if the sponsor fails to identify the [Housing Opportunities by Place \(HOP\)](#) typology associated with the location of the project, **OR** the policies are **NOT** aligned with their assigned typology in the Housing Opportunities by Place (HOP) tool.

Low: A project will receive a medium rating if the sponsor fails to identify the [Housing Opportunities by Place \(HOP\)](#) typology associated with the location of the project, **AND** the policies are **NOT** aligned with their assigned typology in the Housing Opportunities by Place (HOP) tool.

The focus of this criterion is to evaluate the likelihood that populations vulnerable to displacement currently living in the surrounding community will enjoy the benefits of the project in the future. PSRC’s Housing Opportunities by Place (HOP) tool provides information on locations where residents are most at risk for displacement and tailored strategies to reduce that risk. Sponsors should determine where their project is located on the HOP map and identify the typology and anti-displacement strategies associated with that location. They should then contact their Community Development or Planning Departments to learn more about their local comprehensive plans and the broader jurisdiction wide mitigation strategies that are currently in place to deter displacement that are aligned with their assigned typology within the Supply, Stability, and Subsidy categories. For example, a jurisdiction that falls under the “Strengthen Access and Affordability” typology could highlight that their comprehensive plan includes policies that eliminate unnecessary large minimum lot size requirements for development (Supply), mandate inclusionary zoning (Stability), fund affordable housing through commercial linkage fees (Subsidy), etc. Sponsors that accurately identify the HOP typology associated with their project’s location and clearly note the broader mitigation strategies in place that are aligned with this typology will score higher than those that do not.

Example of a High Scoring Project:

“The project serves areas of high displacement risk / lower opportunity, which falls under the “Improve Access and Affordability” typology. The Comprehensive Plan includes strategies that align with this typology and reflect the jurisdiction’s commitment to reduce the risk of displacement. Examples of these strategies include: no minimum parking requirements,

incentive / inclusionary zoning, and financial assistance programs. Attachment A includes language from the comprehensive plan that provides additional details on these strategies.”

GUIDANCE SECTION E: SAFETY AND SECURITY

High: A project will receive a high rating if it:

- identifies and addresses a clearly demonstrated existing or future safety or security issue
- incorporates one or more of FHWA’s proven safety countermeasures, in particular those that address vulnerable users of the system, reduce reliance on enforcement and/or design for decreased speeds
- improves safety and/or addresses a specific safety issue being experienced by the identified EFAs in the project area
- specifically implements the agency’s adopted safety policies

Medium: A project will receive a medium rating if it:

- identifies and addresses a clearly demonstrated existing or future safety or security issue
- incorporates one or more of FHWA’s proven safety countermeasures
- improves safety and/or addresses a specific safety issue being experienced by the identified EFAs in the project area
- is consistent with the agency’s adopted safety policies

Low: A project will receive a low rating if it:

- does not clearly demonstrate how it addresses an existing or potential future safety and security issue
- does not incorporate an FHWA proven safety countermeasure
- does not clearly address safety for the identified EFAs in the project area
- has no clear connection to the agency’s adopted safety policies, or policies were not identified

Applicants should clearly describe the safety or security related issue being addressed by the project, and how the project will improve safety conditions, including for the identified EFAs in the project area.

Consistent with a Safe System Approach, FHWA has identified a collection of 28 safety countermeasures that have been proven to be effective in reducing roadway fatalities and serious injuries. These measures address a variety of road users and locations and address the key focus areas of speed management, intersections, roadway departures, pedestrians / bicyclists, and cross-cutting strategies. Applicants should identify how their project utilizes one or more of these safety countermeasures. *Projects that are not roadway projects or do not fit within these categories should still clearly identify how their project is addressing and improving safety.*

Particular focus should be paid to those measures that improve conditions for the most vulnerable users of the system. For example, projects that separate modes, improve lighting and other security conditions, improve steep grade conditions, etc. may improve conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists and/or wheelchair users. Older adults face disproportionate risks while walking and rolling; high visibility crosswalks and leading pedestrian intervals (LPI) are two examples of countermeasures that reduce the likelihood and severity of collisions and may address disparities for this EFA population.

Examples of project measures that may result in decreased vehicle speeds could include decreasing the number of vehicle travel lanes and/or travel lane widths, adding a pedestrian crossing median, implementing a more restrictive intersection geometry, etc. Features that may support a reduced reliance on enforcement could include improved signage and technologies such as radar speed signs, variable message signs, red light cameras, etc.

In terms of policy, there is a spectrum of safety policies adopted by jurisdictions across the region, from broad safety-supportive statements to more precise calls for improvements in specific locations. Policies are found in a range of documents from comprehensive plans to sub-area plans to standalone safety plans. Applicants should identify what their agency's policies on safety are and discuss how the project implements or was informed by these policies. Specific factors to consider include the project location, the scope of the project and the specific safety issue being addressed.

Safety Commitment

Safety is one of the key policy focus areas of the Regional Transportation Plan, and the 2024 project selection process has further emphasized the importance of safety in the evaluation and recommendation of project funding. More information on the Safe System Approach and FHWA's Proven Safety Countermeasures may be found in the [Safety Guidance](#) contained in the Call for Projects.

The adopted *2024 Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds* further called for each sponsor in the 2024 project selection process to make a commitment to continued planning and implementation in alignment with a Safe System Approach. There is not a requirement for each agency to have developed a safety plan for the 2024 process; however, a commitment is asked to follow federal, state and regional guidance and requirements as they are developed. To support this commitment, each sponsor will be asked to provide a brief statement on their current and future plans related to safety and following the Safe System Approach. For example, some agencies have received, or are applying for, funding from the Safe Streets and Roads For All grant program to support this work. Other agencies have already developed aligned safety plans and are implementing actions consistent with FHWA's proven safety countermeasures. Still others may be in the process of updating their comprehensive plans with policies and actions that align with a Safe System Approach.

GUIDANCE SECTION F: AIR QUALITY / CLIMATE CHANGE

High: A project will rate high if it will substantially reduce fine particulates from diesel exhaust or will substantially reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants, and the air quality benefits will occur by 2035.

Medium: A project will rate medium if it will moderately reduce fine particulates from diesel exhaust or will moderately reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants (for example, a project that reduces VMT by shortening a vehicle trip but does not eliminate a vehicle trip), and the air quality benefits will occur by 2035.

Low: A project will rate low if it results in a limited amount of emission reductions, and the air quality benefits will occur after 2035.

Projects will receive additional points if they are located in an area identified in the Washington Environmental Health Disparities map as a 7 or above for diesel pollution and disproportionate impacts, as long as some estimated emission reduction is estimated to occur. Scores will be tiered based on location:

WAEHD Area	STBG Points	CMAQ Points
7	2	4
8	3	6
9	4	8
10	5	10

The objective of this criterion is to evaluate projects with the highest potential to reduce emissions of both traditional air pollutants as well as greenhouse gas emissions, with increased emphasis on the reduction of diesel particulate emissions. These pollutants pose significant health risks, such as an increase in respiratory ailments, heart disease and cancer, as well as environmental risks such as damage to agriculture and Puget Sound. The application will include specific questions relevant to different types of projects to assist with this estimation.

Projects resulting in a substantial decrease in emissions will score the highest under this criterion. High scoring projects may eliminate a substantial number of trips, reduce a significant amount of VMT or reduce fine particulates through diesel vehicle and equipment retrofits or the reduction of diesel truck idling (e.g. along a freight corridor). Converting fleets to alternative fuels may also score high under this criterion, if substantial emissions benefits will be achieved. Projects eliminating vehicle trips would generally be expected to produce greater emissions reductions than projects solely reducing VMT, but as mentioned above, the magnitude of the project and the timing of the anticipated benefits will play a role in the final score.

The [Air Quality Guidance](#) document in the Call for Projects provides additional resources regarding the estimation of emissions reductions from a variety of types and scales of transportation projects, information on the technical tool PSRC uses to estimate emissions reductions, and a link to the [Washington Environmental Health Disparities map](#).