

PSRC 2024 Project Selection Process
◆ FHWA Funding Application Resources ◆

PSRC Application Checklist and Guidance

In the Regional Funding Application, project sponsors must provide information for the following topics:

- Project Information ([jump to guidance](#))
- Contact Information ([jump to guidance](#))
- Project Description ([jump to guidance](#))
- Project Location ([jump to guidance](#))
- Local Plan Consistency ([jump to guidance](#))
- Federal Functional Classification ([jump to guidance](#))
- Support for Centers ([jump to guidance](#))
- Regional Project Evaluation Criteria ([jump to guidance](#))
- Funding Request ([jump to guidance](#))
- Project Schedule & Delivery Information ([jump to guidance](#))
- Funding Documentation ([jump to guidance](#))
- Project Readiness ([jump to guidance](#))
- Other Considerations ([jump to guidance](#))

Guidance for each of these topics is provided on the following pages. While all of this information directly applies to the Regional application, most also applies to the requirements of the countywide forums' respective applications. Applicants in the countywide competitions are strongly encouraged to utilize this guidance in addition to information provided in the county forum's Call for Projects.

NOTE: All project eligibility questions identified in PSRC review of the project's Screening Form must be fully resolved before completing the funding application.

Project Information

Project Title

Should be concise but descriptive enough that the project can be distinguished from other projects of similar type.

Regional Transportation Plan Consistency

Projects seeking PSRC funding must be in or consistent with the region's long-range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The determination depends on whether the project is a Regional Capacity Project or considered a programmatic investment in the RTP.

Regional Capacity Project

If the project meets the threshold that defines it as a regional capacity project, it must be explicitly included on the RTP's financially constrained Regional Capacity Project list. Guidance on the thresholds that define a Regional Capacity Project is provided [here](#).

The RTP Capacity Project List is provided in Appendix D of the Regional Transportation Plan, located on PSRC's website [here](#). Each listed project has a unique Project ID. Some projects may be connected to more than one RTP project; if this is the case, multiple RTP ID numbers may be provided.

The RTP also identifies the status of Regional Capacity Projects. Projects identified as "Unprogrammed" are ineligible to apply for PSRC funding because they are not included in the region's financially-constrained plan nor the regional air quality conformity analysis. Projects identified as "Candidate" may apply for PSRC funding but must attain an "Approved" status by PSRC's Executive Board prior to obligating right-of-way or construction funds.

Programmatic Transportation Investment

If a project does not meet the Regional Capacity Project threshold and is consistent with regional policies, it is considered a programmatic investment and does not need to be explicitly listed in the RTP. If the project is below the threshold that requires listing in the RTP, enter "n/a" in the Project ID field.

For assistance or questions regarding RTP project status, please contact Mitch Koch at (206) 464-7537 or mkoch@psrc.org.

Certification Acceptance

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) delegates authority to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for approving project development and construction administration. WSDOT delegates some of this authority to qualified local agencies through a Certification Acceptance (CA) program.

To be eligible to receive PSRC funds, a project sponsor must either have CA status or designate a sponsor agency that has CA status. **If your agency identifies a CA sponsor, please provide PSRC either an email or a letter from the sponsor agency confirming that they are willing and have the capacity to serve in that role.**

More information on Certification Acceptance and a listing of current CA agencies is provided [here](#).

Contact Information

Provide the name and contact information of the person who will serve as primary contact for the project application throughout the project selection process.

Project Description

Project Description

Provide a concise (300 words or fewer) but complete description of the **scope elements** included in the project. Guidance on the scope elements eligible for FHWA funds is provided [here](#).

Project Justification, Need, or Purpose

Provide a concise (300 words or fewer) explanation of the intent, need or purpose of the project.

Project Location

Be as specific as possible about the location and extents of the project. If the location is an intersection, indicate the intersecting facilities in the "Location" field and put "n/a" in the "To" and "From" fields. Inclusion of a map that shows the project location is encouraged.

Local Plan Consistency

To be eligible to receive PSRC funding, projects must be in, or consistent with, the transportation element of the appropriate city or county comprehensive plan that has been (1) updated consistent with the Washington State Growth Management Act ([RCW 36.70A.130](#)) and (2) certified, or conditionally certified, by PSRC. Applicants are asked to provide the specific citation and/or describe how the project is consistent with the policies in the local comprehensive plan. For a project on a state facility, it must also be demonstrated it is consistent with state plans, either through WSDOT review of the comprehensive plan transportation element that includes it, or consistency with a state-adopted plan.

The certification status of each jurisdiction in the central Puget Sound region can be accessed [here](#). For more information on PSRC's Plan Review program, please refer [here](#) or contact Liz Underwood-Bultmann at (206) 464-6174 or lunderwood-bultmann@psrc.org.

For transit improvement projects, consistency with a transit agency plan must be described. If the transit project would modify a street or nonmotorized facility, consistency with the certified local plan of the agency(ies) with jurisdiction over those facilities, must also be described.

State-sponsored projects must also demonstrate consistency with the certified plan of the local jurisdiction(s) in which the project is located.

Federal Functional Classification

Functional classification is the grouping of highways, roads, and streets by the character of service they provide and was developed by FHWA for transportation planning purposes. A roadway must be approved on the federally classified roadway system before projects on it may use federal transportation funds (including proposed new facilities).

The following exceptions apply:

- Any bicycle and/or pedestrian project
- Project not on a roadway
- Any transit project, including equipment purchase and park-and-ride lots

Funds may be requested for a project on a roadway that is planned to be added to the federal functionally classified network, but currently is not. In this case, if funds are awarded, the jurisdiction must complete the federal functional classification change process—with FHWA approval completed—prior to obligating the funds. Otherwise, the funds would be required to be returned.

PLEASE NOTE: Federal law requires that Highway Urban Area boundaries be reviewed and adjusted as necessary after each US decennial census. The Washington Adjusted Urban Area updates to reflect 2020 census data took place in 2023. Updates to urban area boundaries have been approved by FHWA but may not yet be reflected in WSDOT's federal functional classification map prior to PSRC's 2024 call for projects. This information does not affect a project's eligibility to request PSRC funds but does determine which projects qualify to meet PSRC's federal rural minimum requirements. The updated Urban Area boundaries are reflected in PSRC's resource map. Please refer to the [Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds](#) for more information on the minimum rural funding requirements, and the [Call for Projects](#) web page for available resource maps.

For assistance determining functional classification, please refer [here](#) or contact Gary Simonson at (206) 971-3276 or gsimonson@psrc.org.

Support for Centers

Identify the center or centers that the project will support. A project may be located within a center or along a corridor serving one or more centers. For the Regional competition, supported centers must include a designated regional growth or manufacturing/ industrial center; additional information on is provided [here](#).

For the Countywide competitions, supported centers are expanded to include those designated through countywide processes, town centers, and other locally identified centers. In addition, military facilities are included in the definition of local centers, with each countywide forum responsible for determining the definition of a military "facility" within their county.

Regional Project Evaluation Criteria

In addition to the guidance contained within the Regional Project Evaluation Criteria for each of the project categories ([Regional Growth Centers](#), [Manufacturing/Industrial Centers](#), or [Corridors Serving Centers](#)), additional resources have also been provided to assist sponsors in addressing the specific criteria related to [Equity](#) and [Safety](#). Additional guidance on the evaluation criteria for each of the countywide forum competitions is provided in each respective Call for Projects.

An interactive web-based [Project Selection Resource Map](#) has been developed to assist applicants in completing their applications and to fully address the project evaluation criteria. The map allows applicants to view the location of features such as the regionally designated centers, freight routes, and the federally designated urban and rural areas. It also provides information from the regional demographic profile as well as additional information related to the potential populations being served by various projects, including data from PSRC's Growing Transit Communities program and highly impacted communities from the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency.

PSRC has also updated the [Air Quality Guidance document](#), providing background information on the potential for various projects to reduce emissions from air pollutants. This document also provides information on the cost-effectiveness measure for evaluating projects competing for CMAQ funding.

Funding Request

Applications must provide complete information on the project's financial status by identifying the PSRC grant request, the project's total estimated cost and funding source(s) by phase. This information should match what was provided in the screening form, reflecting any updates required to address PSRC screening form review comments.

For the project phase for which PSRC funds are being requested, it must be shown that with the PSRC award, the total cost of the phase would be fully funded—with all necessary funds either secured or reasonably expected, as further described below. This is because federal legislation requires the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to be fiscally constrained by year and include a financial plan demonstrating that projects contained within have reasonable expectation of funding through to completion.

The funding request includes the following components:

Funding Source

This is the source of the funds—STBG or CMAQ—being requested. Please refer to the [FHWA eligibility requirements](#) and other resources provided in the [Call for Projects](#) to best align the requested funding source with the project scope.

Identification of Previous PSRC Funds

If an earlier phase or other related segment of the project has previously received PSRC funds, identify the TIP ID for those programmed funds. *Note, a project phase may receive only one PSRC award for the same scope.*

Phase Requested for Funding

This is the project phase—planning, preliminary engineering/design, right-of-way, construction, or other—for which funding is being requested. Given the stringent expectations for project delivery and the potential risk of losing regional funds, sponsors applying for PSRC’s FHWA funds may request funding for a single project phase. Requests for multiple phases are not allowed.

Funding Amount Requested

This is the amount of PSRC funds being requested. As noted above, the combination of the requested PSRC funds plus all other funding must be adequate to fully fund the phase. Requests that do not result in a phase being fully funded cannot be approved into the regional TIP and therefore will be considered ineligible for PSRC funding. Refer to the Financial Documentation section below for guidance on demonstrating this requirement.

1. The request must not exceed the maximum allowable amount established by the forum from which the funds are being requested. The maximum request amount for each funding source, and in some cases for different project categories, is provided in the Regional and each countywide forum’s respective *Call for Projects*.
2. The remaining funds identified to fully fund the phase—when added to the requested PSRC funding amount—must meet or exceed the **minimum local match requirement of 13.5%**.

To calculate the minimum local match requirement, multiply the total phase cost by 0.135. This is the minimum amount of revenue that must be contributed from local or other non-federal sources.

Example:

Total phase cost = \$1,000,000

Minimum local match: $\$1,000,000 \times 0.135 = \$135,000$

The local or non-federal share of funding must be least this amount.

Maximum federal share: $\$1,000,000 - \$135,000 = \$865,000$

The total PSRC funding request cannot exceed this amount.

Funding Year Requested

This is the federal fiscal year (2027 or 2028) for which the funds are being requested.

Note, some awarded funds within each forum will be available for earlier delivery in 2025 and 2026.¹ PSRC will determine this at grant award, but sponsors should provide clear and complete information in the Project Readiness sections to support the year requested. If the project would be able to accept an award for either of these earlier years, please indicate so under Question 1 of “Other Considerations”, located later in the application.

To align with annual delivery expectations, a project phase awarded PSRC’s FHWA funds has an obligation deadline of June 1 of the program year awarded. PSRC’s obligation deadline is the date by which a complete and accurate funding authorization package must be submitted to the sponsor’s WSDOT regional office (as described in chapter 21 of WSDOT’s [LAG Manual](#)). This submittal deadline has been established to ensure that WSDOT has sufficient time to review and confirm accuracy for all projects with current year delivery in time to complete obligation prior to the end of the federal fiscal year.

For a transit agency that intends to flex its FHWA award to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the sponsor must complete the process by which the state requests the transfer by PSRC’s obligation deadline.

For more information on program year and obligation requirements, see PSRC’s [project tracking policies](#).

¹ These are additional STBG and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds authorized under the federal Bilateral Infrastructure Law (BIL). Eligibility requirements for CRP are similar to those for CMAQ.

Project Schedule & Delivery Information

Applicants must provide information on the project's total estimated budget and schedule, including all phases from planning through construction, as appropriate. The estimated cost for each project phase should identify both the funding source(s) and amount(s). Information on all phases is required, not just the phase being requested for PSRC funds.

- For a phase that has already been completed, funding should be identified as secured, and the actual completion date provided.
- For any phase prior to the phase being requested that has not yet been completed, all funding sources must be secured or reasonably expected, and the expected completion date provided. Please refer to the next section for more information on these terms.
- For the phase being requested, the requested amount of PSRC funds should be listed as unsecured *and should match the amount identified on the prior PSRC Funding Request page*. All other funding sources must be secured or reasonably expected, and the expected completion date provided.
- For any future phase that follows the phase for which funding is being requested, funds may be identified as secured, reasonably expected, or unsecured, and the expected completion date should be provided.

The estimated total project cost and estimated completion date must also be provided. Even if the phase being requested is early in a project's development, the best estimate for the total project cost and schedule is required per federal legislation.

Note, if the project for which funding is being requested is a segment of a more expansive project (e.g., a larger corridor project being implemented in stages or phases), total cost and schedule information should be provided for the actual project (segment) that would be implemented with the requested funds.

Funding Documentation

Documentation is required to confirm all funds that are needed to implement the phase for which funds are being requested are identified as secured or reasonably expected. This includes funds needed for any earlier phase that is not yet completed, but must be, to implement the requested phase.

For funds to be considered **secured**, they must be identified explicitly for the project in an adopted local TIP or budget document, or grant award letter. For funds to be considered **reasonably expected**, they generally fall into the following two categories: 1) funds currently available but that require action by a responsible official or policy body to approve them for a project or program, and 2) funds not yet available but have historically been available and a commitment is in place to dedicate the funds for a project or program once they become available. *Please note, anticipated future grants from other sources that have not already been secured do not meet the requirements to be considered reasonably expected.*

For further explanation of “secured” and “reasonably expected” funding, as well an overview of the conditions that must be met and examples for each, refer to PSRC’s [financial constraint guidance](#). For questions regarding project financial information, please contact Miles Stepleton at (206) 971-3051 or mstepleton@psrc.org.

Project Readiness

In the screening form completed for the project, the applicant was required to identify the prerequisites that need to be satisfied before federal funding is typically eligible to obligate. This includes 1) understanding and identifying the obligation prerequisites and milestones that apply to the project, 2) documenting the status of each at the time of application, and 3) providing realistic completion dates for those not yet completed.

To be confirmed eligible to participate in PSRC’s FHWA project selection process, each project is required to have had project schedule milestones reviewed and approved by PSRC as part of the screening form review process. **The project schedule and milestone information provided in the full funding application must match the information that was approved by PSRC as part of the screening form review process.** For more information about PSRC’s project readiness guidelines and review process, please refer to the [Screening Form Checklist and Guidance](#).

Other Considerations

Other Considerations include topics for which additional information about the project and its benefits may be provided. While these are not scored questions, the Regional Project Evaluation Committee (RPEC) could consider this additional information when determining its award recommendations. *If the project would be able to accept an award for either 2025 or 2026, please indicate that under Question 1 in this section.*

Additional Questions?

For additional questions or general information about PSRC's 2024 Project Selection Process, please contact Doug Cox at (206) 971-3050 or dcox@psrc.org.