

PSRC's 2017 Transportation Alternatives Program DRAFT Regional Project Evaluation Criteria

The eligible Transportation Alternatives Program project types have been grouped into three categories to provide for comparison of similar projects and a rating system based on factors that are most appropriate to each category. Part 1 contains evaluation criteria that will be applied to ALL projects. Part 2 contains evaluation criteria based on the three categories - project sponsors are asked to pick the category that best fits their project.

Project scores of high, medium, and low are assigned for each criterion based on the magnitude of the impacts. Projects that most directly support each criterion will be rated "High." The highest possible total score a project can receive is 100 points.

Projects will be evaluated against the criteria based on the responses provided in the application found in the Call for Projects. After all projects have been scored by PSRC staff, the scoring committee will use the scores as a tool to help determine which projects to recommend for funding to PSRC's Boards for final approval.

Part 1: Criteria for All Projects

A. The project supports regional growth, regional manufacturing/industrial centers, and/or locally identified centers. 30 Points

Projects are rated on their ability to provide service to the greatest number of people, as expressed through their relationship to regionally designated growth and/or manufacturing/industrial centers, countywide centers designated through countywide planning policies, or local centers identified in local comprehensive plans. Examples of local centers include locations identified as a town center, downtown, mixed use or business district, or neighborhood activity center. Per the 2016 adopted Policy Framework for PSRC's Federal Funds, military facilities are included in the definition of local centers.

Guidance: The emphasis of this criterion relates to objectives established under VISION 2040, PSRC's growth management, transportation, and economic strategy. VISION 2040 calls for preserving and developing compact communities and directing employment and housing growth into centers that support walking, biking and transit use. In addition to regional growth and manufacturing/industrial centers, VISION 2040 also calls for the support of locally identified centers, including those in rural areas, as well as the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, open space and recreational opportunities, and scenic and historic areas. Preference will be given to those projects that provide clear benefit to one of these designated centers, and help to meet the development goals of the center(s). In addition, projects will be evaluated on their support of existing and/or planned population/employment activity within the center(s), demonstrating support of the identified needs within the context of each center.

Projects will be rated:

High: The project is located within a designated regional or locally identified center, or is located along a corridor connecting to one of these areas. The project helps the center develop in a manner consistent with the adopted policies and plans for the center, as identified in the comprehensive plan of the local jurisdiction. These may include land use and affordable housing, environmental, and cultural goals, context sensitive design, economic development, alternative forms of transportation, etc. The project supports a significant amount of existing and/or planned population/employment activity in the center and implements specific policies or projects identified for the center in an adopted plan.

Medium: The project is located within a designated regional or locally identified center, or is located along a corridor connecting to one of these areas. The project supports a moderate amount of existing and/or planned population/employment activity in the center and implements adopted general or programmatic policies for the center.

Low: The project is located within a designated regional or locally identified center, or is located along a corridor connecting to one of these areas. The project supports a limited amount of existing and/or planned population/employment in the center, and is consistent with the development goals of the center.

B. Project Readiness/Financial Plan. 10 Points

Projects are rated according to the extent to which they are “ready to go.” This will be determined by the status of the project’s prerequisites required to be completed prior to obligation and the ability to fully fund the phase requested. Project sponsors will be asked to supply a full financial budget and project schedule in the application. Depending on the type and scale of the project, information should be provided on the following project milestones: environmental documentation, permits, Right of Way approvals, percent design completed, contract dates, etc.

Completion of environmental documentation will require that the project address all environmental mandates (for example the National and State Environmental Policy Acts, Endangered Species Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Washington State stormwater management requirements, etc.). It is the responsibility of the sponsor to follow all state and federal requirements during project development. Projects will be evaluated based on the following:

- When will the sponsor complete all prerequisites needed to obligate the project’s requested regional funds?
- What are the amounts and sources of secured and/or reasonably expected¹ funding for the project?

Guidance: The emphasis of this category is to rate projects based upon the sponsor’s ability to obligate requested regional funds on schedule, as demonstrated by having completed all applicable prerequisites for obligation and securing all needed funding to complete the project or phase of the project. Applicants may request funding for any single project phase, but requests for multiple phases are limited to preliminary engineering plus the subsequent phase necessary. This program requires a local match of 13.5%, and funds are expected to be available in mid-February 2018. Obligation deadlines for each phase will be June 1 of the year awarded. Refer to PSRC’s Project Tracking Policies for more information (<http://www.psrc.org/funding/tracking/>).

Projects will be rated:

High:

- The applicant can demonstrate that all prerequisites for obligation have been met at the time the competition application is submitted.
- All other needed funding is fully secured at the time the competition application is submitted.
- The requested regional funding, along with other funds in the project including the required match, will be sufficient to complete the project.

Medium:

- The applicant can demonstrate that progress has been made towards completing prerequisites for obligation, and all prerequisites will be met by the estimated obligation date.
- All other needed funding will be fully secured by the estimated obligation date.
- The requested regional funding, along with other funds in the project including the required match, will be sufficient to complete a phase of the project.

Low:

- The applicant fails to demonstrate that progress towards meeting prerequisites for obligation has occurred, and it is uncertain that all prerequisites will be met by the estimated obligation date.
- There is reason to doubt that all other needed funding will be fully secured by the estimated obligation date.

¹ Refer to PSRC’s website for more information on the definition of secured, reasonably expected to be secured, and unsecured funds: http://www.psrc.org/assets/13379/18_Financial_Constraint_Guidance.pdf

Part 2: Category Specific Criteria

C. The project significantly enhances the transportation experience for a variety and multitude of users. 60 points

Projects will be rated according to their relationship to the transportation system, their benefit to the community, and how well they meet certain elements particular to each of the following three project categories. These three categories will provide for comparison of similar projects and a rating system based on factors that are most appropriate to each category.

Project sponsors will select the category most appropriate for their project, and projects will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria specific to that category. All categories are of equal weight, and each project will receive up to 60 points from this section.

The eligible Transportation Alternatives Program project types have been grouped into the three categories shown below. All projects must meet the appropriate Transportation Alternatives Program eligibility requirements (refer to the Summary of Eligibility information in the Call for Projects) and follow federal design and other professional standards.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects*	Historic Resources Projects	Environmental Projects
Facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists and other nonmotorized forms of transportation	Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities	Construction of turnouts, overlooks and viewing areas
Infrastructure-related projects providing safe routes for non-drivers	Archaeological activities relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project (mitigation)	Inventory, control or removal of outdoor advertising
Conversion and use of abandoned railway corridors for trails		Vegetation management practices in transportation right of way
Safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists, only under the Safe Routes to Schools program for Kindergarten through 8 th grade		Mitigation to address storm water management, control and water pollution prevention related to highway construction or highway runoff
		Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats

*Note: Recreational trails are eligible under the set-aside for the State’s Recreational Trails Program

C1. Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects. 60 Points

All projects must meet the appropriate Transportation Alternatives Program eligibility requirements and follow federal design and other professional standards. Projects will be evaluated based on the following elements:

- The project extends or completes a regional or local bicycle and pedestrian system, and/or adds facilities to an existing bicycle and pedestrian system or network.
- The project addresses a need in the community and reduces key barriers to use and functionality – i.e., safety and comfort,² distance, slope, gaps, etc.
- The facility connects to other multimodal facilities (for example, high capacity or other transit stations, ferry terminals, etc.).

² Refer to the National Association of City Transportation Officials [Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#) and/or the Federal Highway Administration’s [Small Towns and Rural Multimodal Networks guidebook](#).

- The level of public access to the project (for example, current and future land use in the vicinity of the facility such as schools, residences, commercial, retail, tourist areas, etc. that would be expected to provide utilization of the facility).
- The user groups that will benefit from the project, including commuters, residents, commercial users, those groups identified in the President's Order for Environmental Justice³, seniors, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.
- The resource is threatened; there will be a loss of opportunity if this project is not funded.

Bicycle and Pedestrian projects will be rated:

High:

- The project extends, completes or otherwise adds to an existing bicycle and pedestrian system.
- The project addresses an identified need in the community and reduces a barrier to use and functionality, such as travel distance, a steep slope, a safety or comfort issue or other identified barrier.
- The project supports a facility connecting to other multimodal facilities (for example, high capacity or other transit stations, ferry terminals, etc.).
- The project has or will have a high level of usage in the community (for example, is easily accessible to a high density area or to a large proportion of the local community).
- The project serves multiple user groups including commuters, residents, commercial users, those groups identified in the President's Order for Environmental Justice, seniors, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.
- There will be a loss of opportunity if this project is not funded, e.g., development or other economic pressure.

Medium:

- The project adds to an existing bicycle and pedestrian system.
- The project addresses an identified need in the community and reduces a barrier to use and functionality, such as travel distance, a steep slope, a safety or comfort issue or other identified barrier.
- The project has or will have a moderate level of usage in the community (for example, is accessible to a fair-sized portion of the local community, but not the most densely populated area), and serves a moderate variety of users.

Low:

- The project does not link to an existing bicycle and pedestrian system.
- The project has or will have a low level of usage in the community (for example, is easily accessible to only a small portion of the local community).

C2. Historic Resources Projects. 60 Points

All projects must meet the appropriate Transportation Alternatives Program eligibility requirements and follow professional standards, including "The Secretary of The Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties."⁴ Projects will be evaluated based on the following elements:

- The current or former transportation use of the facility⁵.
- The historic significance of the facility. This could include designation as a local, state or national landmark; listing as a contributing part of a local, state or National Register historic district; or a determination of eligibility for listing in the National Register.
- The planned use of the facility; the project's relationship to the transportation system.

³ The President's Order for Environmental Justice states "each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations."

⁴ Can be found at <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards.htm>

⁵ "Facility" is not limited to buildings, but can be any historic property, structure, etc. with a transportation connection.

- The project is part of a larger historic preservation plan.
- The level of public access to the project, including access for those groups identified in the President's Order for Environmental Justice, seniors, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.
- The resource is threatened; there will be a loss of opportunity if this project is not funded.
- Long-term preservation and/or maintenance plans for the facility.

Historic Resources projects will be rated:

High:

- The project contributes to the preservation of significant historic or archaeological resources. The facility is designated as a local, state or national landmark or is listed as a contributing part of a designated historic district.
- The planned use of the facility will have a strong connection to the existing transportation system.
- The project is part of a larger historic preservation plan.
- There is access to the project for a high proportion of the local population, including access for those groups identified in the President's Order for Environmental Justice, seniors, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment
- There is access to the project for a variety of modes (vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, etc.).
- The resource is threatened; there will be a loss of opportunity if this project is not funded.
- The project has a long-term maintenance plan.

Medium:

- The project has a moderate impact on the preservation of historic or archaeological resources. The facility is not designated as a local, state or national landmark or as part of a designated historic district.
- The planned use of the facility will have a connection to the existing transportation system.
- There is access to the project for a moderate level of the local population.
- The project has a long-term maintenance plan.
- The resource is threatened; there will be a loss of opportunity if this project is not funded.

Low:

- The project has a limited impact on the preservation of historic or archaeological resources.
- There is access to the project for a low level of the local population.
- The project does not have a long-term maintenance plan.

C4. Environmental Projects. 60 Points

All projects must meet the appropriate Transportation Alternatives Program eligibility requirements and follow professional standards. Projects will be evaluated based on the following elements:

- The relationship of the project to the transportation system.
- The level of public access to the project, including access for those groups identified in the President's Order for Environmental Justice, seniors, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.
- The need for the project.
- How well the project goes over and above what is normally required.
- Long-term maintenance plans for the project.
- There will be a loss of opportunity if this project is not funded.

Environmental Projects will be rated:

High:

- The project has a high level of access to the public (for example, the project is along a heavily traveled route, there are a variety of modes [vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, etc.], there is a high population density surrounding the project, etc.), including access for those groups identified in the President's Order for Environmental Justice, seniors, people with disabilities, those located in highly

impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.

- There is a demonstrated need for the project, and the project provides benefits beyond those of mitigation (e.g., additional flood control benefits, safety, etc.).
- The project has a long-term maintenance plan.
- The resource is threatened; there will be a loss of opportunity if the project is not funded.

Medium:

- The project has a moderate level of access to the public.
- There is a demonstrated need for the project, and the project provides benefits beyond those of mitigation.
- The project has a long-term maintenance plan.

Low:

- The project has a low level of access to the public.
- The project has no long-term maintenance plan.

D. 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, including stakeholder involvement and support for the project.

- 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 the public review process for the project and actions taken to involve stakeholders in the project's development. Describe the outreach and engagement of all stakeholders and provide any public comments received (both positive and negative), letters of support, and/or other partnerships for the project.