

# TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM SELECTION PROCESS

Adopted by the SCOG Transportation Policy Board on October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015

The Federal Highway Administration distributes Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds to each state for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail program projects; safe routes to school projects; and projects for planning, designing, or constructing boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways. Washington State Department of Transportation then suballocates these funds to Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO's) across the state.

Skagit Council of Governments (SCOG) has the responsibility of distributing TAP funds to projects within the region. This document is designed to identify the process that SCOG will use to rank and prioritize projects within the Skagit County.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

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With the guidance of the SCOG Transportation Policy Board the Technical Advisory Committee, and any other advisory committee created by the Transportation Policy Board to advise on project selection, SCOG staff will prepare selection criteria to award TAP funding. The criteria will be based on identified priorities in the Regional Transportation Plan or directives given by the Transportation Policy Board. The selection criteria will be reviewed by the advisory committee(s) to ensure they meet the priorities of the Region. The Technical Advisory Committees will then recommend the approval of the selection criteria to the Transportation Policy Board. The Transportation Policy Board will then discuss and approve the final selection criteria.

- [Current SCOG TAP Selection Criteria](#)

## CALL FOR PROJECTS

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As TAP funding becomes available SCOG will issue a call for projects to be considered to utilize the funds. Eligible applicants will then have 4-6 weeks to submit applications to SCOG for consideration to be funded.

The amount of funding available in the call for projects will be at least enough to achieve a fully-programmed and fiscally-constrained four-year Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). SCOG intends to program an additional two years' worth of projects outside the fiscally-constrained portion of the RTIP. The projects selected for the unconstrained portion of the RTIP (years five and six) will serve as an illustrative list of projects until they can be moved into the fiscally-constrained portion of the RTIP.

Project sponsors must provide proof of approval of the governing body and that the public had an opportunity to comment on the project at time of submittal.

## PROJECT REVIEW AND PRIORITIZATION

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SCOG will conduct a screening to ensure that all of the proposed projects are consistent with local land use plans and eligibility standards for the regionally-managed federal grant funds. The objective portions of the scoring

criteria will be performed by staff. The advisory committee(s) will review the objective measure scores by staff and, if necessary, will score any subjective measures for the projects. The project scores and preliminary ranking will be compiled and distributed to advisory committee members for discussion at the appropriate meeting. Any disputes regarding the scores assigned to a proposed project will be resolved by the advisory committee(s). Using the project scores as a guide in the ranking process, the advisory committee(s) will prepare a project ranking recommendation to the SCOG Transportation Policy Board for discussion and approval

## PUBLIC REVIEW

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In accordance with SCOG's [Public Participation Plan](#), the public will have an opportunity to view the selection committee's project ranking recommendation prior to the Transportation Policy Board meeting in which action will be taken. The public can submit written comments to SCOG prior to the meeting or give verbal comments at the Transportation Policy Board meeting itself.

## TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

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The Transportation Policy Board will then consider the project prioritization proposed by the advisory committee(s). The prioritized list will serve as a guide for the final selection. The Transportation Policy Board has the freedom to reprioritize the list as they see fit.

## INCLUSION INTO THE TIP

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If a project is selected to be funded with TAP funds within the four year funding window, it will be included in the next RTIP update or it may be included into the current RTIP by amendment. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to submit accurate project information to SCOG using the WSDOT STIP web-based software, regardless of which of the four years it is programmed to be funded in.