

PROGRAM GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT SET-ASIDE (STBG-SA)/TA FUNDING (CATEGORY 9)

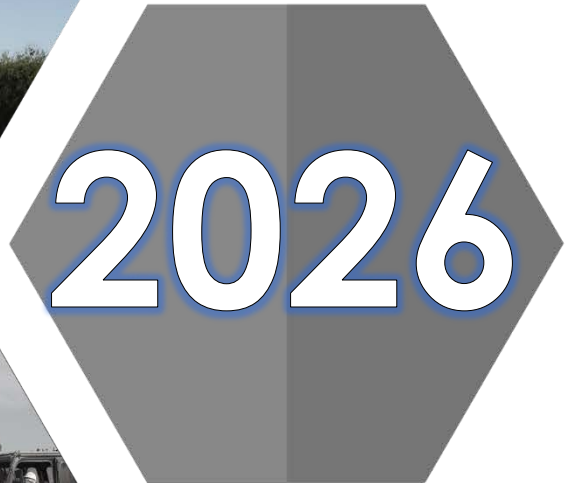


TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND	1
ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS	1
FUNDING AND ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.....	3
PROJECT ELIGIBILITY.....	4
PROJECT ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS	5
APPLICATION PROCESS	6
PROJECT EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA.....	7
EVALUATION PROCESS.....	9

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: Map of the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Area	2
Exhibit 2: Table of the STBG-SA/TA Timeline for 2027-2030 Funds	3
Exhibit 3: Table of Available Funding Estimates	3
Exhibit 4: Table of Scoring Criteria.....	7

PROGRAM GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES:

Surface Transportation Block Grant Set-Aside (STBG-SA)/TA Funding (Category 9)

BACKGROUND

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) continues the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act's Surface Transportation Block Grant set-aside (STBG-SA)/Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding program (Category 9 per TxDOT funding category). The performance-based competitive selection process used to award the funds in Metropolitan Areas should be consistent with the adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The STBG-SA/TA program allows all projects and activities that were previously eligible under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), encompassing a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, recreational trails, safe routes to school projects, community improvements such as historic preservation and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat maintenance.

The Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Organization (Corpus Christi MPO) Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) is the designated forum for municipalities, counties, transit agencies, tribal governments, state and private agencies to address regional transportation issues in the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Area. The Corpus Christi MPO encompasses portions of Nueces and San Patricio counties as illustrated in Exhibit 1. The Corpus Christi MPO is comprised of committees and participating organizations that collaborate and create partnerships to address the region's complex transportation needs. The Corpus Christi MPO's original members (City of Corpus Christi, City of Portland, City of Gregory, Nueces County, San Patricio County, and the Texas Department of Transportation – Corpus Christi District) became the Corpus Christi MPO's initial member agencies in 1973. To develop a more multi-modal transportation planning process, the Corpus Christi MPO now includes the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority (CCRTA) and the Port of Corpus Christi Authority.

This document will describe the goals and criteria used by the Corpus Christi MPO to evaluate and select projects for Corpus Christi MPO's allocation of approximately \$6,600,000 in Category 9 funding for federal fiscal years 2027 through 2030 including carry-over funds from 2026.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The IIJA carries forward the eligible sponsors for the Set Aside from prior transportation law's eligibility and added "nonprofit entities responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs" as eligible sponsors. Nonprofit organizations (other than the one new addition described below), State DOTs, and MPOs/RPOs are not eligible project sponsors; however, they are encouraged to work with eligible sponsors to advance projects where there is a shared interest. Eligible TxDOT Category 9 (STBG-SA/TA) project sponsors include:

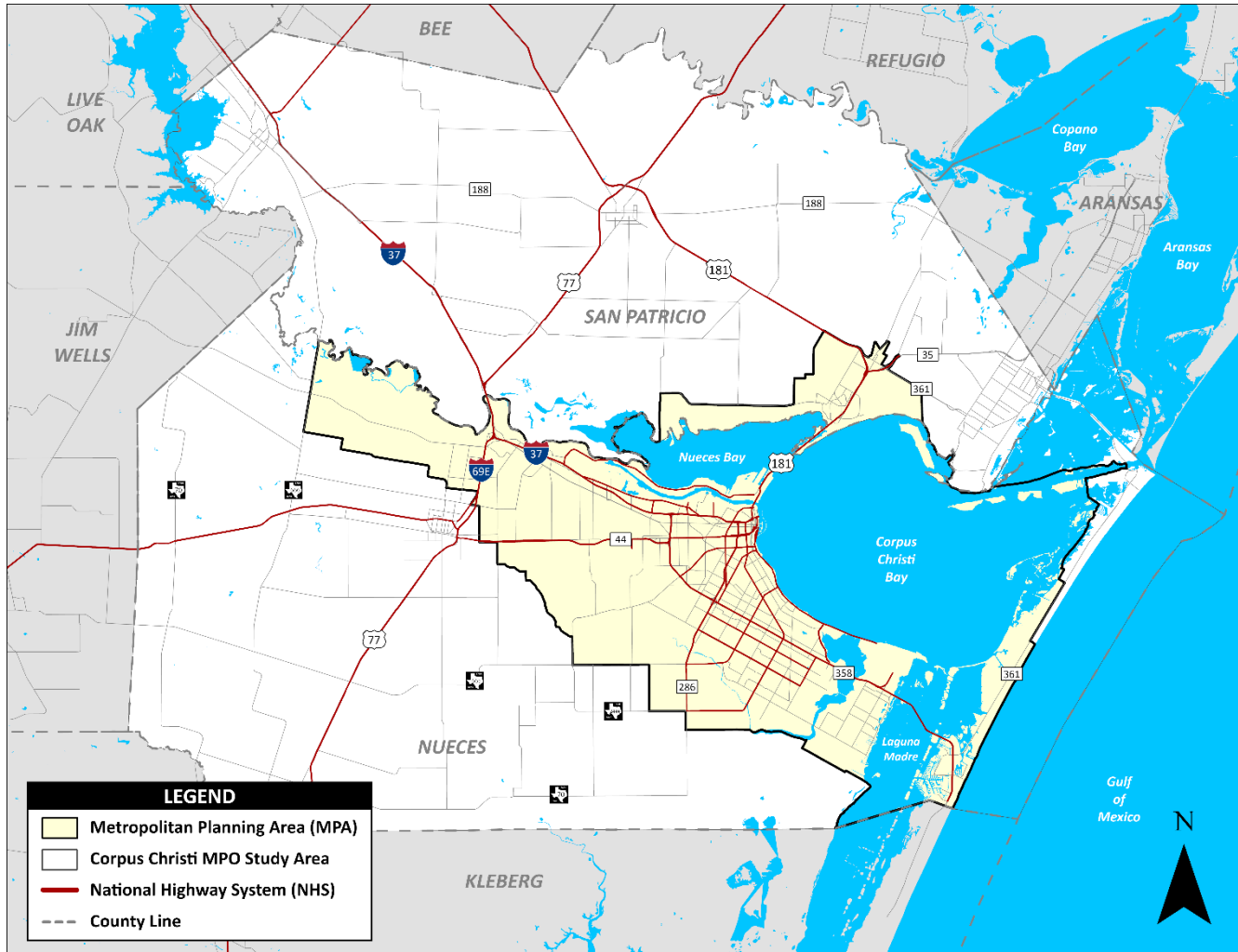
1. Local governments;
2. Regional transportation authorities;
3. Transit agencies;
4. Natural resource or public land agencies, including Federal agencies;
5. School districts, local education agencies, or schools;
6. Tribal governments;
7. A nonprofit entity responsible for the administration of local transportation safety programs;

CORPUS CHRISTI MPO STBG-SA/TA CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

8. Any other local or regional governmental entity with responsibility for oversight of transportation or recreational trails (other than a metropolitan planning organization or a State agency) that the State determines to be eligible, consistent with the goals of subsection (c) of section 213 of title 23.

Entities with limited experience performing construction and associated engineering with federal funds and entities without Right-of-Way (ROW) ownership are strongly encouraged to partner with local governments (city, county, etc.) on construction-related projects. Only one entity is permitted to serve as a project sponsor and enter into an agreement for project implementation with TxDOT. The project sponsor is 100% responsible for the local match and project development.

Exhibit 1. Map of the Corpus Christi Metropolitan Planning Area



It is incumbent upon each project sponsor to read **TxDOT's Local Government Project Management Guide** (<https://ftp.txdot.gov/pub/txdot/lgp/procedures/guide.pdf>) and **Local Government Projects Toolkit** (<https://www.txdot.gov/business/resources/lgp/toolkit.html>) and become familiar with the contracting and reporting procedures associated with Category 9 (STBG-SA/TA). Applying for federal funds is a significant undertaking, which must be led by the project sponsor from start to finish.

Projects that have not navigated the federal requirements and been advertised for construction within 2 years of their programmed year may be subject to forfeiture of awarded funds and project cancellation (i.e., a project programmed for FY 2027 was not yet advertised at the end of FY 2029).

CORPUS CHRISTI MPO STBG-SA/TA CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

Exhibit 2. Table of the STBG-SA/TA Process Timeline for FY 2027-2030 Funds

STBG-SA/TA Process Timeline for 2027 – 2030 Funds	
May 21, 2026	TAC Review of STBG-SA/TA Program Guidance and Procedure and Application Form
June 18, 2026	TAC Regular Meeting Agenda Item
July 9, 2026	TPC Review and Approval of STBG-SA/TA Program Guidance and Procedure and Application Form and issue a formal Call for Projects
July 23, 2026	Workshop No. 1 for Potential Applicants
August 7, 2026	Preliminary Project Applications Due
August 20, 2026	Workshop No. 2 for Potential Applicants After TAC Regular Meeting
September 21, 2026	Project Applications Due
October 1, 2026	TPC and TAC receive update on STBG-SA/TA Applications
October 15, 2026	TAC Review, Comment, and Possible Recommendation on Project Scores and Proposed List of Funded Projects
November 5, 2026	TPC Reviews Project Scores and Proposed List of Funded Projects with Possible Approval
November 19, 2026	TAC Review and Recommend Scores, Ranking, and Funded Projects (if necessary)
December 3, 2026	TPC Review and Approve Scores, Ranking, and Funded Projects (if necessary)

FUNDING AND ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Available Funding

Funds made available through the federal transportation bill prior to the future reauthorization date would still be available for use after September 30, 2026; however, new funds designated after this date, including this round of Corpus Christi MPO STBG-SA/TA funding, may not be. The funding breakdown below describes how the funding is currently allocated to the Corpus Christi MPO region, subject to change beyond September 30, 2026. Each applicant may only apply for the total funds available across all projects/applications. Minimum project request is set at \$1,000,000.

Exhibit 3. Table of Available Funding Estimates

Carry Over 2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Total
\$2,100,000	\$1,126,986	\$1,126,986	\$1,126,986	\$1,126,986	\$6,600,000
Note: TxDOT's 2027 UTP estimate for Corpus Christi MPO CAT 9 for FY 2027-2030 and TxDOT-TPP Carryover Estimates of 2026					

Federal requirements state that Category 9 funds must be obligated within two years of the year of programming. Failure to obligate the funds results in the loss of the funding. The funds will revert back to Corpus Christi MPO for re-allocation at the regional level.

The STBG-SA/TA is not considered a grant program since no upfront funding is provided. Approved costs are reimbursed only after an Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) between TxDOT, and the project sponsor is signed, and a Minute Order is authorized for the project. In order to get an approved Minute Order, the project must obtain the following clearances: right-of-way clearance, utility clearance, railroad clearance, environmental (NEPA) clearance, and have an approved Plan, Specification and Estimate (PS&E) package. No activities performed prior to obtaining the minute order are reimbursable through the awarded funding.

CORPUS CHRISTI MPO STBG-SA/TA CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

Project sponsors are also required to provide a minimum 20% local cash match of the total eligible construction-related project costs included in the STBG-SA/TA application.

Eligible Activities

50% of Category 9 funds are distributed to MPOs with population over 200,000 such as the Corpus Christi MPO, which are designated as Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). TMAs are Census Designated Urban Areas with a population over 200,000. The other 50% of Category 9 funds are designated for statewide use. TMA MPOs will select projects in consultation with TxDOT districts, while small urban areas (with populations below 200,000) and rural areas, the funds are administered by TxDOT's Public Transportation Division (PTN).

A project must be located within the Corpus Christi MPO boundaries to be eligible for funding as part of this call for projects. For projects selected by the Corpus Christi MPO, the local project sponsor is responsible for funding all pre-construction activities (design, environmental clearance, right-of-way and utility relocation/coordination) with local funds. Category 9 funds can then be used to reimburse project sponsors for 80% of the construction-related costs that were paid by the local entity, up to the awarded amount.

Construction, construction inspection, and construction management activities associated with approved projects are eligible uses of Category 9 funds. Any costs exceeding the amount of funds awarded through the Category 9 process are the responsibility of the project sponsor. Please consult the [TxDOT Local Government Project Toolkit](#) for a detailed description of the requirements and procedures to utilize federal transportation funding.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

The list below describes the general project categories eligible for funding through the application process.

1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian projects allow communities to make non-motorized transportation safe, convenient, and appealing. Projects may include on-road and off-road trail facilities that serve to meet the transportation and recreation needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of other non-motorized forms of transportation. These active transportation projects encourage healthful physical activity, keep the air clean by decreasing use of fossil fuels, and enrich local economies with recreational assets.

Eligible Projects:

- New or reconstructed sidewalks or walkways
- Pedestrian and bicycle signs or signals
- Lighting that primarily benefits cyclists and pedestrians (Lighting Plan Requirements)
- Transportation projects that achieve ADA compliance, such as curb ramps
- New or reconstructed off-road trails that serve a transportation need, such as trails that provide connections to schools, parks, or other public places
- Crosswalks, bicycle lanes or shared lane pavement markings
- Widening or paving shoulders
- Bicycle parking facilities, such as bicycle lockers and bicycle racks (including those on buses)
- Shared use paths, side paths, and trails that serve a transportation purpose
- Bicycle and pedestrian bridges and underpasses
- Crossing improvements that shorten crossing distance, provide access, and/or primarily improve bicycle and pedestrian safety
- Traffic realignments, road diets, or intersection changes that improve bicycle and pedestrian access or safety
- Rails with trails projects, which are adjacent to active (not abandoned) lines

2

Safe Routes to School

Infrastructure Projects — Safe Routes to School (SRTS) projects enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school. Infrastructure projects must be within two miles of a Kindergarten through 8th-grade school and must primarily benefit walking or biking students. Eligible infrastructure projects include, but are not limited to, the projects listed below.

Eligible Projects:

- New or improved sidewalks/multi-use paths
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements
- On-street bicycle facilities
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Secure bicycle parking facilities
- Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS

Project sponsors should design projects that clearly fit into the eligible categories defined in this document. Corpus Christi MPO staff in consultation with TxDOT-TPP and FHWA will make the final determination on project eligibility and will disallow any project that is not clearly eligible. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to present how the project aligns with the guidelines for eligible project activities.

- There is no limitation on the number of applications that may be submitted by an eligible entity. A separate resolution of local cash-match commitment from the eligible entity project sponsor (e.g., local government/agency) is required for each submitted project. The total project costs of all applications from each eligible entity may not exceed the total available STBG-SA program funding through 2030.
- Consistent with other Federal-aid highway programs, Category 9 funds are administered by TxDOT. After project selection, a determination will be made as to whether the project will be administered by TxDOT or the local entity.
- The STBG-SA Category 9 Program is not a grant. The funds provided are on a cost-reimbursement basis. Therefore, it is important to understand that the applicant will need adequate cash flow to accommodate the payment of 100 percent of the project costs. Applicants will be reimbursed with the Federal portion after the work has been accomplished.
- The local match must be cash. A resolution of local cash-match commitment from the eligible entity project sponsor (e.g., local government/agency) must be provided with the application. In certain limited circumstances, in-kind contributions of non-cash donations may be considered, but only after consultation with FHWA and TxDOT. Consultation should occur prior to application submission.
- The eligible entity project sponsor is responsible for any and all cost overruns.
- The Corpus Christi MPO Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) will approve all final projects and funding levels. Itemized budgets submitted for STBG-SA/TA (CAT 9) funding will be reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), TxDOT, and the Corpus Christi MPO to ensure work activities are eligible and itemized costs are reasonable. Based on available funds, project application requests for STBG-SA/TA funds may not be fully funded.

CORPUS CHRISTI MPO STBG-SA/TA CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

- Prior to Project Letting: Applicants must have a fully executed Advanced Funding Agreement (AFA) with the TxDOT Corpus Christi District and comply with all applicable state and federal requirements related to the development of federal-aid highway projects. The AFA must be executed within one year from the date of selection by the MPO Policy Committee or risk loss of federal funding.
- Administrative Fee: TxDOT may impose an administrative fee of up to 15% of the project cost. The fee is an eligible expense covered with awarded funds but for which applicants must account when calculating the availability of funds for construction.
- Selected projects must be included in the Corpus Christi MPO's Transportation Improvement Program and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program prior to project letting.
- Commence Construction: STBG-SA/TA Projects must advance to construction within three years from the date of selection by the Corpus Christi MPO TPC or risk loss of federal funding.
- All on-system projects must follow TxDOT procedures.
- Regardless of whether the projects are located within the right-of-way of a Federal-aid highway, the treatment of projects will require: project agreements, authorization to proceed prior to incurring costs, prevailing wage rates (Davis-Bacon), Buy America, and competitive bidding.
- Projects should primarily benefit the general public, and not a private entity.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Project Applications

A complete STBG-SA/TA project application consists of the following components:

- Completed Fillable Microsoft Excel Application including Project Cost Breakdown
- PDF of Completed Application, including Project Timeline and Itemized Budget
- Other Supporting information (maps, drawings, photographs, reports, letters of support etc.)
- Email the completed application to ccmpo@cctxmpo.us

It should be noted that letters of support from elected officials have no influence on the selection of projects in a performance-based programming process. While we encourage that project sponsors inform and collaborate with their elected leadership, letters of support are not necessary unless they are committing funds (matching or additional, non-traditional funding) to the project.

Application Review

Corpus Christi MPO staff will review draft applications for eligibility and notify applicants of any ineligible submittals. After a review applicants will be notified if the applications are incomplete and will be given one week to submit missing or incomplete information.

Multi-year Funding and Funding Cycles

Due to the administrative burden of evaluating funding proposals on an annual basis and the management costs for project sponsors from multiple projects, there is a trend that STBG-SA/TA projects and programs include funding for several years, rather than only one single year. Many infrastructure projects can cost more than funding that is available in one year. This has resulted in FHWA and state DOTs accommodating multi-year activities.

Categorical Exclusions

CORPUS CHRISTI MPO STBG-SA/TA CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

Except in unusual circumstances, FHWA expects that these types of infrastructure projects will fall under the categorical exclusion provisions of 23 CFR Sec 771.117 that recognize construction of bicycle and pedestrian lanes, paths, and facilities as not involving significant environmental impacts. This streamlines compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.

Project Consistency with Adopted Plans

Screening criteria addresses provisions of IJA/BIL and assesses consistency with Corpus Christi MPO's current Metropolitan Transportation Plan and adopted local plans. Projects must be consistent with IJA/BIL eligibility requirements and local or county plans or they will not be considered further.

PROJECT EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria for the Corpus Christi MPO's STBG-SA/TA call for projects aligns with the TxDOT 2025 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program, adjusted to reflect local conditions. Exhibit 4 outlines the evaluation criteria and measures that will be used to score project applications as part of the competitive selection process. The project application form includes questions addressing specific evaluation criteria listed in the table below.

Exhibit 4. Table of Scoring Criteria

Criteria Category and Scoring Weight (%)	Criteria Description	Criteria Measures	Scoring
Safety (25%)	Demonstrates need for safety improvement and appropriate safety countermeasures	Number of Identified bicycle and/or pedestrian safety hazards (application questions #10)	1 safety hazard identified = 2 points 2 safety hazards identified = 4 points 3 safety hazards identified = 6 points 4 or more safety hazards identified = 8 points Records of pedestrian or bicyclist serious injuries or fatal crashes in project location over last 10 years = +2 points
		Number of Proposed countermeasures (application question #10)	1 unique countermeasure = 2 points 2 unique countermeasures = 4 points 3 unique countermeasures = 6 points 4 unique countermeasures = 8 points 5 unique countermeasures = 10 points
	Provides safer and/or less intimidating accommodations for walking, bicycling, and other non-motorized travel	Number of Proposed infrastructure elements (application question #11)	1 unique element = 1 point 2 unique elements = 2 points 3 unique elements = 3 points 4 unique elements = 4 points 5 or more unique elements = 5 points
Connectivity &	Improves active transportation access and	Connectivity to existing bicycle and pedestrian	Connects to one or more existing bicycle or pedestrian path(s) = 5 points

CORPUS CHRISTI MPO STBG-SA/TA CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

Accessibility (25%)	connectivity to destinations of interest such as schools, business districts, downtown, centers of business activity, tourist attractions, high density residential, and/or employment centers	paths and Number of Destinations Accessible (application questions #7, #11, #12, and #13)	1 destination = 1 point 2 destinations = 2 points 3 destinations = 3 points 4 destinations = 4 points 5 destinations = 5 points
	Supports multi-modal connections	Number of transportation modes supported (application question #13)	1 mode = 2 points 2 modes = 6 points all three modes = 10 points
	Eliminate barriers to pedestrians, bicycle riders, transit riders, and wheelchair users	Number of barriers removed (application question #14)	1 unique barrier = 1 point 2 unique barriers = 2 points 3 unique barriers = 3 points 4 unique barriers = 4 points 5 or more unique barriers = 5 points
Project Readiness (25%)	Demonstrates the ability to advance the project to construction immediately, if selected for funding	Percentage of Project Engineering Design Complete (application questions #20-25 and applicant-submitted documentation)	60% design = 2 points 90% design = 6 points 100% design = 10 points
		Project Complexity (application question #20-24 and applicant-submitted documentation)	Applicant obtained/finalized or does not require one of the following: environmental clearance, ROW acquisition, or utility relocation management plan = 3 points Applicant obtained/finalized or does not require two of the following: environmental clearance, ROW acquisition, or utility relocation management plan = 6 points Applicant obtained/finalized or does not require all three of the following: environmental clearance environmental clearance, ROW acquisition, or utility relocation management plan = 10 points Railroad Encroachment without RR Support/Right of Entry Letter = (-5) points

CORPUS CHRISTI MPO STBG-SA/TA CALL FOR PROJECTS 2026

	Project sponsor funding commitment	Project Funding Resolution	Applicant Governing Board Resolution obligating project 20% matching funds within next 12 months = 5 points
Geographic Balance (15%)	Enhances livability by improving active transportation access and improves mode choice in underserved communities	Project location relative to concentrations of underserved communities: Seniors, Individuals with disabilities, Zero vehicle households, Low-income households (CC MPO PAD Maps)	0 underserved communities = 0 points 1 underserved community = 5 points 2 underserved communities = 10 points 3 underserved communities = 15 points
Community Support & Planning (10%)	Public outreach demonstrates positive community support	Number of Letters of support from community organizations and stakeholders active in project location (Application question #17)	1 letter of support = 1 point 2 or more letters of support = 2 points
	Project maintenance and operation	Letter from agency/department responsible for M&O (Application question #18)	Letter from responsible entity/ department responsible for ongoing project maintenance and operation indicating sufficient funds and resources = 1 point
	Project demonstrates a link to formal transportation planning efforts (e.g., ADA Transition Plan)	Does the project link to a formal Transportation Planning Document(s)? (Application question #19)	Project identified in at least one local plan document adopted in last 5 years = 2 points
	Demonstrates commitment to provide the local match	Does the project have Project Sponsor Resolution? (Application question #16)	Adopted resolution of the project sponsor's governing board = 5 points

EVALUATION PROCESS

Project applications received by the specified deadline will be scored by Corpus Christi MPO staff as outlined in Exhibit 4 above. Staff will initially screen each proposed project to determine eligibility. Projects determined to meet federal, state, and local eligibility criteria will then be scored utilizing the information submitted in the project application. Projects will then be presented to the Corpus Christi MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for their recommendation to the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC). TPC will make the final determination on project selection and funding amounts.