

FUNDING POLICY GUIDELINES

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Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study
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This document was prepared by the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Ohio Department of Transportation, and the Village, City and County governments of Portage and Summit Counties and a portion of Wayne County.

The contents of this document reflect the views of AMATS, which is responsible for the facts and accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official view and policies of the Ohio and/or U.S. Department of Transportation. This document does not constitute a standard, specification or regulation.

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Section 1 | Introduction

Planning, design and construction of major transportation capital investment projects, such as major highway relocations and transit service expansions, are costly and time-consuming. Even relatively minor improvements require a substantial investment of time and resources. To implement transportation projects in a systematic manner, proper planning is essential.

The Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study, also referred to as AMATS, is one of the 17 transportation-planning agencies in Ohio. These, and similar agencies throughout the United States, were established as a result of the 1962 Federal Aid Highway Act. This Act requires urban areas of more than 50,000 in population to have a cooperative, continuous and comprehensive (or "3-C") planning process in order to receive federal aid for transportation improvements.

A primary responsibility of AMATS is to prepare and maintain a Transportation Improvement Program (or TIP) that meets the travel needs of people and businesses in Summit and Portage Counties and portions of Wayne County. The TIP is a four-year comprehensive listing of transportation improvements scheduled for implementation with federal or state funds. A project must be included in an area's TIP in order to receive funding assistance from the Federal Highway Administration or the Federal Transit Administration.

As part of preparing the TIP, the AMATS Policy Committee has the lead responsibility for programming transportation projects under the Federal Highway Administration's Surface Transportation Program and Transportation Alternatives Program and the Federal Transit Administration's Urban Formula, Bus and Bus Facilities, and Elderly and Disabled Programs.

The purpose of this report is to document the funding policy guidelines established by the AMATS Policy Committee for these programs and the process to select projects for the TIP. These guidelines reflect the goals outlined in the Regional Transportation Plan that make preserving the existing transportation system the highest priority while continuing to improve safety and reduce congestion. It also includes a procedure to continuously monitor funding programs. It has four main sections.

Section 2 describes the policy guidelines for the programming of federal transportation funds. Section 3 describes the process to select projects for the TIP as well as the process to expedite the implementation of these projects in a timely manner. Section 4 describes the evaluation criteria for each funding program for which the AMATS Policy Committee has the lead responsibility and lastly a map of the federal-aid system and a list of definitions is included.

Section 2 | Policy Guidelines

The AMATS Policy Committee has established a set of Funding Policy Guidelines to be used in selecting projects using federal funding directly attributable to the AMATS area for the TIP. The purpose of this section is to describe these policy guidelines. They are grouped into three categories - Program Administration, General Project Eligibility and Funding Programs.

Program Administration

1. Responsibility – The Technical Advisory Committee is responsible for monitoring the federal funding programs attributable to AMATS and making recommendations to the Policy Committee.
2. Project Review Meetings – Quarterly project review meetings are scheduled to monitor the status of programmed projects. Project sponsors or their representatives are required to attend.
3. Project Lockdown – Sponsors must have their associated project milestone dates finalized by December of each year for projects that are scheduled in the next fiscal year.
4. Reservoir Projects – A project that is scheduled in the fourth quarter (April to June) of a fiscal year may be assigned as a reservoir project. This means that the project may sell in either the current fiscal year or the first quarter (July to September) of the next fiscal year and not incur any adverse penalty. Regardless of which fiscal year the project sells in, the project’s Plans, Specifications, and Estimate or PS&E package must still be submitted in the current fiscal year.
5. Funds Management – If a significant funding balance remains at the end of the current fiscal year, one or more of several options will be pursued to avoid a shortfall of funds. These options include but are not limited to moving reservoir projects as needed, applying funds to remaining projects in that year subject to the funding policy cap and a limit of a 15% increase, or trade/transfer funds with ODOT, County Engineers Association of Ohio, or another MPO.
 - a. If a shortfall in funds in one funding program is a concern, the funding source of one or more projects may be switched or split into two funding sources for items that are eligible for those funds.
 - b. AMATS receives suballocated funds at the discretion of ODOT and US DOT. If ODOT’s or US DOT’s current funding policy changes in regard to amount of funds suballocated or the elimination of a funding program, AMATS assumes no liability in funding projects that have been affected by these changes.
6. Fair Share Distribution – Several AMATS funding programs use equitable distribution of funds as an evaluation criterion. This criterion uses a target budget for each community in the AMATS area. The target budget is based on the community’s percent of the population compared to the total funds spent and programmed by AMATS since 1972. The community’s percent population for the target budget is calculated using the percent urban population from the 1980 and 1990 Census and total population from the 2000, 2010 and 2020 Census. AMATS’ funds programmed for a project in a community is attributed to the community regardless of project sponsor.

General Project Eligibility

1. Regional Transportation Plan – All projects implemented with federal funds must be included in or consistent with the approved AMATS Regional Transportation Plan.

2. Performance Based Planning and Programming – All projects implemented with federal funds must be included in or consistent with the goals of Performance Based Planning and Programming (PBPP). These policies are established to ensure targeted investment of federal transportation funds by increasing accountability and transparency and providing for better investment decisions that focus on key outcomes related to seven national goals: safety, infrastructure preservation, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement and economic vitality, environmental sustainability and reduced project delivery delays. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has issued three related rules to date. The first rule is for safety performance measures, often referred to as PM1. The second set of rules is those pertaining to pavement and bridge conditions; often referred to as PM2. The third set is the system-wide performance measures, including Freight and CMAQ Measures. These are often referred to as PM3. The transit performance rules are issued by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and concern transit asset management (TAM) planning. For a full discussion of PBPP and the AMATS area performance targets, see AMATS Policy Resolution 2022-14 (approved August 11, 2022)
3. Submitting Projects for Funding – A sponsor that submits a project for funding must be a member of AMATS. Generally, every two years the Policy Committee initiates a new round of project funding (see page 23 for a detailed project selection schedule). It is highly recommended that project sponsors submit requests for funding during this two-year cycle of project funding.
4. If a project sponsor feels that their project cannot wait for the normal two-year cycle of funding, the project must be first presented to the TAC TIP Subcommittee for consideration and then to the TAC and Policy Committee for final consideration.
5. Maximum Projects Awarded per Sponsor – The number of STBG and Resurfacing projects awarded to one sponsor shall be three projects per funding category per funding cycle. There is no limit to the number of TASA projects that may be awarded to a sponsor. There is no limit to the number of project applications that a sponsor may submit.
6. Application Legislation – Local commitment, in the form of specific legislation, is required of sponsors and co-sponsor(s) seeking STBG or TASA funding. This ensures that Councils and Boards recognize that the project is being submitted for federal funding and that a local funding match is required. Legislation must include the following: project name, description and cost, an acknowledgement that the sponsor and co-sponsor(s) have read and understand AMATS Funding Policy Guidelines, and that the sponsor and co-sponsor(s) are aware a local match is required. Sample legislation will be included with project applications when they are given to project sponsors. Failure to submit legislation by the established due date may result in cancellation of project application.
7. Ineligible Items – Preliminary engineering and plan development costs, including the development of right-of-way and construction plans are the responsibility of the project sponsor and are not eligible for AMATS funds (except for TASA projects).
8. Logical Termini and Independent Utility – Projects submitted for federal funds must have logical termini and independent utility. This means a project must have rational end points and stand alone when completed. For example, a project may be one phase in a multi-phase project, but each phase must have immediate benefit and use to the public in case additional phases are never funded.
9. Contiguous Projects – Project sponsors that have contiguous projects, such as a phase one and two, may combine their projects after the original approval for funding by AMATS. Combining of projects is subject to the availability of funds and approval by AMATS. AMATS funding for the combined project is not to exceed the sum of the individual project caps that were originally approved for funding.

10. Project Programming Package – Project sponsors must submit a Programming Package to ODOT within 45 days of notification of Policy Committee’s action to approve funding for the project. Failure to do so may result in cancellation of project.
11. Local Let Projects - AMATS funded projects may be ODOT Let or Local Let with ODOT oversight. Local governments who participate in ODOT’s Local Let Process are required to take training to ensure they comply with all federal and state laws, regulations and policies. Local Programs staff provides training in the LPA Qualification Process via ODOT’s eLearning system administered through LTAP. Training must be taken every five (5) years. Once the training is complete, the LPA may complete the LPA Participation Requirements Review Form. This form will need updated every four (4) years or in the event of a change in key personnel.
12. Planning Studies – Applications that are submitted for planning studies will be evaluated on a case-by-case scenario.
13. The Project Delivery Incentive Program (PDIP) - The purpose of PDIP is to incentivize project sponsors to deliver their projects in a specified time window. If projects are delivered within that time window their local match will be reduced to 10 percent of the amount of federal funds awarded by AMATS (instead of the traditional 20 percent). The maximum reduction shall be capped at \$100,000. The reduction in the local match will be paid for using Toll Revenue Credits (TRC). Typically AMATS has only used TRC to eliminate the local match for planning studies and air quality funding. Currently AMATS is guaranteed access to its TRC through FY2027. The PDIP program will be completely voluntary for project sponsors. As part of the AMATS application process the community can request to take part in the program by marking a box on the project application. There will be no penalty for failing to meet the project delivery goal other than the sponsor will not receive the additional 10 percent benefit. To meet the project delivery goal, the project sponsor must ensure its PS&E document is submitted to ODOT District 4 by the date outlined in the PDIP. If AMATS is not able to fund the project due funding not being available, the project will still receive the reduction of local share of 10 percent when it can be bid.
 - a. Timeline for the PDIP program is as follows:
 - i. Resurfacing program – 2 years from AMATS Resolution Approval
 - ii. STBG program – 4 years from AMATS Resolution Approval
 - iii. TASA program – 2 years from AMATS Resolution Approval
 - b. Project applicants that select to participate in the PDIP will be notified after project funding approval of the timeline for completing their project in order to receive the incentive.
14. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan – Applicants must certify that they have developed and maintain an ADA transition plan. Title II of the ADA specifically applies to public entities (state and local governments), and the programs, services, and activities they deliver. Title II Article 8, requires public entities to take several steps designed to achieve compliance with the ADA. ADA transition plans provide a method for a public entity to schedule and implement ADA required improvements to existing streets and sidewalks. The transition plan requires an inventory of the current curb ramps and sidewalks, the identification of barriers, and a system for the removal of these barriers. Transition plans must also include a public involvement component. Applicants will certify the existence of their ADA transition plan in their project application.

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)

Description

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) provides flexible funding for a wide variety of projects including highways, transit and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Funding for STBG projects is assigned to MPO areas by Congress and, in addition, ODOT sub allocates a portion of their statewide STBG funding to Ohio MPOs.

Eligibility

STBG funds are the most versatile and may be used for any project that is recommended in or consistent with the AMATS Regional Transportation Plan. STBG funds can be used on any federal-aid roadway classified above a local road or a rural minor collector and bridge projects on any public road.

STBG projects can include highway projects and bridge improvements (construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, resurfacing, restoration, and operational), transportation system management, public transit capital improvement projects, commuter rail, carpool projects, bus terminals and facilities, bikeways, pedestrian facilities and planning studies.

The AMATS TAC TIP Subcommittee, with consultation from the AMATS staff, reserves the right to consider project applications under another funding program that it deems better suited for the application.

Program Policies

1. Federal Participation
 - a. The maximum federal share for projects under the STBG program is 80% of the total eligible project costs (excluding 100% local items). Federal funds are capped at the approved amount shown in the current TIP.
 - b. Federal funding for STBG projects is either the federal participation rate approved for the project or the total federal funds approved for the project, whichever is less.
2. Local Participation
 - a. The minimum local share is 20% of total eligible project costs (excluding 100% local items). If a sponsor takes advantage of the PDIP program the local share is reduced to 10% of the AMATS federal funding with a maximum reduction of \$100,000.
 - b. The local share for STBG projects is required to be in cash from local, state or other non-federal sources. These projects are not eligible for softmatch credit, or 100% Federal funding participation, regardless of Federal or state eligibility. Planning and engineering costs (including the development of right-of-way and construction plans) are not considered as local share.
3. Right-of-Way – the right-of-way funding may be adjusted from the original amount approved as long as the project's total cap is not increased. These projects have a combined right-of-way and construction cap (see 5 below).
4. Construction/Capital Purchases – the construction funding may be adjusted from the original amount approved as long as the project's total cap is not increased. These projects have a combined right-of-way and construction cap (see 5 below).
5. STBG Funding Cap – STBG projects have a combined right-of-way and construction cap of \$6,000,000 in federal funds. Assuming an 80% Federal share, total project cost should not exceed \$7,500,000. Any cost above this amount is the responsibility of the local sponsor.

6. Project Delays – projects that are delayed or cancelled will be re-evaluated based on the following principles:
 - a. If a project is delayed due to the lack of programmed federal funds, the project will be rescheduled as soon as funds become available.
 - b. If a project is delayed due to the project sponsor, the project may be cancelled or rescheduled at a later time as not to impact or jeopardize other projects that have met their schedules.
7. Project Cost Increases – Project phases scheduled in the next fiscal year will be updated in AMATS funding program to reflect the latest estimates. Project sponsors must submit revised project cost estimates for the phase that is scheduled in the next fiscal year.
 - a. If the revised project cost estimate is lower than the original estimate, AMATS federal share, as shown in AMATS Funding Program and Balances Table, will be adjusted accordingly to reflect 80% of the revised estimate. The project cost shown in the TIP will not be changed and the project is still eligible to receive federal funding up to 80% of the original estimate.
 - b. If the revised project cost estimate, based on the original scope, is higher than the original estimate, AMATS federal share may be increased up to 80% of the revised estimate.
 - c. AMATS federal share increase is limited to 15% above the original federal share programmed for the project and is not to exceed the funding policy cap for right-of-way and construction. The AMATS Staff has the authority to make funding decisions for project cost increases based on the availability of funds. If a project is already at the AMATS funding policy cap, project cost increase requests must be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee, with the Policy Committee having final decision-making authority. Situations not specified herein will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee.
8. Major Changes to Project Funding – Projects which have already received federal STBG funds through AMATS are not eligible to apply for additional STBG funds through AMATS normal application cycle. If additional funding for a project is necessary a request must be made to the AMATS Staff and will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee, with the Policy Committee having final decision-making authority.
9. Self-Scoring – AMATS strongly recommends communities self-score their applications before submitting them for consideration.

Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA)

Description

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TASA) provides funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Funding for TASA projects is assigned to MPO areas by Congress and, in addition, ODOT sub allocates a portion of their statewide TASA funding to Ohio MPOs.

Eligibility

All TASA projects must relate to surface transportation and must address a transportation need, use, or benefit. Project categories include pedestrian and bicycle facilities including Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects. Preliminary engineering, right-of-way and construction are eligible project costs. Planning is an eligible project phase only for SRTS District-wide Travel Plans and only if the sponsor has first pursued and secured funding from ODOT's SRTS program. TASA applications for shared use paths or sidepaths (i.e. trails) must have a feasibility

study for the project completed by the time funding is awarded by Policy Committee resolution. AMATS recommends using an ODOT prequalified consultant found under the Bicycle Facilities and Enhancement Design area at the following link:

<https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odot/working/contracts/prequal-cert/welcome>

The feasibility study must include the following:

- Reasonable assurance that the preferred alignment conforms to AASHTO standards
- Certified cost estimate
- Planning level analysis to identify concerns (i.e. red flags) regarding environment, rights-of-way, slope, soil and historical/cultural impediments

The AMATS TAC TIP Subcommittee, with consultation from the AMATS staff, reserves the right to consider project applications under another funding program that it deems better suited for the application.

FY2024/2025/2026 TASA Supplemental Funding Pilot Program

The purpose of the TASA Supplemental Funding is to develop a reservoir list of projects that could use additional TASA funding to deliver a project in the upcoming fiscal years of 2024, 2025, 2026. To qualify for TASA Supplemental Funding an existing AMATS project must have TASA eligible elements included in the current project. AMATS staff will score projects based on the existing TASA criteria. AMATS staff will develop a rank scoring for supplemental funding and funding will be awarded based on funds availability.

Supplemental funding will only be awarded if AMATS staff determines there will be a balance of TASA funding in that fiscal year. If a balance exists, AMATS staff will award additional TASA funding to the project based on the rank scoring of the funding round by fiscal year.

Any existing federally funded project is eligible for TASA Supplemental Funding (if it contains TASA eligible components) and the additional funding will not count towards the project funding cap of the originally awarded AMATS funds. The maximum supplemental funding award is \$500,000.

Program Policies

1. Ownership – The proposed Alternative project must be publicly owned and on existing publicly owned property (except when property acquisition is part of the proposal).
2. Cost Estimates – Cost estimates for TASA projects must be submitted by a professional engineer or architect.
3. Maintenance – Maintenance-type projects or work items, such as sidewalk replacement and bikeway resurfacing or regrading, are not eligible for TASA funding.
4. Upgrading – Upgrading trails (such as converting a granular-surfaced bikeway to asphalt or concrete) are eligible for funding except if previously funded with federal funds through AMATS. Sidewalks are eligible for upgrading if the project is taking a standard sidewalk and substantially widening it to accommodate multiple uses (ex. upgrading a 4-foot sidewalk to an 8-foot sidewalk to accommodate bicycle traffic)
5. Federal Participation

- a. The maximum federal share for projects under the TASA Program is 80% of total eligible project costs (excluding 100% local items). Federal funds are also capped at the approved amount shown in the current TIP.
 - b. Federal funding participation for TASA projects is either the federal participation rate approved for the project, or the total federal funds approved for the project, whichever is less.
6. Local Participation
- a. The minimum local share is 20% of total eligible project costs (excluding 100% local items). If a sponsor takes advantage of the PDIP program the local share is reduced to 10% of AMATS federal funding with a maximum reduction of \$100,000 (based on the maximum TASA funding by AMATS of \$1,000,000).
 - b. The local share for TASA projects is required to be in cash from local, state or other non-federal sources. These projects are not eligible for softmatch credit, or 100% Federal funding participation, regardless of Federal or state eligibility. Planning is not considered as local share.
7. Planning – The planning funding approved for a SRTS Plan is that Plan’s funding cap. Any unused funds cannot be transferred to a SRTS Plan’s recommended infrastructure project. Up to 10% of the annual TASA allocation may be set aside to fund SRTS District-wide Plans.
8. Preliminary Engineering – The preliminary engineering funding may be adjusted from the original amount approved as long as the project’s total cap is not increased (see 11 below). Up to 25% of the annual TASA allocation may be set aside to fund preliminary engineering.
9. Right-of-Way
- a. The right-of-way funding may be adjusted from the original amount approved as long as the project’s total cap is not increased (see 11 below).
 - b. Right-of-way acquisition may be included only as a part of the cost for the entire project, not as a stand-alone project.
10. Construction/Capital Purchases – the construction funding may be adjusted from the original amount approved for funding as long as the project’s total cap is not increased (see 11 below).
11. TASA Funding Cap – TASA projects have a combined preliminary engineering, right-of-way and construction cap of \$1,000,000 in federal funds. Assuming an 80% Federal share, total project cost should not exceed \$1,250,000. Any cost above this amount is the responsibility of the local sponsor.
12. Project Cost Increases – Project phases scheduled in the next fiscal year will be updated in AMATS funding program to reflect the latest estimates. Project sponsors must submit revised project cost estimates for the phase that is scheduled in the next fiscal year.
- a. If the revised project cost estimate is lower than the original estimate, AMATS federal share, as shown in AMATS Funding Program and Balances Table, will be adjusted accordingly to reflect 80% of the revised estimate. The project cost shown in the TIP will not be changed and the project is still eligible to receive federal funding up to 80% of the original estimate.
 - b. If the revised project cost estimate, based on the original scope, is higher than the original estimate, AMATS federal share may be increased up to 80% of the revised estimate.
 - c. AMATS federal share increase is limited to 15% above the original federal share programmed for the project and is not to exceed the funding policy cap for right-of-way and construction. The AMATS Staff has the authority to make funding decisions for project cost increases based on the availability of funds. If a project is already at the AMATS funding policy cap, project cost increase requests must be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee,

with the Policy Committee having final decision-making authority. Situations not specified herein will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee.

13. Major Changes to Project Funding – Projects which have already received federal TASA funds through AMATS are not eligible to apply for additional TASA funds through AMATS normal application cycle. If additional funding for a project is necessary a request must be made to the AMATS Staff and will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee, with the Policy Committee having final decision-making authority.
14. Self-Scoring – AMATS strongly recommends communities self-score their applications before submitting them for consideration.

AMATS Resurfacing Program

Description

Resurfacing projects on non-state routes using AMATS STBG funds.

Eligibility

Eligible routes for resurfacing include principal and minor arterials, urban collectors and major rural collectors that are not on a state route. Minor rural collector and local roadways are not eligible for federal funding. In order to be consistent with the ODOT Urban Paving Program, the eligibility of an item will be as outlined in ODOT's Urban Paving Policy with the exception of full and partial depth pavement repair and ADA sidewalk ramps, which are eligible for AMATS funding. Work items not directly related to the pavement resurfacing are not eligible for funding such as culvert replacement, street trees and guardrail. Roadways with a Pavement Condition Rating (PCR) of greater than 80 are also not eligible for funding.

The AMATS TAC TIP Subcommittee, with consultation from the AMATS staff, reserves the right to consider project applications under another funding program that it deems better suited for the application.

Program Policies

1. Resurfacing – Resurfacing is defined as a thin asphalt type overlay, not to exceed 3 inches, or similar treatment. Geofabric is eligible. Concrete roadways are not eligible unless being overlaid with asphalt.
2. Reconstruction – Pavements in need of reconstruction are not eligible for AMATS Resurfacing Program funds. A project is considered roadway reconstruction and not resurfacing when over 25% of the pavement surface area within the project limits needs repaired or replaced.
3. Structures – Any work on structures beyond the asphalt type overlay as mentioned above is not eligible for funding.
4. Frequency of Resurfacing – Sponsors are responsible for maintaining their roadways so that the pavement does not deteriorate prematurely. AMATS will only provide funding for resurfacing at a minimum of 10-year intervals if the previous resurfacing involved federal funds. The 10-year interval begins on the date the last resurfacing was completed and does not include temporary overlays.
5. Federal Participation
 - a. The maximum federal share for projects under the Resurfacing program is 80% of the total eligible project costs (excluding 100% local items). Federal funds are capped at the approved amount shown in the current TIP.

- b. Federal funding participation for Resurfacing projects is either the federal participation rate approved for the project, or the total federal funds approved for the project, whichever is less.
 - c. A minimum of 20% of the annual STBG allocation will be set aside as a target budget to fund this program.
- 6. Local Participation
 - a. The minimum local share is 20% of total eligible costs (excluding 100% local items). If a sponsor takes advantage of the PDIP program the local share is reduced to 10% of AMATS federal funding with a maximum reduction of \$100,000 (based on the maximum Resurfacing funding by AMATS of \$800,000).
 - b. The local share for Resurfacing projects is required to be in cash from local, state or other non-federal sources. These projects are not eligible for softmatch credit, or 100% Federal funding participation, regardless of Federal or state eligibility. Planning and engineering costs (including the development of right-of-way and construction plans) are not considered as local share.
- 7. Right-of-Way – the right-of-way phase is not eligible for funding.
- 8. Resurfacing Funding Cap – Resurfacing projects have a construction cap of \$800,000 in federal funds. Assuming an 80% Federal share, total project cost should not exceed \$1,000,000. Any cost above this amount is the responsibility of the local sponsor.
- 9. Project Delays – Funding for STBG projects that are delayed or cancelled will be re- evaluated based on the following principles:
 - a. If a project is delayed due to the lack of programmed federal funds, the project will be rescheduled as soon as funds become available.
 - b. If a project is delayed due to the project sponsor, the project may be cancelled or rescheduled at a later time as not to impact or jeopardize other projects that have met their schedules.
- 10. Project Cost Increases – Project phases scheduled in the next fiscal year will be updated in AMATS funding program to reflect the latest estimates. Project sponsors must submit revised project cost estimates for the phase that is scheduled in the next fiscal year.
 - a. If the revised project cost estimate is lower than the original estimate, AMATS federal share, as shown in AMATS Funding Program and Balances Table, will be adjusted accordingly to reflect 80% of the revised estimate. The project cost shown in the TIP will not be changed and the project is still eligible to receive federal funding up to 80% of the original estimate.
 - b. If the revised project cost estimate, based on the original scope, is higher than the original estimate, AMATS federal share may be increased up to 80% of the revised estimate.
 - c. AMATS federal share increase is limited to 15% above the original federal share programmed for the project and is not to exceed the funding policy cap for right-of-way and construction. The AMATS Staff has the authority to make funding decisions for project cost increases based on the availability of funds. If a project is already at the AMATS funding policy cap, project cost increase requests must be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee, with the Policy Committee having final decision-making authority. Situations not specified herein will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee.

11. Major Changes to Project Funding – Projects which have already received federal STBG funds through AMATS are not eligible to apply for additional STBG funds through AMATS normal application cycle. If additional funding for a project is necessary a request must be made to the AMATS Staff and will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee, with the Policy Committee having final decision making authority.
12. Self-Scoring – AMATS strongly recommends communities self-score their applications before submitting them for consideration.

Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)

Description

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) establishes the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), which provides funds for projects designed to reduce transportation emissions, defined as carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from on-road highway sources.

Eligibility

Eligible routes for the CRP include principal and minor arterials, urban collectors and major rural collectors that are not on a state route. Minor rural collector and local roadways are not eligible for federal funding.

CRP funds may be used to establish new or expanded transportation projects that reduce carbon emissions. Projects eligible for CRP funds include roundabouts, operational projects that improve traffic flow, clean fuel bus purchases, and bicycle and pedestrian projects.

The AMATS TAC TIP Subcommittee, with consultation from the AMATS staff, reserves the right to consider project applications under another funding program that it deems better suited for the application.

Program Policies

1. Federal Participation
 - a. The maximum federal share for projects under the CRP program is 80% of the total eligible project costs (excluding 100% local items). Federal funds are capped at the approved amount shown in the current TIP.
 - b. Federal funding for CRP projects is either the federal participation rate approved for the project, or the total federal funds approved for the project, whichever is less.
2. Local Participation
 - a. The minimum local share is 20% of total eligible project costs (excluding 100% local items).
 - b. The local share for CRP projects is required to be in cash from local, state or other non-federal sources. These projects are not eligible for softmatch credit, or 100% Federal funding participation, regardless of Federal or state eligibility. Planning and engineering costs (including the development of right-of-way and construction plans) are not considered as local share.
3. Right-of-Way – the right-of-way funding may be adjusted from the original amount approved as long as the project's total cap is not increased. These projects have a combined right-of-way and construction cap (see 5 below).

4. Construction/Capital Purchases – the construction funding may be adjusted from the original amount approved as long as the project’s total cap is not increased. These projects have a combined right-of-way and construction cap (see 5 below).
5. CRP Funding Cap – CRP projects have a combined right-of-way and construction cap of \$2,000,000 in federal funds. Assuming an 80% Federal share, total project cost should not exceed \$2,500,000. Any cost above this amount is the responsibility of the local sponsor.
6. Project Delays – projects that are delayed or cancelled will be re-evaluated based on the following principles:
 - a. If a project is delayed due to the lack of programmed federal funds, the project will be rescheduled as soon as funds become available.
 - b. If a project is delayed due to the project sponsor, the project may be cancelled or rescheduled at a later time as not to impact or jeopardize other projects that have met their schedules.
7. Project Cost Increases – Project phases scheduled in the next fiscal year will be updated in AMATS funding program to reflect the latest estimates. Project sponsors must submit revised project cost estimates for the phase that is scheduled in the next fiscal year.
 - a. If the revised project cost estimate is lower than the original estimate, AMATS federal share, as shown in AMATS Funding Program and Balances Table, will be adjusted accordingly to reflect 80% of the revised estimate. The project cost shown in the TIP will not be changed and the project is still eligible to receive federal funding up to 80% of the original estimate.
 - b. If the revised project cost estimate, based on the original scope, is higher than the original estimate, AMATS federal share may be increased up to 80% of the revised estimate.
 - c. AMATS federal share increase is limited to 15% above the original federal share programmed for the project and is not to exceed the funding policy cap for right-of-way and construction. The AMATS Staff has the authority to make funding decisions for project cost increases based on the availability of funds. If a project is already at the AMATS funding policy cap, project cost increase requests must be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee, with the Policy Committee having final decision-making authority. Situations not specified herein will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee.
8. Major Changes to Project Funding – Projects which have already received federal STBG funds through AMATS are not eligible to apply for additional STBG funds through AMATS normal application cycle. If additional funding for a project is necessary a request must be made to the AMATS Staff and will be reviewed by the TAC TIP Subcommittee, TAC and Policy Committee, with the Policy Committee having final decision-making authority.
9. Self-Scoring – AMATS strongly recommends communities self-score their applications before submitting them for consideration.

Pavement Repair & Sidewalk Ramp Program

Description

ODOT’s Urban Paving Program includes participation in resurfacing state and US routes within municipalities. In accordance with ODOT’s Policy, ODOT District 4 requires that all partial and full depth pavement repairs within

the project limits be completed before or in conjunction with a resurfacing project that has been scheduled under its paving program. Municipalities are responsible for funding these pavement repairs.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), ODOT District 4 also requires that all sidewalk ramps within the project limits meet the current standards and be completed before or in conjunction with a resurfacing project that has been scheduled under the paving program. Municipalities are also responsible for all sidewalk ramps costs.

Title II of the ADA specifically applies to public entities (state and local governments), and the programs, services, and activities they deliver. Title II Article 8, requires public entities to take several steps designed to achieve compliance with the ADA. The first step in this compliance is the development of an ADA transition plan. The ADA transition plan should include:

1. A list of the physical barriers in a public entity's facilities that limit the accessibility of its programs, activities, or services to individuals with disabilities.
2. A detailed outline of the methods to be utilized to remove these barriers and make the facilities accessible.
3. The schedule for taking the necessary steps to achieve compliance with Title II.
4. The name of the official responsible for the plan's implementation.

Transition plans provide a method for a public entity to schedule and implement ADA required improvements to existing streets and sidewalks. The transition plan requires an inventory of the current curb ramps and sidewalks, the identification of barriers, and a system for the removal of these barriers. Transition plans must also include a public involvement component. AMATS requires that all of its members have an ADA Transition Plan, and certify this as part of the project funding application process.

Eligibility

Resurfacing projects on State and US routes within municipalities scheduled under ODOT's Urban Paving Program.

Program Policies

AMATS may participate in funding these partial and full depth pavement repairs and sidewalk ramps with STBG funds at an 80% share. The AMATS staff has the authority to make funding decisions of up to \$150,000 in federal funds per project for a combination of both the pavement repairs and ADA ramps. This action is subject to the availability of funds. The AMATS Policy Committee will make funding decisions for projects that require more than the \$150,000 federal share for these items.

FTA Urbanized Area Formula (Section 5307) Program

Description

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Program funding is apportioned to each Urbanized Area as a transportation block grant. These funds are flexible and may be used for a variety of transportation projects. However, these funds tend to be used for transit projects such as bus replacements and other transit capital projects. For urbanized areas over 200,000 in population, such as Akron, Section 5307 funds may only be used for capital expenses. The exceptions to this restriction include expenses for preventive maintenance, the capital cost of

leasing, planning, and complementary ADA paratransit service. The funding participation rate is generally 80% federal and 20% local. See the FTA circular for program guidance.

Eligibility

Grants under the Urbanized Area Formula Program are available to finance planning and capital projects. Capital projects include acquisition, construction, improvement, and maintenance of facilities and equipment for use in public transit. Eligible purposes include planning, engineering design and evaluation of transit projects and other technical transportation-related studies; capital investments in bus and bus-related activities such as replacement of buses, overhaul or rebuilding of buses, security equipment and construction of maintenance and passenger facilities; and capital investments in new and existing fixed guideway systems including rolling stock, overhaul and rebuilding of vehicles, track, signals, communications and computer hardware and software. All preventive maintenance costs are considered capital costs.

Program Policies

1. Designated Recipients – Currently, the only designated recipients of Section 5307 funds in the AMATS area are METRO RTA in Summit County and PARTA in Portage County. Both METRO and PARTA receive the bulk of their Section 5307 funds from the Akron Urbanized Area’s apportionment and receive smaller suballocations from the apportionment to the Cleveland Urbanized Area. Medina County Public Transit (MCPT) serves a portion of the Akron Urbanized Area, in and adjoining the Wadsworth area. As a result, MCPT will receive a portion of these formula funds as described in the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2013 (AMATS Policy Resolution 2013-15; September 25, 2013). NOACA serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for MCPT.
2. Evaluation of Projects – Annually, METRO and PARTA will submit a draft project list to AMATS requesting Section 5307 funds. The staff will ensure that the project lists are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan, as well as the region’s Transit Asset Management (TAM) planning activities. AMATS, METRO and PARTA will collaborate to ensure the appropriate and efficient use of funds and then make recommendations to the Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee based on the priorities of the Regional Transportation Plan. If issues arise with a specific project that the staff cannot resolve, the TAC TIP Subcommittee will be called on to resolve the issue.
3. Cleveland Urbanized Area Section 5307 Funds – AMATS is responsible for programming the projects that METRO and PARTA will fund with the Section 5307 funds they receive from the Cleveland Urbanized Area’s apportionment. Annually, AMATS will work with METRO and PARTA to ensure that FTA obligates all the Cleveland Urbanized Area Section 5307 funds prior to obligating any Akron Urbanized Area funds.
4. Program Funding Cap – There is no funding cap for the Section 5307 Program.

FTA Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program

Description

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310) Program provides funding for the purpose of assisting non-profit human/social services agencies, as well as providers of public transportation, in meeting the special transportation needs of the elderly and those with

disabilities. This competitive grant program is administered by the ODOT Office of Transit as the Specialized Transportation Program. See the FTA circular for program guidance.

To receive FTA Section 5310 funding, an area must develop and maintain a locally developed coordinated transportation plan, as mandated by federal guidance. Local projects must be consistent with the AMATS Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan), as well as the region’s Transit Asset Management (TAM) planning activities. The current Coordinated Plan was approved by the AMATS Policy Committee on May 10, 2018 (see Resolution 2018-11).

Eligible Projects

Grants under the FTA Section 5310 program are available to finance capital and, on a limited basis, operating expenses. Funding may be awarded to qualified public agencies, regional transit authorities and for-profit providers of shared-ride transportation. Eligible projects include (but are not limited to):

- Capital Rolling Stock & Related Equipment – accessible buses, vans and other vehicles, on-board communications equipment, and computer hardware and software to aid in the efficiency and coordination of transportation for the elderly and those with disabilities.
- Capital Projects to Increase Access to Transportation – public transportation projects exceeding ADA requirements, construction of accessible shelters, infrastructure to improve access to transit stops that are not currently accessible, etc.
- Operating Assistance – feeder services to provide access to fixed-route bus stops, new service to meet the needs of seniors and the disabled in areas where existing services are insufficient, inappropriate or unavailable and alternatives to public transportation.

Program Policies

1. Designated Recipients – METRO RTA and PARTA are direct recipients of FTA funds, and are eligible to receive Section 5310 funds. Social service agencies are also eligible to receive Section 5310 funds, and will receive those funds through ODOT acting as the designated recipient of funds. ODOT’s Program Management Plan (PMP) describes the designated recipient’s policies and procedures for administering FTA Section 5310 funds. The PMP is discussed in the ODOT Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan. The PMP also describes the competitive selection process.
2. Administrative Expenses Reimbursement – Per the FTA Section 5310 program provisions, the designated recipient (ODOT) may set aside up to 10% of total program funds for the reimbursement of administrative, planning and technical assistance expenses.
3. Evaluation of Projects – All projects must be competitively selected and consistent with the region’s Coordinated Plan. ODOT Office of Transit maintains evaluation criteria for the FTA Section 5310 program. All projects must meet minimum scoring requirements. ODOT will evaluate and prioritize all projects in coordination with AMATS, in keeping with the recommendations established within the Coordinated Plan and in consideration of the total funding available. Projects that are not consistent with the Coordinated Plan will not be scored or considered for funding. The AMATS Policy Committee will be responsible for final approval of the projects that receive Section 5310 funding.
4. Program Funding Cap – There is no funding cap for the FTA Section 5310 program.

FTA Bus and Bus Facilities (Section 5339) Program

Description

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Bus and Bus Facilities (Section 5339) Program provides capital funding to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment, and to construct bus-related facilities. Several years ago federal surface transportation legislation created this program to replace the FTA Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities Program.

Funds will be formulaically allocated to the Akron urbanized area (UZA), in accordance with the grant requirements established by the FTA Section 5307 program. The designated recipients of program funding are operators of fixed-route bus services, which include METRO RTA and PARTA in the AMATS region. Public agencies or private non-profit organizations engaged in public transportation are eligible subrecipients. The funding participation rate is 80% federal and 20% local.

Eligibility

Grants under the Bus and Bus Facilities program are available to finance capital projects. Eligible activities include the replacement, rehabilitation and purchase of buses, vans, and related equipment, and the construction of bus-related facilities.

Program Policies

1. Designated Recipients – As the AMATS region’s two operators of fixed-route bus service, METRO in Summit County, and PARTA in Portage County are the designated recipients for Section 5339 funding. Both METRO and PARTA receive the bulk of their Section 5339 funding from the Akron Urbanized Area’s apportionment and may receive smaller sub allocations from the apportionment to the Cleveland Urbanized Area.
2. Evaluation of Projects – Annually, METRO and PARTA will submit a draft project list to AMATS requesting Section 5339 funds. The staff will ensure that the project lists are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan, as well as the region’s Transit Asset Management (TAM) planning activities. AMATS, METRO and PARTA will collaborate to ensure the appropriate and efficient use of funds and then make recommendations to the Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee based on the priorities of the Regional Transportation Plan. If issues arise with a specific project that the staff cannot resolve, the TAC TIP Subcommittee will be called on to resolve the issue.
3. Cleveland Urbanized Area Section 5339 Funds – AMATS is responsible for programming the projects that METRO and PARTA will fund with Section 5339 funds they receive from the Cleveland Urbanized Area’s apportionment. Annually, AMATS will work with METRO and PARTA to ensure that FTA obligates all of the Cleveland Urbanized Area Section 5339 funds prior to obligating any Akron Urbanized Area funds.
4. Program Funding Cap – There is no funding cap for the FTA Section 5339 program.

Section 3 | TIP Project Selection and Implementation Process

Final selection of STBG, TASA, Resurfacing, FTA Section 5307 Urban Area Formula, Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities and Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities projects is the responsibility of the AMATS Policy Committee. The Policy Committee has assigned specific duties to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the TAC TIP Subcommittee. In this section, the assigned duties of the TAC and the TAC TIP Subcommittee are listed. In addition, the steps included in the process to select projects for funding are described.

Duties of the Technical Advisory Committee

The Policy Committee has assigned to the Technical Advisory Committee the following duties in the development and monitoring of the STBG, TASA, Resurfacing and FTA Sections 5307, 5310 and 5339 funding programs:

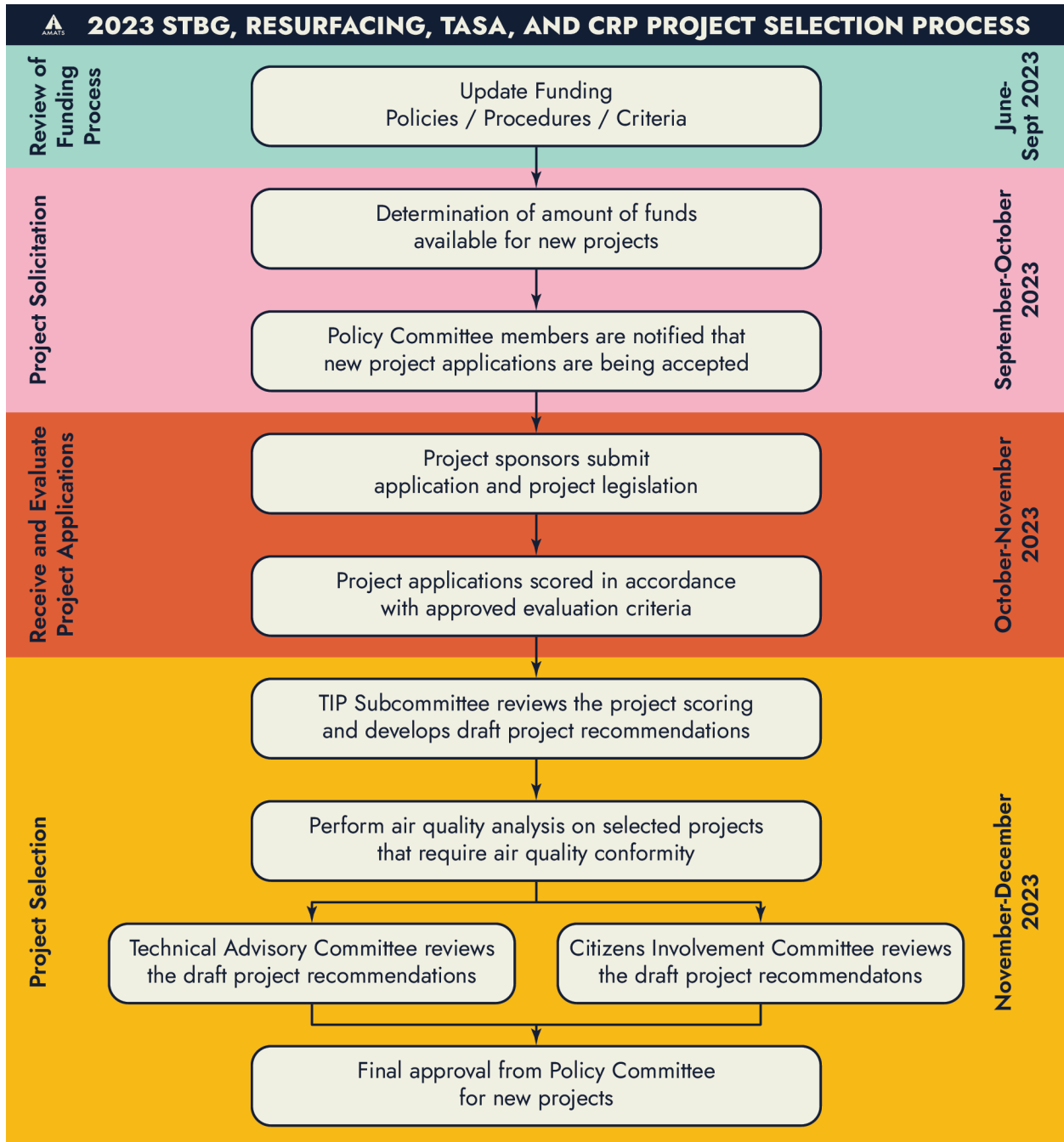
- a. Review project schedules, project costs and funding programs and provide a periodic TIP Status Report to the Policy Committee.
- b. Appoint a TIP Subcommittee to monitor TIP funding and project activity. The TAC Chairman will direct this Subcommittee and its membership shall include the Policy Committee Chairperson, one representative from each city with a population of over 20,000, a representative from a city with a population between 10,000 and 20,000 appointed by the Policy Committee Chairperson, a representative from a city with a population between 5,000 and 10,000 appointed by the Policy Committee Chairperson, a village representative appointed by the Policy Committee Chairperson, the Summit and Portage County Engineers, Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority and METRO Regional Transit Authority. Each member of the Subcommittee has one vote. The chairman can only vote if his or her community is not otherwise represented. Policy Committee Chairperson appointments will be made before a round of AMATS funding begins. The appointees will serve for two years until the next round of funding.
- c. Provide recommendations to the Policy Committee for the purpose of adding, deleting or altering TIP projects. In developing its recommendations, the TAC will consider the results of an evaluation of project applications, TIP Subcommittee project funding recommendations, the goals and objectives of the AMATS Regional Transportation Plan, project development schedules, funding availability through other federal programs, anticipated availability of AMATS attributable federal funds, and an equitable distribution of funding among communities or agencies.

Duties of the TAC TIP Subcommittee

The Policy Committee has assigned the TAC TIP Subcommittee the following funding policies and programming procedures activities. Staff assistance will be provided to the TAC TIP Subcommittee in performing these duties.

- a. Conduct quarterly project review meetings to monitor the status of projects selected for funding.
- b. Provide periodic TIP Status Reports to TAC. The report will include an update of project schedules, project costs and funding availability.
- c. Solicit project applications based on the availability of federal funds.
- d. Conduct a preliminary review of proposed projects.

- e. Review project applications, apply project criteria, and provide to the TAC a listing of project funding recommendations.
- f. Complete air quality conformity evaluations as needed.



Section 4 | Project Evaluation Criteria

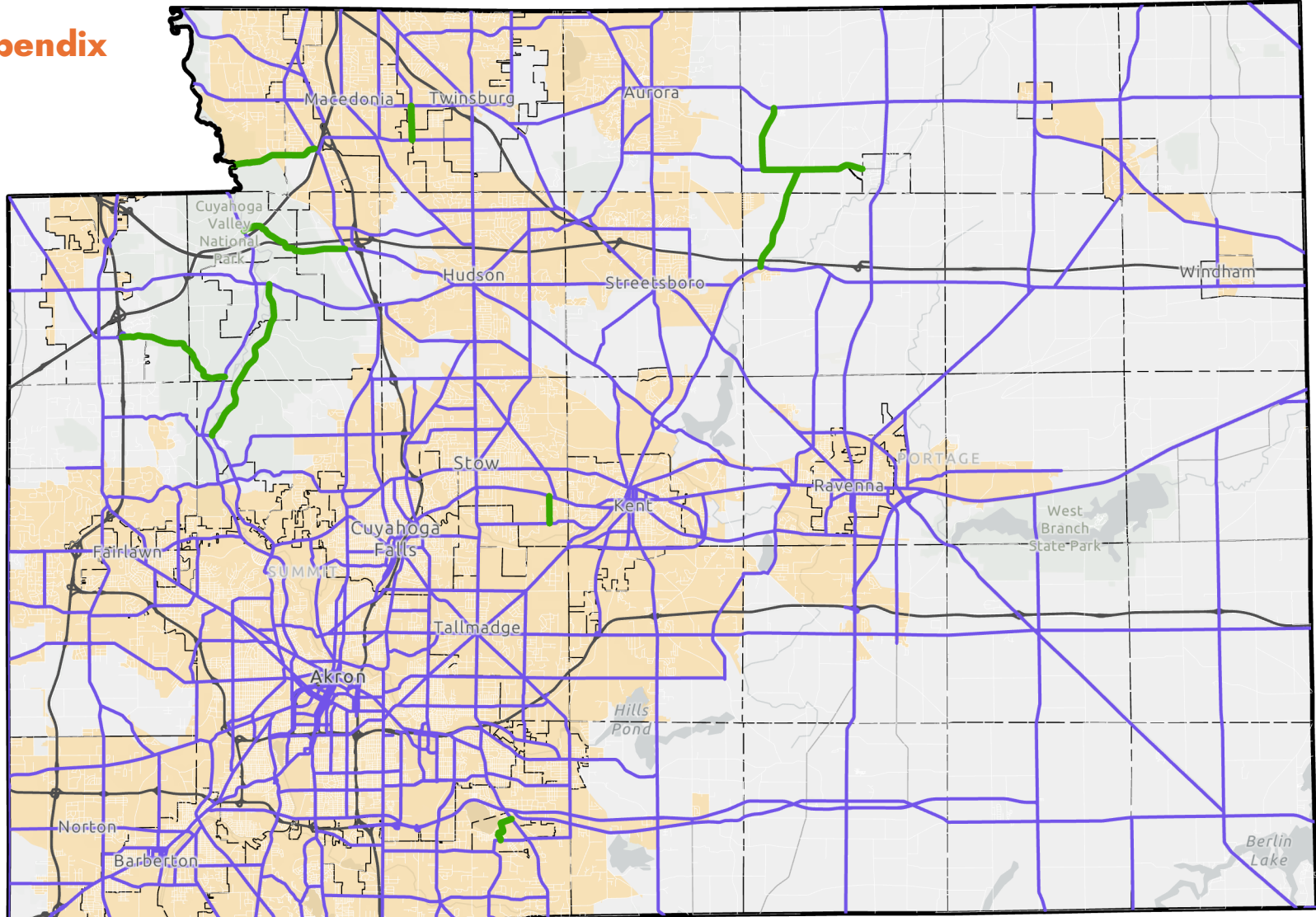
Surface Transportation Block Group Program (STBG)		
Roadway Condition (Maximum 30 Points)		Points
<i>PCI Value</i>		
0-50		30
50-60		25
61-70		20
71-80		15
81-100		0
<i>Bridge Condition</i>		
0-4		20
Signal Upgrade		20
Roadway Safety (Maximum 25 Points)		
Project location identified on AMATS SS4A Plan High Injury Network		25
Bridge / Road Closed		25
High crash location listed on AMATS Traffic Crash Report		15
Bridge Load Restricted		15
Documented Landslide Endangering Road		15
Delay Reduction (Maximum 10 Points)		
Recommended Capacity Improvement in the 2020 CMP		10
Weighted Average Daily Traffic (Maximum 15 Points)		
15,000 or more		15
0 to 14,999		ADT / 1000
Project Readiness (Maximum 15 Points)		
Stage 3 Plans complete (Traditional or Non-Traditional LPA)		15
ODOT LPA Project Scope Form submitted to AMATS		5
Complete Streets Components (Maximum of 15 Points)		Partial Full
<i>Transit</i>		
Bus Signal Priority / Preemption	2	4
Enhanced Bus Shelters	2	4
Dedicated Transit Lane	2	4
Bus Rapid Transit Lanes	2	4
ADA Sidewalk Extensions at Bus Stops	2	4
Other Transit Enhancements	2	4
<i>Bicycle and Pedestrian</i>		
Cycle Track / Shared Use Path	2	4
New Sidewalks	2	4
On Street Bicycle Lane	2	4
Rapid Flashing Beacon, Pedestrian Refuge Island, Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements, Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon	2	4
Connecting Communities Project		
Project recommended in Connecting Communities Planning Grant		5
Equitable Distribution of Funds		
<i>The Ratio of Funds Received (and Programmed) to a Target Budget</i>		
<i>Percentage</i>		
0-50		10
51-60		9
61-70		8
71-80		7
81-90		6
91-100		5
101-110		4
111-120		3
121-130		2
131-150		1
Greater than 150		0
Priority Project Selection		
Priority Project Selected by Sponsor		5

Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TASA)		
Facilities (Maximum 25 Points)		Points
Regional Trail (Towpath, Portage, Headwaters, Bike and Hike)		25
Secondary Trail / Sidewalk / Bike Lane		15
Project Type (Maximum 25 Points)		
Project connects two existing bike/ped facilities		25
FY 2024/2025/2026 existing projects supplemental funding		25
Project Connects to one existing bike/ped facility		20
Project is sidewalk replacement or bike/ped safety infrastructure		20
Project is a stand-alone project		15
Project upgrades trail surface from limestone to asphalt		5
Level of Use (Maximum 20 Points)		
How much use is the facility projected to have		0-20
Consistency with Plans (Maximum 35 Points)		
Recommended as part of an Ohio SRTS Travel Plan		10
Recommended in Connecting Communities Planning Grant		5
Recommended in Transportation Outlook 2045		5
Is on an existing transit line		5
History of bike/ped crashes		5
Rapid Flashing Beacon, Pedestrian Refuge Island, Crosswalk Visibility Enhancements, Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon		15
Equitable Distribution of Funds (Maximum 10 Points)		
<i>The Ratio of Funds Received (and Programmed) to a Target Budget</i>		
Percentage		
0-50		10
51-100		7
101-150		3

AMATS Resurfacing Program		
Pavement Condition Index (Maximum 30 Points)		Points
<i>PCI Value</i>		
0-60		30
61-80		90 - PCI
Equitable Distribution of Funds (Maximum 25 Points)		
<i>The Ratio of Funds Received (and Programmed) to a Target Budget</i>		
Percentage		
0-50		25
51-60		24
61-70		23
71-80		22
81-90		21
91-100		20
101-110		19
111-120		18
121-130		17
131-140		16
141-150		15
Greater than 150		0
Weighted Average Daily Traffic (Maximum 15 Points)		
0 to 14,999		ADT / 1000
15,000 and above		15
Maintenance Performed by Sponsor (Maximum 10 Points)		
Chip and Seal		10
Strip Paving		7
Crack Sealing		5
Patching		3
Priority Project Selection (Maximum 15 Points)		
Priority project selected by sponsor		15

Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)		
Project Type (Maximum 15 Points)		Points
Roundabout		15
Other traffic flow improvements (signal improvements, TWLTL)		10
Alternative Fuel Bus Purchase		15
Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements		7
Project Delivery (Maximum 10 Points)		
Project Delivery in FY 26 or sooner		10
Project Delivery after FY 26		5
Safety (Maximum 10 Points)		
Project Identified in SS4A Plan High Injury Network		10
Project includes SS4A Proven Safety Countermeasure or Location Identified on AMATS Annual High Crash Report		5
Equity (Maximum 5 Points)		
Project within a disadvantaged community according to the Equitable Transportation Community Explorer		5
Impact on Emissions (Maximum 15 Points)		
Consistent reduction in idling time/emissions		15
Intermittent reduction in idling time/emissions		5
Limited reduction in idling time/emissions		5
Equitable Distribution of Funds		
<i>The Ratio of Funds Received (and Programmed) to a Target Budget</i>		
Percentage		
0-50		10
51-60		9
61-70		8
71-80		7
81-90		6
91-100		5
101-110		4
111-120		3
121-130		2
131-150		1
Greater than 150		0

Section 5 | Appendix



Highways Eligible for Federal Funding

- To Be Submitted for Approval
- Eligible Roads
- Urban Area/Cluster

Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA