



## 2024-2027 Community Based Transportation Planning Set Aside: Program Overview

### Program Overview

The community-based transportation planning set aside is a Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) -led technical assistance program in the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The goal of this program is to support member jurisdictions in addressing mobility challenges for historically marginalized communities in the DRCOG region.

To achieve this goal, DRCOG will fund and support a variety of transportation planning studies, in partnership with local jurisdictions and organizations. An estimated \$2,500,000 is available for the full four-year set-aside program, with \$1.25 million expected to be spent each two-year cycle.

These studies will identify the specific mobility needs of historically marginalized communities, develop community-informed solutions, and map out a path to fund and implement recommendations. Collaboration will be central in this planning effort, and DRCOG seeks to work with municipal and county governments, community-based organizations, and community members throughout the development of the community-based plans.

### Program Goals

- Expand access to opportunity for residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities.
- Support member governments in their efforts to improve mobility within their communities.
- Address the needs of disproportionately impacted and marginalized communities in the region.
- Center voices of marginalized communities in transportation planning both in their community and around the region.
- Develop innovative engagement methods to center marginalized voices, including partnering with respected community-based organizations.

### What types of projects are eligible?

DRCOG is interested in supporting a wide variety of transportation studies related to historically marginalized populations, which can be defined by the nominating jurisdiction. This program can support:

- Subarea transportation plans
- Corridor plans
- Multimodal, bicycle and/or pedestrian plans
- Safety or vision zero plans
- Transit or Microtransit studies



- First/Last Mile studies
- School transportation plans
- Other transportation or mobility related studies.
- Conceptual design for community-informed transportation solutions (up to 30% design)

This Community Based Transportation Planning program will work to center the voices of community members at the start and throughout the development of the plan. As such, all studies or plans will also include community engagement as a substantial part of the scope of work given the focus on traditionally underserved populations.

DRCOG is particularly interested in innovative engagement techniques, including working with and contracting with community-based organizations (CBOs) that already have strong ties to the focus communities. CBOs involved do not need to work exclusively on transportation issues but could be a wide variety of organizations that serve or represent the target community. Possible examples include direct service organizations, faith-based organizations, health organizations, local schools or school districts, community groups, and more.

### Funding amount

DRCOG is interested in supporting several communities throughout the region through this set-aside. As such no single project can be more than 50% of the total funding each cycle (\$625,000) and DRCOG will select at least four different projects each two-year cycle (depending on the number of submissions received). Jurisdictions can submit letters of interest for projects of all sizes if they meet the other program criteria.

**There is no local match requirement or financial commitment for this program.**

### Defining Marginalized Communities

All plans or studies must focus on a historically marginalized community, as defined by the nominating jurisdiction or organization. This could include low-income households, people of color, people with disabilities, people without vehicles, transit riders, youth, immigrants, aging populations, people with limited English proficiency, or some mixture of these groups. Communities can be defined geographically (i.e., a neighborhood, urban center, corridor) or as a specific population within a broader area (i.e., non-English speakers or transit riders in a certain neighborhood).

Project sponsors can explain why the community that they are proposing to study is historically marginalized. They can also use the [DRCOG Data Tool](#) to analyze the project area's demographics.

### Eligible project sponsors

Letters of interest can be submitted by local jurisdictions (cities or counties) in the DRCOG MPO boundary, regional agencies, or by nonprofit organizations including Transportation Management Associations (TMAs). If a TMA or other nonprofit organization is interested in serving as the project sponsor and submitting a letter of interest, they must include a letter of



support from each impacted local government detailing their support for the project and willingness to participate in the plan or study, which at a minimum should include attending monthly meetings, providing relevant data, and supporting community engagement through their existing communication channels.

Note: A nonprofit organization or TMA that is a project sponsor and submits a letter of interest will not be eligible to apply to be a contractor or subcontractor on the project.

### Expectations for Project Sponsors

DRCOG will fund the projects, manage CBO and contractor procurement, and support the studies as project manager. The nominating entity will at minimum serve on a steering committee, provide data and background information for the project and support community engagement. If a project is sponsored by a non-governmental agency, the supporting local jurisdictions are required to also commit to attending monthly project meetings, supporting data request, and supporting engagement.

All project sponsors (either local jurisdictions, organizations, or RTD) will be required to sign a letter of understanding and project commitment with DRCOG detailing their commitment to the project, expectations, and involvement.



## 2024-2025 Selection Process & Details

### 2024-2025 Timeline:

November 2023	Letter of Interest Released
November – December 2023	Invitations to submit letters of interest & meetings with interested jurisdictions
December 31, 2023	Letters of Interest DUE
January 2024	Follow up conversations with jurisdiction submitting LOIs, if necessary
January – February 2024	Selection committee recommends projects for 2024-2025 cycle
February - March 2024	TAC, RTC, and Board approve selection
2024 - 2025	Begin studies. Kick-offs may be staggered.

### Key details:

- **Required coordination:** All potential project sponsors should reach out to DRCOG staff to discuss their project idea before submitting a letter of interest. Please contact [Nora Kern](#), subarea and project planning program manager, to set up a meeting.
- **Final Selection:** A selection committee comprised of DRCOG staff and representatives from CDOT and RTD will recommend community-based transportation plans for the program based on the letters of interest that were received. If a decision cannot be made after the letter of interest phase, DRCOG may invite project sponsors to submit a full application to provide additional information. Evaluation criteria that will be used are listed below. The final selection will be approved by DRCOG’s board of directors.
- **Number of projects selected:** The selection committee will rank all submitted projects based on the selection criteria. DRCOG staff will then work with the top-rated proposals to develop scope and set a budget. Additional projects will then be selected based on remaining funds available.

## Selection Criteria

Selection criteria for this set-aside will include:

Criteria	Category	Description	Scoring
1	<b>Alignment with Metro Vision</b>	Will a study of this community advance overarching themes and outcomes outlined in Metro Vision?	0 – Not discussed or no impact  5 – The project has clearly defined goals tied to Metro Vision themes and could help make a significant impact
2	<b>Alignment with 2050 Regional Transportation Plan priorities</b>	Will this study advance goals outlined in the RTP, in particular safety, regional transit, multimodal options, and air quality?	0 – Not discussed or no impact  5 – The project has clearly defined goals tied to 2050 RTP project and program investment priorities and could help make a significant impact

3	<b>Community Need / Level of Disadvantage</b>	Is this community identified as disadvantaged? Does nominated community focus on an area or a population with a high number of low-income people, people of color, people without access to a vehicle, people with limited English proficiency, or people with disabilities?	0 – This project will not benefit marginalized populations or will negatively impact marginalized populations.  5 – This project will have a large positive benefit to historically marginalized populations.
4	<b>Community Engagement</b>	Has the project sponsor considered how to best reach marginalized populations? Are any community-based organizations identified as partners?	0 – Limited or no consideration for engagement or how to reach target population.  5 – Clear plan and consideration for reaching marginalized voices, including but not limited to partnering with one or more respected community organizations.
4	<b>Readiness</b>	Is there a clear goal and scope for this study? Is the nominating agency prepared to partner for this study? Is their capacity at the identified community organization to support this project?	0 – This study is not ready to proceed in a timeline manner. Additional relationships, planning or coordinating are required.  5 – This study has a clearly defined scope and is ready to proceed. Related planning efforts have outlined a clear need for this study. And/or local partners are engaged and available to support this effort.
5	<b>Planning Need</b>	Is there a clear transportation need identified in the focus community? Are there specific transportation barriers or challenges identified? Is there a lack of planning capacity within the local jurisdiction for this project?	0 – There is little to no urgent planning need.  5 – There are clearly defined transportation challenges or barriers faced by the target population that could be addressed through a community-based transportation plan.