

Board of Directors

Meeting date: September 16, 2026

Agenda Item #: 10

2029-2032 TIP Development Process to Date

Agenda item type: Informational briefing

Summary

Discussion on the Transportation Improvement Program, or TIP, development process to date for the new Fiscal Years 2029-2032 TIP.

Background

Since January, staff have held discussions, mainly with Transportation Advisory Committee, or TAC, members to outline potential adjustments to ultimately produce an amendment to the existing [TIP Policy document](#). In the TIP development process, amending the current policy document is the first step before any calls for projects are issued. This memo outlines those discussions to date by topic, including initial recommendations to adjust the current policy document, leading up to the Regional Share call for projects opening in January 2027.

Call for projects process

Walk audits

Staff is recommending all application sponsors conduct a walk audit as part of their applications. A walk audit is a simple on-the-ground inspection of a project area to evaluate current deficiencies to pedestrian safety, comfort and accessibility. The issues observed can then be used to help form scope of work items. A simple diagram will also be required as part of the application materials showing the project area and where those deficiencies are located at.

Emissions calculations

Staff are developing a spreadsheet-based emissions calculator that integrates all proposed project elements into one project-level potential emissions change. In the past, online calculators were utilized, but lacked local or regional data inputs, averages or calculations.

Application platform

Staff are developing a web-based application using Formstack, which will replace the Microsoft Word-based application previously used.

Application questions

TAC members through the TIP Subcommittee are currently reviewing and offering revisions to the existing TIP application questions and will be presented to the September TAC meeting for additional comment. After TAC has reviewed, the draft questions will be included within the draft TIP Policy amendment for RTC and Board action.

New training modules

Staff plan to revise how TIP trainings are conducted to provide greater flexibility and participation, enhance retention, and provide materials in one location. Previously, training was provided by DRCOG, CDOT and RTD at two half-day training sessions held soon after the Regional Share call for projects opened. Going forward, staff intend to release 8-10 individual video modules (PowerPoint with voiceovers) outlining different aspects of the TIP process. CDOT and RTD modules will also be provided.



MPO boundary change

In July, the Governor approved the expansion of the metropolitan planning organization, or MPO, planning area to include both Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties. The MPO boundary change has prompted adjustments to the existing process, including the planned formation of county transportation forum(s) and potential changes to the Subregional Share allocations, which are also being revised to account for estimated available funding and updated data to the allocation formula.

Regional Share

Eligibility

Staff have reviewed the existing Regional Share eligibility criteria and note two adjustments; a shift in the regionally significant air quality staging period timeframes in order to correspond with adjustments in the current RTP update, and adjustments to the eligibility of studies, which can now be located anywhere in the region as long as transportation is the focus. Previously, the study limits must have included the entire MPO to be eligible to be funded.

Use of Regional Transportation Plan or RTP goals

Early in the development process, staff queried both technical members and the Board about the potential to align the Regional Share to one or more of the proposed RTP project and program investment priorities (reliability, air quality, regional transit, safety, freight and active transportation). The concept was to have all projects that are funded work towards advancing one or more goal(s). Though multiple conversations were held, ultimately staff heard mixed results and decided to not advance this concept further. However, the RTP goals will remain a significant scoring element for all projects in both the Regional and Subregional Share calls for projects. Additionally, staff are continuing to explore other options to highlight the regional impact of Regional Share projects and will share more once the draft application questions are shared.

DRCOG funding request minimums and maximums

The current Regional Share funding request minimum is \$100,000 to assist smaller communities with funding projects and the existing maximum is set at \$20 million. The funding minimums and maximums are expected to be discussed at the September TAC meeting.

Subregional Share

Eligibility

As with the Regional Share, staff have reviewed the existing eligibility criteria and outlined adjustments to shift the regionally significant air quality staging period timeframes to correspond with adjustments in the current RTP update. Additionally, the policy outlines the maximum number of applications staff will score, or assist in scoring, if a forum requests assistance. As this was used minimally, staff are recommending the maximum limit be removed.

Funding target adjustments

Of the funding available for the calls for projects, 80% is made available to the Subregional Share. Those funds are then further proportionally targeted for planning purposes to each county transportation forum to ultimately recommend projects back to the DRCOG Board. The percentage is calculated by averaging three factors, all equally weighted, as compared to the regional total: population, employment and vehicle miles traveled, or VMT. Staff expect to present information at the September TAC meeting.



Specific project types

Active transportation projects after counts

In order to provide additional data to DRCOG and its members, sponsors who have projects with an active transportation component will be required to conduct user counts after the project is open to the public.

Transit service studies

After discussions with the Federal Transit Administration, or FTA, DRCOG is eliminating eligibility of transit projects from conducting both a transit study and a pilot of transit service within the same application, as FTA is requesting any transit service be defined upfront in the scope of work. Both elements remain individually eligible but may not be included in the same application.

Funding

Use of MMOF funding

In the last two years, state budget reductions have eliminated Multimodal Transportation and Mitigation Options Fund, or MMOF, funding for DRCOG to allocate in Fiscal Years 2028 through 2030. Considering the elimination of funds and potentially unsolved budget issues in the coming years, DRCOG will not be allocating MMOF in the upcoming calls for projects.

Use of Fiscal Year 2028 funding

In late 2025, the Board approved a special use of Fiscal Year 2028 funding to continue the Fiscal Year 2024-2027 set-asides one additional year and to apply funding towards past years' funding reductions to allow currently funded projects to continue. Based on current projections, approximately 60%, or \$50 million, of the Fiscal Year 2028 funds are projected to roll over to the funding used in the Fiscal Years 2029-2032 calls for projects. This funding level is subject to change before the Regional Share call is opened in January 2027.

Overall funding available

Based on current projections, an estimated \$405 million may be available to program for this TIP. This amount is calculated by growing Fiscal Year 2026 funding levels by two percent each year over the four years of the TIP. This is a conservative estimate until surface transportation reauthorization legislation is fully developed by Congress and signed into law. After the set-asides are taken off the top, 20% is allocated to the Regional Share and 80% to the Subregional Share.

Upcoming schedule

Below outlines the anticipated schedule in order to release the Regional Share call for projects in early January 2027.

- September
 - RTC and Board – development updates
 - TAC - Application questions, Subregional Share funding targets review
- October TAC – TIP Policy amendment review
- November
 - RTC and Board - TIP Policy amendment review
 - TAC – TIP Policy amendment recommendation
- December RTC and Board: TIP Policy amendment recommendation and action.



Action by others

- [January 26, 2026](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee.
- [February 12, 2026](#) – TIP Subcommittee.
- [February 23, 2026](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee.
- [March 12, 2026](#) – TIP Subcommittee.
- [March 23, 2026](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee.
- [April 20, 2026](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee.
- [May 18, 2026](#) – Transportation Advisory Committee.
- [July 27, 2026](#) - Transportation Advisory Committee
- [August 13, 2026](#) – TIP Subcommittee
- [August 24, 2026](#) - Transportation Advisory Committee
- [September 1, 2026](#) - Regional Transportation Committee

Previous discussion/action

None

Recommendation

None

Attachment(s)

Staff Presentation

For more information

If you need additional information, please contact Douglas W. Rex, Executive Director, at 303-480-6701; or Todd Cottrell, Project and Program Delivery Manager, Transportation Planning and Operations, at 303-480-6737 or tcottrell@drcog.org.

