



2022–2023 Community Mobility Planning and Implementation Set-Aside Project Application Form

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

The **Community Mobility Planning and Implementation (CMPI) Set-Aside Call for Projects** opened on **April 22, 2021**. This is a two-step application process that includes/requires the submittal of a letter of intent followed by an application. If you did not submit a letter of intent for your project and have not had a discussion with DRCOG staff, it is not eligible at this time. **Applications are due no later than 5 PM on June 30, 2021**. Please submit your application to Derrick Webb at dwebb@drcog.org.

- Projects requiring CDOT and/or RTD concurrence must provide their official response with this application submittal. Please reach out to them by June 11.
- The application must be affirmed by the department director AND either the applicant's City or County Manager or Chief Elected Official (Mayor or County Commission Chair) for local governments. An agency director or equivalent is sufficient for other applicants.
- Further details on project eligibility, evaluation criteria and selection process are defined on the **Community Mobility Planning and Implementation** [webpage](#).
- If you are submitting more than one project for consideration, please submit a separate application for each.
- If you have any questions, please reach out to Derrick Webb (dwebb@drcog.org) or Josh Schwenk (jschwenk@drcog.org).

APPLICATION OUTLINE

Part 1 | Project Information

Applicants will enter basic information for their *project/plan* (hereafter referred to as *project*) in Part 1, including a Problem Statement, project description, and concurrence documentation from CDOT and/or RTD, if applicable. Part 1 will not be scored.

Part 2 | Evaluation Criteria, Questions and Scoring

This part includes sections for the **applicant to provide qualitative and quantitative responses** to use for scoring projects. To learn more about how projects will be scored, please see the eligibility rules and selection process document at www.drcog.org/mpi.

Part 1

Project Information

1. Project Title	Phase 2 Enhancements, Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement	
2. Project Type	Small Infrastructure	
3. Project Start/End points or Geographic Area <i>Provide a map with submittal that includes the planning area or project location.</i>	On the north side of Evergreen Lake, along Evergreen Parkway SH-74 at mileposts 7.0-8.0 and west of the SH-74/CR-73 Intersection in downtown Evergreen. See Map at Att 1	
4. Project Sponsor (entity that will construct/complete and be financially responsible for the project)	Evergreen Park & Recreation District	
5. Project Contact Person, Title, Phone Number, and Email	Ellen O'Connor, Executive Director 720-880-1011; eoconnor@eprd.co	
6. Does this project touch CDOT Right-of-Way, involve a CDOT roadway, access RTD property or request RTD involvement to operate service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>If yes, provide applicable concurrence documentation with submittal (please use prepared form). See Att 2.</i>	
7. For planning projects, non-local government applicants are required to submit a letter of support from the applicable local government(s) where the project is located. Have you have met/corresponded with the local jurisdiction(s) where your project is located and attached letter(s) of support?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>If yes, please attach Letter(s) of Support.</i>	
8. What planning document(s) identifies the need for this plan or project?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <p> Evergreen Lake North Trail Phase II: Planning Study (2018) Evergreen Lake North Trail Preliminary Study (2017) Evergreen Trails Master Plan (2015) at D-2, D-28-29 Jeffco Trails Plan (2020) at pp. 13, 22, 36 Evergreen Park & Recreation District Master Plan (2011), pp. 35, 38-39, 50-52 and Trail Recommendation Map C in App C Jefferson County Open Space Master Plan (2014-19), Trails Map 6 Jefferson County Evergreen Area Plan (2015) Jefferson County Bicycle Plan (2012) DRCOG Active Transportation Plan (2019) at Fig 14 (p. 16), Fig 19 (p. 34) and Fig 26 (App p. 36) <i>Provide link to document/s and referenced page number/</i> </p> <input type="checkbox"/> This plan or project is not associated with a planning document.	
9. Project Overview (concise abstract limited to 500 characters)		
<p>The Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement Project will construct an accessible, multi-use trail at a regional active transportation and recreation hub, while fixing stability issues under the existing soft-surface trail and adjacent state highway on the north side of Evergreen Lake. This Phase 2 Enhancements Project will improve community mobility by adding safety, connectivity, accessibility, and reliability enhancements recommended during final design of the project. The project is a collaboration of multiple stakeholders including EPRD, CDOT, Denver, Jeffco and Evergreen Metro.</p>		
10. Project Description. Describe your project and what it is going to do. Do not include background information or justification language. Please only include details specific to the work that will occur as part of this project. (limited to 1,500 characters)		

The **Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement Project** will create a multiuse, accessible trail system on the north side of Evergreen Lake. The originally-scoped project includes a **curb and gutter buffer** between SH-74 and trail users; a **gravity support wall**; the **Upper Trail**, an off-street, multi-use, accessible, hard surface trail of 10' treadwidth near SH-74; the **Lower Trail**, a 5-foot-wide soft-surface pedestrian trail with fishing and wildlife viewing areas; and **one drainage inlet** to improve roadway and stormwater run-off into Evergreen Lake. This **Phase 2 Enhancements Project** adds elements to the originally-scoped project that were recommended during final design. Phase 2 Enhancements include a **new safety railing, mobility & accessibility improvements** on the Lower Trail and east and west ends of the project, and **drainage improvements**.

In the works since 2016, the project is a collaboration of multiple stakeholders including EPRD, CDOT, Denver, Jeffco and Evergreen Metro District. It is now in final design under CDOT TAP Project #22364, which is expected to conclude in late summer 2021. Phase 2 Enhancements already have been incorporated into the project's final design and clearance process. Phase 1 construction is already federalized and fully funded under DRCOG TIP Project #2020-025. Construction is planned for spring-summer 2022.

11. Project Innovation. Briefly describe any innovative features of the proposed project. *Example: Project elements haven't been implemented in the region, project reaches new market, project has potentially transferrable products.*

The innovative railing system of the **Phase 2 Enhancements** will transform the buffer between vehicles and trail users from a split rail fence to a safety post and cable railing. This will improve safety, user experience, and comfort. Other innovations developed during final design include widening trail transitions and reducing grade changes at the project's east and west ends to improve accessibility. See Renderings Att 5 & Sera Letter at Att 6.

12. Define the **scope** and **specific elements** of the project. For planning projects, please include any stakeholder events and deliverables under specific tasks. Each task should start with a title and follow with a description.

Phase 1 Construction of the Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement will include a **curb and gutter buffer** between SH-74 and trail users; a **gravity support wall**; the **Upper Trail**, an off-street, multi-use, accessible, hard surface trail of 10' treadwidth near SH-74; the **Lower Trail**, a 5-foot-wide soft-surface pedestrian trail with fishing and wildlife viewing areas; and **one drainage inlet** to improve roadway and stormwater run-off into Evergreen Lake. Final Design of the Phase 1 construction project identified opportunities to enhance the trail system's safety, connectivity, accessibility and reliability. Those enhancements have been incorporated into the project's final design and clearance processes, and will be ready for installation along with the original Phase 1 project.

The **Phase 2 Enhancements** that are the subject of this request for funding are:

- **Task 1: Safety post & cable rail system** — replace originally-scoped split rail fence between SH-74 and trail;
- **Task 2: East-end mobility & access improvements** — extend trail to the east to complete AASHTO and ADA compliant connection to Connector Trail and downtown Evergreen;
- **Task 3: West-end mobility & access improvements** — extend project limits on west end of trail to create accessible transition between Upper & Lower Trails plus accessible connection from Fisherman's Parking Lot north of SH-74.
- **Task 4: Lower Trail expansion and accessibility improvements** -- make access to and entire length of the Lower Trail fully accessible and add more bulb-outs for fishing and wildlife viewing; and
- **Task 5: Better drainage under SH-74 and multi-use trail** — increase inlets from one to four to minimize drainage overflows to protect structural integrity of retaining wall and to reduce run-off or sediment into the lake.

13. Would a smaller amount than requested be acceptable, while maintaining the original intent of the project?

☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, define smaller meaningful limits, size, service level, phases, or scopes, along with the cost for each, if the project is scalable.

While we anticipate that the **Phase 2 Enhancements** will add roughly \$500,000 to the existing \$3.8M construction project, it is too soon to tell to what extent the project is scalable because project bidding is expected to occur in Fall 2021. EPRD will scale the project according to available funding after bids are received. We expect we will have to forego some of the Phase 2 Enhancement elements, and perhaps some Phase 1 elements as well, should we be unsuccessful in securing full funding for these improvements.

14. Please confirm you have completed and attached the **CDOT Risk Assessment Form**.

☒ Yes, I have completed and attached the CDOT Risk Assessment Form

15. Please confirm with your initials that you have read and understand the expectations outlined in **eligibility rules and selection process** document; that you will ensure a DRCOG staff member is included in **project management-level meetings**; and that **project deliverables will be transmitted to DRCOG** upon completion if the project is selected for funding. EOC

A. Project Financial Information and Funding Request

1. Total Project Cost (<i>Phase 2 Enhancements only; for Phase 1 & 2 Proposed Financial Package submitted to CDOT, pls see Att 3</i>)		\$500,000
2. Total amount of DRCOG Request <i>Maximum is 82.79% of total project cost per federal match requirements.</i>	\$413,950	82.79% of total project cost
3. Outside Funding Partners List each funding partner/source and contribution amount.	\$\$ Contribution Amount	% of Contribution to Overall Total Project Cost
Evergreen Metro District	\$50,000	10.00%
Evergreen Legacy Fund/DEED	\$36,050	7.21%
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
Total amount of funding provided by other funding partners <i>(private, local, state, regional or federal)</i>	\$86,050	17.21%

Funding Breakdown (by year)					
			FY 2022	FY 2023	Total
Federal Funds			\$413,950	\$	\$413,950
State Funds			\$	\$	\$0
Local Funds			\$86,050	\$	\$86,050
Total Funding			\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000

4. By checking this box, the applicant's Chief Elected Official (Mayor or County Commission Chair) or City/County Manager or Executive Director **AND** Department Director, has certified it allows this project request to be submitted for DRCOG-allocated funding and will follow all DRCOG policies and state and federal regulations when completing this project, if funded.



Part 2 Evaluation Criteria, Questions and Scoring

A. Project type, collaboration and innovation

Provide **qualitative and quantitative** responses to the following questions on the significance of the proposed project and multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency collaboration.

1. Why is this project important?

The Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement is important to the community of Evergreen, Jefferson County, and visitors from across the State because it will improve transportation safety and provide a missing link in an active transportation network at a regional recreation hub for the Front Range. It also will fix infrastructure issues under the existing soft surface trail on the north side of Evergreen Lake. Regarding its importance to our local community: ***This project is important to Evergreen because it is a critical multi-modal link between our Downtown area and the Evergreen Lake. The current conditions of the pedestrian link between these critical activity centers is in disrepair and has never met any standard for safety nor accessibility. In addition, this section of trail is a link between the Pioneer Regional Trail to the West and Phase I of the Evergreen Lake North Trail segment, which would finally provide a continuous accessible trail system serving a number of recreational, business and transportation destinations.*** ELF Letter of Support at Att 8.

Regarding its importance to Jefferson County and the Denver Region: ***Jefferson County's trail system attracts residents as well as visitors from the Front Range and beyond. Taking care of existing trails is a top priority for the county.*** [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) (2019)(Appendix at p. 34).

Phase 2 Enhancements are important because they will improve safety, expand mobility and connectivity to community assets, enhance accessibility for all trail users, and increase the reliability and lifespan of the trail system. It will fulfill and implement several existing regional and local plans to create a connected, accessible trail in this location, including: [Evergreen Trails Master Plan](#) (2015); Evergreen Park & Recreation District Master Plan (2011); Jefferson County Open Space Master Plan (2014-19); Jefferson County Evergreen Area Plan (2015); Jeffco Trails Plan (2021); and [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) (2019).

2. Does the proposed project cross and/or benefit multiple **municipalities**? If yes, which ones and how?

The Denver region's quality of life depends in part on the abundant recreational opportunities nearby. Thousands of people travel to and from recreational activities in the mountainous areas of Colorado, both within the Denver region and adjacent to it. [2040 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan](#) at p. 18.

Evergreen lies at 7,500 feet on the far western edge of unincorporated Jeffco. **Tourists from across the DRCOG Region** will benefit from this project because Evergreen is about a half-hour to 45-minute drive from most areas of the Region. The 5.5-acre park around Evergreen Lake draws an estimated 160,000 visitors each year, primarily from the Denver Region, and offers year-round recreation opportunities for a wide variety of visitors including ice-skating, boating, hiking, fishing, picnicking, wildlife viewing, summer concerts, festivals and events.

Because of Evergreen's unique role as a foothills outpost and outdoor recreation hub for the entire Denver Region, this project will benefit multiple municipalities and population centers in the Region. **Bergen Park** in North Evergreen is a DRCOG-designated Activity Center, and is connected to the project by the regional Pioneer Trail. The project will also benefit residents from multiple nearby municipalities and population centers identified by DRCOG's municipal boundary map, including but not limited to **Golden, Morrison, Lakewood and Idaho Springs**. Other nearby communities in unincorporated Jefferson County – most notably **Kittredge, Idledale, Indian Hills, and Conifer** – will benefit from the improvement as well. These nearby municipalities and communities will benefit by the addition of a safe, connected, accessible and reliable off-street trail, and concomitant fixes to failing infrastructure, within less than half an hour's drive from their population centers.

3. Does the proposed project include **multi-agency collaboration**? If yes, which agencies will be involved and how will the outcome impact them?

This project is the product of extensive multi-agency collaboration that began in 2016. EPRD is proud of its leadership role in engaging project partners, stakeholders, and the community in this effort, and our leveraging of project contributions to make this project possible. There are many agencies involved at Evergreen Lake, and their respective roles are dictated by a series of intergovernmental agreements signed in the 1980s:

Evergreen Park & Recreation District – operates recreation facilities including Evergreen Lake Trail

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) – operates SH-74 along the north side of Evergreen Lake

City & County of Denver (Denver) – owns Evergreen Lake and the land around it, a part of DMP's Dedisse Park

Jefferson County – home county to the unincorporated Evergreen community & Evergreen Lake

Evergreen Metropolitan District – operates Lake's dam, water source, treatment facilities & distribution main

All of these entities participated in project planning and design and will continue to work together on this construction project. Letters of Support from these stakeholders and others were attached to EPRD's application to DRCOG TIP for Phase 1 funding, found [here](#); the Letters of Support attached to this application focus on the

Phase 2 Enhancements project only.

CDOT contributed \$200,000 in RPP funds to the Phase 1 construction project in 2019, along with awarding a \$200,000 TAP grant for Final Design in 2016. We have asked CDOT for an additional \$100,000 in conjunction with this Phase 2 Enhancements project. **Denver** is on the project's steering committee and continues to collaborate with EPRD on Denver construction permitting and environmental clearance processes. **Jefferson County** T&E has been a valuable project advisor in the areas of planning construction logistics and traffic detour routing. **Evergreen Metro District (EMD)** is contributing \$200,000 to this project and already has provided \$12,500 in funding and extensive consultation to the three planning phases. Other contributions toward the project include a \$550,000 Colorado the Beautiful grant from **Colorado Parks & Wildlife** and \$50,000 from the **Evergreen Legacy Fund (ELF)**. See ELF Letter at Att 8.

For the **Phase 2 Enhancements** project, we intend to leverage overmatch from the Phase 1 TIP construction project to meet the 17% match requirement for Phase 2. This will be comprised of \$50,000 from EMD and \$36,050 from ELF. The total state and local match for the combined Phase 1 & Phase 2 construction project is \$1,250,000, which is **29%** of the total estimated project cost of **\$4,277,000**. For more details, see the attached Proposed Financial Package submitted with EPRD's Request for CDOT Support, at Att 3.

4. What aspects of this project are innovative?

The innovative railing system of the Phase 2 Enhancements will transform the buffer between vehicles and trail users from a split rail fence to a safety post and cable railing. This will improve safety and also improve user experience and comfort. Other innovations developed during final design include widening trail transitions and reducing grade changes at the project's east and west ends to improve accessibility and user experience. See Renderings at Att 5 & Sera Letter of Support at Att 6.

5. What **transportation-related problem** will this project address? How will the proposed project address the specific problem?

Safety & Security. The Evergreen Lake North Trail in its current state poses safety and security concerns due to the high risk of potential conflicts and crashes between trail users and motor vehicles on the narrow, constrained corridor shared by the state highway and the existing trail. Traffic volume on SH-74 adjacent to the project site – 18,000 AADT -- is extremely high for a two-lane arterial road in a rural setting. [CDOT OTIS 2017 Volume Data, 2017, Station 103326](#). The existing multi-use trail also poses safety concerns arising from inevitable user conflicts on its narrow tread. The ongoing infrastructure failures of the trail's substrate further exacerbate safety issues. Another urgent safety issue arises whenever the trail is closed for infrastructure repairs, and trail users choose to take to the roadway and narrow shoulders of SH-74. See Photos at Att 4. **Phase 2 Enhancements** add a safety cable rail to the curb and gutter, reducing the risk of exposure to pedestrians and bicyclists to crashes along SH-74 and also improving user comfort. Renderings of the post and cable railing (as compared to the former split rail fence) are attached at Att 5. Safety is also increased by improving maintainability, with more drainage inlets under the trail and a smooth concrete transition between the roadway and the trail that facilitates better

plowing and clearing. Safety for persons with disabilities is improved by adding lower-grade and fully-accessible transitions and a fully-accessible lakeside trail. See Sera Letter of Support at Att 6.

Mobility & Connectivity. In its current state the Evergreen Lake North Trail does not provide a reliable and effective connection to regional trails that converge here, area recreation hubs, commerce in downtown Evergreen, and regional transportation networks, compromising mobility in and around our community. **Phase 2 Enhancements** will extend the trail to the east to complete AASHTO and ADA compliant connection to the Connector Trail and downtown Evergreen, improving mobility and connectivity to our community's commercial center. The design enhancements on the trail's west end will connect the Upper and Lower Trails and also the Fisherman's Parking Lot for more mobility gains. See Evergreen Chamber & ELF Letters of Support at Att 7 & 8.

Equitable Access. The existing, soft-surface Evergreen Lake North Trail presents issues for access and mobility to and around our community's business and recreation center, especially for vulnerable populations including young and old trail users and persons with disabilities. **Phase 2 Enhancements** will improve access to Evergreen Lake for vulnerable populations including youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities, by making the entire length of the Lower Trail fully accessible and adding more bulb-outs for fishing and wildlife viewing. It also will create accessible transitions on the project's east and west ends, as discussed above. See Letters at Atts 7 & 8.

Reliability & Lifespan. The support structure under the existing soft-surface trail is failing due to years of roadway and stormwater run-off penetrating the 30+ year-old steel bin wall. The trail is often closed for surface and wall repairs – in 2016-17, for over a year. The soft-surface tread also makes it difficult to maintain and plow. **Phase 2 Enhancements** will increase the drainage inlets from one to four to reduce water and sediment on the trail and its support system, making the trail easier to maintain and improving the project's reliability and lifespan. (The drainage enhancements will also reduce sedimentation into Evergreen Lake.) The post and cable railing system will make plowing and trail clearing easier, further improving the system's year-round reliability. See Sera Letter of Support at Att 6.

For a discussion of how the construction project as a whole addresses these transportation issues, please refer to EPRD's application for the Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement TIP Project #2020-025, found [here](#).

6. **For planning projects:** what will the completion of this project lead to? Please describe specific outcomes (ordinance development, policy adoption, project list, etc.) of this planning project.

7. **For small infrastructure projects:** where did the need for this project originate? Is this project identified in a previous plan or study?

Many communities in the region have adopted local active transportation plans and others have addressed bicycle and pedestrian transportation networks in their transportation master plans, comprehensive plans and parks or open space plans. Implementation of these plans is critically important for improving conditions for people who walk and bicycle in local communities, connecting residents to local destinations and creating a culture of support for healthy and active lifestyles. [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) at Intro p. 6.

The need for this trail improvement was first identified in 2014-15, through extensive community engagement and research that produced the GOCO-funded [Evergreen Trails Master Plan](#) of 2015. The public process that led to the community's prioritization of the project is described in ELF's Letter of Support at App 8:

The process that we undertook for the development of this [Evergreen Trails Master Plan] included a major community outreach campaign. With the input of a significant cross section of the Evergreen community, feedback and comments were received and this trail linkage proved to be among the very highest priorities for the community. It is still very fresh in the minds of our local residents. In fact, they are more motivated now than ever before to see improvements be made in this area and strongly support these efforts.

The project became urgent in 2016 when infrastructure failures led EPRD to close the existing trail for over 1.5 years for safety, with ongoing failures continuing to close the trail for periodic repairs each season. The benefits of the trail are explained in the [Evergreen Trails Master Plan](#) at D28-D29:

- ***As traffic increases on this trail, more user conflicts will result leading to a need to manage modal interactions more aggressively. With a wider trail area, those conflicts can be minimized.***
- ***Fishing platforms and piers could be built into this design to provide sustainable fishing opportunities while minimizing bank erosion caused by the current fishing uses and improving water quality.***
- ***Handicap accessible facilities could be included in the design to provide accessible outdoor recreation opportunities.***

The project also will fulfill and implement several other existing regional and local plans to create a reliable and connected trail in this location, including: [Evergreen Park & Recreation District Master Plan](#) (2011); [Jeffco Trails Plan](#) (2020) [Jeffco Open Space Master Plan](#) (2014-19) [Jeffco Evergreen Area Plan](#) (2015); [Jeffco Bicycle Plan](#) (2012). It is part of one of the very few Existing Regional Active Transportation Corridors in western Jefferson County identified in the [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) (2019) (Fig 26 at App p. 36)

B. CMPI Set-Aside Goals

Provide ***qualitative and quantitative*** responses to the following questions on how the proposed project addresses the set-aside goals.

1. Describe how the project will support **diverse, livable communities**.

Evergreen's livability depends on safe and reliable connectivity and equitable access to recreation assets, economic opportunity, schools, and transportation in our area. The Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement project will improve community mobility by establishing clear and direct multimodal connections to the following key destinations for recreation, commerce, education, and transportation in the community:

- Downtown Evergreen (adjacent)
- Evergreen Lake (adjacent)
- Evergreen Golf Course (1/4 mile away)
- Evergreen Nature Center (1/4 mile away)
- Evergreen Library (1/4 mile away)*
- Jeffco Sheriff & Motor Vehicle offices (1/4 mile away)*
- Wulf Recreation Center (1/2 mile away)*
- Evergreen High School (1/2 mile away)*
- Wilmot Elementary School (1/2 mile away)*
- RTD Bus Station on SH-74 (1/2 mile away)
- Hiking along the regional Pioneer Trail to the north (connected)
- Road rides up Upper Bear Creek Road to the west (potentially connected)
- Road rides down Bear Creek Road (JC-74) to the east (potentially connected)
- Regional and local Parks potentially connected to the project by the Pioneer Trail include:
 - Dedisse Park (Denver)
 - Elk Meadow Park (Jeffco)
 - Stagecoach Park (EPRD)
 - Buchanan Park (EPRD)
 - Bergen Park (Denver)

* Connectivity to these locations will be achieved by this project in complement with Jeffco T&E's TIP project for improving JC-73 between SH-74 and Buffalo Park Road.

In particular, a thriving downtown economic center, with good mobility and access to it, is crucial to Evergreen's diversity and livability: ***The economy of Evergreen is highly dependent on tourism with Evergreen Lake being the centerpiece. It draws tourist for boating and walking in the summer, festivals throughout the year, and ice fishing and ice skating in the winter. The visitors to the Evergreen Lake span the entire age spectrum and the activities at the Lake support users of all economic diversity. The accessibility improvements in EPRD's plans will accommodate all ages, incomes and abilities.*** Evergreen Chamber of Commerce Letter at Att 7.

The safety, connectivity, accessibility, and reliability gains of the **Phase 2 Enhancements** that further support Evergreen's diversity and livability are discussed in more detail below.

2. Describe how the project will support **the development of connected urban centers and multimodal corridors.**

The project will support the development of connected urban centers and multimodal corridors by improving multimodal connections between downtown Evergreen, Bergen Park, and other population and commerce centers in the area. While Evergreen is part of unincorporated Jeffco, Evergreen is considered a census “urban area.” Downtown Evergreen is considered a “Village Center” in the Jeffco Comprehensive Master Plan, and Bergen Park in North Evergreen is a designated a DRCOG Metro Vision “Activity Center.”

As a general matter, the **Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement** project will help establish clear and direct multimodal connections between the Evergreen Lake/downtown Evergreen area to all points north along SH-74, including the Bergen Park activity center), because the regional Pioneer Trail begins in Bergen Park and ends at Evergreen Lake. To the east, the project will help establish multimodal connections to Morrison (a Metro Vision urban center) along SH-74 (part of the Lariat Loop) and the regional Bear Creek Trail. To the south, the project will help establish a multimodal connection to Conifer along JC-73. See [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) (2019) Fig 26 at App p. 36. It will also make multimodal connections between downtown Evergreen and the nearby RTD transportation center at Christ the King Church, less than 1/2 mile to the project.

Specific to the **Phase 2 Enhancements** project, east-end trail improvements will better connect downtown Evergreen, the new Connector Trail, and Evergreen Lake in a seamless 10-ft wide multi-use corridor that accommodates pedestrians, cyclists, and users with disabilities. Improved transitions on the west end of the project will provide more accessible connections between the Upper and Lower Trails, and to the regional Pioneer Trail, the Bergen Park Activity Center, and the nearby RTD transportation hub at Christ the King Church.

3. Describe how the project will support **a transportation system that is well-connected and serves all modes of travel.**

The **Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement** will support a well-connected transportation system that serves all modes of travel in these ways:

Vehicle travel. The project provides an off-street bicycle and pedestrian facility adjacent to State Highway 74, which runs south from I-70 into downtown Evergreen and then heads east down Bear Creek back to Red Rocks and Morrison. It is shown on the Metro Vision 2050 Road Network and is part of the scenic Lariat Loop. Traffic volume at the project site – 18,000 AADT – is extremely high in a rural, mountain setting. [CDOT OTIS 2017 Volume Data, Station 103326](#) on SH-74 west of CR-73. Adding a reliable bike/ped facility next to the state highway improves safety and connectivity for motorists and trail users alike.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Use. *Jefferson County is known for high levels of recreational bicycling and can build on this characteristic moving forward.* [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) at App p.35. The project area is an existing DRCOG Active Transportation Corridor and is shown as a hub for bicycle travel on the DRCOG Bicycle Facility Inventory. The project area connects bike routes north up the regional Pioneer Trail to Elk Meadow and Squaw Pass Road, west along Upper Bear Creek Road to Mount Evans Wilderness, east along Bear Creek to Morrison, and south along CR-73 to Conifer. CDOT bicycle counts show an average of 748 daily bicycle trips on SH-74 through downtown Evergreen on weekends in August and September 2017. [CDOT Non-Motorized Traffic Data at Station ID B70377](#). Pedestrian usage of the existing trail is estimated to be at least 434 average daily trail users on weekend days in winter, with at least double that usage in summer. See EPRD’s application for the Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement TIP Project #2020-025, found [here](#).

Public transportation. *Linking active transportation with transit may be the most feasible way to increase walking and bicycling [in Jefferson County] for commuter trips.* [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) at App p. 35. The project will significantly improve conditions for walking and biking to public transportation in Evergreen because the project is less than half a mile along the Pioneer Trail from Evergreen’s public transportation hub. For commuters, the Evergreen RTD Station on SH-74 at Christ the King Church (see Map at Att 1) hosts regular bus routes to Denver, a Park-n-Ride parking lot, and a pick-up location for local FlexRide bus service. [RTD Service Performance 2017](#) data shows there were 83,956 annual daily boardings on the EV bus route in 2017, and that there were 24,337 total FlexRide boardings in Evergreen.

Specific to the **Phase 2 Enhancements** project, east-end trail improvements will better connect downtown Evergreen, the new Connector Trail, and Evergreen Lake in a seamless 10-ft wide multi-use corridor that accommodates pedestrians, cyclists, and users with disabilities. Improved transitions on the west end of the project will provide more accessible connections between the Upper and Lower Trails, and to the regional Pioneer Trail, the Bergen Park Activity Center, and the nearby RTD transportation hub as discussed above.

4. Describe how the project will support **healthy and active choices**.

The **Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement** will support healthy and active choices by encouraging more bike and pedestrian access to area recreation, commerce, schools, and transportation. It is already a busy recreation and active transportation corridor, and is part of one of the very few Existing Regional Active Transportation Corridors in western Jefferson County identified in the 2019 [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) (Fig 26 at App p. 36); see Map Att 1. CDOT bicycle counts in 2017 on SH-74 showed an average of 748 daily bicycle trips on SH-74 in downtown Evergreen on weekends in August and September 2017 (CDOT Non-Motorized Traffic Data at Station ID B70377, data found [here](#)); and Pedestrian User Tallies in 2019 on the existing trail revealed at least 434 average daily trail users on weekend days in winter, with at least double that usage in summer. See EPRD's application for the Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement TIP Project #2020-025, found [here](#).

The project's connections to area recreation outlets and community destinations also support healthy and active choices for its users. It will expand bike/ped access to the skating, boating, fishing, hiking, birding, gathering spaces, and events at Evergreen Lake, as well as the Evergreen Nature Center, the Evergreen Lake Loop Trail, Evergreen Golf Course, and Dedisse Park. It will improve bike/ped connections to other nearby outdoor recreation facilities including Alderfer/Three Sisters Park (Jeffco), Elk Meadow Park (Jeffco), Stagecoach Park (EPRD), Buchanan Park (EPRD) and Bergen Park (Denver), via Dedisse Park trails and/or the regional Pioneer Trail. And it will vastly improve conditions for residents to walk and bike to the community destinations and transportation discussed above at Questions B.1, B.2 & B.3.

Phase 2 Enhancements will improve user connections to nature and the outdoors (and thereby enhance health and well-being) by adding accessible connections to the Lower Trail, a lake-level path with bulb-outs for fishing and wildlife viewing, and also making the entire Lower trail accessible to handicapped users. See Letters of Support at Att 6, 7 & 8.

5. Describe how the project will expand **access to opportunity for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities**.

The **Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement** project will improve mobility infrastructure for everyone, especially more vulnerable populations such as seniors, youth, and individuals with disabilities, expanding access to opportunity for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities. It will also expand the modalities and improve the accessibility of the trail itself, reducing any health-related disparities in its use for all users. ***The region's 60-plus population is growing at a faster rate than the rest of the population as a whole—by 2040, more than 1 million residents will be 60 or older. All counties in the region will see substantial growth in this age group, and by 2040 one in four residents of the region will be 60 or older.*** [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) at Intro p. 2. Jeffco has the largest population of residents 60-and-older in the state, and nearly 10% of Jeffco's population has a disability. [Jefferson County White Paper on Human Services Transportation](#) (2014). And ACS 2015-19 data confirms that the tracts immediately adjacent to the project site have higher than average 65+ and youth populations compared to the rest of the Denver Region. [DRCOG Vulnerable Populations by Tract](#).

The benefits for this critical linkage are many. Through this community supported application, we can finally complete the accessible trail along the entire North side for the use of disabled users, linking Downtown Evergreen, Evergreen Lake, and the Pioneer Trail on a contiguous accessible pathway. In addition to this, we can also create new opportunities for handicapped accessibility to use our community's most cherished connection to the outdoors, Evergreen Lake. ELF Letter of Support at Att 8.

This project's primary impact for access to opportunity will be to make outdoor recreation experiences and close-in local attractions more accessible and increase usage for vulnerable populations. Estimated weekend daily trail usage by vulnerable populations is 109 users per day, or 25% of all trail users. Based on user tallies conducted in February 2019, estimated annual trail usage by youth, seniors, and members of the disabled

population is about 14,000 per year. Local and visiting seniors will benefit because the Upper and Lower Trails will be ADA-compliant and graded to make them accessible for wheelchairs and walkers. Area youth will be served by the creation of an off-street, connected, multi-use trail for the use of roughly 1,450 students who attend Evergreen High School and Wilmot Elementary, which are less than half a mile to the Evergreen Lake Trail. The project also will improve mobility infrastructure by creating an active transportation link to public transportation (the RTD hub at Christ the King Church is less than half a mile from the trail improvement); commerce and tourism (downtown Evergreen abuts this trail improvement); and community services (Evergreen Library and the Jeffco Sheriff & Motor Vehicle offices are less than half a mile away along JC-73). See Map Att 1.

The **Phase 2 Enhancements** include improvements to make the entire Lower Trail accessible. The Phase 2 Enhancements also create fully-accessible transitions between the Upper and Lower Trails and between the Upper Trail and downtown Evergreen. These enhancements will expand access to outdoor recreation, commerce, education and transportation for trail users of all ages, incomes and abilities.

6. Describe how the project will support a transportation system that is safe, reliable and well maintained.

Safe. The Evergreen Lake North Trail in its current state poses safety and security concerns due to the high risk of potential conflicts and crashes between trail users and motor vehicles on the narrow, constrained corridor shared by the state highway (18,000 ADT) and the existing trail. [CDOT OTIS 2017 Volume Data, Station 103326](#). The existing multi-use trail also poses safety concerns arising from inevitable user conflicts on its narrow tread. The ongoing infrastructure failures of the trail's substrate further exacerbate the safety issues at the project site. Another urgent safety issue arises whenever the trail is closed for infrastructure repairs, and trail users choose to take to the roadway and narrow shoulders of SH-74. See Photos at Att 4.

The originally planned project called for curb and gutter with a split rail fence barrier between State Highway 74 and the Upper Trail. **Phase 2 Enhancements** add a safety cable rail to the curb and gutter, reducing the risk of exposure to pedestrians and bicyclists to crashes along SH-74 and also improving user comfort. Renderings of the post and cable railing (as compared to the former split rail fence) are attached at Att 5. Safety is also increased by improving maintainability, with more drainage inlets and a smooth concrete transition between the roadway and the trail. Safety for persons with disabilities is improved by adding lower-grade and fully-accessible transitions, and a fully-accessible lakeside trail. See Sera Letter of Support at Att 6.

Reliable. The support structure under the existing soft-surface Evergreen Lake North Trail is failing due to years of roadway and stormwater run-off penetrating the 30+ year-old steel bin wall. The trail is often closed for surface and wall repairs – in 2016-17, for over a year. **Phase 2 Enhancements** will increase the drainage inlets from one to four to reduce water and sediment on the trail and its support system, improving the project's reliability and lifespan. (The drainage enhancements will also reduce run-off and sedimentation into Evergreen Lake.) See Sera Letter of Support at Att 6.

Well-Maintained. The soft-surface tread of the existing Evergreen Lake North Trail makes it difficult to maintain and plow. The **Phase 2 Enhancement's** post and cable railing system will make plowing and trail clearing easier, improving the system's year-round maintainability. The smooth, concrete transition between the Upper Trail's curb & gutter, railing, and trail surface will also make it easier to maintain. And increased drainage below the trail's surface further improves maintainability of the Upper Trail. See Sera Letter of Support at Att 6.

C. Priority Emphasis Areas

Provide **qualitative and quantitative** responses to the following questions on how the proposed project addresses the priority emphasis areas. **NOTE:** Projects that address one or more priority emphasis area are likely to be more competitive during this round.

1. Describe how the project will **plan for or implement active transportation** as exemplified in DRCOG's Active Transportation Plan.

This project will implement active transportation by improving conditions for riding and walking at a key outdoor recreation destination for the Region and the centerpoint of Evergreen's recreation, commerce, and transportation networks. It will create a safe and accessible bike/ped connection between downtown Evergreen, Evergreen Lake, RTD transportation, area schools, and community destinations, as discussed above. In doing so, it will implement a core component of the 2015 [Evergreen Trails Master Plan](#) through the support of DRCOG and collaboration with multiple regional stakeholders. It will also implement improvements to the primary node of the DRCOG Active Transportation Corridor through unincorporated Jefferson County. This project is well-underway with the collaboration of CDOT, Denver, Jeffco, and Evergreen Metro District. ***DRCOG's role in the implementation of the ATP is to facilitate and encourage collaboration and coordination and to provide support for local implementation efforts, including funding local projects and programs through the TIP and associated set-asides.*** [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) at p. 75 (2019).

Near-term implementation is this project's strength: Both Phases 1 & 2 of the project are fully-designed, with final design documents expected by July 15, 2021. All clearances and permitting will be complete by August 2021. Bidding and contracting are scheduled for Fall 2021, with construction scheduled for Spring-Summer 2022. Phase 1 is already federalized and funded under TIP Project 2020-025. The CDOT IGA is in place, and relationships with CDOT and all stakeholders are well-established. The project is ready to go, and this funding is needed to enhance the safety, connectivity, accessibility and reliability of the originally-scoped project.

2. Describe how the project will **plan for or implement safety** as exemplified in DRCOG's Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero, DRCOG/CDOT's Safer Main Streets program, or CDOT's Strategic Transportation Safety plan.

As recommended by DRCOG's Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero, the **Evergreen Lake Trail Improvement** will create a Complete Street to ***"accommodate people using all methods of transportation, prioritizing safe travel for all users over expeditious travel of motor vehicles."*** This project will implement safety improvements for trail users and motorists by narrowing the travel width of SH-74 with curb and gutter edge-of-roadway characteristics and installing an accessible "sidewalk" on the south side of SH-74, two recommended Regional Vision Zero Countermeasures. The project achieves Vision Zero objectives of improved collaboration between allied agencies and local adoption of safety improvements on a regional active transportation corridor. [DRCOG Taking Action on Regional Vision Zero](#) (2020) at pp. 7, 77 & 80-82.

Phase 2 Enhancements expand local implementation of safety improvements by adding a safety post and cable railing system, increasing drainage, improving trail transitions, and incorporating design changes for better maintainability and reliability of the trail. Please see the discussion at A.5 & B.6 for more details on how Phase 2 Enhancements will implement safety improvements. These safety improvements have already been incorporated into final design of the project and are teed up for ***implementation in 2022.***

3. Describe how the project will **plan for or implement improvements and transit-supportive land use along regional Bus Rapid Transit corridors identified in the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan.**

The project area is not identified as a Bus Rapid Transit Corridor in the 2050 Metro Vision Regional Transportation Plan. Still, the project will implement a local improvement for walking and biking to public transportation because the project is less than half a mile along the Pioneer Trail from Evergreen's public transportation hub. For commuters, the Evergreen RTD Station on SH-74 at Christ the King Church (see Map at Att 1) hosts regular bus routes to Denver, a Park-n-Ride parking lot, and a pick-up location for local FlexRide bus service. ***Linking active transportation with transit may be the most feasible way to increase walking and bicycling [in Jefferson County] for commuter trips.*** [DRCOG Active Transportation Plan](#) at App p. 35.