

2021 Houston – Galveston Area Council – Call for Projects

Investment categories

H-GAC will accept funding requests in five investment categories. The definitions of each investment category are as follows:

Major Investments: All roadway, freight or transit projects that have a total project cost of \$100M or more. Total project cost will include engineering (including environmental), construction and right of way (including utility relocation costs contributed by the sponsor) phases. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed².

Expand¹: All roadway, freight or transit projects that expand the network capacities. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed².

Manage: All roadway, freight or transit projects that improve operations existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.

Maintain: All roadway, freight or transit projects that extend the useful life of the existing networks or improves resiliency of the existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed².

Active Transportation: All projects that expand, manage or maintain bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide alternative choices to essential trip making. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed².

Example projects that for each investment categories are included in attachment A.

¹All projects that contain addition of through lanes must be submitted in expand investment category. Projects submitted in incorrect investment category will not be considered for scoring.

²Project costs expended on project development activities for transit projects that have pre-award authority or a letter of no prejudice from Federal Transit Authority may be eligible for reimbursement consistent with FTA guidelines.

Example projects

Example project types can be found in Attachment A of this document.

Scoring and Weights

All proposed projects submitted in Major Investment, Expand, Manage, or Maintain investment categories will be scored on Benefit/Cost analysis and planning factors at 50% (100 points) weight of the total score (200 points). All benefits and costs will be submitted in present values. All proposed projects should submit safety, delay reductions, and emission reductions benefits. Safety benefits will be considered for 50%, delay reduction will be considered for 30%, and emission reductions will be considered for 20% of the Benefit/cost analysis score. The methodology for weighing the safety benefits, delay and emission reduction benefits and the planning factors criteria is under development.

All proposed projects submitted in Active Transportation investment category will be scored on Benefit/Cost analysis at 20% (40 points) weight and planning factors at 80% (160 points) weight. All benefits and costs will be submitted in present values. All proposed projects should submit safety and emissions benefits. Cost effectiveness and health benefits of the project is still being considered to be included in the Benefit/Cost analysis. The methodology for weighing the safety benefits, and emission reductions benefits, inclusion of cost effectiveness or health benefits as part of the benefit/cost analysis and planning factors criteria is under development.

Benefits calculations templates are also under development.

Total Project Cost

At the March 2020 Transportation Policy Council (TPC) meeting, TPC approved policy guidance document that provides Goals, Priorities and Policies to develop evaluation criteria and project submittal process for the next Call for Projects. Consistent with the policy statement #7 of the guidance document approved by the TPC staff is proposing to use total project cost in benefit/cost analysis. The total project cost will include a proposed projects federal funding request and local funding match (Total project cost = federal funding request + local match).

All proposed project's total project cost will include estimated costs for construction and engineering (including environmental) phases of the project. Right of Way phase cost (including utility relocation cost contributed by the sponsor) depending on the project scenarios listed below.

Scenario 1: Projects being implemented within the same footprint. Total project cost will include construction and engineering phases even if engineering (including environmental) costs are contributed by the sponsor using nonfederal (state or local) resources. Example: Reconstruction and rehabilitation of roadway corridors, transit facilities, and some intersection improvement where improvements are related to traffic signal equipment projects.

Scenario 2: Projects being implemented within the existing right of way outside of existing footprint. Total project cost will include construction, engineering (including environmental) and

right of way (including utility relocation cost contributed by the sponsor) phases. Even if engineering (including environmental) and right of way (including utility relocation cost contributed by the sponsor) costs are contributed by the sponsor using nonfederal (state or local) resources. If the right of way cost is not provided by the sponsor XX% of construction cost will be considered towards right of way.

Scenario 3: Projects requiring additional right of way acquisition. Total project cost will include construction, engineering (including environmental) and right of way (including utility relocation cost contributed by the sponsor) phases. Even if engineering (including environmental) and right of way (including utility relocation cost contributed by the sponsor) costs are contributed by the sponsor using nonfederal (state or local) resources. Even if required additional right of way is donated by another agency or a private agency. If the right of way cost is not provided by the sponsor XX% of construction cost will be considered towards right of way.

Project Evaluation Criteria Development
Attachment A

Investment Category	Investment Category Definition	Example Project types
Major Investments	All roadway, freight or transit projects that have a total project cost of \$100M or more. Total project cost will include engineering (including environmental), construction and right of way (including utility relocation costs contributed by the sponsor) phases. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	All project types
Expand	All roadway, freight or transit projects that expand the network capacities. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	<p>New road construction: Construction of new roadway where none exists, extension of an existing roadway.</p> <p>Road widening/Added Capacity: Projects that increase vehicular capacity by adding new through lanes.</p> <p>Direct connector projects: Construction or expansion of projects providing connectivity between two highways or provide new access to a highway.</p> <p>Grade separations adding capacity/lanes: Construct or expansion of projects providing vertical separation two intersecting highways, or between railroad and a highway.</p> <p>New and expansion of BRT routes: Construction of new bus rapid transit (BRT) facility or extension of existing BRT lines.</p> <p>New and expansion of HOV/HOT lanes: Construction of a new HOV/HOT lanes or widening or extension of existing HOV/HOT lanes.</p> <p>New multimodal facilities/Park & Ride facilities: Construction of new multimodal facilities or park and ride facilities.</p>
Manage	All roadway, freight or transit projects that improve operations of existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	<p>Converting at-grade intersections between two highways to grade separated interchanges: Projects providing vertical separation two intersecting highways or between highways and railroad.</p> <p>Access management: Projects that are recommended in access management plans (developed by local agency, or H-GAC or TxDOT) such as construction of raised medians, continuous center left turn lanes consolidating driveways.</p>

Project Evaluation Criteria Development
Attachment A

Manage	All roadway, freight or transit projects that improve operations of existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	Intersection improvements: Intersection improvements including adding turn lanes, upgrading intersection signal equipment, signal coordination projects.
		ITS infrastructure expansion: Upgrading or expansion of ITS infrastructure projects. Implementation of new ITS infrastructure where none exists.
		Complete street projects/Road diets: Reconfiguring roadway to improve safety and access to all users including passenger vehicles, transit users, bicyclists and pedestrians.
		Ramp relocations: Projects relocating existing access ramps to highways without adding capacity.
		Transit priority infrastructure: Bus pullout, Stop consolidation, Bus operations optimized service treatments (BOOST).
Maintain	All roadway, freight or transit projects that extend the useful life of the existing networks or improves resiliency of the existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	Reconstruction and rehabilitation of roadways: Reconstruction and rehabilitation of roadways without expanding through lanes.
		Infrastructure resiliency improvements: Infrastructure projects designed to improve transportation resiliency. Elevating roadways that can not operate during severe rain, improving (not adding capacity) that serve as alternative routes to roadways that are impacted by severe rain.
		Transit infrastructure rehabilitation (not vehicle replacements): Reconstruction of existing transit facilities. Projects that support a state of good repair for transit assets other than transit vehicles.
Active Transportation	All projects that expand, manage or maintain bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide alternative choices to essential trip making (not recreational trips). Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	Bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure facilities expansion, new construction and rehabilitation/reconstruction: Bicycle/pedestrian projects proving active transportation choice to essential trip making. Example projects include including sidewalks, bike lanes, hike and bike trails, pedestrian refuge islands, bicyclist/pedestrian bridges and underpasses.

*If proposed project converts existing street to a complete street by restriping lane markings and/or improving sidewalks it can be considered as an active transportation project.

*Proposed projects scope that includes reconstruction and widening (addition of through lanes) should be submitted as Expand investment category project.

Comment	Response
1 It addresses ITS infrastructure expansion; but how about New ITS infrastructure where there is none existing?	Revised Example projects list to clarify ITS expansion projects will include implementation of new ITS infrastructure where there is none.
2 How is this (improve operations) defined? Speed/travel time basis? Need to discuss if road diets belong in this category or Active transportation.	Improving operations is defined as improving peak period multi modal Level Of Service (build scenario better than no-build) or improving V/C ratio (build scenarios smaller the no-build) and Improving average travel time. Road diets will belong to in active transportation category if the scope is limited to restriping. If it includes construction of access management treatments such as raised medians it will belong in manage category. If it includes reconstruction of the roadway it will belong in maintain category.
3 Access management: Projects that are recommended in access management plans (Is it limited to H-GAC access management plans) such as construction of raised medians, continuous center left turn lanes consolidating drives.	No, it could be an access management plan developed by TxDOT or local sponsoring agency.
4 All projects that expand, manage or maintain bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide alternative choices to essential trip making. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	Essential trips are not recreational trips.
5 METRO and other transit agencies may have pre-award authority or a Letter of No Prejudice from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) that may allow reimbursement for those project development activities. In such cases, METRO reserves the right to enter into implementation prior to, or while, seeking federal funding through the regional process.	Investment categories revised to note the transit agencies the have pre-award authority or a letter of no prejudice from FTA may seek reimbursement of expenses on project prior to federal obligation after the project is selected by TPC.
6 METRO supports inclusion of ROW costs as a reimbursable activity, however, local governments have different standards and procedures for calculating those costs. ROW costs estimates should align with federal transportation guidelines.	Needs further discussion.

	Comment	Response
7	While funding for expansion of LRT typically comes from FTA, METRO would like to preserve the option to apply for funding assistance for some elements through the regional process. METRO suggest modifying the project example to include new and expansion of LRT as well BRT.	Needs further discussion.
8	METRO suggests broadening the definition and examples to include projects that support a state of good repair for transit assets.	Revised example project list to revise the definition od transit maintain project.
9	Bike/Ped Subcommittee comments	See bike/ped subcommittee comments and staff responses starting on next page

09/17/2020

Investment Category Definitions

H-GAC will accept funding requests in five investment categories. The definitions of each investment category are as follows:

Major Investments: All roadway, freight or transit projects that have a total project cost of \$100M or more. Total project cost will include engineering (including environmental), construction and right of way (including utility relocation costs contributed by the sponsor) phases. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.

Expand: All roadway, freight or transit projects that expand the network capacities. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.

Manage: All roadway, freight or transit projects that improve operations of existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.

Maintain: All roadway, freight or transit projects that extend the useful life of the existing networks or improves resiliency of the existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.

Active Transportation: All projects that expand, manage or maintain bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide alternative choices to essential trip making. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.

Example projects that for each investment categories are included in attachment A.

All projects that contain addition of through lanes must be submitted in expand investment category. Projects submitted in incorrect investment category will not be considered for scoring.

Commented [ARH1]: No maintain

Commented [LV2R1]: Maintain projects with a total project cost more than \$100 million will be considered as major investments.

Commented [ARH3]: No maintain

Commented [LV4R3]: For projects with total projects cost less than \$100 million can be submitted as EXPAND, MANAGE or MAINTAIN investment categories depending on the purpose of the proposed improvement which we clarified in the definition of the investment category. All projects submitted/considered in each investment category will be scored on same planning factors.

Commented [ARH5]: No maintain

Commented [LV6R5]: Same as above

Commented [JS7]: Expand to include active transportation projects.

Commented [LV8R7]: No, all active transportation projects will be considered in active transportation investment category. We are trying not to compare active transportation improvements with roadway improvements because active transportation projects benefits vary by a lot from roadway benefits in quality and quantity and scale and we do not want give active transportation projects BCA 50%weight as opposed to 20%weight. Also, staff proposal will include Category 5 as well as Category funding eligible for active transportation projects unlike the 2018 call.

Commented [ARH9]: All maintain activities are in the Maintain category. No other category has maintain, except for the maintain category. Consistency across the investment categories from a policy perspective is important. Also, the ped/bike network has many gaps and is in need expansion, which should be the strategic priority to make it a viable alternative to SOV.

Commented [LV10R9]: Again, we tried providing this clarification in definitions and example projects list we can certainly expand active transportation investment category example project types. Each investment category will have projects that provide similar purpose to expand maintain or manage the transportation networks. We did not propose these categories for active transportation projects because I ... [1]

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Commented [MNJ11]: There may need to be some clarification regarding pedestrian/bicycle intersection improvements be some overlap between the "Manage" ... [2]

Commented [LV12R11]: If active transportation projects (bike/ped improvements) are part of a larger roadway project the larger roadway project can be submitted in Manage ... [3]

Commented [JS13]: Add clarification to steps in the submission and review process to ensure correct investment categories are selected. Have H-GAC staff more proac ... [4]

Commented [LV14R13]: We do intend to provide the clarification. For Road diets if the project includes road way improvements also like access management, medina ... [5]

Page 1: [1] Commented [LV10R9] Lingala, Vishu 10/14/2020 12:49:00 PM

Again, we tried providing this clarification in definitions and example projects list we can certainly expand active transportation investment category example project types. Each investment category will have projects that provide similar purpose to expand maintain or manage the transportation networks. We did not propose these categories for active transportation projects because all active transportation projects will be scored with same planning factors and BCA at 80% and 20%.

Page 1: [2] Commented [MNJ11] Monique N. Johnson 9/29/2020 4:27:00 PM

There may need to be some clarification regarding pedestrian/bicycle intersection improvements because of some overlap between the "Manage" category and the "Active Transportation" category -- assuming ped/bike intersection improvements can be included in "Manage" if they are part of a larger project, but should be included in "Active Transportation" if ped/bike intersection improvements are a standalone project.

Page 1: [3] Commented [LV12R11] Lingala, Vishu 10/14/2020 12:58:00 PM

If active transportation projects (bike/ped improvements) are part of a larger roadway project the larger roadway project can be submitted in Manage category. If the active transportation project that is part of a larger roadway project and if project sponsor would like to separate active transportation project and compete for federal funding independently then the active transportation improvements can be submitted as an active transportation project and only the active transportation improvement benefits and costs will be applicable.

Page 1: [4] Commented [JS13] Jaworski, Susan 10/1/2020 10:16:00 AM

Add clarification to steps in the submission and review process to ensure correct investment categories are selected. Have H-GAC staff more proactive in the process by making clear which category to put the project in during the application process. Examples: intersection improvements with active transportation; road diet project that includes active transportation

Page 1: [5] Commented [LV14R13] Lingala, Vishu 10/14/2020 1:04:00 PM

We do intend to provide the clarification. For Road diets if the project includes roadway improvements also like access management, median pedestrian refuge islands, or a reconstruction of the roadway then it should be submitted as a roadway project in manage or maintain category. If road diet project include pedestrian improvements by restriping of lane markings then it may be submitted as a active transportation project.

Also, a general comment that I saw some where the bike/ped amenities such as streetscaping, decorative lighting, trash receptacles, way finding signage etc are only eligible for up to 25% of the cost.

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Attachment A

<p>Manage</p>	<p>All roadway, freight or transit projects that improve operations of existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.</p>	<p>ITS infrastructure expansion: Upgrading or expansion of ITS infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Complete street projects/Road diets: Reconfiguring roadway to improve safety and access to all users including passenger vehicles, transit users, bicyclists and pedestrians.</p> <p>Ramp relocations: Projects relocating existing access ramps to highways without adding capacity.</p> <p>Transit priority infrastructure: Bus pullout, Stop consolidation, Bus operations optimized service treatments (BOOST).</p>
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<p>Active Transportation</p>	<p>All projects that expand, manage or maintain bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide alternative choices to essential trip making. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.</p>	<p>Bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure facilities expansion, new construction and rehabilitation/reconstruction: Bicycle/pedestrian projects proving active transportation choice to essential trip making. Example projects include including sidewalks, bike lanes, hike and bike trails, pedestrian refuge islands, bicyclist/pedestrian bridges and underpasses.</p>



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Active Transportation	All projects that expand, manage or maintain bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide alternative choices to essential trip making. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.	Bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure facilities expansion, new construction and rehabilitation/reconstruction : Bicycle/pedestrian projects proving active transportation choice to essential trip making. Example projects include including sidewalks, bike lanes, hike and bike trails, pedestrian refuge islands, bicyclist/pedestrian bridges and underpasses.

Suggestions:

Maintain category: All roadway, freight, transit or **bicycle and pedestrian**  projects that extend the useful life of the existing networks or improves resiliency of the existing networks. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the projects by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.

Active Transportation category: All projects that **expand or manage** bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provide alternative choices to essential trip making. Project costs expended on planning, development or implementation activities of the project by the time project is selected in the call will not be reimbursed.