

March 12, 2024

TO: DCHC MPO Technical Committee
FROM : DCHC MPO Staff
SUBJECT: FY25 Call for Projects Submission Overview, Scoring, and Funding Scenarios

Executive Summary

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (DCHC MPO) invited member agencies to submit applications for federal funding from the Unified Planning Work Program and Regional Flexible Funding (RFF) programs in November 2023. Funding applications were due on December 8, 2023.

The RFF pool for FY25, FY26, and FY27 consists of four funding sources that come directly to the DCHC MPO: Surface Transportation Block Grant Direct Attributable (BGDA), Transportation Alternatives Program Direct Attributable (TAPDA), Carbon Reduction Program Direct Attributable (CRPDA), and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ). The call for projects that was conducted by MPO staff is consistent with federal requirements for CMAQ and TAPDA funds and can be applied to all funding sources.

MPO staff has provided three scenarios attached to this agenda item for discussion with the TC. Staff are seeking TC recommendation of a preferred scenario for funding prior to release for public comment.

Background

The FY25 Call for Projects serves a dual purpose, calling for study requests for the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) as well as competitive project requests for Regional Flexible Funding (RFF). The RFF program was adopted in November 2021 as part of an update to the MPO's Federal Funding Policy. This program was intended to provide a more definitive, data-driven method for evaluating projects and making funding recommendations. The RFF program is competitive and is scored based on a number of factors that the MPO has prioritized. There are also restrictions, such as how many active projects a jurisdiction can have, to ensure all agencies have a chance to receive funding.

The RFF has a special provision related to the Triangle TDM Program. This program is ongoing and has been identified as a joint policy priority by the DCHC and CAMPO boards. TDM is not scored using the Federal Funding Policy as it is a program rather than a capital project and therefore cannot directly compete with the capital projects.

For the FY25 Call for Projects, eleven agencies submitted a total of twenty-seven projects, three studies, and one program.

UPWP Applications:**Table 1: Unified Planning Work Program Requests**

Agency	Project	Federal	Local	Total
Orange County	Orange County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	\$200,000	\$50,000	\$250,000
Durham County	Durham-to-Roxboro Rail Trail Planning Study	\$400,000	\$100,000	\$500,000
Chapel Hill Transit	Chapel Hill Transit High-Capacity Study	\$240,000	\$60,000	\$300,000

RFF Applications:**Table 2: Existing Projects**

Agency	Funding Request Type	Project	STIP#	Federal	Local	Total	Score
Central Pines Regional Council	Existing	Triangle TDM Program	C-4924B	\$1,262,548	\$252,510	\$1,515,058	N/A**
City of Durham	Existing	Cornwallis Road Bike & Ped Improvements	U-4724	\$11,514,534	\$4,606,883	\$16,121,417	90*
City of Durham	Existing	R. Kelly Bryant Bridge Trail	EB-5720	\$971,256	\$1,487,954	\$2,459,210	84*
Town of Carrboro	Existing	South Greensboro Street Sidewalk	C-5650	\$165,075	\$41,268	\$206,343	83*
City of Durham	Existing	Durham Rail Trail	EB-5904	\$353,076	\$592,019	\$945,095	79*
Town of Chapel Hill	Existing	Estes Drive Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	C-5179	\$1,100,000	\$275,000	\$1,375,000	77*
GoTriangle	Existing	805 Corridor Bus Stops	TL-0052	\$491,920	\$122,980	\$614,900	75*
City of Durham	Existing	Third Fork Creek Trail Extension	EB-5737	\$6,374,133	\$1,807,058	\$8,181,191	61*

Table 3: New Projects

Agency	Funding Request Type	Project	STIP#	Federal	Local	Total	Score
GoTriangle	New	Triangle Mobility Hub	N/A	\$30,500,000 (RFF: \$5,500,000)	\$26,480,000	\$58,200,000	95****
NCDOT	New	Durham Roxboro Rail Trail	N/A	\$9,600,000 (RFF: \$7,500,000)	\$2,040,000	\$16,000,000	88***
Town of Carrboro	New	Bicycle Plan Implementation	N/A	\$889,600	\$222,400	\$1,112,000	86
Town of Chapel Hill	New	Sidewalk Gap Project	N/A	\$2,770,000	\$700,000	\$3,470,000	77
RTP	New	Davis Drive Path from I-40 to Cornwallis Road	N/A	\$977,184	\$244,296	\$1,221,480	76
GoDurham	New	Battery Electric Buses Request	N/A	\$2,594,211	\$952,629	\$3,546,840	73
GoTriangle	New	Fordham Blvd Bus Stops and Transit Speed & Reliability Improvements	N/A	\$5,500,000	\$5,000,000	\$10,500,000	73
Chatham County	New	Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	N/A	\$213,278	\$53,320	\$266,598	72
GoDurham	New	Cook Road Pedestrian Pathway	N/A	\$1,700,000	\$2,388,000	\$4,088,000	71
Chapel Hill Transit	New	Electric Bus Purchase	N/A	\$3,680,000	\$920,000	\$4,600,000	69
RTP	New	Laboratory Drive Path from Davis Drive to End	N/A	\$841,464	\$210,366	\$1,051,830	67
RTP	New	NC-54 Path from Boxyard to Hub RTP	N/A	\$1,717,404	\$429,351	\$2,146,755	65
Town of Chapel Hill	New	Bolinwood Rd Bridge	N/A	\$2,088,000	\$522,000	\$2,610,000	61
Town of Chapel Hill	New	Bolin Creek Greenway Extension	N/A	\$1,827,000	\$457,000	\$2,284,000	60
Town of Carrboro	New	Bolin Creek Greenway - Phase 3 & 4	N/A	\$1,100,000	\$275,000	\$1,375,000	59
RTP	New	Hopson Road Path	N/A	\$3,081,648	\$770,412	\$3,852,060	53
Orange County	New	Transit Access Sidewalk for Orange Grove Rd	N/A	\$160,000	\$40,000	\$200,000	53
Town of Chapel Hill	New	Eubanks Multimodal Gap Project	N/A	\$814,000	\$204,000	\$1,018,000	44
Town of Carrboro	New	Bolin Creek Greenway - Phase 2	N/A	\$320,000	\$80,000	\$400,000	30
Town of Chapel Hill	New	Bartram Bridge	N/A	\$947,200	\$236,800	\$1,184,000	29

*Existing projects were scored for general reference purposes. To achieve these scores, shortfall funding scores were used in place of local priority points to show how these projects may compete had scope changes existed.

**The Triangle TDM Program is a program and not a project and cannot directly compete with capital projects in scoring.

***The Durham-to-Roxboro Rail Trail also includes \$1,440,000 in federal funding from KTRPO and additional funding from statewide CMAQ funds

****The Triangle Mobility Hub will utilize the County Transit Plans for the local match and is expected to receive RAISE Grant funds

Regional Flexible Funding

The RFF pool consists of Surface Transportation Block Grant Direct Attributable (BGDA), Transportation Alternatives Program Direct Attributable (TAPDA), Carbon Reduction Program Direct Attributable (CRPDA), and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. Leftover funds available in FY24 were used to supplement the funding in later years. The RFF funding pools for FY25, FY26, and FY27 are as follows:

Table 4: Available RFF Funding

Fund Type	Leftover from FY24	FY25 Amount	FY26 Amount	FY27 Amount	Total Amount
BGDA	\$7,210,000	\$7,265,000	\$6,885,000	\$1,723,000	\$23,083,000
TAPDA	\$1,340,000	\$829,000	\$829,000	\$829,000	\$3,827,000
CRPDA	\$1,573,000	\$209,000	\$794,000	\$0	\$2,576,000
CMAQ	\$0	\$1,949,000	\$2,320,000	\$2,320,000	\$6,589,000
TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING					\$36,075,000
TOTAL REQUESTED FUNDING					\$79,716,032

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

The UPWP funds for FY25, FY26, and FY27 are as follows:

Table 5: Available UPWP Funding

Fund Type	FY25 Amount	FY26 Amount	FY27 Amount	Total Amount
UPWP	\$2,315,000	\$2,430,000	\$2,552,000	\$7,297,000
TOTAL REQUESTED FUNDING				\$840,000

Note: The applications received for UPWP funding are for FY25. Applications for FY26 and FY27 funds will be accepted in the next Call for Projects.

Scoring Details

New projects were scored based on the MPO Federal Funding Policy and could receive up to 115 total points based on eight criteria. Agencies who had not received project funding in the past four cycles were eligible to receive an additional ten bonus points that would be split between the submitted projects for that agency.

New projects submitted for the FY25 Call for Projects cycle were scored as follows:

Table 6: Criteria 1-4: Connectivity, Transit Access, Population/Employment Density, Project Phase

Agency	Project Name	Connectivity	Transit Access	Pop/Emp Density	Project Phase
GoTriangle	Triangle Mobility Hub	10	10	7	30
NCDOT	Durham Roxboro Rail Trail	10	10	1	20
Town of Carrboro	Bicycle Plan Implementation	10	10	8	25
Chapel Hill	Sidewalk Gap Project	10	10	9	15
RTP	Davis Drive Path from I-40 to Cornwallis Road	7	8	3	25
GoDurham	Battery Electric Buses Request	N/A	10	N/A	30
GoTriangle	Fordham Blvd Bus Stops and Transit Speed & Reliability Improvements	10	10	5	15
Chatham County	Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	7	0	2	30
GoDurham	Cook Road Pedestrian Pathway	10	10	4	15
Chapel Hill Transit	Electric Bus Purchase	N/A	10	N/A	30
RTP	Laboratory Drive Path from Davis Drive to End	10	8	10	25
RTP	NC-54 Path from Boxyard to Hub RTP	10	8	10	15
Chapel Hill	Bolinwood Rd Bridge	7	10	6	15
Chapel Hill	Bolin Creek Greenway Extension	10	10	6	20
Town of Carrboro	Bolin Creek Greenway - Phase 3 & 4	10	10	3	15
RTP	Hopson Road Path	10	8	1	15
Orange County	Transit Access Sidewalk for Orange Grove Rd	0	10	2	10
Chapel Hill	Eubanks Multimodal Gap Project	10	10	2	15
Town of Carrboro	Bolin Creek Greenway - Phase 2	7	0	3	15
Chapel Hill	Bartram Bridge	0	8	1	15

Table 7: Criteria 5-8: Local Priority, Environmental Justice, Safety, Emissions. Includes bonus.

Agency	Project Name	Local Priority	Envir. Just	Safety	Emissions	4-Year Cycle Bonus	Total Score
GoTriangle	Triangle Mobility Hub	10	3	10	15	N/A	95
NCDOT	Durham Roxboro Rail Trail	10	6	13	8	10	88
Town of Carrboro	Bicycle Plan Implementation	10	3	11	9	N/A	86
Chapel Hill	Sidewalk Gap Project	5	3	14	11	N/A	77
RTP	Davis Drive Path from I-40 to Cornwallis Road	10	3	6	4	10	76
GoDurham	Battery Electric Buses Request	5	15	N/A	13	N/A	73
GoTriangle	Fordham Blvd Bus Stops and Transit Speed & Reliability Improvements	5	12	5	11	N/A	73
Chatham County	Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	10	3	0	12	10	72
GoDurham	Cook Road Pedestrian Pathway	10	6	10	6	N/A	71
Chapel Hill Transit	Electric Bus Purchase	0	15	N/A	14	N/A	69
RTP	Laboratory Drive Path from Davis Drive to End	0	3	10	1	0	67
RTP	NC-54 Path from Boxyard to Hub RTP	5	3	8	6	0	65
Chapel Hill	Bolinwood Rd Bridge	5	3	10	5	N/A	61
Chapel Hill	Bolin Creek Greenway Extension	5	3	1	5	N/A	60
Town of Carrboro	Bolin Creek Greenway - Phase 3 & 4	5	3	6	7	N/A	59
RTP	Hopson Road Path	0	3	13	3	0	53
Orange County	Transit Access Sidewalk for Orange Grove Rd	10	6	3	2	10	53
Chapel Hill	Eubanks Multimodal Gap Project	0	3	1	3	N/A	44
Town of Carrboro	Bolin Creek Greenway - Phase 2	0	3	0	2	N/A	30
Chapel Hill	Bartram Bridge	0	3	1	1	N/A	29

Existing projects are scored independently from new projects as the MPO wants to prioritize completion of existing projects. Existing projects were scored on three criteria as follows:

Table 8: Existing Projects Scoring Criteria

Agency	Project	STIP#	% Increase in Request Over Original Budget	Highest Phase Completed	Previously Received Shortfall Funds	Total Score
Town of Chapel Hill	Estes Drive Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	C-5179	3	3	3	9
GoTriangle	805 Corridor Bus Stops	TL-0052	2	3	3	8
City of Durham	Cornwallis Road Bike & Ped Improvements	U-4724	1	2	3	6
Town of Carrboro	South Greensboro Street Sidewalk	C-5650	1	3	2	6
City of Durham	Third Fork Creek Trail Extension	EB-5737	1	1	3	5
City of Durham	Durham Rail Trail	EB-5904	1	1	3	5
City of Durham	R. Kelly Bryant Bridge Trail	EB-5720	1	1	3	5

As an additional reference, existing projects were scored as if they were submitted as new projects to understand how they would score among all applications received for the FY25 RFF. Since existing projects would not have local priority points, this section was swapped with the total scores received in Table 8. This analysis demonstrates that these projects would have competed favorably for available funding even compared to new projects.

Triangle Transportation Demand Management Funding Recommendation

The Central Pines Regional Council (CPRC) TDM program has requested \$621,945 in funding for FY26 and \$640,603 in funding for FY27 from the RFF program. Since TDM is a program and not a capital project, it is not scored using the rubrics in the Federal Funding Policy (though per NCDOT guidelines the TDM program must be rated against other projects for emissions in order to receive CMAQ funds). Rather, the Federal Funding Policy identifies TDM as a funding priority for RFF, and for CMAQ funding specifically. According to the policy:

TDM offers high air quality benefits and competes favorably for CMAQ funding. TDM has also been identified as a joint policy priority by the DCHC and CAMPO boards. CMAQ funds will be used for DCHC MPO's share of the TDM program.

Given that CPRC's request is just above three percent of the previous year's request, MPO staff is recommending that the TDM program receive its request of \$621,945 using FY26 CMAQ funds and \$640,603 using FY27 CMAQ funds. *However, CPRC will need to provide a written justification for the increased program costs to the TC and Board for consideration based on our funding policy.* CPRC will provide a match of non-federal dollars of \$124,389 for FY26 and \$128,121 for FY27. The CPRC TDM Program obtained approval for funding in FY25 of \$603,830 with a local match of \$153,957 from the FY23 Call for Projects.

CPRC will complete and submit an application to NCDOT for CMAQ funds. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) makes all final funding decisions related to CMAQ funding.

Cornwallis Road Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements (U-4724) Funding

For this Call the City of Durham requested \$11,514,534 in federal funds for project U-4724. As an existing project it is a priority for funding. At the request of the MPO, in order to increase the amount of RFF funds going towards New Projects, the City of Durham has agreed to receive a reduced amount of federal funding for FY27 in the amount of \$7,000,000. The remainder of the funding amount will be provided in the amount of \$4,514,534 in FY28 federal funds. An exemption from the 65% agency cap requirement will be allowed for the FY26 Call for Projects to accommodate this request.

Next Steps

MPO Staff has provided three scenarios to the Technical Committee for funding consideration. In each scenario, existing projects receive funding, “off the top”, then remaining funding in each fiscal year will go toward the highest scoring new projects. If there is funding left over, that funding will roll into the next call for projects, to be available in FY26-FY28. It is assumed that the percentages of funding allocated for contingency for the relevant project phase will cover potential cost increases before the next call for projects, consistent with the 2023 Federal Funding Policy Update. The Technical Committee will select and recommend a scenario on March 12, 2024, along with a recommendation to release the preferred scenario for public review. The selected scenario will be shared with the MPO Board at their regular meeting in March for their review before release for public review. MPO staff will compile comments received from the public and present them to the TC for review and recommendation of adoption of the list of projects for funding by the MPO Board on April 23, 2024.