

COVID Relief Funds  
New Roadways and Existing Roadways  
Application Instructions & Selection Criteria

Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study (PPUATS)

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## Introduction

Title IV of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021, provided an additional \$10,000,000,000 for highway infrastructure programs across the United States. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) distributed \$876,791.41 of these COVID Relief Funds to the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area for projects in the urbanized area. Recognized as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area as of June 1, 2021, the Peoria-Pekin Urbanized Area Transportation Study (PPUATS) Policy Committee is responsible for programming the funds.

COVID Relief Funds are to follow Surface Transportation Program (commonly known as STBG or STU) guidelines. The funds can be used for projects on all roads except those classified as rural minor collectors and local streets. COVID Relief Funds are 100% federally eligible, meaning they are not subject to a required local match. The funds may be used in conjunction with other federal, state, and local dollars. However, the funds cannot be used to match other federal or state dollars, and they cannot be “swapped” for other federal dollars on a project previously authorized.

## Purpose of this Document

At their May 27, 2021 meeting, the PPUATS Policy Committee approved a schedule for programming COVID Relief Funds that included a call for projects. PPUATS intends to direct the use of COVID Relief Funds toward projects which will benefit the entire region, including:

- Federally funded transportation infrastructure projects already appearing in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FYs 2021-2024, or
- New, shovel-ready projects of regional significance.  
“Shovel-ready” means that Phase I Engineering and Environmental Review are complete as of application, and no additional right-of-way is required for the project.

This document explains the procedures for applying for funding and establishes the evaluation criteria PPUATS will use to guide project selection. It is important to note that the evaluation criteria are a guide to aid members with the selection process. Selection criteria and project scores are not meant to be the sole determinant in project selection. PPUATS may choose a lower scoring project based on funding availability, significant regional priority, severe safety concerns, or other non-quantitative factors. Moreover, PPUATS is not required to select one or more of the projects submitted for funding.

## Project Categories

COVID Relief Funds will follow PPUATS Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) guidelines for project prioritization. PPUATS STBG guidelines include three project types: New Roadways, Existing Roadways, and Pavement Preservation. This document includes Instructions and Criteria for New Roadways and Existing Roadways. Instructions and Criteria for Pavement Preservation may be found in a separate document, titled “COVID Relief Funds Pavement Preservation Application Instructions and Selection Criteria.”

## Project Requirements and Eligibility

The following rules and requirements govern all New Roadway and Existing Roadway projects. Applicants with questions regarding these rules should contact PPUATS staff.

### General Requirements

All projects must meet these general requirements to be considered for COVID Relief Funds.

1. Projects must be in the 20-Year Metropolitan Planning Area.
2. Roadways must have a Functional Classification of Minor Collector or above.
3. Projects must be listed in the Long-Range Transportation Plan 2020-2045.
4. Projects must be ready to be federally obligated by September 30, 2024.
5. Phase I Engineering and Environmental Review must be complete as of application.
6. All right-of-way must be secured for the project as of application.
7. Only dues-paying members of PPUATS are eligible to apply for funding. Other local jurisdictions within the 20-Year Planning Boundary must be sponsored by a PPUATS member.
8. Applications must be submitted on-line.

### Eligible Activities

The following activities are eligible for COVID Relief Funds.

1. Construction, reconstruction (defined as more than 50% removal and replacement), rehabilitation, or operational improvements of roadways.
2. Projects relating to intersections that have high accident rates and/or high levels of congestion.
3. Capital costs for transit projects eligible for assistance under Chapter 53 of Title 49.
4. Transportation alternatives, including recreational trails.

### Ineligible Activities

The following activities (1) are **not** eligible for COVID Relief Funds and (2) **cannot** be counted toward a project's local match requirement.

1. Engineering
2. Right-Of-Way Acquisition
3. Utility Relocation
4. All other activities otherwise eligible under 23 USC 133 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program

## Submission Procedure

PPUATS will use the following procedure to solicit projects submissions, prioritize those submissions, and ultimately decide where the region's COVID Relief Funds should be used.

1. PPUATS establishes a Review Subcommittee to evaluate project applications and assign regional significance points. The subcommittee names a chair, who speaks for the subcommittee at MPO Technical and Policy meetings. Staff keeps minutes of all meetings.
2. Staff issues a Call for Projects for COVID Relief Funds.
3. Staff reviews all received applications:
  - a. Evaluating them for eligibility (see Project Requirements and Eligibility);
  - b. To determine if all required information has been submitted; and
  - c. To verify the reasonableness of the points assigned under the Quantitative Criteria.
4. Staff tallies Quantitative and Regional Significance scores into final scores for each submitted project. Staff finds natural breaks in project scores to establish project "Tiers" (i.e. Tier 1, Tier 2).
5. Staff presents the final scores and tiers to the subcommittee. The subcommittee considers project scoring, available funding, and any other relevant information and recommends projects to the Technical Committee.
6. The Technical Committee considers the subcommittee's recommendation and makes their own recommendation to the Policy Committee. Members of the public receive the opportunity to comment. The Policy Committee considers Technical's recommendation and makes a final decision for COVID Relief Funds.
7. PPUATS adopts their final project selection(s) into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the appropriate fiscal year(s).

## Schedule

COVID Relief Funds will be programmed according to the following schedule.

- **May 19, 2021** — Technical discusses prioritization process and establishes subcommittee.
- **May 27, 2021** — Policy approves schedule for programming COVID Relief Funds.
- **May 31 – June 25, 2021** — Staff prepares and opens call for projects.
- **June 28 – July 16, 2021** — Subcommittee reviews and makes recommendation to Technical.
- **July 21, 2021** — Technical reviews and makes recommendation to Policy\*.
- **July 22, 2021** — Policy\* approves COVID Relief Funds and necessary TIP amendment(s).

**Note:** In the event of a successful merger of the PPUATS Policy Committee with the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission effective July 1, 2021, the merged Commission will take over the duties of Policy.

## Questions

Potential applicants may contact Ryan Harms at [rharms@tricityrpc.org](mailto:rharms@tricityrpc.org) with any questions regarding COVID Relief Funds or the application process.

## Project Prioritization

The over-arching goal of PPUATS is to direct the use of federal transportation funds toward projects which are regionally significant. A regionally significant project is one that will benefit the entire region, instead of a single community or a small part of the urbanized area.

### Priorities

Over the years, PPUATS has utilized several resources and spent countless hours to develop an objective project selection process. One essential resource remains the *FAST Act*, the federal “Highway Bill” that enables multiple transportation capital funding programs. The goals of the *FAST Act*, listed below, are the foundation upon which PPUATS has built its project selection process.

- **Safety** – To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.
- **Infrastructure Condition** – To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair
- **Congestion Reduction** – To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System
- **System Reliability** – To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system
- **Freight Movement and Economic Vitality** – To improve the National Highway Freight Network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development
- **Environmental Sustainability** – To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- **Reduced Project Delivery Delays** – To reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies’ work practices.

## Selection Criteria

The following scoring criteria are guides which will aid PPUATS with project prioritization for Existing Roadway and New Roadway project submissions, respectively. The criteria are organized by category.

Criteria in most categories are scored objectively, meaning that they are scored by matters-of-fact in the project application. For example, Average Daily Traffic is an objective criterion because we can measure it the exact same way for every project. Another example of an objective measure is Permeable Pavement; a project either includes permeable pavement or it does not.

Regional Significance criteria are the only ones scored differently. Regional Significance criteria are scored subjectively by the Review Subcommittee. The subcommittee will assign points for Regional Significance criteria based on narratives supplied by the applicants. These criteria address topics which are more difficult to measure, such as impacts on employment or proximity to important facilities. Definitions of all Regional Significance criteria may be found on the following page.

### Existing Roadway Projects

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Safety</b>	
Crash Rate	10
Crash Severity	10
<b>Subtotal Safety</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Existing Conditions</b>	
Average Daily Traffic	8
Volume/Capacity Ratio	7
<b>Subtotal Existing Conditions</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Multi-Modal</b>	
Pedestrian	5
Bicycle	5
Transit	5
Freight	5
<b>Subtotal Multi-Modal</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>	
Roundabout or Road Diet	3
Permeable Pavement or Bioswales	2
<b>Subtotal Sustainability</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Regional Significance<sup>1</sup></b>	
Regional Connector	8
Employment Center	8
Transportation Facility	8
Public Facility	8
Project Phasing Continuity	8
<b>Subtotal Regional Significance</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Total Available Points</b>	<b>100</b>

### New Roadway Projects

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Points</b>
<b>Local Priority</b>	
Joint Project Bonus	15
Local Comprehensive Plan	15
<b>Subtotal Local Priority</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Multi-Modal</b>	
Pedestrian Accommodations	5
Bicycle Accommodations	5
Transit	5
Freight Accommodations	5
<b>Subtotal Multi-Modal</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Sustainability</b>	
Permeable Pavement	3
Bioswales	3
Roundabout	4
<b>Subtotal Sustainability</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Regional Significance<sup>1</sup></b>	
Regional Connector	8
Employment Center	8
Transportation Facility	8
Public Facility	8
Project Phasing Continuity	8
<b>Subtotal Regional Significance</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Total Available Points</b>	<b>100</b>

**<sup>1</sup> Regional Significance Criteria Definitions**

Regional Connector

Connects municipalities – the proposed project serves as a primary route between two municipalities, and/or Connects major roads – the proposed project serves as a primary link between arterials

Employment Center

Improves movement of employees and/or shopping patrons

Freight Transportation Facilities

The proposed project serves as a primary route for freight, such as manufacturing or warehouse facilities, airports, intermodal terminals, etc.

Public Facility

The proposed project serves as a major connector to a school, medical center, government facility, library, etc.

Project Phasing Continuity

The proposed project is a supplementary phase of a project previously funding through COVID Relief Funds.