

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION GRANT PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION GUIDE

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Introduction

In 2023, the Minnesota State Legislature approved a new regional sales tax for the seven-county region to support a variety of transportation improvements and operations. Part of this new funding is being dedicated for active transportation purposes in the region and to be distributed by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and administered by the Metropolitan Council. The initial distribution of these funds was made to applicants who applied to the 2024 Regional Solicitation within the Multiuse Trail and Bicycle Facilities, Pedestrian Facilities, and Safe Routes to School project categories.

Beginning in 2024, the Active Transportation Grant Program represents a significant opportunity to expand regional efforts to build out the non-motorized system to support the region in meeting state goals in reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

It is estimated that moving forward there will be approximately \$24M in annual funding available for the Active Transportation Grant Program. Future applicant and project eligibility will be defined within the Regional Solicitation Evaluation underway in 2024 and 2025. This document will be updated when the future program parameters are adopted by the TAB.

Purpose

This guide provides an overview of the administrative processes related to applying for and managing regional funds distributed by the TAB and administered by the Council.

Definitions

Application: A project request submitted into the Council's grant management system (WebGrants) which may be specific to a grant program, request for proposal, or notice of funding availability.

Appropriation: A sum of money devoted to a special purpose and apportioned to the Council by the Minnesota Legislature.

Authorized Representative: The person or position designated by the grantee as the point of contact for a particular grant. It is recommended to be a staff person, not an elected or appointed official.

Capital Asset: Tangible or intangible assets used in operation having a useful life of more than one year and are capitalized in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Capital assets include: (a) land, buildings (facilities), equipment, and intellectual property (including software) whether acquired by purchase, construction, manufacture, lease-purchase, exchange, or through capital leases; and (b) additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallations, renovations, or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life (not ordinary repairs and maintenance).

Capital Expenditure: Money spent to acquire a capital asset or make improvements to a capital asset that increases its value and extends useful life (2 Code of Federal Regulations, section 200.13).

Cash Flow Report: Report due from grantees forecasting grant expenditures over a specified time period.

Certified Closeout Form: A form signed by the grantee's chief financial officer or finance manager certifying the total amount and proper expenditure of grant funds. The form is submitted with grant closeout documentation.

Closeout: The procedure initiated by a grantee to finalize a grant agreement, which generally includes submitting a Certified Closeout Form. Closeout also includes the Council's review of final project information.

Conflict of Interest: An actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest occurs when a person has actual or apparent duty or loyalty to more than one organization and the competing duties or loyalties may impair impartiality to one or both parties. A conflict of interest may exist even if no unethical, improper, or illegal act results.

Contract: An agreement to provide a good or service that legally binds two or more parties.

Contractor: An organization or a person who is not a grantee employee that enters into a contract with a grantee to provide goods or services.

Eligible Expense: A cost allowed to be charged to a grant.

Effective Date: The date an agreement begins, as stated in the agreement.

Equipment: Property that has a useful life expectancy of more than one year and is not expected to be significantly depleted in use.

Executed Date: The date of the final signature by all parties on an agreement.

Executed Grant Agreement: A grant agreement that has been signed and dated by all parties.

Expiration Date: The end date stated in the grant agreement or the date when all obligations have been satisfactorily fulfilled, whichever comes first.

Financial Reconciliation: A process that ensures a grantee's reported expenditures for a given period are consistent with supporting documentation, such as purchase orders, receipts, invoices, and payroll records.

Fiscal Agent: A person authorized to manage the fiscal matters on behalf of another party.

Grant Administration: Activities such as grant tracking, grant agreement management, reporting and program management, or oversight of activities.

Grant Agreement: A written or electronic document defining a legal relationship between the Council and a grantee when the principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer cash or something of value to the recipient to support a public purpose authorized by law.

Grant Agreement Amendment: An addition, deletion, or change to a fully executed grant agreement.

Grant Budget: A plan for all income and expenses for the project funded by the grant. Grant budgets typically include construction costs, internal professional services, and external professional services.

Grant Period: The time period between the executed date and expiration date of a grant agreement.

Grantee or Grant Recipient: The party responsible for implementing the terms of the grant agreement with the Council.

Ineligible Expense: A cost that is not allowed for reimbursement with grant funds.

Match: Services, materials, or cash contributed to supplement other funding sources to accomplish grant objectives. Specific programs may have limitations on what may be used as match.

Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business (MCUB) Program: The Met Council's MCUB program is designed to engage and promote businesses that are interested in pursuing Met Council projects and procurements and are owned and operated by women; Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, and Asian people; veterans; and people with disabilities. The MCUB program connects grant recipients with businesses certified through the federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program, the state's Targeted Group Business (TGB) and Veteran or Service-Disabled owned business Programs, and the local Central Certification Program (CERT).

Monitoring: A procedure of reviewing and documenting the progress of grant agreement implementation and compliance with grant agreement provisions.

Monitoring Visit: A visit involving both Council staff and the grantee representatives that occurs during the grant period. The purpose of grant monitoring visits is to review and ensure progress toward the grant's goals, address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period, and build a rapport between the Council and the grantee.

Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity (OEEO): The Met Council's OEEO runs the MCUB program for the Council. The office also provides services for discrimination complaints, equity initiatives, and accessibility at the Council.

Post-Award: The time period during implementation of the grant, reporting progress, reviewing, and processing reimbursement requests and completing closeout requirements.

Pre-Award: The time period consists of the beginning of the grant lifecycle, which includes announcing opportunities, submitting applications, and reviewing applications.

Prevailing Wage: The minimum hourly wage, plus benefits, that employers must pay certain workers who work on construction projects funded at least in part by state dollars, as set by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. Questions about application of prevailing wage rates should be directed at the Department of Labor and Industry.

Progress Report: A summary of grant activities and outcomes for a given period. A progress report may have narrative, data, and/or financial elements.

Project Activity Period: Time period during which expenses incurred are eligible for reimbursement.

Risk: The possibility that an event will occur that adversely affects the achievement of objectives.

Risk Assessment: Evaluation of a grant recipient's risk of noncompliance with statutes, rules, grant agreements, and policies to determine appropriate monitoring and reconciliation procedures.

Transportation Advisory Board (TAB): A Board of local elected officials which, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Council and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), serves as the federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that oversees the transportation planning process in the Twin Cities region, including the distribution of federal and regional transportation funds. The TAB designs the Regional Solicitation and selects projects to fund.

WebGrants: The Council's web-based grant management system used for grant administration, applications, payment requests, and reporting.

Organization of the Council

The Council provides essential services and infrastructure through its divisions: Metro Transit, Metropolitan Transportation Services, Community Development and Environmental Services.

Metropolitan Transportation Services

Metropolitan Transportation Services (MTS) conducts planning for the regional transportation system that includes highways, transit, aviation, freight, and bicycle and pedestrian connections. The Metropolitan Council is the region's federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization. MTS also provides direct transit service through contracts or partnerships with counties to deliver four major programs: Metro Mobility/ADA, Transit Link dial-a-ride, contracted regular-route bus service, and Metro Vanpool.

Planning and Finance Unit

The MTS Planning and Finance Unit works closely with the Agencies and other partners to plan, fund, and support the operation and development of the Regional Transportation Systems. The unit produces the federally required Transportation Policy Plan which guides regional investments and transportation policy. The unit leads the grant solicitation and award processes and provides program guidance and review for amendments to project scopes for the active transportation grants and Regional Solicitation process through the Transportation Advisory Board.

Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)

The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) is a key participant in the region's transportation planning process. This board is where state, regional and local officials, transportation providers, and community members contribute to transportation planning and recommend projects for federal funding. The purpose of the Board is to accomplish the responsibilities designated by state and federal law and regulation with regard to transportation planning and programming for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is a subcommittee of the TAB, composed of technical staff from local agencies which provides technical expertise to the TAB, makes recommendations for action to the TAB Programming Committee or TAB Policy Committee, and provides a public forum for discussion of technical issues that impact the TAB's role and responsibilities.

Finance and Administration Department

Finance and Administration is responsible for establishing and maintaining a formal communications process with Active Transportation grantees and ensuring the efficient financial and technical management of grants. The department provides guidance to grant program managers, processes grant awards for execution, and leads post-award processes, including reporting, payments, amendments, risk assessments, monitoring, and closeout procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

Metropolitan Transportation Services Planning Unit

Multi Modal Planning and TAB/TAC Process Teams: The Multi Modal Planning Team creates regional planning documents and conducts studies to aid in the prioritization of regional funding. The TAB/TAC Process Team reviews solicitation applications to aid the TAB in selecting projects for grant awards and that applications meet state requirements. Provide technical assistance to grantees, including answering questions about cost eligibility and other program requirements.

TAB Coordinator: The TAB Coordinator communicates with TAB members and recipients of Regional Solicitation grants in the pre-award and post-award phases and provides services for TAB members to ensure clear and consistent communication. The TAB Coordinator works with Grant Administrator and Transportation Planner to review project scope changes. The TAB Coordinator coordinates meetings, and other business for TAB members.

Transportation Planner: The Transportation Planner administers all pre-award processes for the active transportation grant program. The Transportation Planner also aids in the development of regional transportation planning documents and prioritization of regional investments. The Transportation Planner works with Grant Administrator and TAB Coordinator to review project scope changes.

Finance and Administration Department

Grant Administrator: The Grant Administrator administers all post-award processes for Active Transportation program grants. The Grant Administrator drafts grant agreements and amendments that ensure grant compliance and carries out grant monitoring, including desk reviews, semi-annual reporting, risk assessments and site visits.

Grants Manager: The Grants Manager oversees grant monitoring activities and ensures appropriate controls are in place to comply with state and Council laws, regulations, and policies.

Finance Analyst: Council finance staff support the Active Transportation grant program by developing budget amendments, leading financial forecasting, and reporting to the state, and providing individual financial reports to grant stakeholders.

Grantee

Authorized Representative: The Authorized Representative is the designated representative of the grantee organization in matters related to the award and administration of its grants. This person certifies that the organization will comply with all applicable conditions referenced in the grant agreements. The Authorized Representative further certifies that their organization will be accountable both for the appropriate use of funds awarded and for the performance of the grant-supported project or activities funded by the award.

Project Manager: The Project Manager is designated by the grantee organization to have the appropriate level of authority and responsibility to direct the project or program supported by the award. The grantee organization may designate more than one person to serve as Project Manager if they share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the project. Each Project Manager is responsible and accountable to the grantee organization for the proper conduct of the project or program, including the submission of all required reports.

Other staff: As determined by each individual grantee.

Active Transportation Grant Program Funding

The Council's Active Transportation Grant Program is funded through Regional Transportation Sales and Use Tax authorized by Minnesota Statute [297A.9915](#).

- The statute requires the Metropolitan Council to impose the Regional Transportation Sales and Use Tax at a rate of $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1% (0.0075) on retail sales and uses in the metropolitan area.
- 83% of the tax proceeds are allocated to the Metropolitan Council, the remaining 17% is allocated to metropolitan counties (Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington).

The use of the Metropolitan Council's allocation of the tax proceeds are defined by Minnesota Statute [473.4465](#). This statute requires that 5% of the Metropolitan Council's share of the tax revenue be used for active transportation, as determined by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and legislative requirements.



Pre-Award Processes

Project Development

The project development process described below is for the previous federal Regional Solicitation. The future Active Transportation Solicitation Program parameters will be established through the Regional Solicitation Evaluation which will present recommendations and findings in 2025 for the 2026 Solicitation and beyond. Project development, also referred to as the “pre-award” phase, begins when the TAB begins to solicit project proposals and concludes when projects are selected and approved for a grant. The Council's TAB Coordinator is the primary point of contact during the pre-award phase for general inquiries. More technical comments or questions on applications can be sent to the Transportation Planner in MTS during the pre-award phase.

The Council communicates an upcoming funding opportunity to eligible recipients to enable them to begin coordinating the submission of project applications. Council MTS Transportation Planners then review applications for program and category eligibility and qualifying criteria. The TAB Coordinator communicates with applicants if projects do not meet program or category qualifying criteria requirements. Qualification of projects are presented to the Funding & Programming Committee to approve, modify, or move applications to appropriate category to ensure eligibility. The Active Transportation funds included additional eligibility requirements that are included in the legislative language and not already covered by existing Regional Solicitation eligibility requirements. State law requires that selected projects be identified in a local or regional non-motorized transportation plan to be eligible for selection and that eligible communities describe local complete streets policies or practices. These additional requirements were confirmed for each project by MTS staff in the qualifying review.

Following eligibility confirmation, projects are scored by scoring committees composed of volunteers from local agency partners. Project scoring is based on criteria and prioritization established by the TAB that must follow the objectives and policies within the Transportation Policy Plan. Projects are scored against projects in the same application category and selected within modal categories, each application category has its own scoring prioritization factors. The highest scoring projects from each category are selected for funding.

Project Application

All applications will be submitted through the Council's grant management system, WebGrants.

The TAB initiates and opens the Regional Solicitation application window. The TAB coordinator opens in the Council's grant management system and notifies local agencies and other eligible entities that they may begin submitting applications. Applicants then begin inputting application information and may continue to edit inputs until all information is complete and/or the application deadline has occurred. Once applicants are satisfied with their application, they will officially submit. Council Transportation Planners will then review applications and work with applicants on any additional information that may be needed to meet the qualifying criteria.

Application Review, Scoring, & Award

After project applications are deemed eligible by staff, and approved by the Funding & Programming Committee, projects are then reviewed and scored by committees consisting of local government technical staff. These are reviewed by measures and prioritization set by the TAB to ensure consistency among reviews. Projects are reviewed against each other in their selective categories and ranked from highest scoring to lowest. After projects are ranked, Council staff create multiple funding scenarios that emphasize different goals to fund various projects for the TAB to choose. TAB then chooses the preferred scenario, and the identified projects are selected to be awarded funding. In 2024, with the new Active Transportation sales tax proceeds, TAB selected additional projects which had applied for federal funding from the non-motorized categories to be funded with these new local funds.

The future solicitation for these funds will be determined through the Regional Solicitation Evaluation process which will conclude in 2025. This new process will include updated eligibility, prioritization and scoring for project proposals.

Grant Program Specifications

Infrastructure projects eligible for the program are designed to improve the safety and ability of people to walk or bicycle throughout their community. Selected projects must meet legislative requirements outlined in 473.4465 Subd. 3. Selected projects which are to receive over \$750,000 in active transportation grant funds and do not have a local small business contracting program in place will be required to work with the Council's Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity to review projects for subcontracting opportunities and set subcontracting goals when appropriate.

Project Activity Period

Grant terms will be four years, expiring on December 31, 2028. There is the possibility to extend up to one year upon submission of a formal amendment request and contingent on subsequent review and approval.

Match

Active Transportation (2024) Pilot Grant Program requires a 20% local match.

Project Start

Projects are required to start by December 31, 2026. A project is considered started when project bidding has been initiated by the grantee. It is possible to seek an extension of the project start through a formal request for TAB approval.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements: pedestrian curb ramps, intersections or midblock crossings, median refuges, raised crossings, raised intersections, speed bumps or tables, and curb extensions.
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities: exclusive multi-use bicycle and pedestrian trails, sidewalks, pedestrian bridges, pathways that are separated from a roadway.
- On-road facilities: bicycle lanes, bicycle boulevards, and cycle tracks.
- Traffic control and safety devices: signs, bicycle and pedestrian activated signals, flexible bollards, pavement markings, pedestrian-scale lighting *Note: electronic devices must be permanent, **not** mobile.*
- Basic curb, roadway, or turf replacement due to removals required to install the improvements listed above.

Eligible expenses are:

- Consistent with the grant agreement, specifically the scope and budget presented in the grant project summary.
- Costs incurred within the project activity period stated in the grant agreement.
- Consistent with state statutes, as applicable.
- Consistent with relevant Council policies.
- Consistent with grant program requirements.

Eligible Expenses

Include, but are not limited to:

- Path/Trail Construction
 - Concrete or bituminous
- Sidewalk Construction
 - Concrete or bituminous
- Pedestrian Curb Ramps (ADA)
- Roundabouts
- Shoulders
- Crossing Aids (e.g. Audible Pedestrian Signals, HAWK)
- Culverts
- Drain Tile
- Overlays
- Seal Coats
- Surfacing
- Signing/Striping
- On-Street Bicycle Facility Construction
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Contingencies

- Other Bicycle and Pedestrian Elements
- Pedestrian-Scale Lighting
- Streetscaping
- Seed/Sod/Mulch
- Trees
- Landscaping
 - Not to exceed 5% of project budget
- Wayfinding
- Mailbox supports
- Right-of-Way Temporary Construction Easements and Recording Fees
- Utility movement required by construction
- Water/Sanitary Sewer (only replacement due to construction)

Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Design or engineering.
- Development of construction plans.
- Incentives, not originally included in construction contract.
- Changes due to consultant design errors.
- Price escalation not provided for in original bid documents.
- Work outside the limits of the project.
- Adjustment of private facilities (signs, fences, lawn sprinklers, etc., unless covered as part of a right-of-way agreement or permit.)
- Storm and sanitary sewer work and other drainage or utility work that is not a result or purpose of the project.
- Excessively expensive treatments that do not appear to be in the public interest. This could include expediting the project for a questionable purpose or proposing the use of very extravagant roadway treatments or street side appurtenances.
- Non-conforming work such as substandard details, designs determined undesirable or discontinued because of poor performance. Example: 3" sidewalk, A588 guardrail, salt susceptible roadside plantings.
- Payment for work done by an unapproved subcontractor.
- Payments for betterments that are not currently part of the project. Example: payment for excess sizing of sanitary sewer adjustment for future development. The additional cost over replacement-in-kind should be borne by the owner of the facility being adjusted.
- Payment for items that should typically be considered maintenance work by the owner agency. Examples: snow plowing, trash removal, and mowing roadsides.
- Right-of-way acquisition costs.
- Water fountains, waste receptacles, benches, statuary
- General operating expenses, general administration, or similar expenses.
- Staff time (unless a grantee is constructing the project themselves and then staff time must be directly related to project delivery/construction).
- Equipment.
- Any expenditure that occurs outside of the activity period as outlined in the Grant Agreement.

Post-Award Processes

Following selection of projects by the TAB and concurred by the Council, applicants are sent an award letter that includes the awarded funding and key contacts to move forward with implementing their projects.

Grant Agreement

Council Grant Administrators prepare grant agreements and route them for execution. Routing a grant agreement for execution entails the following:

- Council Grant Administrators send grant agreements electronically to grantees for review and signature by the grantee's designated signatories.
- Grantees review entire agreement and project summary (Exhibit A) carefully. Contact the Grant Administrator if there are any questions about the terms of the agreement or about the details in the project summary.
- Grantees return signed grant agreements to Council Grant Administrators to route internally for executing signature.
- Grant Administrator routes for final executing signature by the Council.
- Grantee receives notification that the agreement has been executed. A copy of the executed grant agreement is provided to the grantee, along with directions on the next steps for grant project implementation.
 - Attachments to the grant agreement and other required documentation may need to be completed before the project activities occur, or before expenditures are reimbursed.
 - The Project Activity Period begins on the date indicated in the grant agreement.

Assignment

Active Transportation grants are not assignable to any entity, public or private or any tier sub-recipient. For example, a general partner may not assign a grant to a limited partnership.

Acknowledgement

The grant agreement requires grantees to acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the Council in all construction signage, promotional materials, press releases, reports and publications relating to the project activities. Please use the full formal name, *i.e.*, "Metropolitan Council," not "Met Council" or "Metro Council."

Specifically, the agreement requires that you acknowledge Council assistance in "promotional materials, press releases, reports and publications relating to the project activities that are funded in whole or in part with the grant funds." All such acknowledgements should contain the following language:

Financing for this project was provided by the Metropolitan Council through the Transportation Advisory Board's Active Transportation Fund as established by the Minnesota Legislature.

What kind of acknowledgement is expected?

- If your project will have signage at the project site, and if that signage acknowledges any funders, the Council expects similar acknowledgement on that signage. If, for example, the signage displays the logos of other funding partners, it is expected that the Council logo will also

be displayed. If there are statements regarding funding, the Council expects the above statement to be included.

- When issuing press releases, reports or publications that address funding in any way, the Council expects to be included in any discussion of funding partners.
- The Council will provide an electronic version of the Council logo upon request.
- If funding partners are invited to a ceremony, such as a ground-breaking or grand opening, please consider inviting the Council member who represents the district in which the project is located. Contact information for Council members is available online at [Council Members & Districts - Metropolitan Council \(metrocouncil.org\)](#).

If there are questions about what sort of acknowledgements are appropriate, please contact the Grant Administrator.

Payment Requests

Requirements prior to the release of payment

- Grant agreement must be fully executed.
- Designation of Signature Authority form needs to be provided.
- Grantees must submit proof of ownership or controlling interest in land needed to construct facilities. These forms may be deeds, right-of-way plats or equivalent, easement agreements or other forms of evidence of control of necessary land.
- Grantees must submit final plan sheets for Council review and approval.
 - Final plans must be signed off on by an accredited engineer
 - Final plans must meet MnDOT Facility Design Guide or other applicable design standards and ADA requirements
- Grantees must work with the Council's Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity to set subcontracting goals through the Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program (MCUB) for projects with a grant award over \$750,000.00 (See [MCUB FAQ](#) for more information). The goal setting process includes:
 - Subrecipient Contract Initiation Memo (SCIM) submitted to OEEO that includes scope of project to be solicited for bid as well as the broken-down cost estimate
 - OEEO reviews and establishes a goal for the project and provides the required language to be included in the solicitation.
 - OEEO staff must be included in any pre-bid meeting to provide information to contractors on compliance with the requirements
 - OEEO must review final bid submissions and confirm that selected contractor sufficiently addressed the requirements in their bid package
 - OEEO staff must be included in any pre-construction or kick-off meetings to provide information to the contractor about the post award MCUB requirements.
- Grantees with existing small/underutilized business contracting program may utilize and submit verification of their own program for a waiver of the requirement for the Council's Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity to set subcontracting goals.
- Grantees must submit a signed construction contract.

Initial 50% advance payment

Upon completion of the above referenced requirements, Council will issue a payment for the first 50% of the grant award. The Grantee must then track these funds, with expenditures documented as expended for grant eligible activities. All expenditures must be incurred after the start of the project activity period.

Once grantees have fully expended the initial 50% advance payment, grantees must submit all documentation of eligible expenditures to the Grant Administrator for review and approval. Advance payment expenditures must be reported on the Council provided Grantee Invoice form, with all backup documentation included. After Grant Administrator approval of the initial 50% advance payment expenditures Grantees are welcome to submit subsequent reimbursement requests for the remaining grant funds.

Final 50% payment requests

The Council will disburse the final 50% of the grant funds on a reimbursement or cost-incurred basis for grant-eligible expenses incurred during the project activity period. Grantees are required to submit reimbursement claims at least twice annually, during designated claim periods. The claim periods include all expenses incurred from January 1 – June 30 and July 1 – December 31, respectively. Grantees have the six months following the end of a claim period to submit their reimbursement request. This allows time for Grantees to receive and pay invoices for eligible expenses. For example:

- Claim Period: January 1 – June 30
 - Grantee has until December 31 to submit expenses for this period
- Claim Period: July 1 – December 31
 - Grantee has until June 30 to submit expenses for this period

Grantees are welcome to submit for reimbursement more frequently, just not more than monthly. If Grantees do not have expenses for a given claim period, they must inform Council Grant Administrators via email that there are no expenses to be claimed. Once a claim period has been identified and expenses submitted, that period will be closed and no additional expenses will be accepted, unless an exception is requested and approved by Council Grant Administrators.

Final claims are required to be submitted within 90 days after project completion or grant expiration, whichever comes first.

Required Supporting Documentation

Grantees must supply adequate supporting documentation to substantiate each cost claimed for reimbursement. The individual line items claimed must clearly tie to the backup documentation provided. Council Grant Administrators review reimbursement requests for accuracy to ensure expenses align with the grant scope and budget. Each payment request must contain a description of the activity, date of activity, expense, and proof of payment. Payment request documentation should be noted on a payment request form and verified by the grantee's Authorized Representative.

Supporting documents include, but are not limited to:

- Signed contracts including any change orders affecting the contract scope.
- Contractor and/or subcontractor invoices.
 - If invoices include subcontractor expenses, a copy of the subcontractor's invoice(s) must be provided.
- Pay applications and their line-item details (continuation sheets).
- Copy of a contract.
- Signed waivers or lien statements.
- Receipts.
- Proof of payment.

- Typically consists of a copy of the canceled check along with output from the grantee's official accounting system showing the transaction(s).

The grantee is responsible for identifying expenses for reimbursement and for excluding ineligible expenses. Lack of clear information and supporting documentation may delay payment processing or cause the payment request to be returned to the grantee for further clarification.

The Council will not accept a payment request form that is unsigned or that has been signed by anyone other than the Grantee's authorized representative, as documented by the Designation of Signature Authority form.

Dealing with Ineligible Expenses

Within the Active Transportation grant program, there are some valid project costs that the program cannot cover, including common activities such as permits, travel, mileage, postage or administrative overhead. These costs are described in the Ineligible costs section above. An invoice may also include costs that are being submitted to another grantor. All such charges must be clearly identified on the face of the supporting invoice and deducted from the invoice total. The net amount claimed must be indicated on the face of each invoice.

When these expenses are submitted, it is the grantee's responsibility to identify them and exclude them from payment requests to the Council. Grant Administrators will not approve the payment request if it cannot be readily determined how the Grantee arrived at the net amount claimed.

Additional Helpful Information

- If there is no signed contract, provide the agreement that dictates the costs of goods or services, such as a bid, proposal, purchase order, etc. To be acceptable, the scope of work or description of the goods or services must be included, along with change orders.
- Supporting documents must unambiguously identify the name of the service provider, refer to the contract or other cost agreement or project number, cost per hour or unit, total cost of service, quantity of service, the kind of service rendered, or products provided. They must unambiguously relate to a specific grant funded activity. Payment requests with unclear claims will not be approved.
- When submitting a signed copy of the Certificate of Payment along with a Continuation Sheet or AIA Sheet, provide clear identification of the claimed costs – highlight, mark or note the line items being claimed. It is the grantee's responsibility to fully identify the claimed costs. If the grantee is claiming less than the total line item, the grantee must indicate what portion of the line item is being claimed and the rationale for arriving at that number. If the item claimed is not visible on the invoice/continuation sheet or referenced by line item on the payment request, the Council will not approve the costs.
- If costs from subcontractors are claimed, a copy of the subcontractor's invoice(s) must be provided. Make sure to exclude ineligible costs by marking them on the subcontractor's invoice.

Reimbursement Claim Submission Process

- Grantee prepares claim requests using the payment request form provided by the Council.
- Grantee submits the completed payment request form, along with supporting documentation through the Council's online grant management system, WebGrants.
- Council Grant Administrators review payment requests for completeness and accuracy.
- Council Grant Administrators work with the grantee to identify any ineligible expenses and/or gather additional information needed for payment approval.

Instructions for Completing a Grantee Invoice Form and Submitting a Claim Request

Follow this link for detailed instructions on completing Grantee Invoice and submitting the claim request.

Payment Timelines

The Council will make payments within 35 days of a complete submission, as required by [Minnesota Statutes, section 471.425](#). The Council will notify grantees within 10 days if it finds substantive errors in the payment request that prevents Council approval. After notification of any errors, the 35-day period restarts the day the claim is resubmitted. The Council will not make final payments until the grantee meets all reporting requirements.

Grant Reporting

The Council requires grantees to submit reports that are due at specific times during the lifecycle of a grant award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Council Grant Administrators will communicate all known general reporting requirements and anticipated deadlines each year. Additional specific reporting requirements may be found in grant agreements.

General reporting requirements include:

- Submission of semi-annual progress reports and cash flow projections on all active projects using Council provided report templates. Reports are due July 31 and January 31 of each calendar year.
 - Reports include:
 - Grant funded activities that occurred during the reporting period
 - Estimated amount expended for grant-funded activities
 - Issues that arose, and how they were addressed
 - Possible changes required to the grant scope or budget
 - Organizational or staff changes related to the grant
 - Cash flow estimates for when future grant draws will occur and in what amounts
- Final Report is due before the final payment has been made or the grant has been closed for any reason.

Monitoring, Risk Assessments, and Site Visits

Monitoring

Grantees are responsible for the day-to-day management of their grant. As stewards of regional funds, Council Grant Administrators monitor grants to identify potential problems and areas where technical assistance might be necessary. This monitoring is done through review of reports and correspondence from the grantee, risk assessments, site visits, and other information available to the Council.

Grantees may be asked to provide documentation for desk reviews and participate in site visits. The Council Grant Administrator may complete periodic site visits to ensure compliance with grant agreements. Monitoring expectations will be communicated to grantees annually.

Risk Assessments

Council Grant Administrators perform risk assessments of each grantee. Risk assessments are performed at least every two years. Risk assessments include a financial review and examination of prior grantee performance to determine monitoring expectations.

Factors considered in the risk assessment consist of:

- Review of the most recent audit and assessment of the impact of any findings
- Financial review using the most current version of both the:
 - Annual Comprehensive Financial Report from grantee's governing body.
 - Management and Compliance Report from grantee's governing body.
- Prior performance:
 - Required reports and documents were submitted on time.
 - Required reports and documents provided accurate and pertinent information.
 - Reimbursement requests did not include ineligible activities.
 - Program outcomes were met.
- Staff turnover or grantee systems changes.
- Debarment and suspension of grantee by the Council, state, or federal government.

Risk assessment findings inform monitoring strategies and the frequency of future risk assessments.

Site Visits

Site visits may be conducted as part of the Council's monitoring procedure. Grantees will receive advance notification of visits, including date of the meeting and which documents they should be prepared to share and/or review with Council Grant Administrators.

Council Grant Administrators will perform site visits to fulfill several functions:

- Collect information for monitoring and risk assessment activities.
- Verify specific status of grant project, activities, or outcomes.
- Provide orientation on Council grant programs.
- Update grantees on any changes in the grant program or process.
- Provide technical support:
 - Advise on grant project implementation strategies.
 - Assist with the development of grant administration policy and procedure.
- Document grant projects for system-wide publicity efforts.

Grant Amendments

The terms of the grant agreement may be adjusted under certain circumstances. Smaller adjustments to the budget and/or scope may be made by the Grantee with prior written approval of the Grant Administrator.

Significant changes to the project require a formal amendment that may or may not also require approval from the Transportation Advisory Board. See the TAB Scope Change Policy for more details.

To request an amendment, Grantees submit a signed written request detailing what project changes require an amendment, the purpose and rationale for the amendment, and provide any supporting

documentation. The proposed amendment must be consistent with both the scope and the budget of the project, as approved by the Council.

Types of Amendments

Extensions

An extension may be needed if the grant funded activities can't be completed within the grant term. The grant may be extended to a maximum of five years, including the initial project activity period.

Extension amendments requests must be received at least 90 days prior to the grant expiration date.

Budget Change

The Grantee may reallocate up to 20% of the grant budget among the listed line items. The Grantee must obtain the written permission of the Grant Administrator in advance, but no formal amendment is necessary. A request to reallocate the budget may be submitted via email to the Grant Administrator.

If a change of more than 20% of the total grant budget is needed, the Grantee must submit a signed written amendment request. The Grant Administrator will review the request to determine if TAB approval will be required.

The total grant amount cannot be increased.

Scope Change

Grantees are required to notify the Grant Administrator if the grant funded project changes. The Grantee must submit a signed written amendment request. Significant changes to the project may require TAB approval. The Grant Administrator may request additional follow-up to determine if TAB approval will be required. The Council reserves the right to reduce or rescind the grant and to recover funds already paid out if the changes result in a different project or

are deemed significant enough that the grant would not have been awarded funding.

There are three levels of scope changes outlined in the TAB Scope Change Policy: administrative, informal and formal changes. Below is a brief explanation of the three levels of change.

- Administrative scope changes are generally minor changes to a project which occur as projects move into detailed design such as project amenities or aesthetic items or the addition of project elements that are funded through another source. These can be reviewed and approved by the Grant Administrator.
- Informal scope changes exceed the standard of administrative changes of minor element changes or additional elements funded through other sources. This level of scope change requires a consultation meeting with the TAB Coordinator, Grant Administrator and Transportation Planner(s) to determine if the scope change can be approved through an informal or formal process. Project changes which may trigger this consultation include the changing of a route alignment, while still meeting project connections, changing the termini of a project that does not negatively impact the project, changing intersection treatments or the nature of a roadway crossing.
- Formal scope changes are major changes that may significantly alter the estimated benefits of the project to the region. These changes must go through the formal TAB/TAC committee review process and be approved by the TAB.

Grant Amendment Process

- Grantee submits a signed request for the amendment on organization letterhead, including:
 - Title and Council grant number.
 - Type of amendment requested.
 - Reason for request.
- Council Grant Administrators review request for alignment with program terms and compliance with all relevant statutes.
- Council Grant Administrators route for internal review and approval of proposed amendment
 - If the amendment requires TAB approval, then refer to TAB Scope Change Policy for more details on process.
- Amendment document sent to grantee for review and signature.
- Grantee returns signed amendment document to the Council.
- Council executes amendment.
 - All amendments must be executed prior to the expiration of the grant agreement.

Grant Closeout

A grant is ready to close out when all project activities are complete, the grant award has been fully expended, or the balance is no longer needed to complete grant activities, and/or the grant term has ended. The closeout of a grant will render the grant inactive and unavailable for reimbursement of additional project expenditures incurred.

Grant Closeout Process

- Grantees submit a Certified Closeout Form and all necessary backup documentation, along with their final reimbursement claim. Final payments will not be made until all reporting requirements are complete.
- Grantees complete the Certified Closeout Form by verifying the following:
 - Status of the project.
 - Remaining balance of funds.
 - Final project budget expenditures.
 - At least one photo demonstrating the completion of the grant project.
 - Any additional grant program required documentation
- Grantee submits the Certified Closeout Form and supporting documentation (with the final pay request) through the Council's grant management system, WebGrants.
- Council Grant Administrator reviews Certified Closeout Form for completeness and accuracy. They review project documentation for completion and follow up with grantees if additional necessary documentation is needed.
- Once Certified Closeout Forms are approved, final payment is released, and the grant is closed.

Records Retention

Grantees generally must retain financial and programmatic records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other records that are required by the terms of the grant, or may reasonably be considered pertinent to a grant, for a period of six years from the date the final report is submitted. Grantees can refer to the grant agreement for additional information about records retention requirements.

Templates and Forms

Grant Claim & Closeout Forms

Semi-annual Report Form

Source and Use of Funds Form

Project Completion Schedule Form

Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program Resources

[Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program \(MCUB\)](#)

[MCUB Directory](#)

[MCUB Good Faith Efforts \(GFE\) Reference](#)

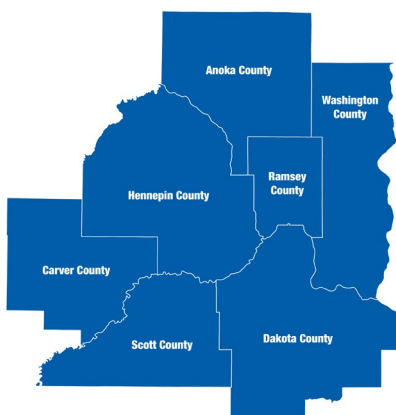
[DBE/MCUB Credit Counting Reference Guide](#)

[DBE/MCUB Trucking Credit Reference Guide](#)

The Metropolitan Council's mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects, and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans, and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

On request, this publication will be made available in alternative formats to people with disabilities. Call Metropolitan Council information at 651-602-1140 or TTY 651-291-0904.



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