



**Locally Administered Projects Program
Federal Fiscal Years 2026 through 2030**

Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

Date of Release: July 7, 2025

Pre-submittal Informational Meeting: July 16, 2025

Pre-application Review Submittal Deadline: August 15, 2025

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Anticipated Award Date: October 2025

Applications will be submitted digitally via
Smartsheet located at www.wmpo.org/stp-datap-da/

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Introduction

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are federally designated local transportation planning agencies that are responsible for conducting regional transportation planning in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive manner. MPOs were introduced by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 and are required to represent localities in all urbanized areas with populations over 50,000. The Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) is the MPO recognized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the Wilmington Urban Area.

The MPO consists of representatives from the City of Wilmington (lead planning agency), Town of Wrightsville Beach, Town of Carolina Beach, Town of Kure Beach, Town of Belville, Town of Leland, Town of Navassa, New Hanover County, Brunswick County, Pender County, the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority and North Carolina Department of Transportation. The MPO's planning area is approximately 494 square miles and encompasses the entirety of New Hanover County and portions of Brunswick and Pender Counties.

The WMPO board adopted this submittal guide on June 25, 2025. It introduces a new approach for the WMPO to award direct attributable funds. Starting with fiscal year (FY) 2026, the WMPO will accept proposals for new projects every two years. Applications for supplemental funds due to funding shortfalls may be submitted on a rolling, as-needed basis.

Project Funding

The WMPO receives allocated funds from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG). The STBG program offers discretionary funding that states and local governments can utilize for various projects aimed at improving the condition and performance of Federal-aid highways, bridges, and tunnels. This funding can also be applied to improvements on public roads, as well as pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects. STBG program funding is allocated through state transportation agencies, and the selection of projects is decided upon by the State Department of Transportation (DOT) or local MPO.

The federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law on November 15, 2021. This act revised and expanded the funding availability for qualifying infrastructure projects. Several provisions of the IIJA provided greater flexibility in the use of federal funds for these projects. Funding examples include the Transportation Alternatives set-aside (TA) and the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). The funds from the IIJA can be obligated until September 30, 2026, and any amounts not obligated by that date will need to be returned.

The table on page 4 outlines the availability of discretionary funds over the next five fiscal years. Please note that the amounts for FY 2026-2027 through FY 2029-2030 are estimated totals. Approximately \$2,000,000 is set aside each fiscal year for WMPO operations and to cover project shortfalls.

Fiscal Year	Total Funds (Estimated)	Operating & Shortfall	Award Availability (Estimated)
FY 2026	\$6,369,353	-\$2,000,000	\$4,369,353
FY 2027	\$5,815,040	-\$2,000,000	\$3,815,040
FY 2028	\$5,815,040	-\$2,000,000	\$3,815,040
FY 2029	\$5,815,040	-\$2,000,000	\$3,815,040
FY 2030	\$5,815,040	-\$2,000,000	\$3,815,040
<i>Total for FY 2026 to FY 2030</i>			<i>\$19,629,513</i>

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for funding, a project must meet the minimum criteria outlined in this section. The applicant(s) must electronically submit a completed application and supplemental materials. Co-applications may be submitted by designating a primary and secondary applicant. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The criteria below meet federal and state funding requirements and the goals adopted by the WMPO Board. Projects that do not meet these criteria will not be considered for funding. Applications not prioritized for funding will not be automatically considered in subsequent years and should be resubmitted in the next call for projects.

I. Federal Aid Eligible

Federal eligibility requirements for the STGB program can be found in US Code [23 USC §133](#). Additional information regarding federal eligibility can also be found at www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/stp/.

II. MTP/LRTP Compliant

Projects submitted for consideration must be identified in the WMPO's adopted 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) fiscally constrained list, the WMPO's draft 2050 MTP fiscally constrained roadway project list, or the draft 2050 MTP non-highway priority project lists. A copy of the 2045 MTP can be found at www.wmpo.org/mtp/ and the draft 2050 MTP can be found at www.wmpo.org/2050mtp-public-comment/.

III. Locally Administered

Applicants are responsible for all federal and state reporting requirements related to discretionary funding. They are also expected to provide progress reports to the WMPO Board upon request. An inter-local agreement between the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the designated recipient will specify a reimbursement schedule. The recipient will be responsible for covering all project costs, submitting invoices to the NCDOT, and receiving reimbursement for the project. While the WMPO may assist with reporting and coordinating efforts between the NCDOT and the recipient, the ultimate responsibility for the project remains with the recipient.

IV. Commitment of Local Funds

All projects must have a minimum local match of 20% of the total project costs. Discretionary funds will cover up to 80% of eligible costs. Recipients will be responsible for any overruns exceeding the final programmed cost estimate. This provision may be reviewed at the discretion of the WMPO Board and may be adjusted through additional amendments to the Surface Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) by the Board of Transportation, if necessary.

V. Project Design Intent

Project design intent must meet or exceed Federal, State, and local guidelines for design elements, including any minimum widths, safety elements, or controls.

Program Administrative Details

I. Informational and Pre-Submittal Meetings

After the call for projects is released, WMPO staff will host an informational meeting on July 16, 2025 to explain the application process, review the application form, and discuss the scoring criteria. Applicants will have the opportunity to submit their applications by August 15, 2025 for staff review and feedback before submitting the final version.

II. Transit Project Funding

Projects from local transit authorities that involve improvements not typically classified by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) may have their funding transferred to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for distribution. This transfer will take place after the funding award has been granted. Applicants should note that the authorization processing time may be extended due to this additional review step.

III. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

If a project awarded does not have an assigned TIP category, a TIP amendment will be required. Applicants should be aware that this amendment process may delay the funding obligation timeline.

IV. Project Submittal Limits

Please limit submittals to no more than thirty (30) pages, including appendices.

V. Construction Requirement

Projects receiving federal discretionary funds must obtain Construction Authorization within ten (10) years from the fiscal year in which Preliminary Engineering was authorized.

Application Materials

Applicants are required to submit the following materials with their application:

I. LAPP Smartsheet and Certification Form

The LAPP Smartsheet will provide WMPO staff with key project details. Instructions to aid applicants in completing the LAPP Smartsheet can be found in the next section. The Certification Form must be signed by the primary applicant and secondary applicant (*if applicable*) for the application to be considered complete.

II. Scoring Rubric

The Scoring Rubric is a Microsoft Excel file that can be downloaded at the following: www.wmpo.org/stp-datap-da/. Applicants should fill out the "Applicant Scoring" column highlighted in orange. If no points are awarded for a row, please leave the cell blank. Scores are out of one hundred (100) total points. A detailed description of the Scoring Rubric criteria can be found beginning on page 8.

III. Map(s) of Proposed Project

At least one (1) map showing the project's location must be included with the application. The map should display street names and labeled points of interest to help the application reviewers identify the project area.

Additional maps that support the points in the Scoring Rubric may be submitted, such as those highlighting the project's proximity to schools or medical facilities. Maps can be created using ArcGIS, ArcPro, or Google Earth.

IV. Opinion of Probable Project Costs

The detailed anticipated design (*if applicable*) and construction costs of the project must be prepared by a licensed Professional Engineer (PE) or a Project Management Professional (PMP) in the State of North Carolina. All associated costs related to the project's completion, including but not limited to engineering, right-of-way (ROW), utility relocations, and inspection/materials testing, should be presented in a line-item cost format displaying the material quantity and unit cost. Please see Appendix A for an example.

V. Inflation and Contingency Calculator

Given the rising costs of materials and supply chain issues, it is essential to factor in both inflation and construction contingency into the overall project total. Applicants must include the "Inflation and Contingency Calculator" Microsoft Excel file found at www.wmpo.org/stp-datap-da/ with their application. This file will calculate the values based on project status and funding fiscal year. Below are two tables outlining the estimated contingency and inflation costs to be added to the project total. Please note that inflation is compounded over the fiscal years.

Project Phase Complete	Contingency
Planning (0-10% of the plans are complete)	40%
Design (15-65% of the plans are complete)	30%
Right-of-way (75-95% of the plans are complete)	25%
Construction (100% of the plans are complete)	10%
NCDOT Administrative Charges	10%

Fiscal Year	Inflation Percent
FY 2026	3%
FY 2027	3%
FY 2028	3%
FY 2029	3%
FY 2030	3%

VI. Project Schedule

Project schedule outlining key milestone dates, including deadlines for plan submissions at applicable stages and dates for requesting funding authorizations. Based on previous project timelines, we anticipate a minimum of 6 months to a year for project agreements to be executed and approximately twelve to eighteen months for right-of-way to be completed. Please develop schedules accordingly. An example project schedule can be found in Appendix B.

VII. Signed Resolution of Financial Support

A signed resolution on the letterhead of the Primary Applicant must be provided, authorizing a local match of no less than 20% of the total project cost. The resolution must include, in whole dollar amounts, the total project cost, the amount requested from the WMPO, and the local match total. Additionally, the resolution must indicate that the local matching funds will be allocated if the grant is awarded. An example is provided below:

“THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Example hereby authorizes the Example Department to apply for \$800,000 in STBG-DA funding from the WMPO for the Example Multi-Use Path Design with a total project cost of \$1,000,000; and

THAT, funding for the required minimum 20% local grant match of \$200,000 from the City of Wilmington has been identified and will be appropriated if the grant is awarded.”

When determining the requested funding amount, always round down to the nearest whole dollar. The local match amount should be rounded up to the nearest whole dollar. An example is provided below:

Prior to Rounding	Incorrect Rounding	Correct Rounding
Project Total: \$101.00 Requested Total: \$80.80 Local Match: \$20.20	Project Total: \$101.00 Requested Total: \$81.00 ↑ Local Match: \$20.00 ↓	Project Total: \$101.00 Requested Total: \$80.00 ↓ Local Match: \$21.00 ↑

VIII. Additional Supporting Documents *(optional)*

The application submission may include exhibits or site photos with labels, additional maps, safety reports, crash records, and any adopted resolutions that support the project's goals. If additional supporting documents are submitted, it is essential to include a clear table of contents that outlines the contents of these documents.

LAPP Smartsheet Guide

The following descriptions are provided to assist with the completion of the LAPP Smartsheet.

1. Project Name: A descriptive name of the project
2. Project Location: Physical location and extent of the project
3. TIP ID: If the project is already included in the NCDOT STIP, provide the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) number
4. Existing Project: Indicate whether this project is an extension of a previously completed or current, ongoing project (yes) or if this project is new (no)
5. Total Project Cost: Total cost of the project, including local match
6. Requested Funding Total: Total funding cost requested, which shall not exceed 80% of the total project cost
7. Local Match Total: Total amount of local match funding, which at minimum must be 20% of the total project cost
8. Anticipated Funding Start Year: Select the anticipated fiscal year to begin project funding
9. Primary Applicant: The name of the municipality or jurisdiction member submitting the application (ex. “City of Wilmington”)
10. Secondary Applicant *(if applicable)*: The name of the agency, organization, municipality, or jurisdiction

member who is a joint applicant

11. Project Manager: The primary point of contact for the project, typically a representative of the primary applicant
12. Contact Person: Individual who the WMPO can contact if there are questions regarding the application
13. Contact Person Phone: Phone number for the contact person
14. Contact Person Email: Email address for the contact person

Scoring Rubric Guide

The following descriptions are provided to assist with completing the Scoring Rubric.

Safety (30 Points)

1. **Reported Crashes & Accidents (Up to 10 Points):** Does the project seek to improve safety at high-risk or high-crash locations? How many recorded crashes or accidents have occurred in the last five years (2019 to 2024) at or along the project location? Have there been any reported severe injuries (rated as A, Incapacitating) or fatalities (rated as K, Fatal)? Select all that apply.
 - a. One (1) to five (5) (2 points)
 - b. Six (6) to ten (10) (3 points)
 - c. Greater than ten (10) (5 points)
 - d. Reported severe injuries (if yes, 2 points)
 - e. Reported fatalities (if yes, 3 points)
2. **Crash Severity (Up to 10 Points):** If there have been reported crashes or accidents, what was the severity of the crash(es)? Select all that apply.
 - a. Fatal (K) or Incapacitating (A) (6 points)
 - b. Non-incapacitating (B) or Not visible, but complains of pain (C) (4 points)
 - c. Property damage (2 points)
3. **Safety Upgrade or Installation (Up to 10 Points):** Will the project be installing new, safety related infrastructure or will the project be upgrading the safety of existing infrastructure? Please explain in the project narrative.
 - a. New infrastructure (10 points)
 - b. Upgrades to existing infrastructure (5 points)

Fair (20 Points)

1. **Project Location (10 Points):** Does the project remove or cross a geographic and/or human made barrier? The barrier must be one of the following (1) natural stream, wetland, or other body of water; (2) railroad tracks; (3) arterial roadway; (4) major/minor collector road; or (5) grade separation. If yes, award 10 points and explain in the project narrative.
2. **Increasing Connectivity (Up to 10 Points):** Does the proposed project improve connectivity near an area with high traffic or frequently used community spaces? This includes the installation of multi-use paths (MUP), sidewalks, or other infrastructure.
 - a. Located or connects to a Traffic Analysis Zone* (TAZ) with high employment (3 points)
 - b. Located within a ¼ mile radius of a grocery store and/or medical facility (3 points)

- c. Located within a ¼ mile radius of a school (K-12 or higher education), library, and/or government services (2 points)
- d. Located within ¼ mile of public transit (2 points)

*A TAZ is a geographic area used to analyze traffic flow and pattern. TAZ data can be requested from the WMPO until September 1, 2025. Please contact the WMPO Grants Coordinator, Krysden Burden, for data requests.

Connected (25 Points)

1. **Connects to a Park or Greenspace (5 Points):** Does the proposed project connect to an existing park or greenspace? If yes, award 5 points and explain in the project narrative.
2. **Closing Gaps (Up to 5 Points):** Does the proposed project include closing gaps within the existing infrastructure? What is the size of the gap? This can include closing gaps in the MUP network, sidewalks, or dedicated bike lanes.
 - a. Gap is greater than 1/8 mile (5 points)
 - b. Gap is less than 1/8 mile (2 points)
3. **Expands Prior Project (5 Points):** Will the proposed project connect to an existing or currently ongoing WMPO or STIP funded project? If yes, award 5 points. Please provide the existing project details (TIP ID and status) in the project narrative.
4. **Multi-Modal (5 Points):** Will the proposed project serve more than one (1) mode of transportation? If yes, award 5 points and explain in the project narrative.
5. **Approved/Adopted Plan (5 Points):** Is the proposed project part of an approved or adopted plan? Some examples include adopted land use plans, economic development plans, and tourism plans. If yes, award 5 points and indicate in the application narrative what plan(s) the project is a part of.

Resilient (15 Points)

1. **Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Element (5 Points):** Does the proposed project include the implementation of ITS components such as signal preemption, emergency preparedness, or other features? If yes, award 5 points and explain in the project narrative what ITS components are included.
2. **Data and Technology (5 Points):** Will the proposed project include elements that will improve data collection, analysis, or technology? If yes, award 5 points and explain in the project narrative.
3. **Redundancy (5 Points):** Does the proposed project provide redundancy within the existing network, such as alternative routes and multi-modal options? If yes, award 5 points and explain in the project narrative.

Proactive (10 Points)

1. **Project Phase (Up to 5 Points):** How close is the project to final implementation or installation?
 - a. Right of Way Acquisition (3 points)
 - b. Construction (5 points)
2. **Local Match (up to 5):** Is the local match percentage greater than the required 20%?
 - a. 21% to 30% local match (2 points)
 - b. Greater than 30% local match (5 points)

Tiebreaker Elements

In the event the number of applications exceeds the funding amount available, and one or more selected projects receive the same number of points using the Scoring Rubric, the following elements will be used as a tiebreaker:

- Project with the lower cost
- Project closest to the bid date
- Project that scores highest in the safety category

Appendix A: Example of Opinion of Probable Costs

Line Item	Description	Quantity	Unit	Price	Amount
	Mobilization	1	LS	\$ 98,325.65	\$ 98,325.65
	Construction Surveying	1	LS	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 21,000.00
	Supplemental Clearing and Grubbing	1	Acre	\$ 2,750.00	\$ 2,750.00
	<u>Earthwork</u>				
	Unclassified Excavation	160	CY	\$ 55.00	\$ 8,800.00
	Borrow Excavation	920	CY	\$ 55.00	\$ 50,600.00
	Removal of Existing Pavement Asphalt	770	SY	\$ 25.00	\$ 19,250.00
	<u>Drainage</u>				
	Drainage Existing Location - 4 Lane Divided C&G Typical Section	0.15	Miles		\$ -
	18"/24" RC Pipe	1,000.00	LF	\$ 175.00	\$ 175,000.00
	MDS w/ Grate	8.00	EA	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 56,000.00
	<u>Pavement</u>				
	Fine Grading	620	SY		\$ -
	B25 Prep	825	SY	\$ 15.00	\$ 12,375.00
	ABC Prep	1575	SY	\$ 15.00	\$ 23,625.00
	Backfill Curb	1660	LF	\$ 25.00	\$ 41,500.00
	Grade around Sidewalk	3150	SY	\$ 15.00	\$ 47,250.00
	Milling Asphalt Pavement, 1.5" Depth	710	SY	\$ 15.00	\$ 10,650.00
	6" Aggregate Base Course	719	Tons	\$ 65.00	\$ 46,735.00
	Asphalt Type B25.0C	190	Tons	\$ 275.00	\$ 52,250.00
	Asphalt Type I19.0C	80	Tons	\$ 275.00	\$ 22,000.00
	Asphalt Type S9.5C	290	Tons	\$ 275.00	\$ 79,750.00
	Asphalt Binder for Plant Mix	30	Tons	\$ 875.00	\$ 26,250.00
	2'-6" Concrete Curb and Gutter	1,000	LF	\$ 35.00	\$ 35,000.00
	4" Concrete Sidewalk	50	SY	\$ 75.00	\$ 3,750.00
	5" Concrete Monolithic Islands	120	SY	\$ 115.00	\$ 13,800.00
	Concrete Curb Ramos	5	Each	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 18,000.00
	<u>Erosion Control</u>	0.50	Acres	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
	<u>Traffic Control</u>				
	(-L-- and -Y2-) (includes MOT Labor + Portable Lighting + Drums + Msg Board + TMA)	0.15	Miles	\$ 650,000.00	\$ 97,500.00
	Thermo and Pavement Marking (4 Lane Divided C&G Typical Section)	0.15	Miles	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 2,250.00
	Traffic Signals (Upgrade)	1.0	Each	\$ 195,000.00	\$ 195,000.00
	Total Construction Cost				\$ 1,209,410.65
	Legal Fees				\$ 15,000.00
	ROW Acquisitions				\$ 23,000.00
	TOTAL				\$ 1,247,410.65

Appendix B: Project Schedule Example

Timeline for Proposed Project XYZ																											
		2025	2026				2027				2028				2029				2030				2031				
#	Tasks	Q2: Oct-Dec	Q3: Jan-Mar	Q4: Apr-Jun	Q1: Jul-Sep	Q2: Oct-Dec	Q3: Jan-Mar	Q4: Apr-Jun	Q1: Jul-Sep	Q2: Oct-Dec	Q3: Jan-Mar	Q4: Apr-Jun	Q1: Jul-Sep	Q2: Oct-Dec	Q3: Jan-Mar	Q4: Apr-Jun	Q1: Jul-Sep	Q2: Oct-Dec	Q3: Jan-Mar	Q4: Apr-Jun	Q1: Jul-Sep	Q2: Oct-Dec	Q3: Jan-Mar	Q4: Apr-Jun	Q1: Jul-Sep	Q2: Oct-Dec	
1	WMPO awards grants																										
2	Agreement drafted and approved																										
3	PE funding authorization																										
4	Solicit proposals for PE, sign contracts																										
5	PE work - 25%, 60%, 100% plans																										
6	NCDOT review and approval																										
7	ROW acquisition																										
8	CON funding authorization																										
9	CON bid documents developed																										
10	Solicit proposals for CON																										
11	Construction																										
12	CEI/construction administration																										
13	Construction inspection																										
14	Project close out																										