



## Climate Focused Funding Portal: *Emissions Reduction Program*

### Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is the Climate Focused Funding Portal?**

A: This web-based portal provides a centralized location for solicitation of transportation projects that incorporate climate benefits. The current solicitation in the Portal is to identify eligible projects to reduce carbon emissions from transportation. Eligible applicants include Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), local governments, WMATA, and MDOT Modal Administrations.

**Q: What do we mean by decarbonization, decarbonization measures, and emissions reduction benefits?**

A: Decarbonization is the process of significantly reducing or eliminating carbon dioxide and other GHG emissions that result from human activity ([UMD Maryland Energy Innovation Institute](#)). Decarbonization measures and emissions reduction beneficial projects can include, but are not limited to: fleet electrification and transition to zero-emission vehicles and infrastructure, Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) projects, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), congestion mitigation, Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) reduction, transportation mode-shift, public transportation services and facilities, bike/pedestrian facilities, efficient street lighting, diesel engine retrofits, port electrification, truck parking technology, connected and automated vehicle (CAV) technologies, transportation demand management, and rail infrastructure and freight rail projects. This is a not an exhaustive list of potential projects, if your project does not fall under one of those categories, please explain how your project will reduce transportation emissions.

**Q: Is highway widening/expansion eligible as a congestion mitigation measure/emissions reduction measure?**

A: No, highway widening is not eligible as a congestion mitigation measure or emissions reduction measure. As part of the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022, highway expansion is not an eligible strategy to reduce emissions from the transportation sector.

**Q: Do projects need to have a funding Match?**

A: Yes, the project sponsor must provide a non-federal funding match, which is generally 20% of the total project cost.

**Q: Do projects need to follow federal aid requirements?**

A: Yes, all projects must follow federal aid requirements for obligation. The project sponsor must ensure that all federal aid requirements are met prior to potential obligation.

**Q: Where can I find more details on the Carbon Reduction Program eligible project types?**

A: Please refer to the [FHWA Implementation Guidance](#) for details on eligible project types, and more in depth explanation of the intention of the funding source.

**Q: Can Carbon Reduction Program Funds be used to support operating expenses?**

A: No, operating expenses are not an allowable expense under the Carbon Reduction Program. The funds may only be used for capital projects. This applies to both flexed and non-flexed funds.

**Q: Is there a minimum or maximum funding request?**

A: There is no minimum or maximum amount to apply, however there is an 80%/20% non-federal matching requirement.

Through federal fiscal year 24, there is approximately \$55 million available in Maryland. 65% of the available apportionment is for obligation in suballocated areas based on population. This includes urbanized areas with a population greater than 200,000, urbanized areas with a population of at least 50,000 but not more than 200,000, urban areas with a population of at least 5,000 and no more than 49,999, and areas of population of less than 5,000. The remaining 35% of apportioned funds may be obligated in any area of the State.

More information on suballocation apportionments can be found at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/funding.cfm> under FY Apportionment and Obligation Limitation Notices “Supplementary Tables” (tables 17, 18, 19).

**Q: Are projects that support transitioning fleet vehicles to electric eligible?**

A: Per CRP guidance on page 13, item J: “a project to support deployment of alternative fuel vehicles, including - ... (ii.) the purchase or lease of zero-emissions construction equipment and vehicles, including the acquisition, construction, or leasing of required supporting facilities.” Projects that request funds for gasoline/electric hybrid vehicles will not be eligible.

**Q: Can projects that happen in part on federal land be funded by the Carbon Reduction Program?**

With coordination from the federal land owner, projects that happen on federal land are eligible under the Carbon Reduction Program.

**Q: Would operating and maintenance costs be eligible expenses for a project that deploys electric vehicle charging infrastructure?**

A: Maintenance is not an eligible expense for Carbon Reduction Program Funding. However, 23 USC 175(c)(1)(J) does allow for the “acquisition, installation or operation” of publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure.

## **Application Process**

**Q: Where do I apply for the opportunity to be a sub-recipient of Climate Focused Funding?**

A: The application is located on the Maryland OneStop Portal, accessible with this link <https://onestop.md.gov/>. Search “Climate Focused Funding”

**Q: How long is the application open?**

A: Applications will be accepted from March 11, 2024 until 11:59pm on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**Q: Does the application and process vary depending on the applicant?**

A: No, each eligible applicant will be following the same process to apply to be a sub-recipient of climate focused funding. Each applicant will use the OneStop portal to apply, and each application will be evaluated using the same process.

**Q: Do I need an account on the OneStop portal to apply?**

A: Yes, applicants will need to have an account with OneStop. To register for an account you can use the link below, and there is no fee to register for an account. If you have applied to other applications via the OneStop portal, you should already have an account.

[https://onestop.md.gov/users/sign\\_up?registration\\_context=%2F](https://onestop.md.gov/users/sign_up?registration_context=%2F)

**Q: Is there a fee to apply to this opportunity?**

**A:** There is no fee to apply.

**Q: Who is eligible to apply?**

**A:** Eligible applicants include Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), local governments, WMATA, and MDOT Modal Administrations (SHA, MPA, MTA, MAA, MVA).

**Q: What information do I need to include in the application?**

**A:** Please be prepared to provide information on the following: project overview, project scope, project location, budget information, permit requirements and status, and information on the emissions reduction measures that are expected to result from the project.

**Q: How much detail should I provide when filling out the application?**

**A:** Please provide as much detail as possible. This will help reviewers to better understand the scope of the project and understand the different components of the project. Additionally, it will help to determine the readiness of the project for the possible obligation of funds.

**Q: Who do we address letters of support to?**

Please address any letters of support (not required), to the following name and address:

Secretary Paul J. Wiedefeld  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
7201 Corporate Center Drive  
Hanover, Maryland 21076

**Q: My project type is not covered in the Project Readiness Checklist, how should I complete this requirement?**

**A:** All applications are required to provide the project readiness checklist, or some information that informs the readiness of your project for obligation. Please provide notes on the stage of your project on the readiness checklist or an alternative upload. You may also provide a narrative description in the last question of the application in the “Review” section. Please email [Allison.breitenother@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:Allison.breitenother@mdot.maryland.gov) with any additional questions.

## **Resources/Support**

**Q: How can I learn more about the application and ask any questions I have?**

**A:** The Office of Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation is hosting weekly office hours where potential applicants can ask any questions on Climate Focused Funding Opportunity and receive additional support as needed. The office hours will be hosted weekly on weekly, March 11 – April 24, 2024 on Wednesday afternoons at 2pm.

**Q: I have a question on the application who can I contact about the application?**

**A:** If you have a question on the application, please contact Allison Breitenother at [abreitenother@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:abreitenother@mdot.maryland.gov).

**Q: I have a question on the emissions reduction program and process, who can I reach out to?**

**A:** If you have a question on the emissions reduction program and process, please contact Shawn Kiernan, Senior Manager – Strategic Climate Initiatives in MDOT’s Office of Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation, [skiernan@mdot.maryland.gov](mailto:skiernan@mdot.maryland.gov) or 410-865-2775.

## **Helpful Resources**

1. [MDOT Climate Change Website](#)
2. [MDOT Carbon Reduction Strategy \(CRS\)](#)
3. [MDOT Transportation Resilience Improvement Plan \(TRIP\)](#)
4. [MDOT Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#)
5. [State of Maryland Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#)