Screen: Title Slide

Neil Good afternoon. This is Neil Burke, CRTPO Program Manager. Welcome to the Discretionary Funding Application Webinar. We expect this webinar to last approximately 60 minutes. Thank you to those who are participating today. The recorded webinar will be available on our website for later viewing. Because this is being recorded, participants are muted. Please use the chat feature to submit your questions throughout the webinar. We will take 10 to 15 minutes to answer questions at the end.

I'm now going to turn it over to Erin Kinne for a brief overview of the call for projects and today's agenda.

Screen: Timeline

Erin Thank you, Neil. We have a little less than six weeks left before the application deadline of October 31, 2019. All applications and attachments are due by 5 pm on that date. Application funding decisions will be completed by December, presented to the TCC and Board for information in January, and for action in February. Please keep this in mind as you put your application together. Awarded funds will not be available until well into fiscal year 2020.

Screen: Agenda

Erin Today's agenda is broken down mainly by the different application types. Questions will be covered at the end. If you have a question that is very specific to your project or location, we may need to follow up with you offline in greater detail. And we will be capturing all of the questions that are submitted today. As Neil said, you can submit questions at any time through the chat feature.

Screen: Application Overview

Erin First of all, the application is a Google Form. You should have received this link in an email from me on August 19. The attachments you'll need to submit are referenced within the application, and you can send all attachments by email to Neil Burke.

Screen: CRTPO Website

Erin In addition to the application itself, you'll want to be familiar with the Discretionary Projects webpage. It contains the discretionary funds policy guide, recent presentations, and soon this recorded webinar and a webinar transcript.

Screen: Discretionary Projects Webpage

Erin Here, you can also review the questions in a PDF format. When you're first getting started, the PDF is easy to navigate to get a sense of what information you might need to gather for your responses. You may also find it's a good idea to draft your responses in Word or some other format that you can save while it's in progress. Once you start your application, you can navigate between the sections of the application and your answers will be saved. However, if you close your browser prior to clicking Submit, your answers will not save for you to return to later. Therefore, you'll want to enter the information in the Google Forms application when you are ready to do so in one session.

Below the application questions, you will find two budget attachments. 1A is to be used for new capital projects and 1B is to be used for shortfalls on existing discretionary funded capital projects. We'll go into detail on these documents when we get to the budget sections of the applications. Please note, if you are submitting an application for a local Planning project then these budget attachments do not apply to your application.

Screen: UPWP Webpage

Erin Also of note for Planning funds applicants, please review the UPWP page and the Resource Guide there to familiarize yourself with the eligible activities and the requirements for requesting the funds. We will also cover local planning projects as part of this webinar.

Screen: Application - Section One (part 1)

Erin I'm now going to move onto the application. All applicants will complete this section, providing information about the person completing the application and the person who will be the main contact for managing the project. In question 5, you can also provide information on the roles and experience of anyone else who will be involved in managing the project.

Screen: Application - Section One (part 2)

Erin In question 10, give the project a descriptive name without being overly long.

Question 11 is important because, as the smaller text describes, your response will take you to the appropriate section for your application. The choices are: 1. New request – Project not currently funded with STBG-DA, TAP-DA, CMAQ, Bonus Allocation, or Planning (PL) funds; 2. Existing CRTPO project needing additional funds – Currently funded with STBG-DA, TAP-DA, CMAQ or Bonus Allocation; and 3. Existing CRTPO local planning project needing additional funds – Currently funded with Planning (PL).

The descriptions are pretty straightforward, but please note, if you have an existing project that has received some other funding, whether it's state Safety Funds, Highway Trust Funds, or something else, and you are requesting CRTPO discretionary funds, that would be considered a New Request. The project is new to CRTPO and to its discretionary funds process and we want to make sure we're collecting the same data for all projects. If you are not clear on which option to select, contact us as soon as possible.

Once you make your selection, you're directed to the next section of the application. We will now go over each of the application types. If I select New Request, the first choice in the list, it takes me to this screen.

Screen: Application – New Requests

Erin Next, we are going to select either Roadway or Transit—they take you to the same application-- and we'll review those questions. Before we move on, please note, even though it says this is page 3 of 8, you only have one more section to complete. The other sections it's referring to are all the other application types that are part of this Form. Now I'm going to turn it over to Neil.

Screen: New Requests – Roadway & Transit - Questions 1-3

Neil Thanks, Erin. In questions 1 and 2, we want you to identify the specific reason or reasons this project is needed, and how you expect the project will solve the problem. If you have specific data you can reference, that is great, but not required.

In question 3, identify the plans where this project has been identified. You should be submitting projects that have been included as a recommendation in a previous plan. In the case of intersection projects, if the intersection has been part of a previous study, you can note that as well.

Screen: New Requests – Roadway & Transit - Questions 4-9

Neil Moving on to question 4. In order for a project to be eligible to receive Federal funds, all roadways submitted for improvements must be part of the Federal Aid System. If a roadway is in the process of being added to the system, you should apply for funds after that process is complete, as it can take several months, which would cause significant delays to the start of a project.

If you have any special cases regarding Federal Aid eligibility that you would like to discuss, please contact CRTPO staff and let us know the details of your request.

In questions 5 through 8, we're looking for key dates in the project schedule, whether they have already occurred, or they're anticipated to occur. Question 9 is asking for any additional clarifying details related to the timing of the project, particularly for any urgent or imminent needs.

Screen: New Requests – Roadway & Transit - Questions 10-25

Neil Questions 10 through 25 all relate to the project budget. As the language below question 10 says, you need to submit a detailed cost estimate and Attachment 1A found on our website. We recommend completing attachment 1A, then plugging the information into questions 10 through 25. Erin is now going to review Attachment 1A.

Screen: New Requests – Roadway & Transit – Attachment 1A

Erin I first want to go over the cost estimate requirements. As it says on page 9 of the Discretionary Funds Policy Guide, each discretionary project submittal must contain the following to satisfy the CRTPO's cost estimation requirements: a detailed cost estimate that has been prepared by a qualified professional such as a Professional Engineer or Registered Landscape Architect; cost estimates shall be no more than six months old from date of project submittal; cost estimates shall be prepared for full project implementation—including applicable all activities, such as preliminary engineering, environmental documentation, right-of-way acquisition, utilities relocation, and construction.

On to the budget attachment. In line 1a, enter the estimated construction cost including any utilities relocation costs. For line 1b, enter the preliminary engineering and design cost. Per the guidance in the funding policy guide, this should be at least 25% of the construction cost. If there is a reason for it to be lower, contact us and let us know. In line 1c, enter the estimated right-of-way cost. These amounts should be supported by your cost estimate documentation.

For the contingency amount in line 2, you'll select the percentage from the table below that applies to your project. The addition of project-phase contingency factors will improve the accuracy of cost estimates and lessen the need to allocate additional funding to active discretionary projects. Depending on the amount of prior work completed for the project request, the following contingency factors must be applied:
No preliminary engineering and design completed: 40%
Preliminary engineering and design complete, but right-of-way has not been acquired: 30%
Preliminary engineering and design complete and right-of-way acquired: 25%

Project scopes that entail the purchase of buses and other vehicles under existing contracts are not subject to the requirement to add a contingency percentage.

Next, in line 3 the Construction Engineering Inspections, or CEI, cost needs to be calculated as 20% of the construction cost and entered here. Please note, between the PE cost and the CEI cost, the applicable NCDOT administrative fees are included. So, there is no need to add those on as an additional line item.

Then, a minimum of 20% local matching funds is required. The percentage should be based on the total project cost, including the applicable contingencies and fees. If additional local funding is committed to the project, state the percentage of match where it is requested in the application and in this table. You'll also need to provide municipal resolution and/or official letter on the jurisdiction's letterhead that clearly commits funding the local match and identifies the source of the matching funds.

Finally, the Request Amount will be 80% of the amount in line 4 if the match is 80/20, or it will be less if the match percentage is greater. (As a reminder, there is a sample project budget found on page 11 of the Policy Guide. I encourage you to read the budget section of the Policy Guide for this and other helpful information. Now back to Neil and the end of the application.)

Screen: New Requests – Roadway & Transit - Question 26

Neil As Erin said, for questions 10 through 25, you'll input this budget information based on what you've filled in Attachment 1A. Next, question 26 lists the attachments that you'll email to me: Budget Attachment 1A – Required; Cost estimate prepared by qualified professional (no more than 6 months old) – Required; Map attachments (Shapefiles with metadata) – Required; Letter from jurisdiction confirming local match – Required; and Letters of support – Optional. Finally, under "Other," you can include pertinent project documentation that relates to responses given in the application, including road safety audits and local crash data and reports. Once this question is complete you can click Submit and the application form will be transmitted to CRTPO staff.

Screen: New Requests

Neil Next, we'll select Bicycle/Pedestrian as our project's mode and I'll turn it over to Curtis to review that application.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Question 1

Curtis Thank you. Question 1 lists several destinations of interest and asks whether the project provides access to them. The goal here is to select the six highest scoring destinations that are proximate to the project. Six is the maximum that will be considered for scoring this question.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Questions 2-4

Curtis In question 2, you are making calculations for each destination selected above by using the appropriate multiplier from the Accessibility Multipliers Table, in order to show how close these destinations are to the project. There is also an online resource for mapping provided here that you can use.

In question 4, we ask, "Does the project connect to an existing non-motorized transportation facility or facilities? If so, how many connections are made?" By transportation facilities, we mean access to other bicycle or pedestrian projects or alignments. If the project connects at three different points to a greenway, for instance, select 3+ connections. If only one connection is made, select 1 connection.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Questions 5-7

Curtis In questions 5 and 6, we're asking about the project's inclusion as a recommendation in any existing plans. Question 5 groups plans into broad categories, as far as the answers you can select from. Then question 6 asks for the specific plan or plans to be identified. You should be submitting projects that have been included as a recommendation in an existing plan.

Question 7 asks, "Does the project include desirable amenities?" Examples include, but are not limited to: seating; bicycle racks; repair stands; landscaping; unique wayfinding; public art; pedestrian lighting; fitness stations; and others.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Questions 8-11

Curtis In questions 8, we're asking about existing bike-ped activity in the project area and/or existing public requests for facilities. If community requests are a factor in your response of yes, please provide that documentation as an attachment. For question 9, "Are there documented safety challenges associated with this project?" Examples can include recorded crash data of any severity, or a posted speed limit. It's a yes or no question, and a yes response should be supported with additional documentation.

In question 10, we're asking whether the project will reduce the exposure between motor vehicles and humans through a physical barrier or defined space. Examples of physical barriers include an off-road greenway, pedestrian refuge island, a bike boulevard with a vertical structure, or a buffered sidewalk. Examples of defined space include striped bike lanes, back-of-curb sidewalks, and crosswalks. For question 11, we provide a link to the NACTO guidelines to help you determine if your project's design encourages traffic calming or vehicle lane narrowing.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Question 12

Curtis Question 12 asks, what is the Average Annual Daily Traffic, or AADT, of the affected roadway facilities from which the exposure would be reduced? To help you determine this, you can visit the link provided and select the applicable range.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Questions 13-15

Curtis For question 13, follow the instructions outlined in steps 1 through 3 in order to calculate any reduction in vehicles miles traveled locally as a result of this project. In question 14, please reference the online mapping tool at the provided link to help answer the following: "Does the project provide access (direct or adjacent contact) for environmental justice populations?"

Question 15 asks whether the project includes significant benefits which address wildlife safety, water quality, or other environmental improvements. Again, if you have relevant documentation to support a response of "yes," please provide it.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Questions 16-19

Curtis In questions 16-19, we're looking for key dates in the project schedule, whether they have already occurred, or they're anticipated to occur. They are pretty straightforward.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Questions 20-35

Curtis For questions 20-35, you can follow the same guidance Erin and Neil provided earlier about the budget attachment. Complete Attachment 1A and plug in the corresponding information in the application questions.

Screen: New Requests – Bicycle & Pedestrian – Questions 36-37

Curtis For question 36, complete the calculation as described here in order to provide a cost benefit number. Please note, determining this score will first require you to complete the scores for Trip Generation & Connectivity, Safety, and Health & Environment, earlier in the application. Question 37 lists the attachments that you'll email to us: Budget Attachment 1A – Required; Cost estimate prepared by qualified professional (no more than 6 months old) – Required; Map attachments (Shapefiles with metadata) – Required; Letter from jurisdiction confirming local match – Required; and Letters of support – Optional. Finally, under "Other," you can include pertinent project documentation that relates to responses given in the application, including road safety audits and local crash data and reports. Once this question is complete you can click Submit and the application form will be transmitted to CRTPO staff.

Screen: New Requests

Curtis Next, we'll select Local Planning as our project type and I'll turn it over to Erin to review that application.

Erin Thank you, Curtis. Local Transportation Planning projects had previously been funded through a separate process that was part of our Unified Planning Work Program or UPWP. The criteria and the intent of this project type remains the same. The process for submitting the application has just changed to be in line with the capital projects process. If you are unfamiliar with the types of studies that fall under this category, you can visit the UPWP webpage to see lists of past projects and view a resource guide specific to local planning projects, as well as a 4-page Quick Facts Guide.

Eligible local transportation planning activities include: corridor studies; access and mobility analyses; traffic, alignment alternatives, and feasibility studies; bicycle and pedestrian planning initiatives; and economic impact of transportation investments studies. Ineligible activities include: NEPA, engineering, design, acquisition, and construction activities.

It's important to note that project managers will be asked to complete a quarterly reporting and invoicing form to provide updates on the status and to request reimbursement once costs have been incurred. If using consultant services, procurement of consultants must be chosen in compliance with state and federal regulations.

Screen: New Requests – Local Planning – Questions 1-3

Erin In question 1, provide a brief summary of the project location, purpose, and need. In question 2, describe how the project's objectives meet one or more of the goals and objectives in the 2045 MTP. A link is provided here for your reference. In question 3, provide a brief summary of the project scope including major milestones and anticipated deliverables. Here, you should identify which type of study activity you will undertake with your local planning project.

Screen: New Requests – Local Planning – Questions 4-8

Erin The project start date in question 4 should be after the funds are awarded. It is fine for it to be approximate. So, putting a date in late February of 2020 or later would demonstrate that understanding. The project end date should be based on a real assessment of the proposed scope of work. Typically, projects take around 12 months to complete, but some may run up to 18 months. You should not submit a request for something that will take longer than that to complete.

For questions 6 through 8, state the total anticipated cost, the request amount, and the local match of at least 20%. Typical awards in the past have ranged from $50,000 to $150,000. You do not need to fill out a budget attachment document as part of your application for local planning project funds.

Screen: New Requests – Local Planning – Questions 9-10

Erin If you have any supporting documentation related to your proposed project, you may submit those attachments. This is optional. Finally, we want applicants to affirm they understand that these funds are provided on a reimbursement basis and should be requested quarterly, accompanied by a progress report, invoices, and proof of payment. At this point, you would click Submit and the application form will be transmitted to CRTPO staff.

Screen: Application Section One

Erin We're now going to shift gears and cover the application for additional discretionary funds, also called a shortfall request. As the description says, this type of request is for existing projects already awarded STBG-DA, TAP-DA, CMAQ, or Bonus Allocation funds through CRTPO's discretionary funding process. Existing projects that don't meet that description and have instead received some other funding, whether it's state Safety Funds, Highway Trust Funds, or something else, would need to submit the New Request application, which we covered earlier. This type of project is new to CRTPO and its discretionary funds process and we want to make sure we're collecting the same data for all projects. If you are not clear on which option to select for your project type, contact us as soon as possible.

Screen: Existing CRTPO Project Shortfall Requests – Questions 1-3

In questions 1 through 3, we're gathering background information on the existing project. There is just one shortfall application for capital projects, whether it is roadway, bike/ped, or transit.

Screen: Existing CRTPO Project Shortfall Requests – Questions 4-12

Erin In questions 4 through 12, we are asking a series of questions related to funding authorization, the work that has been completed to date, and the remaining project schedule. These questions are straightforward data points that we need to establish the status of the project at the present date. Neil will describe the next few questions, which address the need for the additional funds.

Screen: Existing CRTPO Project Shortfall Requests – Questions 13-17

Neil This is your opportunity to be specific about the factors that have contributed to a need for additional funds. In questions 14 and 15, let us know if the project has a higher cost estimate than the original and why, or if unexpected costs related to right-of-way or utilities relocation have led to cost estimate increases. Be ready to provide supporting documentation for each applicable reason, which will be covered at the end of the application. Erin will cover the next group of questions related to the budget.

Screen: Existing CRTPO Project Shortfall Requests – Questions 18-30

Erin As the language below question 18 says, you also need to submit a detailed cost estimate and Attachment 1B found on our website. As we stated previously, we recommend completing the attachment then plugging the information into questions 18 through 30.

Screen: Existing CRTPO Project Shortfall Requests – Budget Attachment Page 1

Erin Before we look at the budget table, I want to bring your attention to the language on page one of Attachment 1B, which reads: If you are requesting to receive funds for a project phase (PE, ROW, CON) that does not currently have discretionary funds programmed to it, that phase now must be completed in compliance with all applicable Federal regulations. Meeting those requirements may lengthen the project schedule. Funds that are awarded may only be applied to new costs that will be incurred and may not be used toward previous activities undertaken prior to award.

If you have questions on your ability to comply with both of those requirements, please contact us with your concerns.

Screen: Existing CRTPO Project Shortfall Requests – Budget Attachment Page 2

On to page two. This table is requesting the same information as Attachment 1A, in rows 1 through 7, except instead of only 1 column, we would like you to provide 3 columns of information to show the actual shortfall amount for the project. In the first column, Original Estimate, fill in the fields to the best of your ability. We recognize that the contingency amount and CEI cost were likely calculated differently then than what is required now, and that’s fine. What we’re interested in seeing is the difference between the original cost and the revised cost, especially for construction, right-of-way, and PE. From there, calculating the right contingency amount and CEI cost in the shortfall column will help ensure that the project is adequately funded and additional cost overruns will not occur.

Regarding the local match, if the original agreement for this project has a local match greater than 20%, you may use 20% local match for the shortfall request amount. However, if there is a need to reduce the match percentage for the entire project budget, we would like you to submit your application as a new project request so that the project can be rescored.

(Please note, since there is a sample budget table for new requests in the Policy Guide, we would also like to provide a sample budget table for shortfall requests, and we will post that soon on the Discretionary Projects webpage.)

Once you have answered the corresponding budget questions in the application, there is one final question.

Screen: Existing CRTPO Project Shortfall Requests – Question 31

Erin Here we are asking for you to indicate which attachments you are submitting to support your request for shortfall funding. The budget attachment, Attachment 1B is required. The original cost estimate is also required. The types of other supporting documentation you submit will depend on the circumstances of your project's funding shortfall, as you've described it earlier in questions 14 and 15. Once this question is complete you can click Submit and the application form will be transmitted to CRTPO staff.

Screen: Application – Section One

Erin Finally, we have an application for existing local planning projects to request additional funds.

Screen: Existing Local Planning Shortfall Requests – Questions 1-4

Erin Again, in the first few questions, we want to gather information on the existing project and the activities that have been completed to date, as well as identifying the likely timetable for completing the remaining work. Next, it is your opportunity to describe what has occurred to create a need for additional funding for the project. In question four, please note if there will be any minor impacts on the project scope or the nature of the project's deliverables as a result of the circumstances that have led to a project shortfall.

Screen: Existing Local Planning Shortfall Requests – Questions 5-11

Erin In question 5, provide the date that the project commenced. Then provide the project end date. It's possible that it has changed since the initial application. In questions 7 through 9, provide the current project cost, the amount of additional funds being requested, and the new total local match. Of course, the local match should be 20%.

Finally, any documentation that supports the need for additional funds should be provided and identified in the application.

You'll notice, at the end of each application it says, "A copy of your responses will be emailed to the address you provided." That is the email address you enter on the first screen of the application. If for some reason you don't receive a copy of your responses and you would like one, let us know and we can send you a PDF of your application document.

Screen: Questions?

Erin This concludes our presentation, unless Neil and Curtis have anything else to add at this point.

We will now move into responding to any questions we’ve received.