COMMUNITY CHOICES FOR IDAHO (COMMUNITY CHOICES)

MANAGEMENT TOOL BENEFITS

The following outlines benefits with the proposed Community Choices for Idaho Program

- Provides an annual process to solicit and tie locally identified projects to potential funding, independent of federal funding categories.
- Enhances ITD's ability to leverage all funding sources for locally sponsored projects, including the recently created Transportation Alternatives Program funding source.
- Improves project outcomes by providing technical assistance and project vetting.
- Provides local communities with the technical resources to prioritize and meet community needs

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Community Choices is to provide local communities the choice on how best to address local mobility and access issues that advance ITD's strategic goals of Mobility, Safety and Economic Opportunity while maximizing the use of federal funds.

ELIGIBILITY AND MAXIMUM FUNDING AVAILABLE

The following are eligible project sponsors/applicants:

- Local governments;
- Regional transportation authorities;
- Transit agencies;
- Natural resource or public land agencies;
- School districts, local education agencies, or schools;
- Any local or regional government entity with responsibility or oversight of transportation

Additionally, applicants must have legal authority over the project impact area. For example, if the applicant is proposing an educational program at a school, the school has to be the local project sponsor/applicant. Entities not included on the list above are encouraged to partner with an eligible project sponsor who is on the list.

The following eligible project types are classified into two categories: infrastructure and non-infrastructure with specified funding targets. [1]Projects within each category will be evaluated against each other. All projects are to be identified through a planning process that includes public involvement, needs analysis, and a project prioritization process which will be vetted in the project application process.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS (70% - 90% OF TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDS)

---

[1] The eligible project types will likely change as other funding sources are incorporated into the Community Choices approach.

- Planning, Design, and Construction of the following[2]:
  - Bicycle facilities including lanes, shoulders, parking, shared use pathway, bike share program capital expenses, etc.
  - Pedestrian facilities including sidewalks, street furniture, curb ramps, crosswalks, etc.
  - Boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.
- Inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising;
- Historic preservation and rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities;
- Vegetation management practices.
- Archaeological activities, relating to impacts from implementation of a transportation project eligible for federal transportation funds.
- Any environmental mitigation activity:
  - Address stormwater management, control, and water pollution prevention or abatement related to highway construction or due to highway runoff, or
  - Reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality or to restore and maintain connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats.

NON-INFRASTRUCTURE (10% - 30% OF TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDS)

- Educational projects can include funding for coordinator positions, bike/walk safety related education programs, walk/bike to school events, bicycle rodeos, etc. for grades 1 – 8. [3]
- Planning related projects can include complete street programs, area plans (including school areas), circulation studies, corridor management plan, corridor studies/investment plans, alternatives analysis, etc.[4]

MAXIMUM FEDERAL PARTICIPATION AND NON-FEDERAL MATCHING FUND REQUIREMENTS

Projects shall be limited to a maximum of $500,000 in federal transportation funding. All Community Choices projects will require the minimum match determined by federal law. (Currently, the minimum local match required for TAP by federal law is 7.34%.)

APPLICATION PROCESS

CALL FOR PROJECTS/ TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TP division staff will release a call for projects through the following communication mechanisms:

- Partner distribution lists/conferences

---

[2] Right-of-way is not an eligible project cost.

[3] To keep funding available for new communities to start safe routes to school programs and to create sustainable safe routes programs, safe route to school coordinators will only be funded for two years.

[4] This will require flexing funds to Surface Transportation Program (STP).

- Press release, through ITD communications office
- Present at conferences
- Social media (coordinate with ITD safety and communications staff)

TP division staff will also facilitate up to 3 webinars to explain the following requirements:

- Match allowances
- Federal aid project restrictions
- Application
- Schedule

PRE-APPLICATION

Applicants will electronically submit a letter of intent outlining the project sponsor, project elements, and a preliminary cost estimate. TP division staff will review these letters for eligibility. If appropriate, TP division staff will schedule a site visit along with district staff (engineer and environmental planner) to evaluate project feasibility including constructability, environmental clearance, and appropriateness of cost estimates. TP division staff will also provide applicants with information related to federal aid processes, match requirements and standard project development processes. Only eligible applicants and project types will be asked to proceed through the application process.

FULL APPLICATION

Eligible applicants/projects will be invited to electronically submit a full application including revised project elements based on input from the TP division staff and the site visit. This application, limited to 2 pages, will require a project name, project sponsor, cost estimates, and information pertinent to the selection criteria. Applicants are encouraged to attach additional project information if available, including site maps, letters of support, assessment of environmental concerns, cost estimates, etc.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Projects will be ranked by the Community Choices Advisory committee based on project need, benefits, and feasibility as detailed below:

NEEDS

- MPO priority (if applicable)
- Identified in existing planning effort
- Provides new/improved access to key destinations (i.e. completes a gap in the system)

BENEFITS

- Preserves the existing local mobility system
- Anticipated number of new users
- Percent of key target audiences reached. Target audiences could include elderly, school children, and aggressive driving age groups.

- Anticipated impact on safety/crashes
- Anticipated number of jobs retained/introduced and/or impact on investment opportunity
- Applicability of program to other areas of the state
- Impact to environmental quality

FEASIBILITY

- Local commitment (as evidenced by local match and/or support letters)
- Community support
- Schedule feasibility

The Community Choices Advisory Committee will identify the highest ranking projects within each category (up to the category funding allowances). TP staff will match those projects with various funding sources under the Community Choices umbrella, while considering federal restrictions and allowances. Those projects, with appropriate funding sources, will be submitted to the Idaho Transportation Board for review and consideration for programming into the ITIP.

FUNDING SOURCES

The following are available funding sources under the Community Choices umbrella. Eligibility criteria related to specific funding sources are included in this section.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)[5]

The TAP funding source, as outlined in MAP-21, allocates funding to the following 3 categories, the third category of which is administered under the Community Choices umbrella:

1. Recreational Trails Fund (RTF)
2. Transportation Management Area (TMA)
3. State Allocated
   - Urban – includes those areas with populations between 5,000 and 200,000
   - Rural – includes those areas with populations less than 5,000
   - Anywhere – no restrictions on where the funding is spent

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

---

[5] At present, the funding source for this program is TAP. However, it is anticipated that the Community Choices umbrella will eventually access the full range of funding sources administered by the Transportation Performance Division including but not limited to Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ), federal transit formula funds, and the ADA Pedestrian Curb Ramp Program.

The districts will manage infrastructure related projects. The transportation performance program development team will manage non-infrastructure related projects in coordination with the district planner. During the application process, district staff will be asked to review infrastructure projects for feasibility, constructability, and appropriateness of cost estimates.

Infrastructure projects typically have 3 distinct phases including design (PE)[6], right-of-way, and construction which usually need to be programmed in separate years. Right-of-way will not be considered an eligible project cost. Projects will need to be completed within 3 years and adhere to a milestone schedule defined in the state and local agreement.

Due to the large number of projects competing for limited funding, projects that are in the year their construction funds are programmed in the Community Choices for Idaho Program shall not be allowed to delay into a later fiscal year. A one-year delay exception may be granted by the project manager for projects that have most of the development completed and are close to contracting. The project sponsor shall be notified when a project has been removed from or delayed in the program.

When a project is removed from the Community Choices Program, the sponsoring agency is responsible for all costs incurred and must reimburse the federal government for any federal-aid funding received by the agency. To compete for future federal-aid funding, sponsors of projects removed from the program may re-apply.

Failure to meet milestones and/or estimated costs will be subject to loss of funds if it is determined by the project manager that the project is not proceeding appropriately. Those funds will then be allocated to other successful applicants to address cost overruns and/or the districts to use as long as it addresses local mobility, access, and connectivity issues.

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

The Division of Transportation Performance (DTP) grant administration team will administer all grant related processes including conducting educational webinars/workshops on federal aid funding processes, conducting the application process, facilitating of the Community Choices Advisory Committee, and managing the project selection process.

District staff and the DTP program development team will provide assistance, as needed.

The DTP Performance Management team will monitor performance of projects via data submitted by applicants. Applicants will be required to submit performance data as it relates to their project type. For example, project applicants with an infrastructure project will be required to submit information on number of users of the facility both before and after project completion.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The DTP program development team will conduct annual project development workshops (includes funding opportunities, federal aid restrictions, project identification and environmental processes). The PD Team will also develop and distribute planning and data collection tools. The PD team will look for opportunities to partner with

---

[6] Design includes concept development and environmental clearance.

Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) and Department of Commerce (DOC) on the workshops to leverage existing staff resources.

SCHEDULE

FY14 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Action	Description	Applicable Date / Times	Responsible Party
Call for Applications	Project applications made available to the public via the communication channels outlined above.	May 23, 2013	ITD Grants Administration (GA) Team
Webinars	ITD will hold webinars to describe eligible applicants and project types, the application process, and how to draft a competitive application. Although not required, applicants are encouraged to attend.	May 28 – 31, 2013	ITD Potential applicants
Submit Pre-Application		June 7, 2013	Potential Applicant
Conduct Site Visits	Site visits may be required in order to evaluate infrastructure project feasibility and constructability. Applicants will be notified by ITD staff if a site visit is warranted.	June 10 – July 1, 2013	Applicant/ITD
Submit Application to MPO	Not required for projects located outside of an MPO boundary.	June 24′ 2013	Applicant
Review and provide comments	MPO's have the opportunity to review and offer input and ensure projects are consistent with their long range plans and that the applicant is made aware of how the project will be added to the TIP, if funded.	June 25 – July 1, 2013	MPO
Revise application based on MPO comments		July 2 – 8, 2013	Applicant
Submit Application to District Office	Applicants are required to submit the application to the district office for review but are encouraged to work with their district office throughout the application process.	July 9, 2013	Applicant
Review and provide comments	Districts will review projects for feasibility, constructability and appropriateness of cost estimates.	July 10 – 16, 2013	District Office
Revise application based on district comments		July 17 – 22, 2013	Applicant
Submit applications to ITD Grant Administration Team	Only electronic copies will be accepted, and should be submitted to: gateam@itd.idaho.gov.	July 23, 2013	Applicant

Action	Description	Applicable Date / Times	Responsible Party
Conduct technical review	Applications are reviewed for completeness.	July 23 – 30, 2013	ITD
Completed Applications provided to Community Choices		July 31, 2013	ITD Grants Administration Team
Review/Score Applications	Community Choices members are provided with a scoring sheet. See Selection Process, described in the previous section, for more detail on criteria.	August 1 – 14, 2013	Community Choices Advisory Committee
Recommendations for Award presented to ITD Board for ITIP amendment	The recommendations are presented to the board for approval and inclusion into the draft ITIP.	September 2013	ITD Grants Administration Team
Announce Project Awards	The ITD Program Development Team will issue a press release and notify individual project sponsors by letter.	September 2013	ITD Grants Administration Team
Sign State/Local Agreement	ITD staff will prepare a state/local agreement for signature. This agreement outlines the responsibilities of both parties and must be approved by appropriate local official (s).	no later than September 30, 2013	ITD/ Local Project Sponsor
Initiate Project	Projects must be completed according to project charter milestones.	Oct. 1 – Sept. 30, 2014	Local Project Sponsor
Submit quarterly reports	Project sponsors will be asked to submit a one page report highlighting progress on the project and adherence to the milestone schedule.	Within 30 days of the end of the quarter (Jan 30, April 30, July 30, Oct 30)	Local Project Sponsor

FY15 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Action	Description	Applicable Date / Times	Responsible Party
Call for Applications	Project applications are made available to the public via the Communications mechanisms outlined in the guide.	February 21, 2014	ITD GA Team
Webinars	ITD will hold webinars to describe eligible applicants and project types, the application process, and how to draft a competitive application. Although not required, applicants are encouraged to attend.	March 3 – 7, 2014	ITD Potential applicants

Action	Description	Applicable Date / Times	Responsible Party
Submit Pre-Applications to ITD Program Development Team	Only electronic copies will be accepted, and should be submitted to: gateam@itd.idaho.gov.	March 21, 2014	Applicant
Conduct Site Visits	ITD will conduct site visit, if appropriate, to evaluate project feasibility and constructability.	March 25 – April 25, 2014	Applicant/ITD
Submit Application to MPO	Not required for projects located outside of an MPO boundary.	April 16, 2014	Applicant
Review and provide comments	This allows the MPO's to review and prioritize.	April 17 – 24, 2014	MPO
Revise application based on MPO comments		April 25 – May 2	
Submit Application to District Office	Applicants are encouraged to work with their district office throughout the application process.	May 5, 2014	Applicant
Review and provide comments	Districts will review projects for feasibility, constructability and appropriateness of cost estimates.	May 5 - 9, 2014	District Office
Revise application based on District comments		May 12 – 16, 2014	
Submit applications to ITD Program Development Team	Only electronic copies will be accepted, and should be submitted to: gateam@itd.idaho.gov.	May 16, 2014	Applicant
Conduct technical review	ITD TP team will review the applications for completeness.	May 16 – 23, 2014	ITD
Completed Applications provided to Community Choices	Completed Applications provided to Community Choices	May 23, 2014	ITD Grants Administration Team
Review/Score Applications	Review/Score Applications	May 23 – June 6, 2014	Community Choices Advisory Committee
Recommendations for Award presented to ITD Board	The recommendations are presented to the board for approval and inclusion into the draft ITIP.	June 2014 IT Board meeting	ITD Grants Administration Team
ITIP Approval		September 2014	Idaho Transportation Board
Project Awards Announced	The ITD Program Development Team will issue a press release and notify individual project sponsors by letter.	September 2014	ITD Grants Administration Team

Action	Description	Applicable Date / Times	Responsible Party
Sign State/Local Agreement	ITD staff will prepare a cooperative agreement for signature. This agreement outlines the responsibilities of both parties and must be approved by appropriate local official (s).	September 30, 2014	ITD/ Local Project Sponsor
Initiate Project	Projects must be completed according to project charter milestones.	September 2014	Local Project Sponsor
Submit quarterly reports	Project sponsors will be asked to submit a one page report highlighting progress on the project and adherence to the milestone schedule.	Within 30 days of the end of the quarter (Jan 30, April 30, July 30, Oct 30)	Local Project Sponsor

COMMUNITY CHOICES 4 IDAHO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Community Choices Advisory Committee will meet annually to evaluate, rank and select projects for funding consideration. This committee will include 13 individuals, solicited through a nomination process, representing the following stakeholder interests:

- Bicycle/pedestrian professional/advocate
- City planning (APA is potential nominator)
- Economic development professional
- Environmental community (agency representation)
- Transit provider
- Accessibility/mobility impaired
- Business owner
- Health community
- Scenic byway member
- Tribal
- School
- Law enforcement
- Housing