



Clean Transportation Program Questions

- Does the 12-month window of using the funds start after that April 2021 grant agreement?
 - The 12-month window starts after the final agreement is signed between MnDOT and the receiving entity.

- For tribes, could this funding be used for hybrid vehicles for department transportation?
 - FHWA has indicated that leasing hybrid vehicles is preferred over purchasing vehicles to ensure that the vehicle will be used only for eligible purposes. MnDOT will review requests for vehicles with FHWA when the letter of intent is received to ensure eligibility and/or to provide the applicant with additional guidance.

- Do successful applicants have to upfront costs then be reimbursed?
 - The Federal funds is a reimbursable program, therefore the applicant will upfront the costs. MnDOT, cities with populations greater than 5,000, counties, and tribal governments already have processes in place to manage the reimbursement. Cities with populations less and 5,000 should consider having a county sponsor. Non-profits should consider working with cities and counties for sponsorship. MnDOT can also provide assistance in finding sponsorship in unique situations.

- Could we get a state aid project number and for this to be an off-system improvement? Could we use state aid dollars for the match? It may tough to budget given the announcement just came on and budgets are already being set.
 - State aid funds can be used as a match. A state aid city or county can manage this through their normal federal-aid process working through State Aid for Local Transportation (SALT).

- Is local government fleet EV charging infrastructure eligible?
 - FHWA has indicated that charging infrastructure is eligible under U.S.C. 23 as long as it shows a transportation purpose and linkage. MnDOT will work with the local agency and FHWA to demonstrate transportation purpose and linkage.

- Are Indirect Costs (IDC) eligible costs under the grant?
 - FHWA requires approved Indirect Cost rates connected to the transportation system. If an entities has pre-approved IDCs they the cost can be covered.

- Can the match be in-kind?
 - Yes, in-kind matches will be considered.

- How will you choose high scores that are tied?
 - In the event of multiple projects score well (and potentially having tied scores), regional balance will be considered. MnDOT may also look at possibly asking an applicant to delay the project to use funding from 2022.

- Would this qualify if a Local Government Unit is working with a VW settlement?
 - A local government can apply for a Clean Transportation grant while also receiving funds from the VW settlement. The VW settlement funds can be used as match funds because they are not federal funds and the VW grant program does not prohibit the grants from being used as match funds.

- Would education/outreach qualify anywhere in the state, or just greater MN?
 - Education and outreach projects anywhere in the state can qualify. It's important for education and outreach activities to expand knowledge and understanding of clean transportation technologies in communities that may have less access to this information. Communities may have historically had less access to this information for geographic, socio-economic, or other reasons.

- Does the "co-benefits" in addition to GHG reduction (10% of weight on full application) mean non-GHG air pollutants (NOx, PM etc.) or something broader than that?
 - Co-benefits are listed on p. 10 of the [Clean Transportation Pilot Guide](#). Co-benefits may include but are not limited to:
 - Improved safety
 - Improved stormwater quality or reduced runoff
 - Expanded mobility and multimodal options
 - Add new charging stations that may encourage more people to purchase electric vehicles.
 - Increased safety for one or more user groups
 - Improved water quality or reduced impact on water quality
 - Reduction in noise pollution
 - Increased access and affordability
 - Local economic benefits

- Will you be providing details for what is required in the Letter of Interest?
 - The Letter of Interest questions are provided on p. 8 of the [Clean Transportation Pilot Guide](#). Applicants can submit a letter of interest using the electronic form that will be available on the [Clean Transportation Pilot Program website](#) beginning on Nov. 2, 2020.

- What's the expected deliverable to fulfill the LOI's requirement of demonstrating the 20% local match (i.e. is a board/council resolution needed)?
 - Applicants must submit the source(s) of the local match in the letter of interest. The 20% local match requirement is waived if the lead applicant is a federally-recognized tribal government in Minnesota.

- Are bike/ped trails considered a qualifying activity?
 - While bike and pedestrian trails are not an intended use of the program, they could be considered a qualifying activity for the funds. The funds do not cover maintenance or operations. Applicants should review the project selection criteria listed on p. 11-12 of the [Clean Transportation Pilot Guide](#) when developing the project proposal. The cost effectiveness of GHG emissions reductions could be lower for bike and pedestrian trails relative to other proposals.

- Can you give more information or an example of what you'd like to see in response to Proof of Concept question?
 - The proof of concept question is asking about the replicability of the proposed project. In the final application scoring, applicants will receive up to 5 points for describing a “proof of concept” outcome that serves as a ready model for adoption by other organizations or agencies.

- Are electric cooperatives eligible to apply?
 - Electric cooperatives are eligible to apply if the proposed project benefits their membership and community.

- If a project involved bike share would there also need to be bikes that are options for people with disabilities to meet ADA?
 - Additional information coming soon.

- Will there be a worksheet available to assist with calculations of greenhouse gas reductions from one technology to a green technology? How would you quantify using the existing grid in a better way?
 - A worksheet will not be provided, but there are existing resources that can assist with calculating greenhouse gas emission reductions, including:
 - [Minnesota Infrastructure Carbon Estimator](#)
 - [EPA GHG Equivalencies calculator](#)
 - See “[model assumptions](#)” for additional detail
 - The American Lung Association in Minnesota coordinates the local coalition of the national Clean Cities Program, which is a resource for fleets looking to reduce their use of petroleum or improve efficiency. Part of this work includes connecting transportation stakeholders with objective information and experts to assist with alternative fuels, fuel economy improvements, and emerging transportation technologies. Through these trusted, time-tested resources, Clean Cities has helped fleets and fuel providers deploy hundreds of thousands of alternative fuel vehicles and fueling stations that serve a growing market. Clean Cities continues to support the entry of new transportation technologies into the marketplace.
 - With the support of Department of Energy's Clean Cities Program and Argonne expertise, American Lung Association staff can assist your fleet at no cost to examine both the environmental and economic costs and benefits of alternative fuel and advanced vehicles. Argonne has developed the Alternative Fuel Life-Cycle Environmental and Economic Transportation (AFLEET) Tool for Clean Cities stakeholders to estimate petroleum use, greenhouse gas emissions, air pollutant emissions, and cost of ownership of light-duty and heavy-duty vehicles using simple spreadsheet inputs. Check it out or ask for help calculating the data for your projects. <https://greet.es.anl.gov/afleet>. The Clean Cities coordinator in Minnesota is Lisa Thurstin, who is available at lisa.thurstin@lung.org.