

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated on March 7, 2020

1. How do I create a new application?

To create a new application, you must first have an account in the [DVRPC online CMAQ Application system](#).

To create an account, enter an email address as the username. The system will send you an email confirmation with a password.

Then return to the site to log in using the username and password. You must pass a short quiz by answering all questions correctly in order for the system to allow you to create a new application. The intent of the quiz is to ensure that you have reviewed the Program Guidance and/or participated in the webinar.

On the system's homepage (after logging in), select "New Project" at the top right corner. The "Create New Project Application" page should open for you to enter the project's general information. After the information is provided, click "Save" and the "DVRPC CMAQ Application Checklist" webpage for the project will appear for you to download and upload all materials required for submission. You can return at a later time to "update" the general information provided, which will appear in the blue box of the page.

2. Do I need to submit the entire application at one time?

No. You can return to the system at any time to make revisions or finish the application. **Do not click the "submit" button until you are completely satisfied with the uploaded documents and fields and have met with DVRPC staff.** Once the application is "submitted," the system will lock the application record, and you should receive an automatically generated confirmation email for the submission. The online system will automatically lock all CMAQ applications at 5:00 PM on Friday, August 21, 2020.

3. May I submit more than one application for consideration?

Yes, but please indicate in the application form which of your proposed projects is your highest priority. Create an application for each proposed project.

4. For each proposed project, what are all the documents that I am required to submit by 5:00 PM (Eastern Time) on August 21, 2020?

Please review Chapter 6 of the Program Guidance.

5. Where do I download and upload my application and all supporting documentation?

Log into the [DVRPC online CMAQ Application system](#). If an application is already created, click on the system-assigned project application ID. Then the "DVRPC CMAQ Application Checklist" webpage will appear for the project. You will see each document (e.g. Project Application Form). Click on a document title to download the document. When you are ready to upload the document, select



"Upload". Once a document is successfully uploaded, the text for the button will





automatically change to "Download." You can upload any type of file (pdf, word, jpg, gif, etc.). There is no limit to the size of the document or quantity of documents uploaded.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated on March 7, 2020

6. I uploaded an old document for an application. How can I replace the old document with a new document?

To remove a document that has been uploaded, select the red “trashcan”  to delete the document. Once the document is deleted, upload  the new document.

7. Will I receive confirmation that my application has been received?

Yes. You will automatically receive a confirmation email. If you do not receive this email, please contact Kwan Hui at khui@dvrpc.org or (215) 238 – 2894.

8. The application form is over 20 pages long. Must all applicants complete the entire form? Are there exceptions?

Yes, the entire form must be completed; there are no exceptions. This form attempts to capture information on various project types, so not every question will apply to your proposed project. Please take the time to carefully read and answer questions that apply to your project.

9. Must I meet with DVRPC staff for every proposed project by August 14, 2020? Why is it required?

Yes. The (public) sponsor agency and applicant are required to meet with DVRPC staff before formally submitting their application and by Aug. 14, 2020. Consultants are not considered a representative of the community or project sponsor. In the case of a multi-municipal project, the lead municipality must attend. DVRPC staff has set aside one hour for each proposed project.

The purpose is to preliminary review and discuss the “saved” project candidates to ensure applicants and sponsor agencies know what their proposals must contain, including all information required, for the CMAQ Selection Committee to make a decision; identify any fatal flaws or issues of the proposed projects; ensure applicants knows what further steps need to be taken by the applicants or the Sponsor Agency; and answer questions. For bicycle and pedestrian projects the scope, budget, schedule, and right-of-way for construction projects could be discussed.

Applicants must not use this mandatory meeting with DVRPC to obtain preliminary project selection committee decisions on the content of the application, or to raise other matters that are outside of DVRPC’s purview. DVRPC will not provide direct assistance to applicants with completing their applications. It is DVRPC’s intention to remain neutral and objective in the role as program coordinator.

10. How do I schedule the mandatory meeting with DVRPC staff for my project?

Contact Kwan Hui at khui@dvrpc.org or (215) 238 – 2894. Email is preferred. Due to COVID-19, DVRPC staff is working from home, and Kwan checks her voicemail twice a day.

11. What do I need to bring to the mandatory meeting with DVRPC?

Prior to attending the meeting, please provide general project information, including the summary, in the [DVRPC online CMAQ Application system](#). You can also upload a draft application form for DVRPC staff feedback (but not required) and other helpful materials, such as plans and maps. The applicant must make available hardcopies of the uploaded documents for the meeting. Do not click

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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“submit” for an application unless your project is ready for final submission. This meeting with DVRPC staff should occur prior to the sponsor agency’s application submission. Once the application is “submitted”, the system will not permit further changes.

12. When will I be notified if my project was selected for funding?

DVRPC anticipates formal notification to applicants to occur in the winter of 2021 after DVRPC Board approval.

13. What project types are ineligible for the FY2020 Competitive CMAQ Program for New Jersey?

Please review section 4.2 in Chapter 4 of the Program Guidance. If there is still uncertainty, please contact Kwan Hui at khui@dvrpc.org or (215) 238 – 2894.

14. Are the purchase of electric vehicles and/or the installation of an electric vehicle charging station eligible or accepted under this program?

Per Chapter 4 of the Program Guidance, electric vehicle purchases are not accepted under the FY2020 Competitive CMAQ Program for New Jersey, unless a Buy America certification is submitted to DVRPC by the Oct. 2, 2020 deadline.

The charging station **may** be eligible for funding. Per section 4.1 of the Program Guidance, the establishment of on-site fueling facilities and other infrastructure needed to fill alternative-fueled vehicles must be **visible, conveniently located** and **open to the general public**, and **comply with FHWA’s Buy America requirements** under this program. Applicants are not permitted to “double-dip” by stacking funding/incentives from other ongoing incentive programs, such as the [NJDEP It Pay\\$ to Plug-In Program](#) and the [NJBPU “Clean Fleet Electric Vehicle Incentive” Program](#), for the same infrastructure that is seeking CMAQ funds from this program (however, the location is an exception). For example, an electric vehicle charging station seeking CMAQ funds from this program must not be the same station being considered or funded by other incentive programs; but one may apply for CMAQ funds to provide a different station at the same location. If applicants have applied to other incentive programs, they must acknowledge in the application form that the item(s) seeking CMAQ funds from this program are different.

15. Are improvements for private businesses or services eligible?

No, improvements must be used and accessible for general public use.

16. Is bicycle share operating assistance eligible for CMAQ funding?

No, costs for bicycle share operations are not eligible for CMAQ funding, however, capital and equipment are eligible. See FHWA’s [Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities](#).

17. Can a project include multiple eligible project types that are being accepted by this program?

Yes. If all components of a multi-type project are CMAQ eligible and accepted by this FY2020 program, then the entire project is eligible. If the proposed project contains both CMAQ eligible and ineligible project components (e.g., decorative benches on a trail or maintenance facility upgrades on an Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) project are not eligible), only the CMAQ eligible component in a mixed project of this type will be eligible for CMAQ funds.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated on March 7, 2020



A question that DVRPC has received for alternative fuel infrastructure is if a sign showing the location of the infrastructure is also eligible. The answer is to please provide an itemized list of the full cost of the infrastructure, including equipment and installation, and identify the purpose of those items. Then the CMAQ Selection Committee, DVRPC staff, and the FHWA can review and determine if signs and other items on that list are CMAQ eligible.

18. Is there a maximum or minimum request amount?

Due to the complexity of managing CMAQ construction projects, DVRPC requires that the minimum project request be \$250,000 for construction projects. There is no minimum cost on other project types, and no cost request maximum for any project type.

19. In a Public -Private Partnership (P3), which entity is considered the project sponsor?

The public entity is considered the project sponsor.

20. What bicycle and pedestrian projects are eligible for federal CMAQ funds?

Constructing bicycle and pedestrian facilities (paths, bike racks, support facilities, etc.) that are not exclusively recreational and will reduce vehicle trips are CMAQ eligible, such as those part of [the Circuit](#). Note that at least \$1 million of the total \$5 million award is dedicated to construction-ready Circuit projects in this FY2020 program. Depending on the pool of projects submitted and CMAQ Selection Committee decision that it is the best way to meet the purpose of the CMAQ program and the best approach for the region, more than \$1 million could be awarded to one or more than one Circuit Trail project over the three-year period (FY2022, 2023, and 2024).

Other eligible CMAQ examples include bicycle parking, bike racks on transit, capital and equipment for bike share (but not operations), bicycle storage or service centers at transit hubs, bridges/overcrossings for pedestrians and/or bicyclists, bicycle coordinator position, crosswalks (new or retrofit), curb cuts and ramps, maps (for pedestrians and/or bicyclists), paved shoulders for pedestrian and/or bicyclist use, separated bicycle lanes, shared use paths/transportation trails, sidewalks (new or retrofit), signed pedestrian/bicycle routes, trail bridges, trail/highway intersections, training, tunnels/undercrossings for pedestrians and/or bicyclists.¹

In this FY2020 program, any CMAQ requests for bike racks, shelters, and lockers must comply with [FHWA's Buy America](#) requirements. Under FHWA's Buy America requirements, steel and iron purchased on a contract funded with Federal funds must be produced in the United States. These requirements apply only to the actual steel and iron that is incorporated into a product, and there is an allowance for a minimal amount of foreign-produced steel or iron (\$2,500, or one-tenth of one percent of the total contract price, whichever is greater).

¹CMAQ projects must demonstrate emissions reduction and benefit air quality. See FHWA's [CMAQ guidance](#) for a list of projects that may be eligible for CMAQ funds. Several activities may be eligible for CMAQ funds as part of a bicycle and pedestrian-related project, but not as a highway project. CMAQ funds may be used for shared use paths, but as previously stated, such funds may not be used for trails that are primarily for recreational use and will not reduce vehicle trips.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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21. Can Circuit Trail projects get more than \$1 million of CMAQ available?

Yes, if they are construction-ready, score well in the project selection criteria per Appendix A of the DVRPC CMAQ Program Guidance, and if there is consensus among the CMAQ Selection Committee members that it is the best approach for the region and the best way to meet the purpose of the CMAQ program.

22. Is the \$5 M per each fiscal year or over 3-years? The \$5 million is spread over a three year period from FY2022, 2023, and 2024. It is not \$5 million each year.

23. Will you make the March 22nd webinar available? Yes. The slides are available on the DVRPC CMAQ webpage. Unfortunately, Zoom did not record the webinar, so a recording is not available.

24. Will Local Aid schedule a kick-off meeting when the project starts?

Yes.

25. Why isn't moving an intersection eligible if it has AQ benefits?

An intersection is eligible if the intersection improvement results in congestion reduction and improved air quality. See the DVRPC CMAQ Program Guidance for further details.

26. Do you know how often or when a Project Sponsor (Local Public Agency) gets reimbursed for a federal-aid construction project? What would be a typical schedule?

Once the federal project agreement has been executed, the Local Public Agency (LPA) has to submit billings at least on a *quarterly* basis (can submit more frequent). 90% of what was paid by the LPA will be reimbursed until the time of the final payment, when the full 100% will be reimbursed.

27. Can I seek CMAQ funds to buy an electric bus?

No. Please use Table 2 in the DVRPC CMAQ Program Guidance for transit vehicle selections.

28. Can my bus route be located in a certain municipality or area?

Yes, as long as the route will not preclude someone from the general public (within or outside of the municipality) from using it.

29. Will the COVID-19 pandemic impact the amount of CMAQ funds available for projects?

While the current pandemic has resulted in extending the application deadline to late summer of 2020, the projects and their CMAQ amounts awarded from this program will not be impacted. CMAQ is one of the resources provided by federal surface transportation legislation (FAST Act). If the project is selected and approved by the DVRPC Board to be included on the DVRPC Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a kick-off meeting is typically scheduled to begin the federal process in order to start advancing the project towards federal authorization. As long as the project is included on the DVRPC TIP and the project will accomplish all the milestones necessary to achieve federal authorization in the required time period designated by this Competitive CMAQ Program, then funding is guaranteed.