

# Public Transportation Division

## GRANT PROGRAMS EVALUATION: 2017-18 GRANTS PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUMMARY



Beginning in 2005, WSDOT has engaged a diverse group of stakeholders statewide in a biennial grant programs examination through the Grant Programs Advisory Committee (GPAC), as outlined in [RCW 47.66.080](#).

The 2017-18 GPAC began with three stakeholder workshops across the state. The purpose of these workshops was to determine whether policy and process improvements were needed for state-administered transportation grants and, if applicable, generate reasonable, actionable improvement ideas.

Process improvement ideas were immediately incorporated into the 2019-21 grant cycle. Several follow-up stakeholder activities, including two diverse work groups of statewide stakeholders that met a total of nine times, were initiated to further develop and recommend policy improvements. These work groups represented regional planning organizations, transit agencies, nonprofits, tribes and transit associations.

## GRANT PROGRAMS EXAMINED

- |                                     |   |   |  |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| <b>1</b> Consolidated Grant Program | <b>2</b> Vanpool Investment Program (VIP) | <b>3</b> Commute Trip Reduction Program (CTR) | <b>4</b> Regional Mobility Grant Program (RMG) | <b>5</b> Puget Sound Transit Coordination Program |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|

## FOUR-HOUR WORKSHOPS

- |  |                                     |                                      |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> Spokane<br>September 14, 2017 | <b>2</b> Everett<br>October 5, 2017 | <b>3</b> Olympia<br>October 24, 2017 |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

**7 POLICY IMPROVEMENT IDEAS**

**5 PROCESS IMPROVEMENT IDEAS**

Incorporated into the 2019-21 grant cycle

## WORK GROUPS

**REGIONAL RANKING OF APPLICATIONS**

**12** representatives from **10** organizations

**SUSTAINING OPERATIONS & MOBILITY MANAGEMENT APPLICATIONS**

**14** representatives from **10** organizations

**8** changes recommended for the 2019-21 grant cycle

## WHAT CHANGED: POLICY

The table below shows policy improvement ideas and changes WSDOT is making to state-administered transportation grants evaluated in the 2017-18 GPAC process.

Grant Program	Policy Improvement Ideas	Changes Recommended
Consolidated Grant Program	Update process for Regional Transportation Planning Organization engagement in ranking and selection of projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refined demographic statistics for rural populations</li> <li>Added demographic statistics for persons 85+ years old</li> <li>Modified regional ranking spots for multi-county planning organizations</li> <li>Retained policy of nine regional ranking spots for single-county planning organizations</li> <li>Developed regional ranking process for four-year projects</li> </ul> For more information, see white paper at <a href="http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/transit/grants">www.wsdot.wa.gov/transit/grants</a>
	Provide continuity of funding for sustaining operations and mobility management projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised policy to allow for sustaining operations and mobility management projects to apply for four-year funding (dependent on appropriations).</li> </ul> For more information, see white paper at <a href="http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/transit/grants">www.wsdot.wa.gov/transit/grants</a>
	Examine minimum local match requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applied existing minimum local match requirement of 10% to all returning projects for the 2019-21 grant cycle</li> </ul>
	Review policy of providing full funding for all awarded operating projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retained the full funding policy for non-capital projects for the 2019-21 grant cycle</li> </ul>

## WHAT CHANGED: PROCESS

The table below shows process improvement ideas and changes that WSDOT made to state-administered transportation grants evaluated in the 2017-18 GPAC process.

Grant Program	Process Improvement Ideas	Changes Implemented
All Programs	Address timelines/ applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staggered grant application deadlines to minimize impact to agencies applying for multiple grant programs</li> <li>Increased time between grant announcement and application due date</li> </ul>
	Improve forms/ applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising and testing forms/applications internally and externally prior to release</li> <li>Clarified electronic submittal process in application guidance documents</li> <li>Improved file naming convention in application guidance documents</li> </ul>
	Increase training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed more robust grants management training curriculum, including recorded webinars, regional trainings, and sessions at the 2018 Public Transportation conference</li> <li>Developed and released Transit Asset Management Plan (TAM) guidance</li> <li>Conducting four regional TAM workshops</li> </ul>
	Increase communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Released grant cycle timelines and key application dates in January 2018</li> </ul>
VIP	Allow grantees more time to purchase vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening solicitation in March 2019</li> </ul>

## CONTINUING WORK

There are two VIP policy areas where further dialogue is required:

WSDOT continues to engage VIP stakeholders regarding the opportunity to obtain VIP funding twice per biennium. VIP stakeholders are also examining the prioritization used to award state vanpool funding to transit agencies, which is currently applied in the following order:

1. Expansion vans
2. Replacement vans
3. Incentives for employers to expand vanpooling

Additionally, discussion continues with partners to provide clarity on eligible activities under the current incentives policy for CTR and VIP. WSDOT and local partners are exploring options to get funding agencies (state, federal and/or local) to allow more types of subsidies and incentives to increase the use of transit, carpools, vanpools, walking, bicycling, telework, etc.



## WHAT'S NEXT?

### MARCH 21-APRIL 9, 2018:

- Two-week comment period for policy and process outcomes

### APRIL 2018

- 2017-18 GPAC process concludes

### MAY 2018

- Implement policy and process changes for next grant cycle

### AUGUST 2018

- Public Transportation Conference
  - Consolidated Grant Program application training

## MORE INFORMATION

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