

# Transportation Demand Management and Regional Mobility Grants Proposed Changes

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the transportation demand management initiative on better integrating TDM into WSDOT's Regional Mobility Grants program.

## Proposed Recommendations

A small sprint team of committee members and subject matter experts proposed the following recommendations to the Regional Mobility Grant program. These recommendations are organized in terms of perceived effect, from most effective to least effective:

1. **Add behavioral TDM as an explicit grant scoring criteria for ALL proposals.** Proposals that include TDM will get additional points in application scoring.
2. Create a **set aside for TDM behavior projects** within the Regional Mobility Grant program. This will designate a specific amount of grant funds to go exclusively towards TDM behavior change projects.
3. **Spread awareness of eligibility of TDM projects** for Regional Mobility Grants to potential applicants.
  - a. Change the language of the grant application to clarify the eligibility of TDM projects for this grant program.
  - b. Provide direct outreach to jurisdictions.

## Background

In their [2019-2021 Transportation Demand Management Action Plan](#), the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Technical Committee and Executive Board identified the development of “new, effective TDM strategies grounded in stakeholder input and expertise” as a priority initiative. This initiative includes the following action items:

- Make delivery of TDM essential in the development and implementation of WSDOT's Practical Solutions projects; and
- Influence Regional Mobility Grant (RMG) process and priorities to support innovative TDM strategies

This committee and board initiative directly aligns with [WSDOT's Public Transportation Division's 2019-2023 TDM Strategic Plan](#) goal to “expand the availability and use of transportation options.”

## About Regional Mobility Grants

The [Regional Mobility Grant Program](#) supports local efforts to improve connectivity between counties and regional population centers, and reduce transportation delay. With approximately \$96 million in state funding, the Washington State Legislature approved 48 new and continuing Regional Mobility Grant projects across the state for the 2019-2021 biennium. Project examples include:

- New transit services
- Park and ride lots
- Transportation demand management (TDM) programs
- Transit speed and reliability improvements
- New buses
- Transit service expansion

Many of the funded RMG projects focus on new capital projects and new/increased service operation. While these projects may include elements of TDM, there is a lack of submitted proposals for TDM projects that focus explicitly on utilizing existing resources and/or behavior change (i.e. non-capital and non-operating programs). In the 2019-21 biennium, only \$320,000 of the total allocated \$96,188,462 (or 0.4%) were awarded to TDM projects that did not involve new capital or operations.

These kinds of proposals are often competitive, and effective, when submitted. As such, there is opportunity to increase the percentage of “use what you have” TDM Regional Mobility Grant funded projects by better integrating TDM into the grant process.

### **Projects are currently evaluated in four different categories:**

#### *Reduce delay*

Definition: A project that uses public transportation and/or demand management funds to reduce the amount of time it takes for people to get where they are trying to go.

#### *Improve connectivity*

Definition: A project that improves multimodal connections and services between counties or regional population centers.

#### *Project performance*

Definition: A project’s reductions in VMT and VT compared with its costs and useful life. It is calculated based on the project’s average cost per year in terms of its useful life, divided by its annualized VMT and VT reductions in Year 1 and Year 4.

#### *Readiness to proceed*

Definition: A project that is consistent with local plans, minimizes scope, schedule, and budget risks and is likely to deliver public benefits according to schedule.