
Reading MPO CMAQ Project Selection Process (Adopted 5/20/2021, Updated 2/25/2026)

Introduction

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Funding Program was created under the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Equity Act (ISTEA, 1991) and reauthorized under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21, 1998); the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU, 2005); the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21, 2012); the Fixing Americas Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act, 2015); and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021.

The purpose of the CMAQ Program is to fund transportation projects/programs that will contribute to the attainment or maintenance of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and particulate matter (both PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}).

According to the latest guidance (Nov 2013) from the Air Quality and Transportation Conformity Team in FHWA's Office of National Environment, in cooperation with the FTA's Office of Planning and Environment, the CMAQ program supports two important goals of the U.S. Department of Transportation: improving air quality and relieving congestion – in other words, reducing pollution and adverse environmental effects of transportation projects and transportation system inefficiencies. The CMAQ program provides funding for a broad array of tools to accomplish these goals while ensuring compliance with the transportation conformity provisions of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

This guidance document states that MPO's, State DOT's, and transit agencies "should develop CMAQ project selection processes in accordance with the metropolitan and/or statewide planning process under 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135." The project selection process should be transparent, in writing, and publicly available. State DOT's and MPO's should develop an appropriate project list of CMAQ programming priorities that will have the greatest impact on air quality.

Historically, the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) has championed three air quality target areas in previous TIP's:

- Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Reduction: Susquehanna Regional Transportation Partnership (SRTTP) and the CommutePA (formerly the Commuter Services of Pennsylvania) program – advocating for non-SOV transportation alternatives for commuters.
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- Cleaner Engines: BARTA Fleet Replacement – in the 2021-2024 TIP, RATS approved \$900,000 per year for two years to assist with the purchase of new replacement vehicles in the BARTA fleet. With significant financial constraints due to increasing inflationary effects, there were no CMAQ funds available to be flexed within the 2023-2026 TIP. The 2025-2028 TIP and current 2027-2030 TIP reintroduce funds in 2027 (\$450,000) and 2028 (\$900,000) to again assist with vehicle replacements within the BARTA fleet.
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- Traffic Operations / Congestion Mitigation: Addressing off-road improvements that promote cleaner air and/or congestion reductions such as Freeway Service Patrol expansion, additional operator(s) in the Traffic Management Center, and traveler information improvements as recommended in the recently published 2020 Regional Operations Plans.
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Any additional CMAQ funds available would then be applied to those TIP projects that were reviewed and deemed eligible for CMAQ funding.

Project Selection Process

The Reading MPO wishes to commit to specific on-going CMAQ-eligible programs and prioritize those efforts for CMAQ funding. During the development of future Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), RATS may designate (a) specific on-going program(s) as (a) CMAQ funding priority(ies) and allocate CMAQ funding for that program for any period chosen by the MPO, with the caveat that funding may be redirected during the TIP update process as project needs and available resources dictate.

1. Prior to the beginning of a TIP update cycle (generally in the late winter/early spring of the year prior to a new TIP taking effect) District and MPO staff will meet to discuss projects proposed for inclusion in the CMAQ Project Selection Process.
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3. Once the TIP Update Cycle begins, and after the total of all on-going program commitments is deducted from the RATS CMAQ funding allocation, any remaining CMAQ funds will be allocated to CMAQ-eligible projects based on the following subjective criteria:
4.
 - A. Does it meet the CMAQ Program requirements (NOx and/or VOC emission reduction, congestion reduction, NO capacity-increasing projects)?
 - B. Have the emission reduction benefits been quantified?
5. After MPO staff completes an initial screening through the subjective criteria to ensure CMAQ eligibility, the CMAQ Evaluation Table Template – cooperatively created and endorsed by both PennDOT and the FHWA – will be used to Objectively screen projects.
6. A second coordination meeting between District and MPO staff will be held where each project will be recorded in the attached Excel spreadsheet and fields completed accordingly. Note that since the Reading MPO does not actively solicit candidate CMAQ projects through a competitive process, this spreadsheet is used to further document the decision-making process and not necessarily to rank projects against each other.
7. Upon completion of the spreadsheet and concurrence by District 5-0 staff, the results will be forwarded to PennDOT Center for Program Development and Management (CPDM) staff.
8. Once CPDM staff approve, projects will be programmed on our Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This entire process will be conducted publicly during MPO Technical and Coordinating Committee meetings.

Outside of the TIP update cycle, should additional CMAQ funds become available, these funds may be allocated to currently programmed CMAQ-eligible projects and/or new candidate projects. Project selection will take place using the same process. This entire process will be conducted publicly during MPO Technical and Coordinating Committee meetings.

Candidate CMAQ Projects for Evaluation and Selection

MPO: Reading

Meeting Date: 10/30/25 [Between MPO and District Staff To Review Candidate Projects]

Add a New Project Row Delete a Project Row

Weight Sum = 100%

County	Project Description		CMAQ Eligible Activity	Applicable Criteria Pollutant(s)	Project Selection Factors (0=lowest, 100=highest rank) ; Weights must sum to 100%								Average Project Rank Score (0-100)	Selected for CMAQ Funding
	MPMS#	Detailed Project Description			30%		10%	20%	10%	10%	10%	10%		
					FHWA Cost Effectiveness	Cost Effectiveness Override Value - Required for "Other" Projects	Consistency with LRTP	Corridor Congestion & Priority	Nonattainment or Maintenance for Ozone and PM2.5	Project Readiness and Sponsor Capacity	Benefits EJ Population	Other Factors		
Berks	123619	SR 422 Ben Franklin Congested Corridor West (Traffic Signal Coordination and Optimization at 5 Intersections along Arterial corridor in Exeter and Amity Townships)	Other	Ozone	N/A	N/A	High (100)	High (100)	0	Medium (50)	Medium (50)	Low (0)	40	Yes
Berks	117620	SR 2023 State Hill Road #2 (Improvements at signalized intersection with SR 3422-Penn Ave.)	Intersection Improvements	Ozone	53	N/A	High (100)	High (100)	0	High (100)	Medium (50)	Low (0)	61	Yes
Berks	79467	SR 12 Elizabeth Avenue (Install roundabout at unsignalized intersection with SR 2016-Elizabeth Ave.)	Roundabouts	Ozone	21	N/A	High (100)	High (100)	0	High (100)	Medium (50)	Low (0)	51	Yes
Berks	117603	State Hill Road - SR 222 SB to Norfolk Southern R/R (State Hill Rd. intersections with SR 222 SB ramps, SR 222 Hill ramps & Spring Street, converting signalized intersections to roundabouts)	Roundabouts	Ozone	21	N/A	High (100)	High (100)	0	High (100)	Medium (50)	Low (0)	51	Yes
Berks	10815	SR 73 / Friedensburg Rd. (Install left-turn lanes at signalized intersection on SR. 73 and SR 2023-Friedensburg Rd.)	Intersection Improvements	Ozone	53	N/A	High (100)	High (100)	0	Medium (50)	Medium (50)	Low (0)	56	Yes
Berks	90569	SR 222 / Long Lane (Install roundabout at signalized intersection of U.S. 222 and SR 1024-Long Lane)	Roundabouts	Ozone	21	N/A	High (100)	High (100)	0	High (100)	Medium (50)	Low (0)	51	Yes
Berks	110075	SR 422 Ben Franklin Congested Corridor (Traffic Signal Coordination and Optimization at 8 Intersections along Arterial corridor in Amity Township)	Other	Ozone	N/A	N/A	High (100)	High (100)	0	Medium (50)	Medium (50)	Low (0)	40	Yes