



ASSOCIATION OF  
CENTRAL OKLAHOMA  
GOVERNMENTS

# AIR QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM

## APPLICATION GUIDEBOOK

**OPEN:** SEPTEMBER 2, 2025  
**CLOSE:** OCTOBER 31, 2025

**FY 2026**

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments  
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If you have questions regarding the Air Quality Grant Program, please contact Ethan Mazzio at [emazzio@acogok.org](mailto:emazzio@acogok.org).

## INTRODUCTION

The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) Air Quality Grant (AQG) Program – formerly the Air Quality Small Grant (AQSG) Program – funds transportation infrastructure, congestion relief, and transit improvement projects that strive towards the reduction of transportation emissions and improvement of regional air quality. Approximately **\$4 million\*** in total grant awards will be made available to eligible applicants through a competitive grant process. Applicants are required to provide a **minimum of 20 percent in matching local funds**, and grant awards will be conferred as **reimbursement**. A variety of projects are eligible, but all must serve to address long-term reduction in transportation-related emissions that contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone.

\*Funds for the AQG Program are shared with the ACOG Public Fleet Grant Program and may flex depending on demand.

## BACKGROUND

Every five years, ACOG, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), completes a long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that projects Central Oklahoma's growth over a three-decade period and identifies necessary changes to the region's transportation network. The most recent plan, [Encompass 2045](#), adopted in 2021, included a series of goals and strategies to guide transportation planning efforts into the future. Of those strategies, the ACOG AQG Program has been developed to address the following:

1. Improve, enhance, and expand the ability for residents to walk, bike, or use public transportation
2. Investment in projects that enhance the efficiency of the existing transportation system
3. Provide efficient connections within and between modes and facilities
4. Encourage procedures and procedures that preserve traffic operations and safety

The implementation of these strategies is made possible by the use of funds through the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program and the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP).

The goal of the AQG Program is to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicle trip and improve regional air quality. This program will accomplish that goal through three approaches:

1. Funding active transportation projects
  2. Funding congestion relief efforts
  3. Funding transit system improvements
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## PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

First and foremost, applicants should ensure their project meets the minimum eligibility laid out in the following resources published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA):

- [CMAQ Fact Sheet – Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)
- [CMAQ Essentials – FHWA Office of Planning, Environment, & Realty](#)
- [Interim CMAQ Guidance – MAP-21 \(2014\)](#)
- [Interim CMAQ Guidance – MAP-21 \(2024\)](#)
- [CRP Guidance – Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)
- [CRP Fact Sheet – Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)

All projects must satisfy the basic eligibility requirements under Titles 23 and 49 of the United States Code and complete National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.

Due to requirements under the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), all projects must demonstrate the ability to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. ACOG staff will evaluate all project applications using the available tools in the [CMAQ Emissions Calculator Toolkit](#).

Because ACOG is permitted to further limit project and program eligibility to reflect funding limitations and regional priorities, there are additional eligibility requirements beyond those provided through CMAQ and CRP.

Applications for any project are required to be a **minimum of \$50,000** and projects can receive **no more than \$1,000,000** in federal funds. Applicants should reach out to ACOG if considering a project that is less than \$50,000.

Additionally, no single entity can receive more than 56 percent of the total available funding for the Air Quality Grant Program until all entities' projects have been considered. The initial threshold of 56 percent may be exceeded if there are not sufficient projects ready for obligation by other entities. Additional components may be added to projects if excess funds are available. ACOG reserves the right to negotiate grant awards.

There are three categories eligible for funding through the ACOG AQG program: active transportation infrastructure and improvements, congestion reduction efforts, and transit system infrastructure and improvements. While similar, each category has unique and specific requirements intended to address regional air quality. In evaluation and scoring, each category will be treated equally.

Applicants are not limited to the types of projects listed. Innovation and customization to achieve the best results in reducing transportation emissions and meeting the needs of each community is encouraged. ACOG staff can work with prospective applicants to develop projects as needed.

## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Bicycle racks                          | • Pedestrian lighting                        |
| • Bicycle shelters                       | • Bicycle/pedestrian pavement markings       |
| • Bicycle lockers                        | • Sidewalks                                  |
| • Bicycle public service/repair stations | • Bicycle lanes                              |
| • Bicycle signage                        | • Multi-use trails                           |
| • Pedestrian signage                     | • Shared micromobility, including bikeshares |

Note that federal guidance specifies that fundable bicycle and pedestrian facilities and infrastructure, including support facilities such as bicycle racks, must not be exclusively recreational but rather serve to reduce vehicle trips.

The cumulative award for **sidewalk projects** shall not exceed **25 percent** of the region's CMAQ/CRP funds in a given AQG program cycle before all other eligible applications have been considered.

## CONGESTION REDUCTION EFFORTS

Projects in this category should focus on easing regional congestion and/or decreasing single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips, therefore reducing transportation-related emissions and improving air quality.

- Traveler information services
- Traffic signalization/synchronization systems
- Traffic management/control devices
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Traffic calming measures

Note that eligibility for funding is limited to projects that explicitly aim to reduce SOV trips and related emissions.

## TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

- Facilities related to new/expanded transit service, including lines, stops, stations, terminals, and transfer facilities
- Transit signal and communication equipment
- Transitway creation, conversion, or enhancement
- Transit management systems

To be considered eligible for funding, transit-related projects must demonstrate the ability to increase transit capacity and/or transit ridership and illustrate the potential to reduce congestion.

## INELIGIBLE PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

Federal guidance provides some specification on ineligible projects and programs.

Although a broad scope of projects are eligible, the program's limited funds and administrative needs require additional ineligibility. The Air Quality Grant Program will not fund the following:

- Use of funds as salaries or stipends
- Use of funds to defray administrative costs
- Use of funds as a sub-grant program
- Use of funds to add new capacity for single occupancy vehicles
- Use of funds to model or monitor emissions or networks
- Use of funds for planning documents such as master plans, environmental analyses, and comprehensive plans
- Use of funds to subsidize transit fare
- Use of funds for project design
- Use of funds for routine maintenance and rehabilitation projects including road repavement, sidewalk repair, etc.
- Use of funds to purchase conventional or alternative fuel and vehicles and/or fueling/charging infrastructure
- Use of funds for residential, commercial, or industrial energy efficiency
- Use of funds for the purchase of street furniture such as waste receptacles, benches, or tables

Prospective applicants are encouraged to contact Ethan Mazzio at [emazzio@acogok.org](mailto:emazzio@acogok.org) with questions regarding project eligibility.

## PROJECT REQUIREMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Administration and letting of all projects will be completed by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). During project execution, regular progress reports to ACOG will be required. After the completion of the project, annual reports will be required for three years.

### Program Branding

Project sponsors that receive funding through the ACOG AQG program shall, where reasonable and appropriate, ensure the presence of the ACOG visual identity in project-related public information, marketing, or advertising campaigns during project implementation. This may include, but is not limited to, print media, such as fliers, mailers, magazine and newspaper articles, and posters; digital media, such as newsletters, blog posts, press releases, and webpages; social media, such as images, videos, and copy; and events, such as presentations, groundbreakings, and ribbon-cuttings.



Upon completion of the project, sponsors will be required to advertise project completion via a combination of social media and a minimum of one additional form of media stated above; within which the sponsor shall announce ACOG's role in funding and completing the project. ACOG can assist and/or provide examples in developing social media and other content.

Projects which include the construction or enhancement of physical facilities – including, but not limited to active transportation infrastructure, traffic calming measures, transitways, and transit lines, stops, stations, terminals, and transfer facilities – shall incorporate ACOG's name and visual identity into the physical design of the facility.

Project applications must address how ACOG branding will be applied to the project and related public information, marketing, or advertising campaigns. Associated costs may be covered by the grant award but should be included as a line item within the proposed budget. Branding maintenance must be incorporated in the maintenance plan.

ACOG reserves the right to determine the applicability and appropriateness of program branding requirements for ACOG projects.

### **Facility Maintenance**

In addition to providing a project maintenance plan and a project maintenance letter of support, applications which include the construction or enhancement of physical facilities – including, but not limited to active transportation infrastructure, traffic calming measures, transitways, and transit lines, stops, stations, terminals, and transfer facilities – shall include within the proposed budget an additional line item which funds project maintenance for up to 3 years from the completion of the project.

ACOG reserves the right to determine the applicability and appropriateness of maintenance funding set-asides for projects that receive funding through the ACOG program.

### **Bicycle Infrastructure**

ACOG recommends using the [NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#), AASHTO Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities, and the [FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide](#) when selecting, designing, and constructing bicycle facilities in the region. For intersections, it is recommended local communities use the NACTO guide [Don't Give Up at the Intersections](#). These guides are based on the experience of the top cycling cities in the world. While these designs have proven effective in many cities around the world, it is important for local officials to tailor the treatment to fit the individual situation.

### **Pedestrian Infrastructure**

General design standards for sidewalks is difficult, given that their construction is based on amount and location of right-of-way, though it is important to ensure all sidewalks are adequate given their situation. Below are the standards as set by FHWA and adopted by ACOG.

[FHWA Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access](#) guidelines sets sidewalk requirements by roadway classification and land use type. The FHWA also promotes Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP). This program recommends several countermeasures to ensure pedestrians have safe facilities to travel. These improvements primarily focus on conflict points, such as marked and unmarked crossings.

View the [ACOG Facility and Design Guidance](#) for more recommendations for both bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

### **Evaluation Metrics**

ACOG requires each project sponsor to create a plan for gathering evaluation metrics to measure how successful the project is after implementation. The sponsor is expected to gather data for evaluation such as daily usage figures and estimated vehicle trips removed. For bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects, such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes, before and after counts are expected. These counts can be conducted manually, although **ACOG strongly recommends the use of automatic bicycle/pedestrian counters**. Entities may request to use an automated counter provided by ACOG. The cost of purchasing an automatic counter may also be covered by the grant award but should be included as a line item within the proposed budget.

## APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for the Air Quality Grant Program is limited. First and foremost, all applicants must be located within the Central Oklahoma Transportation Management Area (TMA).

(Please see [Appendix I](#))

Eligible applicants within the TMA are:

- ACOG MPO member local governments (towns, cities, and counties)
- Transit agencies
- Tribal governments
- Public school districts, public schools, or public universities (with support from local municipality)

Although organizations such as neighborhood associations, nonprofits, private schools, and private universities are not eligible as applicants, these organizations are encouraged to collaborate with their ACOG MPO member local governments on project applications.

Because funds are based on reimbursement and require a minimum 20 percent match of local funds, such collaborations can benefit all parties involved. In-kind match is not allowed. All applicants are encouraged to secure partnerships to demonstrate community buy-in and benefit.

## CALL FOR PROJECTS TIMELINE

All applications must be submitted no later than 4 p.m. CST on Friday, October 31, 2025.

DATE	ACTION
September 2, 2025	Application cycle opens
October 31, 2025	Applications due by 4:00 p.m. CST
November 2025	Project application evaluations and scoring
December 11, 2025	ACOG staff present project recommendations to committees
December 18, 2025	ACOG Board of Directors approves final project selections
December 2025	Projects passed to ODOT for administration

If you have questions regarding the Air Quality Grant Program, please contact Ethan Mazzio at [emazzio@acogok.org](mailto:emazzio@acogok.org).

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## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All applications must be completed in full, including the addition of all required attachments, to be considered.

Each project application must include the following attachments:

ATTACHMENT	REQUIREMENTS
1. Project location map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Showing street names, project limits, and north arrow</li><li>• Current design plans*</li></ul> <i>*facilities/construction projects only</i>
2. Signed community letters of support (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letters must be specific to the proposed AQG project</li><li>• May be from any involved stakeholders, partners, or organizations</li><li>• Minimum 3 letters required</li></ul>
3. Detailed cost estimate/project budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must be no older than 6 months prior to the date of the resolution</li><li>• Must include a 10% contingency line item*</li><li>• Must be signed by a licensed professional engineer*</li><li>• Must include a project maintenance line item (up to 3 years)*</li></ul> <i>*facilities/construction projects only</i>
4. Signed maintenance letter of support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letter must be specific to the proposed AQG project</li><li>• Must be signed by the project sponsor's public works director, city manager, or similar</li></ul>
5. Detailed timeline and work plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must take into account the length of time required for ODOT to complete environmental clearance</li></ul>
6. Adopted resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopted at a public meeting of its governing body</li><li>• Should describe the location of the project, type of improvement, total project cost, and source(s) of funds</li><li>• Must include original signatures or a certified copy</li><li>• Template available upon request</li></ul>
7. Scoring worksheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can be downloaded from the <a href="#">ACOG website</a></li><li>• Any and all additional comments and justification must be included on the scoresheet document only</li><li>• Supplemental documentation will not be accepted or taken into consideration</li></ul>

Applications, including supplemental documents such as resolutions, letters of support, project budget and work plans, must be completed and submitted online through the [ACOG ProjectTracker website](#).

Instructions for creating ProjectTracker account and completing the application can be found in the [ProjectTracker Guidebook](#) and CMAQ [ProjectTracker Presentation](#).

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## PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

A committee consisting of representatives from the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, and/or other partner nonprofits may be employed to evaluate and score all project applications.

Committee members will review each application and score based on a 100-point system. A PDF Scoring Worksheet should be downloaded from the [ACOG website](#), filled out, and submitted with each online application form.

CATEGORY	MAXIMUM POINTS
1. Project Narrative	15
2. Pollutant Reduction	10
3. Cost Effectiveness	10
4. Transportation Impact	15
5. Consistent Planning	10
6. Underserved Communities	10
7. Funding	15
8. Project Readiness	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

### 1. PROJECT NARRATIVE

Applicants must provide a descriptive overview of the project, including a name, classification, a description of project tasks and activities, and a general timeline to completion. The application must also be able to clearly articulate a purpose for the project, including goals, expected outcomes, and specific needs within the community that the project will address.

<b>Does the application describe the characteristics and activities of the project, as well as articulate community needs that justify the project? (15 points maximum)</b>	
Application clearly describes the characteristics and activities of the project, including project name, classification, construction activities, purpose and goals, expected outcomes, and implementation timeline; and identifies particular needs within underserved subsets of the community that the interventions being proposed in the project will directly address.	15 pts
Application clearly describes the characteristics and activities of the project, including project name, classification, construction activities, expected outcomes, and implementation timeline; and articulates general needs across the community that the interventions being proposed in the project will address.	10 pts
Application describes the baseline characteristics and activities of the project, including including project name, classification, construction activities, and implementation timeline; but does not sufficiently illustrate the project's purpose, goals, expected outcomes, or communities the project seeks to benefit.	5 pts
Application does not provide a sufficient baseline description of the project, tasks and activities to implementation, goals, or community needs to be addressed.	0 pts

## 2. POLLUTANT REDUCTION

Project must demonstrate the potential to reduce ozone-forming pollutants. Primary pollutants of concern include Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC). Please provide a detailed description of how the proposed project is expected to play a role in reducing ozone-forming pollutants.

Due to requirements under the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), all projects must demonstrate the ability to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. ACOG staff will evaluate all project applications using the available tools in the [CMAQ Emissions Calculator Toolkit](#).

**How will the project contribute to a reduction in ozone-forming emissions?**  
(10 points maximum)

## 3. COST EFFECTIVENESS

Cost effectiveness is a measure of the project's ability to reduce emissions per dollar invested. Funds can be used on a variety of project types. Certain project types are expected to be more cost effective and will therefore be more competitive.

**How cost effective in terms of pollutant removal is the proposed project?**  
(10 points maximum)

Transit lines, stops, stations, terminals, and transfer facilities; transit signal and communication equipment; transit management systems

10 pts

Transitways; traveler information systems; traffic signalization and synchronization systems; traffic management/control devices; intelligent transportation systems; active transportation signage and wayfinding; bicycle racks, lockers, and repair stations; multi-use trails, bicycle lanes, and pavement markings

7 pts

Sidewalks; traffic calming measures; all other eligible projects not currently addressed in the program guidebook

5 pts

Note: If the project falls in two or more of the categories listed above, the points must be averaged together to get a final score.

## 4. TRANSPORTATION IMPACT

Will the project improve the transportation system?

- a. Projects that aim to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips by encouraging travel by other modes – walking, bicycling, or public transit – will be most competitive.

**Will the project promote multimodal options?** (5 points maximum)

Project promotes multimodal options and aims to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips

5 pts

Project does not promote multimodal options

0 pts

Note: Only answer one of the 4.b. questions based on project type.

- b. Enhanced connectivity improves the ability to get from place to place. For example, projects that extend a current bike path or projects that improve access to public transit will be more competitive.

OR

<b>Will the project enhance connectivity by addressing a network limitation?</b> (5 points for active transportation and transit projects)	
Project addresses a gap in the existing bicycle, pedestrian, or transit facilities network by creating a new connection from one existing network to another	5 pts
Project contributes to the eventual desired network by connecting an existing segment to a proposed segment	4 pts
Project expands an existing network in a new direction where no segment is existing and none is currently proposed	3 pts
Project does not connect to an existing segment but connects two segments proposed in a published plan at any level	2 pts
Project connects a proposed segment in a new direction where none is existing and none is currently proposed	0 pts

- b. Projects should focus on easing regional congestion and/or decreasing single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips, therefore reducing transportation-related emissions and improving air quality. More points will be awarded if the project addresses a corridor that experiences moderate to severe a.m. or p.m. peak hour congestion.

<b>Will the project improve reduce congestion?</b> (5 points for congestion reduction projects)	
Project will reduce congestion, reduce volume, and/or improve travel time in a congested corridor	5 pts
Project will reduce congestion, reduce volume, and/or improve travel time in general	3 pts
Project is not expected to reduce congestion	0 pts

- c. Projects that address an identified safety issue will be more competitive.

<b>Will the project improve vehicular, pedestrian, or bicycle safety?</b> (5 points maximum)	
Project improves safety	5 pts
Project does not improve safety	0 pts

## 5. CONSISTENT PLANNING

Projects that have been identified through a previous planning effort will be more competitive. The project should address an issue identified in one of the following types of plans:

Regional Plans (produced by ACOG):

- [Regional Active Transportation Plan](#)
- [Congestion Management Process \(CMP\)](#)
- [Central Oklahoma Regional Safety Action Plan](#)

Local Plans:

- Comprehensive plans
- Bicycle/pedestrian plans
- ITS plans
- Comprehensive safety action plans

Note: In addition to one of the plan efforts above, projects must also be included in or be consistent with ACOG's long-range transportation plan, [Encompass 2045](#).

Is the project consistent with regional and/or local comprehensive land use and transportation plans? (10 points maximum)	
Project is consistent with a published regional transportation plan	10 pts
Project is consistent with a published local transportation or trails plan	8 pts
Project is consistent with a published local comprehensive plan	5 pts
Project is consistent with unpublished general ideas of the community's future direction	3 pts
Not addressed	0 pts

## 6. UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Underserved communities, such as low income, minority, elderly, disabled, limited English-speaking, and households without vehicle access are particularly susceptible to the effects of ozone pollution.

Use [STBG-UZA Project Scoring Criteria Dashboard](#) item C4 – *Does this project increase access in an area of underserved populations?* – to identify potential air quality related underserved populations.

Does the project address the air quality in areas of significance, and/or does the application identify underserved communities served by the project? (10 points maximum)	
Project is wholly or partially within a significant area and identifies specific underserved communities that would be directly served by the project.	10 pts
Project is wholly or partially within a moderate area or is able to sufficiently articulate broad underserved communities that would be served by the project.	5 pts
Project is not wholly or partially within a significant or moderate area and does not sufficiently articulate underserved communities that would be served by the project.	0 pts

## 7. FUNDING

Funds are based on reimbursement and require a minimum 20 percent match of local funds. How well is the applicant financially prepared to secure local matching funds and implement the project?

- a. Project applications that include a detailed and realistic cost estimate will prove project readiness and be more competitive.

Does the project plan include a detailed and realistic cost estimate? (5 points maximum)	
Application includes a detailed, itemized cost estimate, showing a good faith effort to consider all elements of the project	5 pts
Application includes a summary estimate with no details	3 pts
Application does not include a cost estimate	0 pts

- b. Projects must include a maintenance plan that demonstrates applicant ownership and sustainable long-term care.

Does the project include a clear plan for future maintenance costs? (5 points maximum)	
Application includes details on existing maintenance standards and illustrates a plan to fund future maintenance, including branding maintenance.	10 pts
Application seems to discount level of maintenance necessary and/or does not include a plan for branding maintenance	5 pts
No maintenance plan is included	0 pts

## 8. PROJECT READINESS

All projects and programs have two years upon execution of a grant award contract to be completed in full. The applicant must include a detailed timeline and clear work plan for implementation of the project.

- a. Projects have two years upon execution of a grant award to be completed in full. A detailed and realistic timeline is essential to the success of the project.

Is the project schedule detailed and realistic? (5 points maximum)	
Project schedule is detailed and realistic	5 pts
Project schedule is detailed but ambitious	3 pts
Project schedule lacks sufficient detail and underestimates how long infrastructure projects take	0 pts

- b. ACOG is required to collect data metrics to evaluate how successful the project was after implementation. The applicant is expected to gather data for evaluation such as daily usage figures and estimated vehicle trips removed.

<b>Does the applicant include a plan for gathering meaningful evaluation metrics for the project?</b> <i>(10 points maximum)</i>	
Applicant includes detailed plans for gathering evaluation metrics	10 pts
Applicant includes generalized plan for gathering evaluation metrics	5 pts
No plan for gathering evaluation metrics included	0 pts

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APPENDIX I

ELIGIBLE ACOG TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT AREA (TMA) COMMUNITIES

