
Belomar Project Funding Policy

for Distribution of Regionally Allocated Federal Transportation Funds

Draft



Bel-O-Mar Transportation Study (Belomar)

Belomar Project Funding Policy

Wheeling, WV-OH Urban Area

105 Bridge Street Plaza


Wheeling, WV 26003





Contents

Purpose and Overview	2
Key Principles	2
Eligible Funds and Allocation	2
Project Proposals, Selection, and Prioritization	3
Administrative Policies and Compliance	4
Implementation and Monitoring	5



Belomar Project Funding Policy

for Distribution of Regionally Allocated Federal Transportation Funds

Purpose and Overview

The Belomar Regional Council's Transportation Study Policy Committee is the decision-making body for the distribution of regionally allocated federal transportation funds to support eligible projects in its planning area. These funds, suballocated from both Ohio and West Virginia, must align with federal and state requirements and regional transportation priorities. This document establishes policies and procedures for allocating and managing these funds, ensuring fair distribution and compliance.

Key Principles

Ohio suballocates Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), Transportation Alternatives (TA), and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds to all of Belmont County within the MPO. However, Belomar voluntarily surrenders its TA funds to compete for statewide TA funding. West Virginia only suballocates a portion of the federally required funds to urban areas with 50,000-200,000 population within the WV portion of the Wheeling, WV-OH Urban Area, as defined by the U.S. Census.

Funded projects must be located within Belomar's planning area, comply with federal eligibility requirements, and align with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Prioritization is based on accessibility, regional mobility, safety, infrastructure condition, and sustainability goals.

Eligible Funds and Allocation

At Belomar's discretion, FHWA Planning (PL) and FTA Metropolitan Planning Program (MPP) funds can be allocated to specific planning product requests. This may include Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) studies to develop a project, planning products that promote tourism-related transportation, and other eligible planning efforts. The full eligibility criteria are defined by the Scope of the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process in federal code.

In Ohio, STBG funds support roadway, bridge, safety, and multimodal projects. CMAQ funds improve air quality and reduce congestion. CRP funds promote carbon reduction initiatives. TA funds, though suballocated, are voluntarily surrendered to ODOT in exchange for eligibility in the statewide TA program. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is an eligible program type under the TA program. The TA program is also eligible

under STBG, CRP, and CMAQ. In other words, STBG, CRP, and CMAQ can be flexed to become TA and RTP projects.

West Virginia suballocates STBG funds only within urbanized areas of 50,000-200,000 population and CRP funds to support emissions reduction initiatives in eligible urbanized zones. Each fund type's full eligibility is guided by the federal code which is developed based on the latest transportation funding authorization from the United States Congress.

Project Proposals, Selection, and Prioritization

Project requests are accepted on a rolling basis. If limited projects are received, Belomar may advertise that project requests are being accepted. All project requests must be submitted through the Open Comment Portal: [Survey123 Submission Portal](#). The web URL to the portal is here: <https://arcg.is/0CjmGi>

The QR Code to the project submission portal is here:




When submitting a new project, select “a specific project request,” under what your comment relates to. In the project description, identify the eligible agency, the fund type you intend to use, and a detailed project description, including how far the project has developed and how the project idea was conceived.

Each year, Belomar MPO may issue a Call for Projects, inviting proposals from eligible entities. Applications undergo a technical review, assessing eligibility, project readiness, and alignment with regional goals. Input from local governments, transit agencies, and stakeholders is incorporated into project evaluations. The Policy Board makes final funding decisions.

Submissions must include a GPS location and supporting documentation showing how cost estimates were determined. Applicants should provide a thorough project description, detailing how the proposal aligns with Belomar's long range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), topical planning products such as the Hazard Mitigation Plan, or other topic-specific plans.

Supporting documentation should also include a resolution from the fiscal appropriating body of the agency affirming commitment to providing the required local matching funds and/or administrative support necessary for project completion.



Eligible entities seeking project funding may submit up to three prioritized projects, ranking each by priority. Eligible projects will be presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for review, taking into account the amount of funding available in the current TIP years. The TAC may approve, modify, or reject the proposed project funding schedule. The TAC may also request that Belomar staff provide qualitative assessments of each project based on its contribution to achieving TIP performance targets. Projects will be ranked based on these assessments, and funding will be allocated favorably to those that score the highest. As a tie breaker, Belomar staff can consider the project's flood zone type, innovative project design, the requesting agency's perceived ability to work on project development tasks in a cooperative, continuing, and comprehensive manner, or other factors.

Once the project funding schedule is approved, adjustments may be made to account for project cancellations, completion, scope changes, and cost adjustments. Modifications that do not require Policy Board or TAC approval will follow WVDOT STIP/TIP Operating Guidelines and the ODOT TIP Revisions Guide for amendments and administrative modifications.

Following the adoption of the new TIP, a new project listing will be produced, incorporating existing or newly submitted projects with consent from the Belomar TAC and Policy Board.

Administrative Policies and Compliance

Belmont County's TA funds are surrendered to compete for state-level grants. All funds should be obligated within the allocated fiscal year to prevent rescission. Amendments to funding allocations require Policy Board approval, while minor adjustments can be handled administratively.

Belomar may produce new available funding totals upon request. Additionally, Belomar may provide a preliminary project assessment for eligibility or performance upon request.

These policies are subject to the ODOT MPO Administration Manual policies and procedures and the WVDOT STIP/TIP operating procedures.

Belmont County's TA funds are surrendered to compete for state-level grants. All funds must be obligated within the allocated fiscal year to prevent rescission. Amendments to funding allocations require Policy Board approval, while minor adjustments can be handled administratively.



Implementation and Monitoring

MPO staff conducts periodic reviews to track fund obligations and project progress. The TAC may request progress monitoring updates on a specific project.

ODOT and WVDOT have varying timelines based on staff availability to administer projects. Agencies may request local administration of a project and support through the Belomar Regional Council. An agency requesting Belomar Regional Council project management support must add administrative costs at the rate of 5% of the total project cost.

A local agency in Belmont County, Ohio may administer a project independently without regional council support, provided they have complied with all ODOT Local Project Administration training and procedures. ODOT has the final authority to determine whether an agency is qualified for local project administration. A local agency in West Virginia may request project administration rights through Belomar to WVDOT, but WVDOT has the final authority to determine whether the agency is qualified for local project administration.

Conclusion

This policy establishes an efficient, transparent, and strategic framework for managing regionally allocated federal transportation funds within the Belomar MPO region.