

Transportation Advisory Committee

Meeting date: July 22, 2024

Agenda Item #: 5 (Attachment C)

Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside

Agenda item type: Discussion

Summary

Notification of upcoming call for letters of interest for the Livable Centers small-area planning set aside.

Background

The Denver Regional Council of Governments is conducting a call for letters of interest from August 14, 2024 to October 7, 2024 to identify Livable Centers small-area planning projects for the first cycle of the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program set aside funding.

The Livable Centers small-area planning set aside is a DRCOG-led technical assistance program in the Fiscal Year 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program. The goals of this program are to:

- Increase housing and employment in connected urban centers.
- Support the investment in multimodal enhancements and transit access along corridors connecting centers.
- Promote investment/reinvestment in existing communities.
- Increase opportunities for diverse housing accessible by multimodal transportation.
- Improve access to and from the region's developed and emerging housing and employment centers.
- Improve multimodal access to employment, commerce, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities.

To achieve these goals, DRCOG will fund and manage a variety of small-area planning projects in partnership with local agencies. An estimated \$2,500,000 is available for the full four-year set-aside program, with \$1.25 million expected to be spent each of the two, 2-year cycles. Non-federal match will be provided using state toll credits.

Small-area planning projects will identify ways to enhance and increase livability in connected multimodal centers. Planning project nominators are encouraged to consider the program goals in developing their proposals. This program can fund a wide range of small-area plans, analyses or studies addressing land use, housing and/or transportation in a center or node on the region's multimodal transportation system. Such centers or nodes include:

- Centers of regional importance such as Metro Vision urban centers.
- Areas that could be eligible to become urban centers.
- Rapid transit station areas.
- Other employment, activity, and housing centers that require significant multimodal connections.



Recent state legislation calls attention to centers - specifically transit and neighborhood centers. In addition to other eligible project types, this set-aside can include implementation assistance for local governments facing new requirements and opportunities under Colorado House Bill 24-1313, which is promoting more housing in transit-oriented communities. Local governments could seek assistance to analyze and consider zoning changes to meet their housing opportunity goal or strategize use of the related infrastructure fund or affordable housing tax credits.

Letters of interest are due October 7, 2024, and can be submitted by local jurisdictions (cities, towns or counties) in the DRCOG metropolitan planning organization boundary, regional agencies, or by nonprofit organizations including Transportation Management Associations.

Full details about the program, project eligibility, evaluation criteria and the letter of interest process can be found in the adopted [Policies for Fiscal Year 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside Programs](#).

Additionally, DRCOG staff will provide an informational webinar for those who want to learn more about this program and ask questions on Wednesday, August 14, 2024 at 11:00am on Zoom. [Register for the webinar using this link](#).

Action by others

None

Previous discussion/action

[February 27, 2023](#) – Policies for Fiscal Year 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program Set-Aside Programs

Recommendation

None

Attachment

Staff presentation

For more information

For additional information, please contact Kaitlyn Service, Senior Planner, Regional Planning and Development, at 303-480-6836 or kservice@drcog.org.





Livable Centers Small-Area Planning Set-Aside

Transportation Advisory Committee | July 22, 2024



Livable Centers Overview

- \$2.5 Million total identified as a set-aside in the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program.
- \$1.25 Million available for the 2024-2025 application cycle.
- Funding for consultant services for planning and analysis.
- Small-area planning that enhances and increases livability in connected multimodal centers.
- Policies for this set-aside were adopted by the Board in March 2023.





Set-aside goals



Foundation in DRCOG's vision

Our region is a diverse **network of vibrant, connected, lifelong communities** with a broad spectrum of **housing, transportation and employment**, complemented by world-class **natural and built environments**.

Program goals

- Support centers and nodes and their connections to the region's multimodal transportation system.
 - Increase diverse housing and employment in connected urban centers.
 - Support multimodal and transit access along corridors connecting centers.
 - Promote investment/ reinvestment in existing communities.
 - Improve multimodal access to housing, employment, commerce, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities for residents of all ages, incomes, and abilities.



UNION STATION
TRAVEL by TRAIN

UNION STATION

1880

Eligibility

Eligible project types for small-area planning

Examples include:

- Active transportation plans.
- First and final mile studies and plans.
- Transit-oriented development plans.
- Redevelopment plans.
- Zoning and design standards.
- Market analysis.
- Development feasibility analysis.
- Parking studies.
- Infrastructure improvement prioritization.
- Implementation planning.
- Placemaking.
- Access to opportunity analysis.
- Housing type diversity analysis.
- Housing needs assessment.
- Cost/benefit analysis.
- Center/node connector multimodal corridor plans.

Opportunities to help with House Bill 24-1313

New state legislation requiring transit-oriented communities determine and meet a housing opportunity goal to increase **housing near transit**.

- Initial activities and technical assistance to implement legislation currently happening with the state's Department of Local Affairs, which includes:
 - Mapping transit areas.
 - Housing goal calculation model.
 - Report guidance.
 - Menu of affordability strategies.
 - Displacement risk assessment.
 - Menu of displacement mitigation strategies.
 - Developing neighborhood center criteria.

Implementation assistance through this set-aside could include help in:

- Considering land development policy changes to meet housing opportunity goal.
- Identifying and designating optional neighborhood centers.
- Considering affordability and displacement mitigation strategies.
- Strategizing use of related new infrastructure fund or affordable housing tax credits in House Bill 24-1403.
- Other analysis or planning to help with implementation not covered by the state's planned technical assistance.

Eligible project locations

Small-area planning for a **center or node on the region's multimodal transportation system**, including but not limited to:

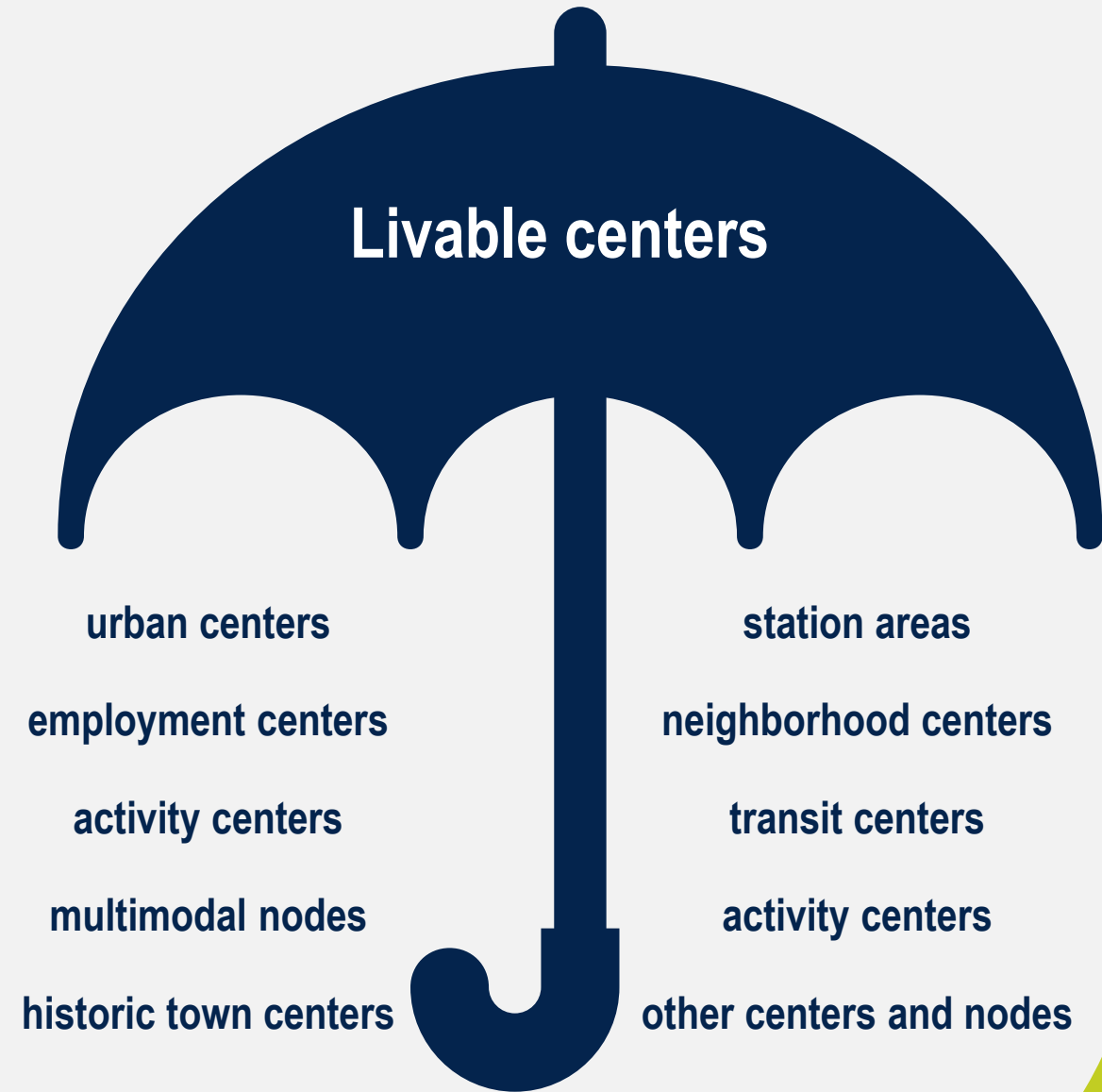
- Center of regional importance such as Metro Vision urban centers.
- Areas that could be eligible to become urban centers.
- Rapid transit station areas.
- Other employment, activity, and housing centers that require significant multimodal connections.

-Projects must be located in and/or provide benefits to the Metropolitan Planning Organization geographical area.

-Plans that cover an entire jurisdiction's boundaries are not suitable for small area planning.

What are livable centers?

- Not a new designation in Metro Vision.
- Intended to reflect the diverse types of central locations for different communities.
- Do need to be on the region's multimodal transportation system.



Eligible participants

Project proposals may be submitted by:

- County and municipal governments.
- Regional agencies.
- Transportation management organizations/associations.
- Other nonprofits serving a regional transportation purpose.
- State of Colorado offices and agencies.

Non-governmental organizations should document support from applicable local governments due to the connection between planning outcomes and implementation of projects by governmental partner agencies.



Program logistics



Funding

- \$2.5 Million total over 2-year cycles (Fiscal Year 2024 – 2027 TIP).
- \$1.25 Million this cycle (next cycle solicitation late 2025 or early 2026).

Project roles and expectations

DRCOG will:

- Fully fund small-area planning (no local match required).
- Manage procurement and serve as project manager for the planning project.

Project Sponsor will:

- Submit letter of interest and letter of understanding and project commitment from agency's senior leadership.
- Commit to attending monthly project meetings, share data, and support community engagement.
- Provide timely feedback on scope and deliverables.
- Act as a liaison with local elected officials.
- Help present to board or council.

Key dates

- Informational webinar August 14 at 11:00am.
- Letters of interest solicitation August 14- October 7.
- Project selection November- December 2024.
- Consultant procurement February- March 2025.
- Project kickoff May 2025.

Next steps

- Full program overview on website.
- Letters of interest due October 7.
- Project sponsors are welcome to set up meeting with DRCOG staff before submitting a letter of interest.
- **Learn more!** Join us for informational webinar to learn more on August 14 at 11:00am on Zoom. [Register for the webinar using this link.](#)



Questions?

Thank you

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