

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



CMAQ Essentials

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program (23 U.S.C. 149) provides a flexible funding source for State and local governments to fund transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act (CAA) and its amendments. The primary goal of the CMAQ program is to provide funding to State and local governments to support transportation projects and programs that reduce emissions of criteria pollutants and to help improve air quality for areas that are nonattainment or maintenance for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), or particulate matter (both PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). Each CMAQ project must meet three basic criteria: it must be a transportation project; it must be located in or benefit a nonattainment or maintenance area; and it must generate an emissions reduction. Many CMAQ projects also provide congestion reduction benefits and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Since its beginning in 1992, the CMAQ program has provided more than \$42 billion for over 45,000 transportation-related emission reduction projects by State transportation departments (DOTs), metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other sponsors across the country.

Examples of CMAQ Eligible Projects and Programs

- Alternative fuels and vehicles
- Bicycle and pedestrian facilities/programs
- Diesel engine replacement or retrofit
- Electric vehicles and charging
- Idle reduction
- Intermodal freight facilities and port improvements
- Improvements to locks and dams and marine highways
- Operating assistance
- Transit improvements
- Transportation control measures
- Transportation management associations
- Travel demand management
- Shared micromobility

Key CMAQ Funding Requirements

- CMAQ funds may be invested in all ozone, CO, and PM nonattainment and maintenance areas, including former areas where the NAAQS has been revoked or the maintenance period has been satisfied. CMAQ funds may also be used on projects that significantly benefit a current or former nonattainment or maintenance area.
- A State without a nonattainment or maintenance area may use its CMAQ funds for projects eligible under CMAQ or the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.
- All CMAQ projects must come from a State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) or a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- The State DOT is responsible for distributing CMAQ funds. All projects must conform to established CMAQ guidance.
- The Federal share for most CMAQ-eligible projects is 80 percent, but certain safety projects that include an air quality or congestion relief component (e.g., carpool/vanpool projects) may have a Federal share of 100 percent.
- Similar to other Federal-aid highway programs, CMAQ operates on a reimbursement basis so funds are not provided until work is completed.

Photo: FHWA

CMAQ under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58, also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” (BIL) continues the CMAQ Program with additional project eligibilities.

New Project Eligibility in BIL

- Shared micromobility: bikeshare and shared scooters
- Purchase of medium or heavy duty zero emission vehicles and related charging stations
- Modernization or rehabilitation of a lock and dam or a marine highway corridor under certain circumstances
- No time limitation on operating assistance to include transit systems in small urban and rural areas

CMAQ Emission Calculations

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) developed the CMAQ Emissions Calculator Toolkit to provide technical support and resources for the implementation of the CMAQ Program. The Toolkit uses Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and emissions data sources such as the Environmental Protection Agency’s MOTO Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES) to calculate emissions benefits by project type.



For more information, please contact:

U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration
Office of Natural Environment
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20590
202-366-4053

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/