

**OKI-Allocated Federal Funds: Project Application Guidance for
2024 Project Prioritization Process for Ohio
Carbon Reduction Program**



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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide information about the process used by the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) to score and award OKI-allocated federal Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds to projects that further the goal of reducing transportation emissions, defined as carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from on-road highway sources. This process discusses only awards over which OKI has direct ability and duty to make, including federal CRP funds in Ohio.

This document is divided into three sections:

Project Eligibility Requirements – this section covers eligible project types identified in Title 23 of the USC and OKI requirements.

Scoring Process – the description of the OKI scoring process for CRP projects.

Guidance for Applicants and Project Scoring Process – explanation of overall process details, listing and description of factors, measures used in project scoring and listing of potential points awarded.

Project Eligibility Requirements

Eligible activities

Information on the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Carbon Reduction Program CRP, as established under the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, can be found on the FHWA CRP fact sheet: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/crp_fact_sheet.cfm

For the purposes of the OKI CRP program only, OKI is limiting eligibility to projects that support deployment of alternative fuel vehicles. Specifically, this includes **acquisition, installation, and maintenance of publicly accessible Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) within the OKI urbanized area (UZA)**. Primary consideration will be given to DC Fast Charging (DCFC) equipment, although Level 2 charging equipment is also eligible.

The remainder of this document details the process OKI will use to prioritize and award funding under the Carbon Reduction Program:

Scoring Process

OKI receives a sub-allocation of federal CRP funds and has the authority and responsibility as the MPO to allocate these projects in the region. OKI Staff have developed a scoring process for the CRP which is used in all competitive calls for CRP funding.

1. **Establish a project solicitation period** based on a TIP/STIP development schedule responsive to the needs of local and state transportation agencies.

2. **Hold a workshop** for prospective applicants to inform them of the application process, deadlines and scoring procedures developed by OKI Staff. This workshop may be held virtually.
3. **Accept completed applications until the advertised deadline.** Applications and instructions can be found at <https://www.oki.org/funding/carbon-reduction-program-crp/> . Once the application has been submitted to OKI, the project request is fixed—no changes in cost, scope or other aspect will be allowed. The only exception to this requirement will be if non-OKI funding becomes available to the applicant and the requested amount of OKI funding can be reduced.
4. **Adoption by OKI Board of Directors.** Funding awards for projects are approved.
5. **Added to the OKI Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).** Projects and funding amounts are added to the TIP and submitted for inclusion in the Statewide TIPs (STIPs).

Project Conditions

The following funding limitations will be applied to each project requesting OKI CRP funding.

1. Eligible Phases

Construction (CON) phases and maintenance contracts for EVSE are eligible for funding. Preliminary engineering, environmental, and contract plans are the responsibility of the applicant. Any funding request for maintenance contracts must be included in the application cost estimate.

2. Project must be located on public property. Projects involving construction of DC Fast Chargers (DCFC) will be given preference.
3. Each DCFC port must be equipped with an SAE CCS 1 connector. Each DCFC port shall also be capable of connecting to and charging vehicles equipped with charging ports compliant with the North American Charging Standard (NACS).
4. Applicants must be a Local Public Agency (LPA) eligible to receive federal funds.
5. Applicants who receive funding through OKI should work closely with OKI and the state DOT district office on a coordinated schedule. Strict adherence to schedule milestones is a fundamental requirement.
6. The standard local match requirement for OKI allocated federal funds is 20%, however, OKI is offering to fulfill the local match requirement by using its allocation of toll revenue credits in Ohio. The use of toll revenue credits will allow for awarded projects to be 100% funded with federal Carbon Reduction funds.
7. Funding for state DOT oversight and administration is eligible. This amount is capped at 10% of the construction phase amount.
8. Applicants must provide a certified or otherwise official cost estimate for each project request.
9. The following scope limitations will apply to each project request:
 - Each applicant is limited to one application per site up to a total of five project applications requesting CRP funds. If an applicant is making an application on behalf of another entity,

that application will not count towards the total number of applications allowed. For example, if a county makes an application on behalf of a township, which is ineligible to apply directly to ODOT, that application will not count towards the county's total applications allowed.

- Total funding request per Ohio application cannot exceed \$1,000,000. The total project funding for a single application is capped at the approved amount.
- Projects must be located within the OKI urbanized boundary.

10. Applicants agree to share utilization data with OKI according to the Data Sharing Agreement (Appendix 1) for 5 years after project completion.

Guidance for Applicants

The **Application Form** is to be filled out by the applicant. Required supplemental information/attachments are:

1. Statement of sufficient utility network capacity for site from provider.
2. Itemized cost estimate containing the following:
 - a. Estimated cost and description of EV charging equipment
 - b. Estimated cost and description of maintenance agreement (if requested)
 - c. Cost and description of physical site upgrades and preparation
 - d. Cost and description of electrical upgrades and preparation
3. A site map including the following:
 - a. General location of EVSE, signage, and other related features.
 - b. Existing and proposed electric infrastructure.
 - c. Existing and proposed security features such as lighting or cameras.
 - d. Anticipated construction limits.
 - e. Adjacent roadways with street name labels. Indicate if there are restrictions on turning movements.

They should be as condensed as possible. Incomplete applications may be rejected.

The **Project Scoring Process** is the method by which OKI Staff reviews and ranks the individual applications. A detailed explanation of the scoring process follows. An application is scored using the Evaluation Factors. A total of 65 points is available.

Evaluation Factors (55 points)

1. (15) The **Project Description** is a narrative description of key points in your project plan. The description will be scored on whether requested items are adequately addressed. Your project description should include discussion of:
 - a. Type and quantity of charging ports – Make sure to state the type (Level 2 or DCFC) and number of charging ports you intend to install at the site. Indicate whether there will be space for future expansion and how many additional charging ports could be added in the future.
 - b. Amenities and vehicle accessibility – Describe the amenities at and within ¼ mile that are safely accessible by **walking** from the proposed site. Amenities that require crossing multilane roadways without robust pedestrian infrastructure should not be included. Describe site accessibility to motorists. Are there turn lanes, signalized intersections, or any impediments to motorists entering the site.
 - c. Describe the potential users of the site. This can be based on amenities, knowledge of regular visitors to the area, or other factors unique to your site.
 - d. Describe site preparation needed. This should include both physical and electrical work needed and any safety enhancements (lighting, cameras, etc).
 - e. Describe your maintenance and network plan for at least 5 years of operation.

2. **Sufficient Utility Network Capacity** assesses the readiness of the utility network to support the proposed EVSE project. Consult with your local utility provider to determine network capacity at your project. For the CRP, the answer to this question must be **yes** due to the potentially long lead time on making capacity adding improvements to the utility network. **A brief statement from your utility provider should be provided with the application.** Points are not awarded for this factor.

2. (5) **Proximity to Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities.** Proximity to Justice40 rewards investment in disadvantaged communities and will help bring resources to these areas most impacted by pollution and environmental hazards. The Biden-Harris Administration created the Justice40 Initiative to confront and address decades of underinvestment in disadvantaged communities. The initiative allows USDOT to identify and prioritize projects that benefit rural, suburban, tribal, and urban communities facing barriers to affordable, equitable, reliable, and safe transportation. A map of Justice 40 Communities can be found here: <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=ee9ddbc95520442482cd511f9170663a>

3. (5) **Planning Factors** asks you to consider the impact on EJ identified groups. You should carefully consider both benefits and potential adverse impacts as well as how you will communicate the availability of this new infrastructure to nearby residents. The US DOT has prepared resources to help you consider impacts and issues: <https://www.transportation.gov/urban-e-mobility-toolkit/e-mobility-infrastructure-planning/equity-considerations>. As part of your planning for users with disabilities, please refer to the guidance provided by the US Access Board available at <https://www.access-board.gov/files/usab-evse-guide.pdf>. Responses will be scored by the Environmental Justice Committee or CRP committee.

4. (10) **Distance to nearest DCFC (100kW+)** provides points based on the distance to the nearest DCFC EVSE rated at 100kW or greater **for projects installing DCFC**. Maximum points are awarded for projects that are located 5 miles or more from an existing DCFC station. For

projects installing Level 2 chargers, no points are awarded in this category. Plugshare.com provides locations for DCFC equipment, use the filter tools to search for CCS/SAE locations that provide charging at 100kW+.

5. (10) The **ADT** factor provides points for corridors with a volume of traffic. This figure is based upon the highest ADT count within a quarter mile of the proposed project.
6. (10) The **Renewable Energy Supply** factor awards points for a project's ability to utilize renewable energy in powering the proposed EVSE. Projects utilizing 90% or more renewable energy will be awarded 10 points, projects with 30 to 89% will receive 5 points, projects with less than 30% renewable receive 0 points.
7. (0) The **Applicant's History of Project Delivery** takes into account whether an applicant has had OKI-funded projects slip from one fiscal year to a later year after the project has been programmed or if the project has been canceled. While external factors can affect the delivery of a project, it is important for OKI to maintain a balanced budget of projects to be delivered each fiscal year. The potential for slippage needs to be addressed when a project is initially programmed. Projects not yet awarded for construction and listed in the current TIP will be evaluated for history of project delivery. Penalties for slippage will continue into subsequent application cycles until the project is awarded for construction. Sponsors with a canceled project will receive the penalty once, occurring during the next application cycle where they have a submitted application. An applicant who has had one project slip to a later year will be penalized -1 points; an applicant who has had two or more projects slip to a later year will be penalized -3 points; an applicant who has had one or more projects cancelled will be penalized -5 points.

Evaluation Factors (55 points available)

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Points</u>
Project Description	15 total
	Up to 3 points for each item a – e scored:	
	Clear and comprehensive discussion of item	3
	Item mostly addressed, but missing some information	2
	Item partially addressed and missing key information	1
	Item not addressed in a meaningful way	0
	Each evaluator will score the description and scores will be averaged.	
Sufficient Utility Network Capacity	Sufficient Capacity.....	Yes/No
Proximity to J40 Disadvantaged Communities	Located within J40 Community.....	5
	within 1 mile	4
	1 to 1.5 miles	3
	1.5 to 2 miles.....	2
	2 to 3 miles.....	1
	Greater than 3 miles	0
Planning factors	Scored by EJ or CRP Committee.....	5
Distance to nearest DCFC (100kW+)	5 miles or greater and DCFC installation	10
	4 to 5 miles and DCFC installation	8
	3 to 4 miles and DCFC installation	6
	2 to 3 miles and DCFC installation	4
	1 to 2 miles and DCFC installation	2
	Less than 1 mile or a Level 2 installation	0
Average Daily Traffic (ADT)	Over 25,000.....	10
	Over 20,000.....	8
	Over 15,000.....	6
	Over 10,000.....	4
	Over 5,000.....	2
	Less than 5,000	0
Renewable Energy Supply	90 to 100%	10
	30 to 89%	5
	Less than 30%.....	0

History of Project	1 project sale slipped past programmed year	-1
Delivery	2 or more projects slipped past programmed year	-3
	project canceled.....	-5

APPENDIX 1
DATA SHARING AGREEMENT

- 1. Purpose:** To obtain data to assess the OKI Carbon Reduction Fund grant efficacy. This will assist OKI in refining the prioritization process and supporting local agencies in project applications, both for CRF funds as well as other funding opportunities. Data will be shared for 5 years.
- 2. Data to be shared:** No data shared should include personally identifying information.
 - a.** Daily utilization data should be shared on a quarterly basis including the following items:
 - (i) Unique charging site name or identifier
 - (ii) Address of charging site
 - (iii) Geographic coordinates for charging site
 - (iv) Unique charging port identifiers
 - (v) Charging level of each port
 - (vi) Access information (free to access or in paid lot)
 - (vii) Real time status using Open Charge Point Interface
 - b.** A report indicating uptime should be shared with OKI by **January 15** annually.
- 3. Responsibilities of OKI:**
 - a.** Protect shared data using passwords and restricting access to relevant agency personnel.
 - b.** Use data only for the stated purpose.
- 4. Responsibilities of applicant:**
 - a.** Ensure that data sharing is set up with network provider.
 - b.** Periodically review data sharing to verify that network provider is adhering to agreement.