

SYSTEM ACCESS FUND APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Once System Access Fund (SAF) applications are received, the following evaluation process will take place:

- All applications will be posted on the Sound Transit website
- Teams of Sound Transit staff will evaluate proposed projects against the Policy and Technical factors identified in the System Access Fund Application and assign a High, Medium, or Low rating
- Sound Transit evaluation teams will subsequently assign a Highly Recommended, Recommended, or Not Recommended rating for each project
- Staff from Sound Transit's Office of Planning & Innovation will review Policy, Technical, and Overall ratings with the Sound Transit Board of Directors
- The Sound Transit Board of Directors will ultimately decide which projects will receive System Access Funds and how much System Access Funds per subarea that will be allocated

This document provides details about how each factor will be evaluated to allow all applications to be compared against each other. The sections below titled "Key Metrics" and "Questions to Answer" provide applicants with insight into critical evaluation components. The section titled "Scoring Guidance" identifies the ranges for each factor for Sound Transit's scoring.

The Appendix provides a variety of potential quantitative measures and sources to help an applicant support their application. These will vary by application and are not required.

Policy Factors

Please answer each question in a brief narrative. The Appendix provides a variety of quantitative measures to help an applicant support their application. Specific measures will vary depending on the type of project and are not required; however, all data and information provided by applicants to support their application will be weighed during the evaluation process.

Projects will be scored high, medium, or low for each factor.

Customer Experience

Key Metric

The impact the project will have on making it easier and more convenient for people getting to the facility being served by this project.

The purpose of this factor is to help transit be an easy, comfortable travel choice.

Applications should outline how projects will achieve the following goals to provide a simple, seamless, and intuitive trip:

- Improve pedestrian comfort.
- Improve bicycling/scooter comfort.
- Improve the passenger pick-up/drop-off experience (transit or private vehicles).
- Increase transit ridership.
- Does the project save time for riders?
- Does it shorten riders' access path?
- Does it give riders a new access mode that they did not have before?

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- Does it make it simpler or more intuitive to get to the facility in question?
- Provides a technological investment to improve the customer experience.

Questions to Answer

1. In what specific ways will the project support making it easier and more convenient for people to get to the transit facility?
2. What key destinations (e.g. neighborhoods, employment centers, schools, community amenities, other multimodal facilities) does the access improvement connect to?

Scoring Guidance

High

- The project can demonstrate a potential for a high level of usage in the community (for example, the project is easily accessible to a high-density area or to a large proportion of the local community).
- The project can demonstrate a potential for saving a significant amount of time for riders and/or significantly shorten their access path.
- The project can demonstrate a potential for giving riders a new access mode that they did not have before.
- The project can demonstrate a potential for making it significantly simpler or more intuitive to get to the facility in question.

Medium

- The project only demonstrates a moderate level of usage in the community (for example, the project is accessible to a fair-sized portion of the local community, but not the most densely populated area), and serves a moderate variety of users.
- The project only demonstrates a moderate amount of time saved for riders and/or moderately shorten their access path.
- The project only demonstrates giving riders a new option to an access mode that they did have before.
- The project only demonstrates making it moderately simpler or intuitive to get to the facility in question.

Low

- The project only demonstrates a low level of usage in the community (for example, the project is easily accessible to only a small portion of the local community).
- The project fails to demonstrate a time saving for riders and/or shorten their access path.
- The project fails to demonstrate providing riders a new path to access a mode.
- The project fails to demonstrate making it simpler or intuitive to get to the facility in question.

Equity

Key Metric

The impact the project will have on connecting people who rely on transit to the facility being served by this project.

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The purpose of this factor is to evaluate how well potential projects result in improved connections to public transit for these populations.

Question to Answer

1. Describe how the project makes it easier for populations that rely on transit (e.g. low-income populations, people with disabilities, households that do not own vehicles, youth, senior citizens, etc.) to get to the transit facility. Please include specific communities that will be served and how the project specifically improves their access. Please see the appendix of System Access Fund Application Guidance document for potential data sources.

Scoring Guidance

High

- The project can demonstrate how it targets, or otherwise serves, a significant number of members of communities and populations, including, but not limited to, older adults, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.

Medium

- The project can only demonstrate how it targets, or otherwise serves, a moderate number of members of communities and populations, including, but not limited to, older adults, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.

Low

- The project fails to demonstrate how it targets, or otherwise serves, members of communities and populations, including, but not limited to, older adults, people with disabilities, those located in highly impacted communities and/or areas experiencing high levels of unemployment or chronic underemployment.

Connectivity

Key Metric

The impact the project will have in increasing the number of people who can use the facility being served by this project.

The purpose of this factor is to eliminate physical or operational barriers in parts of the transportation network that limit use of transit.

Applications should outline how projects may achieve the following goals:

- Eliminate gaps in the pedestrian network.
- Ensure safe and adequate crossings.
- Eliminate gaps in the bicycling network.
- Increase the productivity of bicycle parking facilities.
- Increase multimodal options for access.
- Create simpler or more direct transfer options between transit services.
- Increase transit ridership.

Questions to Answer

1. In what specific ways will the project reduce key barriers or close gaps for people to get to the transit facility? Please identify the specific barriers or gaps and how the project reduces these barriers and/or closes these gaps.
2. How does the project conform to transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and universal/ADA design best practices resulting in a connection that will attract existing and new riders? Sources of best practices can be found in the appendix of the System Access Fund Application Guidance document.

Scoring Guidance

High

- The project clearly demonstrates how it addresses a significant gap/barrier.
- The project clearly demonstrates how it significantly extends an existing high-quality network (pedestrian, bicycle, or transit).
- The project clearly demonstrates how it is a clear example of a best design practice for its mode.
- The project clearly demonstrates a high likelihood for its potential of increasing transit ridership at the station.

Medium

- The project only demonstrates that it addresses a less significant gap/barrier.
- The project only demonstrates that it moderately extends an existing high-quality network (pedestrian, bicycle, or transit).
- The project only demonstrates that includes some elements from best design practices for its mode.
- The project only demonstrates a medium likelihood for its potential of increasing transit ridership at the station.

Low

- The project fails to demonstrate how it addresses a gap/barrier.
- The project fails to demonstrate how it extends an existing high-quality network (pedestrian, bicycle, or transit).
- The project fails to demonstrate how it includes elements from best design practices for its mode.
- The project only demonstrates a low likelihood for its potential of increasing transit ridership at the station.

Safety and Human Health

Key Metric

The impact the project will have on improving both the safety and health of people at and surrounding the facility being served by this project.

The purpose of this factor is to create safer communities by improving routes and modes to transit, while also encouraging healthier lifestyles through more physical activity.

Applications should outline how projects may achieve the following goals:

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- Reduce a known safety issue, or improve safety more broadly.
- Increase physical activity by shifting local riders to more active and environmentally friendly modes.
- Reduce greenhouse-gas emissions due to mode shift.

Questions to Answer

1. How will the project specifically address an existing safety issue?
2. In what specific ways will the project support an increase in physical activity for people getting to the transit facility?
3. How will the project reduce a person's likelihood of using a personal vehicle to get to the transit facility?

Scoring Guidance

High

- The project clearly demonstrates how it will address a known or community-identified safety issue.
- The project clearly demonstrates the potential to shift a high number of local riders to more active and environmentally friendly modes.

Medium

- The project only demonstrates that it addresses a component of a known or community-identified safety issue, but not the entire issue.
- The project only demonstrates the potential to shift a moderate number of local riders to more active and environmentally friendly modes.

Low

- The project fails to demonstrate how it addresses a known or community-identified safety issue.
- The project only demonstrates the potential to shift a small number of local riders to more active and environmentally friendly modes.

Technical Factors

For each factor, please answer each question in a brief narrative and with cost/quantitative data as requested. Projects will be scored high, medium, or low for each factor.

Funding Plan

Key Metric

The project sponsor has all other funds in place to complete the phase or a realistic plan in place to secure them.

The purpose of this factor is to confirm that System Access Funds will be utilized as part of a complete, identified funding plan.

Questions to Answer

1. Total cost of project.

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2. Total requested from Sound Transit SAF.
3. Identify other sources of funding and where those are secured or not yet secured.
4. Please list all phases of this project, their projected costs and funding sources, and expected year of completion. Please attach a complete budget for the project.
5. Please identify secured or reasonably expected funds. For funds that are reasonably expected, please explain the procedural steps that will be taken to secure the funds, with dates for completion.
6. Acknowledge responsibility for ongoing operations and maintenance costs: Yes: No:

Scoring Guidance

High

- The sponsor has a complete funding plan with funds for all costs confirmed. All funds needed to complete the phase(s) have been secured or are reasonably expected by the year System Access Funds are requested.

Medium

- The sponsor has a complete funding plan with most funds secured and other funds reasonably expected. No funds needed to complete the phase(s) have been secured, but the sponsor has a plan demonstrating that it is reasonable for all funds for the phase(s) requested to be secured by the year System Access Funds are requested.

Low

- The sponsor does not have a complete funding plan identified. No funds are secured, and the sponsor has not demonstrated that it is reasonable for all funding to be secure by the year System Access Funds are requested.

Delivery Plan

Key Metric

The project sponsor has a realistic plan for delivering the project based for which they are requesting funds.

The purpose of this factor is to confirm the feasibility to meet necessary requirements and ensure that System Access Funds support the delivery the proposed project by the expected completion year.

Questions to Answer

1. Questions for all applicants:
 - a. What is the current or anticipated level of environmental documentation for this project? Has documentation been approved? If not, provide anticipated date of completion
 - b. Will Right of Way (ROW) be required for this project? If yes, please discuss the extent the project schedule depends on ROW acquisition and your agency's experience in conducting ROW acquisitions of similar size and complexity.
 - c. Provide a brief overview of potential risks with this project, their potential impact, and mitigation strategies.
2. Questions for applicants seeking PE/Design funding:

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- a. Identify PE/Design milestones associated with the project, including anticipated activities and expected dates of completion for each milestone.
 - b. When will the PE/Design phase be complete?
3. Questions for applicants seeking Construction funding:
 - a. Provide an engineer's estimate for project cost.
 - b. Identify the relevant permits needed for the project and when they are scheduled to be acquired.
 - c. Provide the date when plans, specifications, and estimates will be submitted for approval.
 - d. When is the project scheduled to go to ad?
 - e. When is the project scheduled to be substantially complete?
4. Questions for applicants seeking non-capital funding:
 - a. Please describe the project implementation schedule including key milestones.
 - b. Please describe your ability to fund operations once System Access Funds are expended.
 - c. Please identify any performance measures the project is intending to achieve, which are not identified in the above application.

Scoring Guidance

High

- The sponsor can demonstrate that work on project prerequisites has begun and/or remaining work is scheduled to be complete before the year System Access Funds are requested.

Medium

- The sponsor can demonstrate that work on project prerequisites has begun and/or remaining work is scheduled to be completed by the year System Access Funds are requested.

Low

- The sponsor fails to demonstrate that project prerequisites will be completed by the year System Access Funds are being requested.

Additional Information

5. Describe any additional aspects of your project not requested in the evaluation criteria that could be relevant to the final project recommendation and decision-making process.

Appendix: Potential Quantitative Measures

Factor	Measures	Methodology/Source
Customer Experience	Pedestrian Level of Service (LOS) at the proposed project site	Pedestrian LOS description and methodology options can be found here
	Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) within 3-mile radius of station	Bicycle LTS description and methodology can be found here
	Utilization of bicycle parking facilities	Bicycle parking utilization counts taken at peak intervals on typical mid-week weekdays
Equity	Demographic composition, income categories, households that do not own vehicles, limited English proficiency, etc. of the Census tracts the proposed project touches	GIS analysis Source: https://www.psrc.org/data-and-resources/data-psrc
Safety and Human Health	Collisions resulting in injuries or fatalities within ½ mile radius of stations over the past 3 years	State collision rates with source
Connectivity	Ratio of residents/employees within 1-mile that have direct access to continuous active-transportation network connections to the station	GIS analysis
	Ratio of eligible roadway network within 1-mile radius that has adequate walking facilities on both sides of the roadway	GIS analysis
	Ratio of signalized intersections within 1-mile that feature crossing facilities on each leg	GIS analysis
	Ratio of eligible roadway network within 3-mile radius that has appropriate bicycling facilities	GIS analysis
	Universal Design; ADA Requirements	<p>ADA Accessibility Guidelines (2010): https://www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards_index.htm</p> <p>APBP Bicycle Parking Guidelines, Second Edition (2010): https://www.apbp.org/</p> <p>Federal Highway Administration Separated Bike Lane Planning And Design Guide: https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/publications/separated_bikelane_pdg</p> <p>NACTO Urban Street Design Guide: https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/</p> <p>NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide: https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/</p> <p>NACTO Transit Street Design Guide: https://nacto.org/publication/transit-street-design-guide/</p> <p>U.S. Access Board Proposed Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAG): https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/streets-sidewalks/public-rights-of-way/proposed-rights-of-way-guidelines/part-1190-accessibility-guidelines-for-pedestrian-facilities-in-the-public-right-of-way</p>