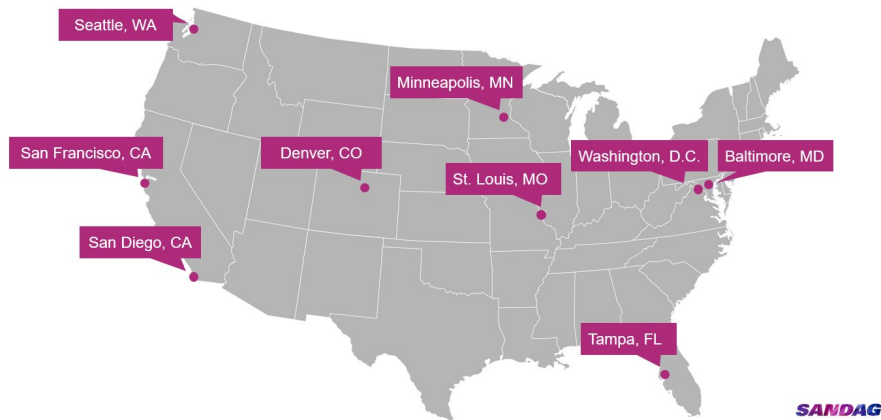




Specialized Transportation Grant Program

Cycle 13 Call for Projects



Literature Review and Benchmarking Analysis

December 22, 2023

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About SANDAG

Vision Statement

Pursuing a brighter future for all.

Mission Statement

We are the regional agency that connects people, places, and innovative ideas by implementing solutions with our unique and diverse communities.

Our Commitment to Equity

We hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve. We acknowledge we have much to learn and much to change; and we firmly uphold equity and inclusion for every person in the San Diego region. This includes historically underserved, systemically marginalized groups impacted by actions and inactions at all levels of our government and society. We have an obligation to eliminate disparities and ensure that safe, healthy, accessible, and inclusive opportunities are available to everyone. SANDAG will develop an equity action plan that will inform how we plan, prioritize, fund, and build projects and programs; frame how we work with our communities; define how we recruit and develop our employees; guide our efforts to conduct unbiased research and interpret data; and set expectations for companies and stakeholders that work with us. We are committed to creating a San Diego region where every person who visits, works, and lives can thrive.

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Executive Summary

SANDAG researched best practices and trends in the Federal Transit Administration Section 5310 (Section 5310) program administration and analyzed the project selection criteria of similar regions to provide a foundation upon which the agency can identify selection criteria that best meets the needs of the region through the SANDAG Specialized Transportation Grant Program (STGP) Cycle 13 Call for Projects. SANDAG conducted a literature review of two studies that analyzed the Section 5310 program across the county, highlighting key themes and findings. The agency also selected eight regions that have comparable Section 5310 apportionments to SANDAG's to benchmark their Section 5310 project selection criteria against SANDAG's STGP Cycle 12 Call for Projects selection criteria:

- Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota
- Seattle, Washington
- St. Louis, Missouri
- Baltimore, Maryland
- San Francisco-Oakland, California
- Denver-Aurora, Colorado
- Tampa-St. Petersburg, Florida
- Washington, D.C.-Virginia-Maryland

SANDAG identified 53 selection criteria from the nine regions studied, including San Diego. From these, SANDAG combined similar criteria into nine simplified categories to decipher themes. SANDAG also analyzed the proportional weights given by the selected regions to the nine simplified categories.

Key findings include the following:

- Coordination was the most common selection criteria identified, found in eight of the nine regions analyzed, including San Diego. For most of these regions, coordination encompassed the extent to which proposed Section 5310 projects would address strategies and needs identified in a locally developed Coordinated Plan. For some of these regions, coordination also encompassed the degree to which applicants would coordinate with other agencies to reduce duplication of service.
- Equity, communications, and outreach were the least common selection criteria identified, found in only two of the nine regions analyzed.
- The themes of the SANDAG STGP Cycle 12 Call for Projects selection criteria were consistent with those of the eight other regions studied.
- Coordination was the criterion given the most weight by the selected regions. On average, this criterion comprised 34% of the selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects. For the San Diego region, coordination comprised 10% of the total score, which was the second-lowest percentage of the selected regions.
- Except for the coordination criterion, the weights of the SANDAG STGP Cycle 12 Call for Projects selection criteria were consistent with those of the eight other regions studied.

Section 5310 Benchmarking and Research

1.1 Introduction

The STGP is comprised of the Section 5310 program and the TransNet Senior Mini-Grant program. As the designated recipient of Section 5310 program funds, SANDAG administers the program for the large, urbanized areas of San Diego County. Since the Section 5310 program allocates formula funds throughout the country, states and other metropolitan planning organizations administer this program in their respective regions on behalf of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

In the development of the STGP Cycle 13 Call for Projects, SANDAG staff analyzed how other regions structure the project selection criteria of their Section 5310 programs and researched best practices and trends in the program's administration. The purpose of these efforts was to provide the region with information that can support project selection criteria that best meet the needs of the region and facilitate effective administration of the STGP.

1.2 Literature Review for Section 5310 Program Administration

In 2021, the National Aging and Disability Transportation Center published its [FTA Section 5310 Compendium](#). The compendium describes how Section 5310 program recipients and subrecipients employ coordination to enhance the program's effectiveness, highlighting mobility management as well as coordination with Area Agencies on Aging. It also discusses policy areas pertinent to the Section 5310 program such as Americans with Disabilities Act compliance and efforts to support diversity, equity, and inclusion. Lastly, the compendium provides an overview of how Section 5310 recipients and subrecipients use the program's funding to support travel training and volunteer driver programs.

In 2022, the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine published a study,¹ entitled [Program Management Insights for the Section 5310 Program, Including Subrecipient Consolidation and Urban 5310](#), on the administration of the Section 5310 program throughout the country. Below are a few of the key findings from this study:

- **The level of need for transportation, particularly for services that enhance mobility for older adults and individuals with disabilities, is so great that the program cannot meet demand, and applications routinely surpass the available funding.**
- The Section 5310 program is small in comparison to the Section 5307 and Section 5311 public transit funding programs. However, the Section 5310 program requires the same or greater commitment of administrative time as the larger programs, demanding what can appear to be an outsized amount of time for the funding awarded.

¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2022. Program Management Insights for the Section 5310 Program, Including Subrecipient Consolidation and Urban 5310. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/26841>.

- Program managers have not chosen to focus on reducing the number of subrecipients as a primary strategy for administering the program. The focus has instead been on streamlining and improving the administrative process through regional mobility managers or local coordinating councils.
- Even in instances where a focus on regionalization and on purchase of services has resulted in fewer grant awards administered, the program managers make a point of recruiting new services to fill gaps and meet the need for specialized transportation. New services include public-private partnerships, mobility managers, and interagency agreements for transportation programs.
- Program managers agree that the need for transportation services for older adults and individuals with disabilities outweighs the funding available in many areas, particularly in rural areas.

1.3 Benchmarking Methods

To select regions to analyze, SANDAG staff looked at the [Federal FY 2023 Section 5310 apportionment table](#) published by the FTA to identify the regions that have a Section 5310 apportionment commensurate with SANDAG's. Since the Section 5310 program allocates formula funds based on population size, apportionment size was used to identify regions with population characteristics like those found in San Diego. Using the method, SANDAG staff selected eight regions to benchmark, four that have apportionments higher than SANDAG's and four that have apportionments lower than SANDAG's. The eight regions are listed in the table below and ordered by how much their apportionment size is larger or smaller than SANDAG's. SANDAG's apportionment size is included for reference.

No.	Region	Section 5310 Fund Administrator	FFY 2023 Section 5310 Apportionment Amount	Apportionment Size Higher or Lower than San Diego's (in \$)	Apportionment Size Higher or Lower than San Diego's (%)
0.	San Diego, CA	SANDAG	\$3,570,697	\$0	0%
1.	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN	Minnesota Dept. of Transportation	\$3,332,145	-\$238,552	-7%
2.	Seattle, WA	Washington State Dept. of Transportation	\$4,005,240	\$434,543	12%
3.	St. Louis, MO	East-West Gateway Council of Governments	\$2,963,583	-\$607,114	-17%
4.	Baltimore, MD	Maryland Transit Agency	\$2,946,695	-\$624,002	-17%
5.	San Francisco-Oakland, CA	Caltrans	\$4,200,723	\$630,026	18%
6.	Denver-Aurora, CO	Denver Regional Council of Governments	\$2,929,143	-\$641,554	-18%
7.	Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL	Florida Dept. of Transportation	\$4,235,611	\$664,914	19%
8.	Washington, D.C., VA, MD	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments	\$5,210,439	\$1,639,742	46%

SANDAG staff then identified the Section 5310 selection criteria in each chosen region, as detailed in the following sections. A summary of SANDAG's Specialized Transportation Grant Program selection criteria is included for reference. From the 53 selection criteria identified in the nine regions including San Diego, SANDAG staff combined similar criteria into nine simplified categories to decipher themes and commonalities. The Section 5310 selection criteria for each of these regions are detailed in subsequent sections.

1.4 San Diego, California

Roles and Responsibilities

For San Diego County, SANDAG administers the Section 5310 program for the large urban areas while Caltrans administers the program for the small urban and rural areas. Based on stakeholder input, SANDAG sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects in the large urban areas of San Diego County.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

The project selection criteria approved by the SANDAG Board of Directors and used in the Specialized Transportation Grant Program (STGP) Cycle 12 Call for Projects are available and detailed on the [STGP web page](#), and summarized in the following table:

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Applicant Capacity and Experience for Proposed Service	15	15%
2.	Operational/Implementation Plan	20	20%
3.	Stewardship of Public Funds and Assets	15	15%
4.	Need and Equity	15	15%
5.	Coordination	10	10%
6.	Environmental Responsibility	5	5%
7.	Proposed Performance	10	10%
8.	Performance Monitoring, Reporting, and Outcomes	10	10%
Total		100	100%

1.5 Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota

Roles and Responsibilities

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) administers the Section 5310 program for the entire State of Minnesota, including the urban areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul. MnDOT sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

Per the draft [2023 Greater Minnesota State Management Plan](#), there are seven selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 vehicle projects.

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Project Description	6	14%
2.	People Served	6	14%
3.	Public Notice and Publication	4	9%
4.	Coordination Activities	8	19%
5.	Partnerships/Local Match	9	21%
6.	Organizational Background	6	14%
7.	Budget Report and Operational Statistics	4	9%

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
	Total	43	100%

Project Description

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the project vehicle will be successful for a new, expansion, or replacement service. (6 points)

People Served

This criterion includes the following:

- Extent to which the applicant clearly identifies how the project enhances access for people with disabilities or seniors (3 points)
- Extent to which the applicant clearly identifies how the project enhances access for both people with disabilities and seniors (3 points)

Public Notice and Publication

This criterion includes the following:

- Extent to which the applicant demonstrates public notice through service area in newspaper (2 points)
- Extent to which the applicant demonstrates significant effort in providing local transit providers of intent to apply (2 points)

Coordination Activities

This criterion includes the following:

- Extent to which the proposed project addresses a locally preferred strategy or project identified in its locally developed Coordination Plan (3 points)
- Letters of support from community representatives and partnering organizations demonstrating diversity among entities providing letters (2 points)
- Extent to which the applicant clearly identifies how partners and stakeholders will stay involved throughout the project (3 points)

Partnerships/Project Match

This criterion includes the following:

- Demonstration of legal commitments from fiscal partners (3 points)
- Extent to which partnership letters express fiscal commitment to the project during the grant term (3 points)
- Degree to which partnership letters express fiscal commitment to the project beyond the grant term (3 points)

Organizational Background

This criterion includes the following:

- Degree to which the applicant demonstrates its organizational and fiscal capacity to deliver proposed project (4 points)

- Extent to which the applicant demonstrates previous experience in delivering similar projects to the proposed project (2 points)

Budget Report and Operational Statistics

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the applicant demonstrates that the budget request is appropriate to the size of project proposed. (4 points)

1.6 Seattle, Washington

Roles and Responsibilities

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) administers the Section 5310 program for the State of Washington, including the Seattle urban area. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) develops the federally required Coordinated Plan for the Puget Sound region. WSDOT and PSRC set the evaluation criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects in the Seattle area.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

WSDOT has three selection criteria from which WSDOT evaluators use a paired-comparison (also known as forced-pairs) method of evaluation to assign scores. Projects can receive up to 100 points during this portion of the evaluation process. WSDOT then passes applications in the Seattle urban area to the PSRC, requiring the PSRC to assign a fixed number of letter grades to each application based on additional selection criteria set by the PSRC. The letter grades are then translated into point values up to 50 points such that an A receives 50 points, a B receives 25 points, a C receives 12 points, a D receives 0 points, and an F is disqualified. A proposed project can receive up to 150 points (100 from WSDOT and 50 from PSRC), though WSDOT and PSRC staff confirmed that there are no specific points or weights associated with each evaluation criterion.

Per the [2020-2023 WSDOT State Management Plan](#), there are three selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects. Per the PSRC Regional Priority Ranking Process provided by PSRC staff, there are four additional selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects. Combined, these seven selection criteria are summarized in the following table and discussed below.

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.*	Project Component	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
2.*	Applicant Component	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
3.*	Performance Component	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
4.^	Project Type (Preservation, New, or Expansion)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
5.^	Support for Puget Sound Regional Council's Coordinated Mobility Plan	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
6.^	Uniqueness of Service	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
7.^	Financial Sustainability	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
		Total	150
			100%

**WSDOT criterion; ^PSRC criterion*

Project Component

This criterion includes the following:

- The degree to which the project establishes, preserves, or improves public transportation services in a community
- The extent to which the project addresses a recognized need in the community
- The ability of the applicant of leverage funds from other sources to support the implementation of the project
- The degree to which the project reflects a community process of coordination and input
- The feasibility of the project
- The degree to which the project connects with other systems or modes
- The extent to which the project helps the State of Washington maintain the number of vehicles that are within their minimum useful life

Applicant Component

This criterion includes the following:

- The extent to which the applicant reports sufficient experience in managing transportation projects and previous grant awards to provide assurance of success
- The degree to which the applicant reports sufficient financial capacity and resources to implement and successfully carry out the project
- The extent to which the applicant reports a long-term commitment to the project to continue the effort beyond the availability of the requested grant resources
- The degree to which the applicant's risk level warrants award of funds

Performance Component

This criterion includes the following:

- The extent to which the applicant describes community benefits resulting from the grant
- The extent to which the applicant defines performance measures to be used in determining the success of the project
- The degree to which the applicant describes an active effort aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness

Project Type (Preservation, New, or Expansion)

This criterion evaluates if the proposed project would preserve existing service at existing service levels.

Support for Puget Sound Regional Council's Coordinated Mobility Plan

This criterion evaluates the degree to which the applicant supports the PSRC's Coordinated Mobility Plan by addressing at least one "High" Prioritized Strategy identified in this plan.

Uniqueness of Service

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the applicant adequately explains the uniqueness of its services and how its project does not duplicate other existing services for target populations, including those provided by public transportation operators.

Financial Sustainability

This criterion evaluates the extent to which an applicant demonstrates that it is providing more than the federal minimum required match from local sources in its project budget.

1.7 St. Louis, Missouri

Roles and Responsibilities

The East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWGCOG) administers the Section 5310 program for the St. Louis area and sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed projects.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

Per the [FY 2023 EWGCOG Section 5310 Workbook](#), there are five selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects.

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Responsiveness to Coordinated Plan Gaps and Strategies	25	25%
2.	Benefits to Target Population	25	25%
3.	Sponsor Experience and Management	23	23%
4.	Coordination and Awareness	22	22%
5.	Project Budget	5	5%
Total		100	100%

Responsiveness to Coordinated Plan Gaps and Strategies

This criterion includes the following:

- Responsiveness in addressing gaps identified in the Coordinated Plan (10 points)
- Number of strategies the project addresses and how well the project responds to the strategies in the Coordinated Plan (10 points)
- Clear description of the project and how it meets eligibility requirements (5 points)

Benefits to Target Population

This criterion includes the following:

- Estimated number of older adults and/or individuals with disabilities that the project will benefit (5 points)
- Demonstrates that improved benefits to the target population over time (5 points)
- More than one jurisdiction served (5 points)
- Needs of more than one target population addressed (5 points)
- Extent to which the program of service is open to the target populations (5 points)

Sponsor Experience and Management

This criterion includes the following:

- Sufficient management, staff, resources, and financial ability to implement the project and to sustain the project after initial grant funding is expended (7 points)
- Experience in managing transportation services for older adults and/or individuals with disabilities (5 points)
- History of managing federal funding sources (5 points)
- Stability of local match funding source(s) (3 points)
- Ability to quantify clear and measurable outcomes to track the effectiveness of the project (3 points)

Coordination and Awareness

This criterion includes the following:

- Clear description of existing transportation services and how the project will complement, rather than duplicate, those services (5 points)
- Demonstration of partners and stakeholders involved with the project and the applicant's role in providing service (5 points)
- Extent to which the applicant will ensure service coordination (5 points)
- Documentation of effort to notify local transportation providers of intent to apply (5 points)
- Extent to which clients and/or the public are informed about the service/program, or how it is marketed (2 points)

Project Budget

This criterion evaluates how efficiently the project provides benefits to the intended users. (5 points)

1.8 Baltimore, Maryland

Roles and Responsibilities

The Maryland Transit Administration within the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT MTA) administers the Section 5310 program for the State of Maryland, including for

the Baltimore area. While MDOT MTA sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council reviews proposed projects in the Baltimore area to ensure consistency with its Coordinated Plan.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

Per the 2022 MDOT MTA State Management Plan, there are four selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 vehicle projects.

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Extent and Urgency of Local Needs	10	20%
2.	Coordination and Cooperation	20	40%
3.	Vehicle Utilization	10	20%
4.	Fiscal and Managerial Capacity	10	20%
Total		50	100%

Extent and Urgency of Local Needs

This criterion evaluates the degree to which the project meets urgent transportation needs and benefits older adults and individuals with disabilities.

Coordination and Cooperation

This criterion includes the following:

- Degree to which the proposed project demonstrates coordination or cooperation among local service agencies and existing transit and paratransit operators
- Extent to which maximum vehicle utilization is achieved through coordination

Vehicle Utilization

This criterion evaluates the degree to which the proposed service plan provides for the fullest possible utilization of the requested vehicle(s) as well as vehicles currently or proposed to be operated through ridership projections, miles, and hours of operations.

Fiscal and Managerial Capacity

This criterion includes the following:

- The degree to which the applicant appears to be capable of conducting the proposed project
- The source and availability of both capital and operating funds for the proposed project
- The capacity of the applicant to provide an efficient service with adequate maintenance, driver training, and administrative oversight

1.9 San Francisco-Oakland, California

Roles and Responsibilities

Caltrans administers the Section 5310 program for the San Francisco-Oakland area and sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria – Traditional and Expanded

Per federal requirements, there are two categories of eligible Section 5310 projects: traditional and operating assistance. According to [FTA Circular 9070.1G](#), traditional Section 5310 projects are defined as “those public transportation capital projects planned, designed, and carried out to meet the specific needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities when public transportation is insufficient, unavailable, or inappropriate.” Caltrans created one set of selection criteria for traditional Section 5310 projects and another set for operating assistance, which Caltrans calls expanded Section 5310 projects. Per the [Caltrans 5310 Traditional Scoring Criteria](#), there are four selection criteria used to score proposed traditional Section 5310 projects. Per the [Caltrans 5310 Expanded Scoring Criteria](#), there are five selection criteria used to score proposed expanded Section 5310 projects.

Traditional Section 5310 Project Selection Criteria

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Ability of Applicant	32	32%
2.	Coordination Planning	18	18%
3.	Transportation Service	20	20%
4.	Service Effectiveness	30	30%
Total		100	100%

Ability of the Applicant – Traditional Section 5310 Projects

This criterion includes the following:

- Applicant experience providing existing specialized transportation services for seniors or individuals with disabilities OR providing social services (non-transportation) for seniors or individuals with disabilities (4 points)
- Driver Training Program (4 points)
- Dispatching Plan (2 points)
- Maintenance plan, including daily pre-and-post-trip inspections, preventative and routine maintenance, and contingency plan (6 points)
- California Highway Patrol Inspections (2 points)
- Annual Budget/Fund sources, including a description of other funding received and a qualified agency audit (4 points)
- Emergency Operations and Response Planning (4 points)

- Proposed Budget for Transportation program (6 points)

Coordination Planning – Traditional Section 5310 Projects

This criterion includes the following:

- Extent to which the applicant addresses the Coordinated Plan requirements, including how the proposed project addresses coordination strategies, activities and/or efficiencies listed in the Coordinated Plan (12 points)
- Extent to which the applicant has coordinated or will coordinate with other agencies in the use of Section 5310-funded vehicles and/or equipment (6 points)

Transportation Service – Traditional Section 5310 Projects

- For replacement vehicles and/or equipment, this criterion evaluates the degree to which an applicant’s existing vehicle needs to be replaced to continue its existing transportation services. (20 points)
- For new or additional vehicles and/or equipment, this criterion evaluates the degree to which the requested additional equipment would be fully utilized (days and hours, passenger trips, service area) including usage of vehicle by another agency through a coordination plan. (20 points)

Service Effectiveness – Traditional Section 5310 Projects

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the applicant would fully utilize the proposed vehicles, as measured by service hours per week, one-way passenger trips, service miles per vehicle, and wheelchair/lift users as a percentage of total users. (30 points)

Expanded Section 5310 Project Selection Criteria

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Program Goals and Objectives	20	20%
2.	Project Implementation Plan	30	30%
3.	Program Performance Indicators	20	20%
4.	Communication and Outreach	20	20%
5.	Emergency Planning and Preparedness	10	10%
Total		100	100%

Program Goals and Objectives – Expanded Section 5310 Projects

This criterion evaluates the degree to which the proposed project is consistent with the overall Section 5310 program goals and objectives. (20 points)

Project Implementation Plan – Expanded Section 5310 Projects

This criterion evaluates the degree to which the applicant provides a well-defined and detailed operations plan with defined routes, schedules, current/projected ridership, key personnel, and marketing strategies with supporting documentation for carrying out the project. (30 points)

Program Performance Indicators – Expanded Section 5310 Projects

This criterion evaluates the degree to which the applicant identifies clear, measurable outcome-based performance measures and indicators and includes a logical, reasonable, and quantifiable methodology to track the effectiveness of the project. (20 points)

Communication and Outreach – Expanded Section 5310 Projects

This criterion (with 20 points possible) includes the following:

- Applicant communication and outreach to target populations that benefit from the Section 5310 program with clear and identifiable communication goals and strategies
- Applicant efforts and accomplishments in coordinating with other community transportation and/or social services resources in the project area
- Support letters from stakeholders (at least three)

Emergency Planning and Preparedness – Expanded Section 5310 Projects

This criterion evaluates the degree to which applicant identifies and details its emergency planning and drill activities and is included in the County Office of Emergency Services response plan. (10 points)

1.10 Denver-Aurora, Colorado

Roles and Responsibilities

The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) became the designated recipient of Section 5310 program funds for the Denver-Aurora urbanized area in spring 2020. Consequently, it administers the Section 5310 program for the Denver area and sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed projects.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

Per the [2021 DRCOG Section 5310 Program Management Plan](#), there are two criteria applicable to all proposed projects that constitute 70% of the total project score and additional criteria based on project type that constitute the remaining 30% of the total project score.

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Compatibility with the DRCOG Coordinated Transit Plan	65	65%
2.	Innovation and Transferability	5	5%
3.	Additional Criteria Based on Project Type	30	30%
Total		100	100%

Compatibility with the DRCOG Coordinated Transit Plan

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the completed planning proposal moves toward being an actionable/implementable project derived from the DRCOG Coordinated Transit Plan. This criterion is applicable to all proposed projects.

Innovation and Transferability

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the project involves an innovative practice or technique and/or potential transferability of project process or products. This criterion is applicable to all proposed projects.

Additional Criteria Based on Project Type – Capital Projects

Proposed projects are evaluated based on the following factors by capital project subcategory:

- Replacement of vehicles
 - The vehicle's age, mileage, usage, readiness, and how the vehicle's replacement is projected and prioritized
 - The applicant's effective, documented, and formal preventive maintenance plans
- Expansion of service
 - The need of the expansion of service in terms of documented ridership or need studies and community support
 - The applicant's strong institutional and financial commitment to the proposed project as demonstrated by higher local match funding
- Facilities, design, and equipment
 - Readiness and demonstrated timetable
 - Project purpose, cost savings and efficiency
 - Partnerships with the local community and the applicant's financial capacity to sustain the project over the time

Additional Criteria Based on Project Type – Operating and Mobility Management Projects

This criterion includes the following:

- Financial need, which encompasses the following factors:
 - Lack of other funding sources available to the applicant
 - Good faith efforts to obtain good faith efforts to obtain funds for the project from non-Department of Transportation sources
 - Reasonableness of costs to operate and administer the project amount of available revenue, including contract and earmarked funds
 - Portion of costs covered by local funds
- Service justification, which encompasses the following factors:
 - Lack of appropriate public transportation alternatives
 - Transit dependency of the population in the applicant's service area, particularly the extent to which the proposed project serves elderly or disabled persons, persons without a car, or low-income persons, veterans, and other vulnerable populations
 - Extent to which the applicant provides service to other organizations
 - The numbers of riders and types of trips provided

- Size of an applicant's service area
- Coordination/Effectiveness, which encompasses the following factors:
 - Extent which coordination reduces operating expenses, number of vehicles used, and lead time for passenger scheduling
 - Extent to which the applicant works with community organizations (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, human service agencies) to promote the service and make it more efficient
 - Lack of duplication or overlap with transit services provided by others
 - The applicant's good faith efforts to coordinate with private for-profit operators
 - The applicant's ability to demonstrate through its performance measure(s) that the project will improve the quality of life of its clients

1.11 Tampa-St. Petersburg, Florida

Roles and Responsibilities

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) administers the Section 5310 program for the State of Florida, including the Tampa-St. Petersburg region, and sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed projects.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

Per the [2022 FDOT Section 5310 Score Card and Guidance](#), there are three selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects.

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Project Description	40	40%
2.	Need Assessment	20	20%
3.	Performance Measures - Traditional or Nontraditional	40	40%
Total		100	100%

Project Description

This criterion evaluates the project's merits, including the proposed grant budget, the applicant's geographic cost methodology, and project-related improvements.

Needs Assessment

This criterion includes the following:

- Extent to which the applicant demonstrates financial need and justifies estimated expenses in the budget narrative (15 points)
- Degree to which the proposed project fills service gaps and addresses unmet specialized transportation service demand (5 points)

Performance Measures – Traditional

This criterion includes the following:

- Number numbers of seniors and people with disabilities afforded mobility they would not have without program support resulting from the traditional Section 5310 project (20 points)
- Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided annually for individuals with disabilities and seniors on Section 5310-supported vehicles and services resulting from the traditional Section 5310 project (20 points)

Performance Measures - Nontraditional

This criterion includes the following:

- Increases or enhancements related to geographic coverage, service quality, and/or service times that impact availability of transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities (20 points)
- Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided annually for individuals with disabilities and seniors on Section 5310-supported vehicles and services resulting from the traditional Section 5310 project (20 points)

1.12 Washington, D.C.-Virginia-Maryland

Roles and Responsibilities

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG) administers the Section 5310 program for the Washington, D.C. area and sets the evaluation criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects.

Section 5310 Program Project Selection Criteria

Per the [2022 MWCOCG Program Management Plan](#), there are seven selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects.

No.	Selection Criteria	Points Possible	Percentage of Total Points Possible
1.	Coordination Among Agencies	25	25%
2.	Responsiveness to Transportation Planning Board's Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan	20	20%
3.	Institutional Capacity to Manage and Administer an FTA Grant	20	20%
4.	Project Feasibility	15	15%
5.	Regional Need	5	5%
6.	Equity Emphasis Area	5	5%
7.	Customer Focus	10	10%
Total		100	100%

Coordination Among Agencies

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the applicant engages in coordination activities with other organizations such as providing service to clients of multiple agencies, coordinating purchasing, or conducting joint project planning and operation.

Responsiveness to Transportation Planning Board's Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

This criterion includes the following:

- The number of Priority Projects in the Coordinated Plan that the proposed project addresses (12 points)
- The extent to which the application responds to the strategies outlined in the Coordinated Plan (8 points)

Institutional Capacity to Manage and Administer an FTA Grant

This criterion considers the availability of sufficient management, staff, and resources to implement an FTA grant, stable and sufficient sources of funds to provide required match and if applicable, past grant performance.

Project Feasibility

This criterion evaluates the degree to which the applicant proposes activities that are consistent with the objectives of funding; clearly spells out how a project will be implemented, with defined roles and responsibilities; and includes an action plan with milestones that is achievable within the two-year timeframe.

Regional Need

The criterion evaluates if the applicant proposes to serve more than one jurisdiction in the Washington, D.C.-Virginia-Maryland Urban Area.

Equity Emphasis Area

This criterion evaluates the extent to which the applicant proposes to serve Equity Emphasis Areas in the Washington, D.C.-Virginia-Maryland Urban Area.

Customer Focus and Involvement

This criterion evaluates the extent to which applicant demonstrate an awareness of the needs of a targeted population group and how customers will be involved in the development and implementation of the proposed activity.

1.13 Benchmarking Analysis and Key Findings

Comparison of Selection Criteria Themes

The following table summarizes the nine simplified selection criteria categories identified and indicates with a check mark if they were present in each region analyzed. The names of the regions matched to their region numbers in the following table can be found in the Benchmarking Methods section.

Selection Criteria	Region 0	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8	Count
Coordination	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	8
Applicant Experience and Capacity	√	√	√	√	√	√			√	7
Performance Measures and Service Effectiveness	√	√	√		√	√		√		6
Project Implementation Plan	√	√	√			√		√	√	6
Need	√			√	√			√	√	5
Other*	√		√			√	√		√	5
Project Budget and Financial Sustainability	√	√	√	√						4
Communication and Outreach		√				√				2
Equity	√								√	2
Total	8	6	6	4	4	6	2	3	6	

*Other selection criteria were emergency planning and preparedness, additional criteria based on project type, environmental responsibility, innovation and transferability, program goals and objectives, uniqueness of service, and customer focus.

Key Findings

- Coordination was the most common selection criteria identified, found in eight of the nine regions analyzed, including San Diego. For most of these regions, coordination encompassed the extent to which proposed Section 5310 projects would address strategies and needs identified in a locally developed Coordinated Plan. For some of these regions, coordination also encompassed the degree to which applicants would coordinate with other agencies to reduce duplication of service.
- Applicant experience and capacity was the second most common selection criteria identified, found in seven of the nine regions analyzed, including San Diego. This criterion encompassed the degree to which the applicant demonstrated its prior experience and institutional capacity in operating a transportation service, serving the target population, and/or managing a federal grant.

- Equity, communication, and outreach were the least common selection criteria identified, found in only two of the nine regions analyzed.
- The themes of the SANDAG STGP Cycle 12 Call for Projects selection criteria were consistent with those of the eight other regions identified.

Comparison of Selection Criteria Percentages

The following table summarizes the nine simplified selection criteria categories identified and compares the weights or percentages given to each criterion by each region. The names of the regions matched to their region numbers in the following table can be found in the Benchmarking Methods section.

Selection Criteria	Region 0	Region 1	Region 2*	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Region 8	Avg. %
Coordination	10%	19%	N/A	47%	40%	9%	65%		45%	34%
Performance Measures and Service Effectiveness	20%	14%	N/A		20%	35%		40%		26%
Project Implementation Plan	20%	14%	N/A			15%		40%	15%	21%
Applicant Experience and Capacity	15%	14%	N/A	23%	20%	16%			20%	18%
Project Budget and Financial Sustainability	15%	30%	N/A	5%						17%
Other	5%		N/A			15%	35%		10%	16%
Need	7%			25%	20%			20%	5%	15%
Communication and Outreach		9%				10%				10%
Equity	8%								5%	7%
Total	100%	100%	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

*The Seattle, Washington region did not assign weights or percentages to each selection criterion, so this information was not available (N/A).

Key Findings

- Coordination was the criterion given the most weight by the selected regions. On average, this criterion comprised 34% of the selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects. For the San Diego region, coordination comprised 10% of the total score, which was the second lowest percentage of the selected regions.
- Performance measures and service effectiveness was the criterion given the second most weight by the selected regions. On average, this criterion comprised 26% of the selection criteria used to score proposed Section 5310 projects. For the San Diego region, coordination comprised 20% of the total score, which was consistent with of the selected regions.

- Equity, while only present in two regions, was the criterion given the least weight. The San Diego and Washinton, D.C. regions weighted this criterion at 8 and 5%, respectively.
- Except for the coordination criterion, the weights of the SANDAG STGP Cycle 12 Call for Projects selection criteria were consistent with those of the eight other regions identified.