

Regional Sustainable Infrastructure Planning Grant Program

**Fresno Council of Governments
December 2017**

Sustainable Infrastructure Planning Grant Program

The Regional Sustainable Infrastructure Planning Grant Program is one of the three Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) implementation programs directed by the Fresno COG Policy Board during the 2014 RTP/SCS adoption process.

The passing of SB 1 Senate Bill (SB) 1 - The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, a transportation funding bill, will provide a reliable source of funds to maintain and integrate the State's multi-modal transportation system.

The grant specific objective is to encourage local and regional multimodal transportation and land use planning that furthers the region's RTP SCS contributes to the State's GHG reduction targets and other State goals, including but not limited to, the goals and best practices cited in the [2017 RTP Guidelines](#), address the needs of disadvantaged communities, and also assist in achieving the Caltrans Mission and Grant Program Overarching Objectives.

Integrating Objectives and Considerations

Successful grant applications address and articulate how the project relates to the Caltrans Mission, Grant Program Overarching Objectives, Grant Program Considerations, and Fresno COG's RTP SCS.

Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed effort would:

- Integrate Grant Program Considerations
- Advance transportation related GHG emission reduction project types/strategies (i.e., mode shift, demand management, travel cost, operational efficiency, accessibility, and coordination with future employment and residential land use, etc.)
- Identify and address deficiencies in the multimodal transportation system, including the needs of environmental justice and disadvantaged communities, including Native American Tribal Governments and rural communities
- Encourage stakeholder collaboration
- Involve active community engagement
- Coordinate transportation, housing, and land use planning
- Promote the region's RTP SCS (where applicable), State planning priorities ([Government Code Section 65041.1](#)), and climate adaptation goals ([Safeguarding California](#))
- Result in funded and programmed multimodal transportation system improvements

Grant Program Overarching Objectives

The following Grant Program Overarching Objectives are provided to guide grant application development, including:

Sustainability – Promote reliable and efficient mobility for people, goods, and services, while meeting the State's GHG emission reduction goals, preserving the State's natural and working lands, and preserving the unique character and livability of California's communities.

Preservation – Preserve the transportation system through protecting and/or enhancing the environment, promoting energy conservation, improving the quality of life, and/or promoting consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planning growth and economic development patterns.

Mobility – Increase the accessibility of the system and mobility of people and freight.

Safety – Increase the safety and/or security of the transportation system for motorized and active transportation users.

Innovation – Promote the use of technology and innovative designs to improve the performance and social equity of our transportation system and provide sustainable transportation options.

Economy – Support the economic vitality of the area (i.e. enables global competitiveness, enables increased productivity, improves efficiency, increases economic equity by enabling robust economic opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment and for Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), etc.).

Health – Decrease exposure to local pollution sources, reduce serious injuries and fatalities on the transportation system, and promote physical activity especially through transportation means.

Social Equity – All of these overarching objectives should promote transportation solutions that focus on and prioritize the needs of communities most affected by poverty, air pollution and climate change, and promote solutions that integrate community values with transportation safety and performance while encouraging greater than average public involvement in the transportation decision making process.

Grant Program Considerations

The Grant Program also supports related State sustainability initiatives, explained further in [Caltrans Sustainable Communities Grant Guide](#), including:

- California Transportation Plan (CTP) 2040
- 2017 RTP Guidelines and Promoting Sustainable Communities in California
- Addressing Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities
- Proposed 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan Update, Appendix C
- Complete Streets and Smart Mobility Framework
- Climate Ready Transportation
- Planning for Housing

Available Funding

\$160,278 will be distributed through a competitive regional program to eligible applicants and sub-applicants for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-2018 grant cycle. Funding distribution for the competitive program will depend on the quality and number of applicants.

Eligible Applicants

The following are eligible to apply as a primary applicant:

- Member Agencies
- Transit Agencies
- **Native American Tribal Governments**

The following are eligible to apply as a sub-applicant:

- Non-Profit Organizations
- Community-Based Organizations
- ~~Native American Tribal Governments~~

Example Sustainable Communities Grant Project Types

These examples include projects that plan for reductions in GHG and VMT, and/or integrate Land Use and Transportation planning.

- Studies, plans or planning mechanisms that advance a community's effort to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips and transportation related GHG through strategies including, but not limited to, advancing mode shift, demand management, travel cost, operational efficiency, accessibility, and coordination with future employment and residential land use
- Studies, plans or planning mechanisms that assist transportation agencies in creating sustainable communities and transit oriented development
- SCS development
- Community to school studies or safe routes to school plans
- Studies, plans or planning mechanisms that advance a community's effort to address the impacts of climate change and sea level rise
- Studies that promote greater access between affordable housing and job centers
- Context-sensitive streetscapes or town center plans
- Complete street plans
- Active transportation plans, including bicycle, pedestrian and trail master plans
- Bike and pedestrian plans with a safety enhancement focus, including Vision Zero plans
- Traffic calming and safety enhancement plans
- Corridor enhancement studies
- Health and transportation studies, including health equity transportation studies and other plans that incorporate health into transportation planning
- Climate change adaptation plans for transportation facilities
- Identification of policies, strategies, and programs to preserve transit facilities and optimize transit infrastructure
- Studies that evaluate accessibility and connectivity of the multimodal transportation network
- Studies to improve access to social services and other community destinations for disadvantaged communities

- Studies, plans or planning mechanisms that address environmental justice issues in a transportation related context
- Station area planning
- Student internships for rural agencies and/or disadvantaged communities
- First Mile/Last Mile project development planning
- Planning for zero or near zero emission vehicles
- Planning for autonomous vehicles Integration of transportation and environmental planning
- Shared mobility services planning studies
- Road or parking pricing studies
- Transportation Demand Management Studies
- Congestion pricing studies and plans
- Commute trip reduction studies and plans
- Planning to remove or reduce barriers created by transportation infrastructure such as highways, overpasses and underpasses, that create disconnected communities

Land use planning activities *in coordination with a transportation project*. Examples include:

- An update to a general plan land use element or zoning code that increases development opportunities around key transportation corridors or nodes
- Creation of a Transit-Oriented Development overlay zone or other special zoning district around key transportation corridors or nodes
- Studies, plans, and policies that address land use conflicts with major transportation corridors such as major highways, ports, shipping and freight corridors, etc. that are near sensitive land uses such as homes, schools, parks, etc. or potentially impacted by climate change

Eligible Activities and Expenses

Eligible activities must have a transportation nexus per the California Constitution, Article XIX Section 2 and 3. Please consult with Caltrans district staff for more information on whether costs are eligible for funding. Some examples of eligible costs include:

- Data gathering and analysis
- Planning consultants
- Conceptual drawings and design
- Community surveys, meetings, charrettes, focus groups
- Bilingual services for interpreting and/or translation services for meetings
- Community/stakeholder advisory groups
- Project administration (up to 5% of the grant is allowed, e.g., quarterly reports, invoicing, project management)

Ineligible Activities and Expenses

Some activities, tasks, project components, etc. are not eligible under these grant programs. If an application has any of the following elements, it will be disqualified. Ineligible activities and expenses include:

- Environmental studies, plans, or documents normally required for project development under the National Environmental Policy Act or the California Environmental Quality Act
- Engineering plans and design specification work
- Project Initiation Documents (PIDs)
- Regional Transportation Plans (RTP) or updates to the RTP, excluding SCS development
- Construction projects, capital costs, such as the building of a facility, or maintenance
- Purchasing of office furniture, or other capital expenditures
- Decorations, e.g., for public workshop events
- Acquisition of vehicles or shuttle programs
- Organizational membership fees
- Unreasonable incentives such as prizes for public participation
- Charges passed on to sub-recipient for oversight of awarded grant funds
- Other items unrelated to the project

General Information and Requirements

This section provides a brief overview of the grant application review process, financial, contracting, subcontracting, and legal requirements pertaining to the competitive grant program. The content of this section should be notably considered in the development of grant applications as it lays the foundation for what to expect when applying for these grant funds. Upon award, grantees will receive more specific guidelines including administrative and reporting requirements.

Award Terms

Fresno COG is committed to being an active partner. If awarded a grant, the applicant should include Fresno COG staff when planning both technical advisory and community meetings. Applicants are also recommended to engage Fresno COG staff throughout the entire grant life, when applicable.

If an agency does not demonstrate adequate performance and timely use of funds, Fresno COG may take appropriate actions, which can include termination of the grant.

Project Start Dates and Timelines

All awarded grant funds must be programmed during the State FY 2017-2018 and work may begin as early as January 2018. Awardees are required to submit all supporting materials and a signed agreement or risk forfeiting the grant award. Consider these dates when developing the Scope of Work and Project Timeline:

February 28, 2020

- Project end date (**no time extensions will be granted**)

- Reimbursable work must be completed

April 28, 2020

- A Final Request for Reimbursement must be submitted to Caltrans for approval and reimbursement. This allows Caltrans sufficient time to comply with the State Controller's Office payment requirements.

Grant Project Administration Requirements

- Reporting
- Ownership
- Third Party Contracts
- Accounting Requirements

Project Selection Process

A scoring committee will evaluate, score and rank the proposed projects. The selected project(s) will go through Fresno COG Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Advisory Committee, and Policy Board for endorsement.

The scoring committee consists of one representative from each of the following entities:

1. Fresno Council of Governments
2. City of Fresno/Clovis
3. Eastside Cities
4. Westside Cities
5. County of Fresno
6. Caltrans
7. Transit Agency
8. Community Based Organization/Non-Profit Organization

Scoring Criteria (maximum 100 points)

1. Project Justification (maximum ~~30~~ 20 points):
 - Describe the problems or deficiencies the project is attempting to address, as well as how the project will address the identified problems or deficiencies. Additionally, list the ramifications of not funding this project.
2. Grant Specific Objective (maximum ~~30~~ 20 points):
 - **Extent to which** ~~Explain how~~ the proposed project addresses the grant specific objective of the sustainable communities grant program: to encourage local and regional multimodal transportation and land use planning that furthers the region's RTP SCS (where applicable), contributes to the State's GHG reduction targets and other State goals, including but not limited to, the goals and best practices cited in the 2017 RTP Guidelines.

3. Plan Implementation (maximum ~~25~~ 20 points):

- Extent to which the Applicant demonstrates readiness and capacity to implement the proposed work on time and within budget.
- The project will be scored favorable if it leads to a capital improvement project or other tangible changes such as a general plan amendment.

~~A successful project will demonstrate potential of timely implementation of the plan. The project will be scored favorably if it leads to a capital improvement project or other tangible changes such as a general plan amendment.~~

4. Benefit to Areas with Health Burden Measures or Disadvantaged Communities (maximum 20 points):

- ~~Extent to which the Projects that benefit areas with health burden measures or that falls within an economically disadvantaged community (15 points):~~ project benefits areas that are most health burdened. Visit Fresno County Department of Public Health's website at <http://gis.co.fresno.ca.us/HealthPriorityNDX/> (Health Priority Index) for a map to determine project areas level of health burden. Health Burden measures include: Pre-term Birth rate, Pollution Burden, Year of potential life lost, and Composite Mortality Index.

5. Community Engagement (maximum 20 points)