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Notice of Funding Opportunity

Title: Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program
Website: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/transportation-planning/regional-planning/sustainable-transportation-planning-grants>
Funding: Total: \$34,000,000. Maximum awards: \$50K-\$700K, depending on grant.
Dates: Caltrans Headquarters and Districts Workshops: December 2020 – January 2021
Application Submission Deadline: February 12, 2021

Summary: The Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program was created to support the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) Mission: Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. The California Legislature passed, and Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. signed into law, Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, a transportation funding bill that will provide a reliable source of funds to maintain and integrate the State's multi-modal transportation system. In addition to the \$9.5 million in traditional State and federal grants, approximately \$25 million in SB 1 funds for Sustainable Communities Grants is available for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22 grant cycle. The period of grant fund availability spans over three FYs and approximately 27 months for grant project activities after the grant agreement is executed and Caltrans issues a Notice to Proceed. The SB 1 grant funding is intended to support and implement Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Sustainable Communities Strategies (SCS) (where applicable) and to ultimately achieve the State's greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target of 40 and 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 and 2050, respectively. Eligible planning projects must have a transportation nexus per Article XIX Sections 2 and 3 of the California Constitution. Therefore, successful planning projects are expected to directly benefit the multi-modal transportation system. These grants will also improve public health, social equity, environmental justice, the environment, and provide other important community benefits.

Project Topic Areas: The Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program includes:
Sustainable Communities Grants (\$29.5 million) to encourage local and regional planning that furthers state goals, including, but not limited to, the goals and best practices cited in the Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines adopted by the California Transportation Commission. The purpose of the Sustainable Communities grants is to fund local and regional multimodal transportation and land use planning projects that further the region's RTP SCS (where applicable), contribute to the State's GHG reduction targets, and assist in achieving the Caltrans Mission and Grant Program Objectives, and must be considered when preparing the grant application. A minimum threshold of 50 percent of Sustainable Communities Competitive and Technical Grants has been identified for projects that benefit disadvantaged communities, which includes Native American Tribal Governments and rural communities (for transportation planning purposes, rural is defined as all areas of the State that are not included in urbanized areas of 50,000 in population or greater. Caltrans/Regional Agency Boundaries Map, which indicates rural areas). Sustainable Communities Competitive applicants must demonstrate how the project fits every aspect of the Grant Specific Objective, as appropriate for the applicant and project type. The grant specific objectives for Sustainable Communities grants are listed below: Encourage local and regional multimodal transportation and land use planning that furthers the region's RTP SCS (where applicable); Contribute 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 Assist in achieving the Caltrans Mission and Grant Program Objectives.

Sustainable Communities Technical project types do not require public engagement due to their technical nature, but applicants should explain how the public will be involved at later stages of the planning process. However, applicants are required to collaborate with and involve appropriate stakeholders with technical expertise. Technical applications are scored under the same criteria as all other project types, they are grouped with other technical projects, and they compete at the same level. Caltrans will screen applications submitted under this category to ensure they are in-fact technical projects. If it is found that the project is not one of a technical nature, it will compete with the other Sustainable Communities Competitive applicant pool. Applicants must demonstrate how the project fits every aspect of the Grant Specific Objective, as appropriate for the applicant and project type. The following guidance, tools, and resources are provided to assist applicants in preparing a competitive grant application consistent with the grant program and specific objectives and the Plans and Programs outlined in the Grant Program Considerations: Advance Transportation Related GHG Reduction Project Types/Strategies; Addressing the Needs of Disadvantaged Communities; Public Health Resources; Active Community Engagement; Integrated Housing, Land Use and Transportation Planning; Promote the Region's RTP/SCS and State Planning Priorities, and Climate Adaptation Goals; and Climate-Ready Transportation.

Example Project Types

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The examples below are organized in the following grant project types: Active Transportation; Climate Change; Corridor and Freight; Social Equity; Integrated Housing, Land Use, and Transportation; Multimodal; Safety; Technical; and, Transit.

Active Transportation – Active transportation plans, including bicycle, pedestrian and trail master plans; Plans for bike parking facilities; Rural planning studies or plans that provide rural counties the ability to develop active transportation plans with a rural context-sensitive focus and allow for rural regions to contribute to the State's GHG reduction targets; Studies or plans that include a temporary built environment demonstration, e.g., tactical urbanism.

Climate Change – Studies, plans or planning methods that advance a community's effort to address the impacts of climate change, such as sea level rise, flooding, wildfires, and mudslides, which may include the use of natural infrastructure to reduce the impacts of climate change; Climate change adaptation plans for transportation facilities.

Corridor and Freight – Corridor enhancement studies; Studies or plans related to zero emissions vehicle goods movement; Freight/goods movement plans and studies; Local or regional corridor plans; Studies and plans that can help to quantify and highlight the value and importance of the rural State transportation system which connects large urban centers to rural open space, State and federal lands, and recreation and agriculture hubs; Studies and plans to mitigate for impacts to the rural transportation system due to increased interregional tourism and visitor traffic; Modeling improvements that address SB 743 implementation and induced travel; Complete street plans that consider last-mile freight; Curbside freight management plans; Sustainable freight plans; Agriculture goods movement plans; Freight/supply chain resiliency studies.

Social Equity – Community Needs Assessments; Health and transportation studies, including health equity transportation studies and other plans that incorporate health into transportation planning; Studies to improve access to social services and other community destinations for disadvantaged communities; Studies, plans or planning methods that address environmental justice issues in a transportation related context; Congestion pricing studies including plans that enhance social equity and avoid inequitable cost burdens; Planning to remove or reduce barriers created by transportation infrastructure such as highways, overpasses and underpasses, that create disconnected communities; Studies or plans to ensure that infill and transit-oriented development benefits existing residents and businesses, low-income and disadvantaged communities, and minimizes displacement; Outreach to educate disadvantaged communities on mode shifts to electric forms of transportation, as part of a plan or study as appropriate; Student internships for rural agencies and/or disadvantaged communities.

Integrated Housing, Land Use, and Transportation – Studies, plans or planning methods that assist transportation agencies in creating sustainable communities and transit-oriented development; SCS development; Studies that promote greater access between affordable housing and job centers; Station area planning; Integration of transportation and environmental planning; First Mile/Last Mile project development planning; 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.

Multimodal – Complete streets plans; Long range transportation plans for tribal governments; Studies, plans or planning methods 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; Context-sensitive streetscapes or town center plans; Studies that evaluate accessibility and connectivity of the multimodal transportation network; Shared mobility services planning studies; Community outreach plans for park-and-ride lots.

Safety – Bike and pedestrian plans with a safety enhancement focus, including Vision Zero plans; Community to school studies or safe routes to school plans; Traffic calming and safety enhancement plans.

Technical – Transportation modeling studies that address SB 743 implementation and induced travel, active transportation, emerging technology, public health, VMT and other impacts; Planning for zero or near zero emission vehicles; Electric vehicle charging infrastructure network planning; Transit planning for zero emission bus fleets; Planning for autonomous vehicles; Road or parking pricing studies; Transportation Demand Management studies; Commute trip reduction studies and plans; Data collection/data sharing initiatives; Integration of transit, new emerging technologies, and shared mobility services; Educational outreach for mode shifts to electric forms of transportation, as part of a plan or study as appropriate.

Transit – Identification of policies, strategies, and programs to preserve transit facilities and optimize transit infrastructure; Transit planning studies related to accessible transit, paratransit, mobility management, etc.; Studies, plans, or outreach for school public transit, school pool ridesharing; Strategies to increase transit ridership; Studies or



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plans that evaluate commuter rail or multi-modal connectivity; Studies or plans that evaluate first and last mile transit connectivity.

Strategic Partnerships Grants (\$4.5 million) to identify and address statewide, interregional, or regional transportation deficiencies on the State highway system in partnership with Caltrans. A sub-category funds transit-focused planning projects that address multimodal transportation deficiencies. Strategic Partnerships are intended to fund planning projects that partner with Caltrans to address needs on the State Highway System (SHS), while the transit sub-category will address multimodal planning projects that focus on transit. The objectives of the Strategic Partnerships and Strategic Partnerships - Transit grants are to: Accomplish the Federal Planning Factors; and Achieve the Caltrans Mission and the Grant Program Objectives.

Federal Planning Factors

Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency; Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users; Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users; Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight; Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns; Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight; Promote efficient system management and operation; Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system; Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and Enhance travel and tourism.

Example Project Types - Strategic Partnerships

Studies that identify interregional, inter-county, and/or statewide mobility and access needs; Corridor studies and corridor performance/preservation studies; Studies that evaluate transportation issues involving ground access to international borders, seaports, airports, intermodal facilities, freight hubs, and recreational sites; Development of planning activities intended to result in investment in sustainable transportation projects; Enhanced tools to capture GHG benefits of Operations and System Management projects; Integration of transportation and economic development; Planning for sustainable freight; Planning for transportation safety; Studies for relinquishment of state routes; Statewide or interregional research or modeling tools; Transportation demand management plans; System investment prioritization plans; Assessment and integration of new technology; Complete street plans that consider last-mile freight; Curbside freight management plans; Agriculture goods movement plans; and Freight/supply chain resiliency studies.

Example Project Types - Strategic Partnerships Transit

Identification of policies and procedures to integrate transit into the transportation system and planning process; Statewide transit planning surveys and research; Identification of policies, strategies, and programs to preserve transit facilities and optimize transit infrastructure; Projects that evaluate accessibility and connectivity of the multi-modal transportation network; Transit technical planning studies to optimize system performance; Studies or plans that evaluate commuter rail or multi-modal connectivity; Studies or plans that evaluate first and last mile transit connectivity Eligible and Ineligible Activities and Expenses.

Funding:

Grant Program	Funding Total	Grant Minimum	Grant Maximum	Local Match
Sustainable Communities and Strategic Partnerships –Transit	\$29.5M; \$3M will be set-aside for technical projects	\$50,000 for Disadvantaged Communities; \$100,000 for all others	\$700,000	11.47% minimum
Strategic Partnerships	\$4.5M	\$75,000 for rural RTPAs; \$100,000 for MPOs	\$500,000	20% minimum; 11.47% for Transit

Project Requirements:

Criteria for Successful Sustainable Communities Grant Applications: 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.



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Criteria for Successful Strategic Partnerships Grant Applications: Partner with Caltrans to identify and address statewide, interregional, or regional transportation deficiencies in the State highway system (or multimodal transportation system for transit-focused projects); Strengthen government-to-government relationships; and Result in programmed system improvements.

Eligible Applicants:

Sustainable Communities

The following are eligible to apply as a primary applicant: MPOs with sub-applicants; RTPAs; Transit Agencies; Cities and Counties with compliant Housing Elements and completed Annual Progress Reports; Native American Tribal Governments; and Other Public Transportation Planning Entities. The following are eligible to apply as a sub-applicant: MPOs/RTPAs; Transit Agencies; Universities and Community Colleges; Native American Tribal Governments; Cities and Counties with compliant Housing Elements and completed Annual Progress Reports; Community-Based Organizations; Non-Profit Organizations (501.C.3); and Other Public Entities.

Strategic Partnerships

The following are eligible to apply as a primary applicant: MPOs; and RTPAs. The following are eligible to apply as a sub-applicant: MPOs/RTPAs; Transit Agencies; Universities and Community Colleges; Native American Tribal Governments; Cities and Counties; Community-Based Organizations; Non-Profit Organizations (501.C.3); and Other Public Entities.