

Evaluation Criteria for RTC Call for Projects

State and federal regulations require state departments of transportation (Caltrans), regions (RTC and AMBAG), and transit agencies to establish and advance projects that meet performance targets. A performance-based approach to transportation planning and programming aims to ensure the most efficient investment of transportation funds, support improved decision-making, and increase accountability and transparency. These include measures identified in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), California Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP), federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Guidelines, Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI), Caltrans Strategic Investment Strategy (CSIS), and other state and local plans.

Project evaluation criteria are vital to the implementation of the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). The following criteria will be used to evaluate projects to ensure they meet the objectives and policies outlined in the *Regional Transportation Plan*, including meeting state and federal guidelines, legislative requirements, and executive orders. The project evaluation scoring criteria are one factor in project selection.

The responses provided in the second tab of the Project Programming Request (application-excel sheet) for each category will receive a score based on the equally weighted scoring range (HIGH-3, MED-2, LOW-1, NO RESPONSE-0) and each project will receive a final evaluation score totaled across all categories. The lowest score for each project will be dropped from the overall project score.

The following categories summarize federal, state, and regional performance measures, goals, and/or targets used to evaluate and prioritize projects. Examples of the types of information that could be included in the application to demonstrate how a project addresses the metric are provided as well.

Safety and Collisions

Objective: Reduce transportation related fatalities and serious injuries and maximize safety for all transportation users (reduce collisions; eliminate hazards)

- Does the project have a history of collisions in the area? How will the proposed safety measure reduce collisions or address hazards?
- What countermeasures are incorporated into the project to reduce collisions, especially fatalities and serious injuries?
- Does the project reduce the potential for conflict between bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles?

- Does the project improve safety for more vulnerable users (low income, seniors, people living with disabilities, people of color, youth)
- Will the project reduce or prevent major mechanical failures for transit vehicles?
- Does the project address perceived safety or security issues to encourage increased transit ridership, biking, or walking (e.g., add lighting at bus stops)
- Does the project fill a gap in the bicycle or pedestrian network within the project area?
- Does the project eliminate hazards, such as trees in roadways, dips in roads, or improve drainage?
- Does the project improve access to/for emergency services and emergency evacuation routes?

System Preservation/Infrastructure Condition

Objective: Maintain and improve the condition of transportation assets such as pavement, culverts, bridges, and public transit assets to maintain a state of good repair.

Does the project:

- Increase percentage of facilities in good condition?
- Reduce percentage of transit vehicles that have met or exceeded their useful life benchmark?
- Extend useful life of a transportation facility or program?
- Maintain facilities in a state of good repair?
- Incorporate sustainable pavement practices?

System Performance

Objective: Improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system; improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, support regional economic development; reduce congestion; enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

- Reduce emissions, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and/or fuel consumption.
- Reduce number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT): Reduce number or distance of trips; reduce percent of single-occupancy vehicle travel.
- Mode Shift: Shift automobile travel to alternative modes and increase the percentage of trips made via bicycling, walking, transit or carpool; increase telecommuting; coordinate land-use, housing, and transportation policies to reduce need for travel.
- System Reliability: Improve reliability and efficiency of the multimodal transportation system: reduce variability in travel times, especially during peak travel periods day-to-day and for transit.
- Reduce travel delays, especially during peak hours; reduce annual hours of excessive delay per capita.
- Reduce transit travel times.

- Connect multiple jurisdictions – e.g., arterials linking cities and unincorporated towns/population centers.
- Improve freight and goods movement efficiency: Increase freight throughput on existing facilities or services.

Access for All

Objective: Expand affordable and convenient multi-modal travel options and choices, especially to and within key destinations for all users.

- Address transportation needs of people with limited mobility.
- Increase walking (add new sidewalks, crosswalks, minimize obstacles)
- Increase bicycling (add bicycle lanes/paths, fill gaps in network, add bicycle box at intersection).
- Increase public transit access or quality of transit rider experience.
- Fill gap in complete streets network and increase network connectivity by closing gaps in the bike, sidewalk, and transit networks. Indicate if there are no alternate routes.
- Expand bicycle and pedestrian network across physical barriers such as creeks, freeways, and private property.
- Provide education and encouragement.

Public Health and Equity

Objective: Enhance healthy, safe access to key destinations for transportation-disadvantaged populations and avoid new negative impacts to historically disadvantaged communities.

- Improves public health: The project targets health issues such as obesity, physical inactivity, asthma, or other health issues.
- Reduce disparities in safety and access for people who are transportation disadvantaged due to age, income, disability, language or race/ethnicity.
- Serves transportation disadvantaged populations and avoids substantial burdens on a disadvantaged community.
- What percent of the population in the project area is minority or low-income?
- Does the project area contain higher than average concentrations of traditionally under-served groups when compared to the area surrounding the project area or the city or county as a whole?
- Are the areas in which these populations are located subject to disproportionate impacts?
- Will the proposed project increase traffic in low-income and minority neighborhoods?
- Will minority owned businesses that serve a minority or low-income population be impacted by the project?

Climate Change and Resiliency

Objective: Fund projects that will not increase greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.

Additional Considerations in Project Evaluation

Other Options for Funding the project:

- Eligibility for Other Grants: Is this project eligible for any other competitive grants? What other grants are reasonably available for this project?
- Leveraging: Will funds programmed by RTC be used to leverage other grants? If funds are not approved by the RTC during this competitive grant cycle, will other funding be at risk of being lost?
- Delivery Risk: If these funds are approved, will the project be fully funded or how much additional funding is needed and what is the likelihood of those other funds being secured?
- Secured Funding: What other funding has been secured for the project?
- Funding for Cost Increases: What are potential funding sources available for the project if there are unanticipated cost increases?

RTP Consistency: Is the project included in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Project List, which implements the SB375-mandated Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)?

Consistency with Complete Streets: Consistency with Complete Streets guidelines and policies, including the [Monterey Bay Area Completes Streets Guidebook](#), the California Complete Streets Act (AB1358-2008), and state, city or county Complete Streets policies.

- Consideration of possible complete streets components appropriate for different street types
- Integration of complete streets elements into road projects

Consistency With Other Plans: Is the project consistent with other regional and/or local plans, such as the plans listed below?

- Active Transportation Plans, Complete Streets Plans, Safe Routes to Schools Plans
- Transit asset management, Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) and other transit plans
- General Plans
- Capital Improvement Programs
- Unmet Transit Needs
- Vision Zero/zero traffic fatalities, local roadway safety plans
- Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS)
- Local Roadway Safety Plans
- Safe Streets for All Plan

Public Engagement: Does the project provide early and ongoing opportunities for meaningful public participation for all users?

- Describe how the project was identified as a community priority.
- List any public outreach that has already occurred.
- Participation from diverse and historically underrepresented members of the public in project planning
- Describe any planned outreach that will occur during project planning and/or implementation (e.g., outreach to stakeholder groups, advisory committees, other jurisdictions/agencies, transit, environmental groups, seniors, etc., surveys, open houses)
- What outreach to low income, BIPOC, etc. residents about this project has been done?
- How have residents in the project area been involved in the decision-making or project information process?

Scale of Benefits: How many people could potentially benefit from this project? What are the number of anticipated users for the facility, service, or program (e.g., number of cars, transit riders, bicyclists and/or pedestrians)?

Data to support these estimates may include:

- Traffic volumes, transit ridership, bicycle and pedestrian counts if available, etc.
- Work plan for a program and targeted number of people to use program.
- Destinations served by a project (e.g., employment center, transit center, retail/commercial area, visitor destination, school)
- Modeling information for future use, if available

Potential Risks: Describe the efforts undertaken to minimize risk to project implementation.

- Schedule: How quickly can the project be implemented to provide benefits to the community? Are there any potential risks to the project schedule?
- Deliverability: What is the ability of the agency to complete the project on schedule? Performance on past grant applications? Timing of other projects? Is there an ability to consolidate projects, even if one project might otherwise be constructed several years later) - Ex. Timed utility upgrades, new development, etc.
- Environmental Risks: What are the risks associated with current and future environmental conditions such as climate change, extreme weather, and seismic activity?
- Other: Are there any other potential risks that could delay the project? Describe any possible financial, operational/asset, strategic/organizational compliance, political, other risks.

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