



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

1101 Pacific Avenue, Suite 250, Santa Cruz, CA 95060-4418 • (831)460-3200 • info@sccrtc.org

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 1, 2025
TO: Transportation Project Sponsors
FROM: RTC Programming
RE: 2025 Consolidated Call for Projects

Project sponsors are hereby invited to submit applications to the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) requesting funding for transportation projects and programs in Santa Cruz County.

Deadline: Applications are due no later than **3:00 p.m. on September 15, 2025**. Complete application packages – including the multi-tabbed Excel file and PDFs of supporting materials - must be submitted electronically to programming@sccrtc.org by the application deadline in order to be considered for funding. *Hard copies are not required.*

Available Funds: This is a consolidated call for projects with approximately \$15 million anticipated to be available from the following state and federal fund sources:

- State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP): **\$4.35 million** target through FY30/31.
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)/Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX): Approximately **\$8 million** through FY27/28.
- SB1-Local Partnership Program (LPP): **\$1 million** LPP-formula through FY28/29.
- Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) 99313: **\$650 thousand** FY25/26.
- State Transit Assistance-99313 (STA): **\$900 thousand** through FY26/27.

Required Application Package Contents: For an application to be considered complete, the following documents must be submitted:

- 1. Application-Project Programming Request** (Excel document – includes multiple tabs)
 - a. Project Information
 - b. Project Benefits/Evaluation Criteria
 - c. Project Costs: Fill in either **capital** or **non-infrastructure** projects (not both)

- i. Capital Projects:
 - 1. Schedule, Cost and Funding Summary
 - 2. Engineers estimate
- ii. Non-infrastructure projects/programs:
 - 1. Detailed task, cost, schedule
 - 2. Staffing
- d. Certification and Assurances
- 2. Detailed project description/scope** (created by applicant)
- 3. Map, photos, public outreach information, and any other supporting materials** (created by applicant)
- 4. Roadway Preservation Projects Certifications** (MS Word documents)
 - *only required for roadway preservation projects**
 - a. Rehabilitation: Exhibit 25-K: Local Road Rehabilitation Project Certification
 - b. Preventive Maintenance: Exhibit 25-L: Pavement Management System (PMS) Certification

The information included in the application packet is needed for evaluation and programming purposes. Electronic copies of application materials are available by emailing programming@sccrtc.org and online at <https://www.sccrtc.org/funding-planning/grant-programs/25-26-rtip/>.

Eligible Projects: Funds are available for transportation projects and programs in Santa Cruz County. Eligible projects include a wide range of public street/road and highway, local roadway reconstruction/rehabilitation, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, transportation system management, transportation demand management and other projects summarized in *Attachment 1* and set forth in federal and/or state guidelines for each funding source. Ongoing, general roadway and transit operations and maintenance are not eligible for STIP or STBG/RSTPX funds. While a wide range of projects are eligible for these funds, project sponsors should submit applications for projects that will significantly improve the transportation system and are encouraged to submit applications for projects serving equity priority communities. For example, system preservation projects located in an equity priority community that integrate complete streets and include components that reduce collisions will score higher than paving projects that do not also improve bike or pedestrian facilities.

Eligible Applicants: Cities, the County of Santa Cruz, SCCRTC, Caltrans, Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (METRO), University of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC) and other governmental agencies with a Master Agreement with Caltrans are eligible recipients of these funds. Non-governmental and other entities interested in applying for funds are required to have a

public agency sponsor (with a Master Agreement with Caltrans) that will be responsible for ensuring state and federal accounting and implementation requirements are met.

Project Evaluation: Projects will be evaluated based on a range of criteria and project benefits (*Attachment 2* and second tab of the application programming request excel file). Applicants should clearly and succinctly articulate the benefits of their project, demonstrating how their project advances Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan, state, and/or federal goals, policies, performance metrics, and targets related to **safety, infrastructure condition, system performance/reliability, access for all, and/or health and equity. Although some projects may not address all the measures, projects that address all or almost all of the measures will receive higher scores. Project sponsors are encouraged to submit applications for projects that provide multiple benefits to the community.**

Type of Funds for Approved Projects: Staff will work with project sponsors and the Interagency Technical Advisory Committee (ITAC) to determine the most appropriate funding source (“color of funds”) for each project that is recommended and approved for funds, taking into consideration funding source-specific eligibility criteria, project schedules, size, potential delivery risks, and other factors. Staff works to focus funds which have more requirements (such as STIP and LPP funds) on fewer projects that can more easily navigate such requirements and deadlines. Staff will work with project sponsors to coordinate and expedite the use of funds.

Project Implementation: Approved projects will be subject to California and Federal requirements, as applicable to each funding source. These include, but not necessarily limited to:

- Caltrans’ [Local Assistance Program Guidelines \(LAPG\)](#) and [Local Assistance Procedures Manual \(LAPM\)](#)
- California Transportation Commission (CTC) Guidelines (STIP, SB-1 LPP-formula)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidelines
- Other state or federal requirements, as may be applicable.

Workshop: An optional workshop to review and respond to questions on the application will be held by Zoom on **July 17th at 1:00pm**. Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89550911277> (Meeting ID: 895 5091 1277; Passcode: 921387)

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to attend. Applicants should begin filling in the application prior to the workshop and are encouraged to submit questions in advance to programming@sccrtc.org. A list of frequently asked question (FAQ) will be posted online and periodically updated.

Matching Funds: To maximize funding options for each project, applicants should include an 11.47% non-federal match or in-kind donations for each project. For the LPP funds, a 1-to-1 match is required from private, local, federal, or state funds.

Timeline:

- **July 1, 2025** – Call for Projects issued.
- **July 17** – Application workshop [via Zoom](#) at 1:00 pm.
- **September 15** – Applications due to programming@sccrtc.org by 3:00pm
- **Week of October 13th** – RTC advisory committees review/recommend projects.
- **November 6** – Public hearing and RTC approval of projects.
- **December 15** – RTIP due to California Transportation Commission (CTC)
- **March 2026** – CTC action on STIP and LPP funds.

Contact: For any questions about this application or to request additional information, please contact Rachel Moriconi at programming@sccrtc.org or 831-460-3200.

Background: The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC), in its capacity as the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) is responsible for selecting projects to receive certain federal and state funds. Approved projects will be programmed in the RTC's Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and/or RTC budget, as appropriate. Projects approved for STIP funding by the RTC are subject to concurrence and allocation from the California Transportation Commission (CTC). Projects approved for federal funds or considered capacity increasing or regionally significant will also be programmed in AMBAG's Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP).

Attachment Links:

1. [Discretionary Fund Descriptions](#)
2. [Evaluation Criteria](#)
3. [Application](#) (MS Excel file)
4. Certifications for Roadway Preservation Projects (required for roadway repair, rehab, preservation projects only)
 - a. [Local Road Rehabilitation Project Certification: LAPM Exhibit 25-K](#)
 - b. Pavement Management System Certification: [LAPM Exhibit 25-L](#)

RTC Discretionary Funding Program Descriptions

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is responsible for selecting projects to receive certain state and federal funding sources. The following is a summary of fund sources the RTC plans to program in its 2025 Consolidated Grants/2026 *Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP)*. Additional information about each funding source can be found in state and federal guidelines linked at the end of each section.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)

Background: Since approval of Senate Bill 45 in 1997, regions have received 75% of STIP funds by formula for projects approved by the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) – RTC in Santa Cruz County. Criteria for use of the funds and final approval and allocation of funds is set by the California Transportation Commission (CTC). The CTC is set to approve the [2026 STIP Guidelines](#) and final Fund Estimate on August 15, 2025.

Available Funds: Approximately **\$4.35 million** through Fiscal Year (FY) 2030/31; with 5% for the RTC’s state-mandated planning, programming, and monitoring (PPM) activities. The first three years of the 2026 STIP (FY26/27-28/29) are currently overcommitted and CTC has indicated that new funds may not be available until FY29/30 and FY30/31.

Eligible Applicants: Governmental entities implementing eligible activities, including RTC, Caltrans, cities, counties, METRO.

Eligible Uses:

- Projects that meet eligibility requirements for funds from the State Highway Account in accordance with Article XIX of the California Constitution.
- Capital projects (including project development costs). These projects generally may include, but are not limited to, improving State highways, local roads, public transit (including buses), intercity rail, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, grade separations, transportation system management, transportation demand management, soundwalls, intermodal facilities, and safety.
 - Rail rolling stock and buses may be funded only from the Federal revenues.
- Non-capital costs for transportation system management (TSM) or transportation demand management (TDM) may be included where the regional agency finds the project to be a cost-effective substitute for capital expenditure.
- RTC project planning, programming, and monitoring (5%): this includes preparation of the RTIP, RTP, coordination with Caltrans on highway projects, etc.
- Not eligible: Road and transit maintenance.

While the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) is responsible for choosing projects to receive the region's shares of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) funds, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) ultimately decides which projects are included in the STIP and in which year. The CTC is placing greater emphasis on how well projects perform across various metrics, their contribution to climate readiness, and their effectiveness in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, the CTC has stated that projects leading to an increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) must provide a clear justification and demonstrate that other projects will achieve corresponding VMT reductions.

Timing: The RTC's proposal for STIP funds is due to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) by December 15, 2025. CTC approval is scheduled for March 2026. Funds must be obligated by June 30, 2031, and are subject to strict use-or-lose schedule deadlines.

Source: [CTC STIP](#)

SB 1 Local Partnership Formula Funds (LPP-f)

Background: The RTC is responsible for selecting projects to receive a portion of the Local Partnership Program formulaic funds that are generated by Senate Bill 1 taxes and fees. The region's shares of LPP funds are relatively small in comparison to the STIP and STBG/RSTPX programs. Criteria for use of the funds and final approval and allocation of funds is set by the California Transportation Commission (CTC).

Available Funds: Approximately **\$1.1 million** through FY 2028-29. Requires at least 50% match.

Eligible Applicants: Recipients of Measure D or other voter-approved taxes, tolls, or fees which that are dedicated solely to transportation improvements.

Eligible Uses: Eligible projects for the Local Partnership Program will be consistent with subdivisions (a) and (b) of Government Code Section 8879.70, and Streets and Highways Code Section 2032(a). The CTC encourages projects that align with the state's climate and equity goals as well as those that identify and incorporate the installation of conduit or fiber, where appropriate and feasible, along strategic corridors.

Eligible projects include:

- A. Highways: Improvements to the state highway system including major rehabilitation, new construction, safety or operational improvement, soundwalls.
- B. Transit projects:
 - a. Improvements to transit facilities, including guideways, that expand transit services, increase transit ridership, improve transit safety, enhance access or convenience of the traveling public, or otherwise provide or facilitate a viable alternative to driving.

- b. The acquisition, retrofit, or rehabilitation of rolling stock, buses, paratransit transit equipment and vehicles for seniors and people with disabilities, maintenance facilities, transit stations, rail transit guideways, passenger shelters, fare collection equipment, and other transit equipment.
- C. Local Road Improvements:
 - Major roadway rehabilitation, resurfacing, or reconstruction that extends its useful life by at least 15 years;
 - New construction and facilities to increase capacity, improve mobility; and
 - Safety or operational improvements that are intended to reduce crashes and fatalities and/or improve traffic flow.
- D. Complete Streets: Improvements to bicycle or pedestrian safety or mobility.
- E. Mitigations: Improvements to mitigate the environmental impact of new transportation infrastructure on local air quality or water quality, commonly known as “urban runoff,” including management practices for capturing or treating urban runoff; landscaping, wetlands or habitat restoration or creation, replacement plantings, and drainage facilities.

Required Match: LPP-funded projects are required to provide a 1-to-1 match of private, local, federal, or certain state funds.

Source: [Local Partnership Formulaic Program](#)

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)/ Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX)

Background: The STBG program (sometimes referred to as RSTP and STP) is established through the federal transportation act, with criteria set by FHWA and Caltrans Local Assistance guidance, and RTC Rules and Regulations. As a smaller county in California, the state usually allows RTC to exchange the federal STBG funds for state exchange funds (RSTPX). Following a performance audit of several regional agencies, FHWA informed regions that they are not allowed to sub-allocate the funds by formula to certain agencies or modes and that a performance-based evaluation should be used to select projects to receive these and other funds.

Available Funds: Approximately **\$ 8 million** through FY 2027-28. In addition to these funds, the County of Santa Cruz receives \$224,813 of the region’s share of RSTPX funds directly each year, as set forth in state statute.

Eligible Applicants: Governmental entities implementing eligible activities, including RTC, Caltrans, cities, counties, UCSC, METRO, Cabrillo, and non-profits with a master agreement with Caltrans or with a public agency sponsor – such as Community Bridges, Ecology Action, Bike Santa Cruz County, Community Traffic Safety Coalition, etc.

Eligible Projects and Activities: Funds must be used for projects as defined in Article XIX--Motor Vehicle Revenues of the California State Constitution or in Sections 133(b) and 133(c) of Title 23--Highways of the United States Code (U.S.C.). Only direct project-related costs are eligible. Local agency overhead and other non-direct charges are ineligible. General maintenance is not eligible.

Eligible Projects (See 23 U.S.C. 133(b)): Subject to the location of projects requirements in paragraph a above, the following eligible activities are listed in 23 U.S.C. 133(b):

(1) Construction of-

(A) highways, bridges, tunnels, including designated routes of the Appalachian development highway system and local access roads under section 14501 of title 40;

(B) ferry boats and terminal facilities-

(i) that are eligible for funding under section 129(c); or

(ii) that are privately or majority-privately owned, but that the Secretary determines provide a substantial public transportation benefit or otherwise meet the foremost needs of the surface transportation system described in section 101(b)(3)(D);

(C) transit capital projects eligible for assistance under chapter 53 of title 49;

(D) infrastructure-based intelligent transportation systems capital improvements, including the installation of vehicle-to-infrastructure communication equipment;

(E) truck parking facilities eligible for funding under section 1401 of MAP-21 (23 U.S.C. 137 note);

(F) border infrastructure projects eligible for funding under section 1303 of SAFETEA-LU (23 U.S.C. 101 note); and

(G) wildlife crossing structures.

(2) Operational improvements and capital and operating costs for traffic monitoring, management, and control facilities and programs.

(3) Environmental measures eligible under sections 119(g), 148(a)(4)(B)(xvii), 328, and 329 and transportation control measures listed in section 108(f)(1)(A) (other than clause (xvi) of that section) of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7408(f)(1)(A)).

(5) ¹ Highway and transit safety infrastructure improvements and programs, including projects eligible under section 130 and installation of safety barriers and nets on bridges.

(6) Fringe and corridor parking facilities and programs in accordance with section 137 and carpool projects in accordance with section 146.

(7) Recreational trails projects eligible for funding under section 206 including the maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails,,² pedestrian and bicycle projects in accordance with section 217 (including modifications to comply with accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.)), and the safe routes to school program under section 208.

(8) Planning, design, or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.

(9) Development and implementation of a State Asset Management Plan for the National Highway System and a performance-based management program for other public roads.

(10) Protection (including painting, scour countermeasures, seismic retrofits, impact protection measures, security countermeasures, and protection against extreme events) for bridges (including approaches to bridges and other elevated structures) and tunnels on public roads, and inspection and evaluation of bridges and tunnels and other highway assets.

(11) Surface transportation planning programs, highway and transit research and development and technology transfer programs, and workforce development, training, and education under chapter 5 of this title.

(12) Surface transportation infrastructure modifications to facilitate direct intermodal interchange, transfer, and access into and out of a port terminal.

(13) Projects and strategies designed to support congestion pricing, including electronic toll collection and travel demand management strategies and programs.

(14) Projects and strategies designed to reduce the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions, including project-related planning, design, construction, monitoring, and preventative maintenance.

(15) The installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure and vehicle-to-grid infrastructure.

(16) The installation and deployment of current and emerging intelligent transportation technologies, including the ability of vehicles to communicate with infrastructure, buildings, and other road users.

(17) Planning and construction of projects that facilitate intermodal connections between emerging transportation technologies, such as magnetic levitation and hyperloop.

(18) Protective features, including natural infrastructure, to enhance the resilience of a transportation facility otherwise eligible for assistance under this section.

(19) Measures to protect a transportation facility otherwise eligible for assistance under this section from cybersecurity threats.

(20) At the request of a State, and upon Secretarial approval of credit assistance under chapter 6, subsidy and administrative costs necessary to provide an eligible entity Federal credit assistance under chapter 6 with respect to a project eligible for assistance under this section.

(21) The creation and operation by a State of an office to assist in the design, implementation, and oversight, including conducting value for money analyses or similar comparative analyses, of public-private partnerships eligible to receive funding under this title and chapter 53 of title 49, and the payment of a stipend to unsuccessful private bidders to offset their proposal development costs, if necessary to encourage robust competition in public-private partnership procurements.

(22) Any type of project eligible under this section as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the FAST Act, including projects described under section 101(a)(29) as in effect on such day.

(23) Rural barge landing, dock, and waterfront infrastructure projects in accordance with subsection (j).

(24) Projects to enhance travel and tourism.

The following activities are made eligible by other sections of 23 U.S.C.:

(1) Public transportation projects: (i) as described in 23 U.S.C. 142(a)(1), (a)(2), (a)(3), and (c); and (ii) meeting the requirements contained in 23 U.S.C. 142.

(2) Initiatives to halt the evasion of payment of motor fuel taxes as provided for under 23 U.S.C. 143(b)(8), including expenditure limitations.

(3) Workforce development, training, and education activities under 23 U.S.C. 504(e).

Location of Projects (See 23 U.S.C. 133(c)): STBG projects may not be undertaken on a road functionally classified as a local road or a rural minor collector unless the road was on a Federal-aid highway system on January 1, 1991, except—

(1) for a bridge or tunnel project (other than the construction of a new bridge or tunnel at a new location);

(2) for a project described in paragraphs (5) through (15) and paragraph (23) of subsection (b);

(3) for a project described in section 101(a)(29), as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the FAST Act;

(4) for a bridge project for the replacement of a low water crossing (as defined by the Secretary) with a bridge; and

(5) as approved by the Secretary.

Applicability of Planning Requirements (See 23 U.S.C. 133(d)(5)): Programming and expenditure of funds for projects shall be consistent with 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135, as amended by the BIL. Projects must be identified in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and be consistent with the Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan(s) (See 23 U.S.C. 133(d)(5)). When obligating suballocated funding (discussed below), the State must coordinate with relevant metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) or rural planning organizations (See 23 U.S.C. 133(d)(3)). STBG projects for eligible planning purposes must be reflected in the statewide SPR work program or Metropolitan Unified Planning Work Program (See 23 CFR 420.111). Further, these projects must be in the STIP/TIP unless the State DOT or MPO agree that they may be excluded (See 23 CFR 420.119(e)).

Applicability of 23 U.S.C. 217(i) for Bicycle Projects: 23 U.S.C. 217(i) requires that bicycle facilities be principally for transportation, rather than recreation, purposes. However, 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(7) and 133(h) list “recreational trails projects” as eligible activities under STBG. Therefore, the requirement in 23 U.S.C. 217(i) does not apply to recreational trails projects (including for bicycle use) using STBG funds. Section 217(i) continues to apply to bicycle facilities other than trail-related projects, and Section 217(i) continues to apply to bicycle facilities using other Federal-aid highway program funds (e.g., NHPP, Highway Safety Improvement Program, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program). The transportation requirement under Section 217(i) is applicable only to bicycle projects; it does not apply to any other trail use or transportation mode.

Per [Caltrans Local Assistance Program Guidelines, Chapter 18](#), RSTPX funds are available for projects and to entities authorized under Article XIX of the California State Constitution and Section 182.6(d)(1) of the Streets and Highways Code.

Ineligible Costs: Only direct project related costs are eligible. Local agency overhead and other non-direct charges are ineligible for STBG and RSTPX. Ongoing maintenance and operations are also ineligible.

Required Match: 11.47% non-federal

Source: [STBG Guidelines](#)

Low-Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) – 99313

Background: LCTOP funds are part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade/Invest dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment, particularly in disadvantaged communities. The RTC, as the RTPA, receives a portion of these funds (99313 funds) to distribute to transit agencies for operations and capital projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. LCTOP Funds are distributed based on review of project benefits, schedules, and

program guidelines established by Caltrans. Any funds allocated to community transit services flow through the RTC.

Available Funds: Approximately \$650 thousand for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26.

Eligible Applicants: Public transit operators (e.g., Santa Cruz METRO) and community transit services, as set forth in Article 4.5 of the Transportation Development Act (e.g. Lift Line).

Eligible Uses:

- **Operating and capital assistance for transit agencies** to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve mobility, with a priority on serving disadvantaged communities.
- Projects that meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - **Reduced Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions:** Projects that directly reduce GHG emissions through improved transit service, increased ridership, or adoption of zero-emission technologies.
 - **Increased Transit Ridership:** Projects that attract new riders or increase the frequency of transit use.
 - **Improved Transit Service:** Projects that enhance the quality, reliability, or accessibility of transit services.
 - **Support for Disadvantaged Communities:** Projects that specifically benefit or provide access for residents in disadvantaged communities, as defined by CalEnviroScreen.
- Examples include:
 - Increased bus service frequency or expanded routes.
 - Purchase of zero-emission buses or other low-carbon vehicles.
 - Improvements to transit stops, stations, or intermodal facilities that encourage transit use.
 - Fares reduction programs or free transit for specific populations (e.g., youth, low-income).
 - First/last mile connections to transit.

Ineligible Costs:

- Road and highway projects that are not directly related to transit.
- General administrative overhead not directly attributable to an LCTOP-eligible project.

- Projects that do not demonstrate a clear path to greenhouse gas emission reductions or other program goals.

Required Match: No local match is explicitly required for LCTOP funds, but projects that leverage other funding sources may be viewed favorably.

For more information visit: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/rail/low-carbon-transit-operations-program-lctop/>

State Transit Assistance (STA) 99313 funds

Background: The State Transit Assistance (STA) program provides formulaic allocations to transit agencies and Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) across California. These funds are derived from the Public Transportation Account, primarily funded by the statewide sales tax on diesel fuel. The 99313 funds are the discretionary portion allocated to RTPAs, which the RTC (as the RTPA for Santa Cruz County) distributes to eligible transit operators within its jurisdiction. SB1 increased STA funds statewide and the RTC agreed to make 15% of the RTC's FY25/26 share and 20% of the RTC's FY26/27 funds available through a competitive process.

Available Funds: Approximately \$900 thousand through Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27.

Eligible Applicants: Public transit operators (e.g., Santa Cruz METRO) and community transit services meeting TDA Article 4.5 criteria (e.g., Lift Line).

Eligible Uses: STA funds can be used for planning, public transit, and community transit services.

- Public transit capital projects: This includes the acquisition of transit vehicles (buses, rail cars), construction or rehabilitation of transit facilities (maintenance yards, stations, bus stops), and other fixed guideway improvements.
- Public transit operational costs: This includes expenses related to running transit services such as driver salaries, fuel, maintenance, and administrative costs directly associated with operations.
- Transit planning activities.
- Projects that improve transit services or efficiency.

Ineligible Costs: Non-transit related projects and general agency overhead not directly attributable to transit operations or capital projects.

Required Match: No local match is required.

Source: [Transportation Development Act](#), Public Utilities Code Sections 99313

2025 Consolidated Call for Projects Evaluation Criteria

Below are the criteria for the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission's 2025 Consolidated Call for Projects for the region's shares of State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), SB1-Local Partnership Program (LPP), Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)/Regional Surface Transportation Program Exchange (RSTPX), State Transit Assistance (STA-99313), and Low Carbon Transit Operations Program (LCTOP) funds. 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. Projects will be evaluated to ensure they meet the objectives and policies outlined in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), including meeting state and federal guidelines, legislative requirements, and executive orders.

Evaluation Criteria

Responses to the evaluation criteria must demonstrate how the project nomination meets the objectives and policies outlined in the Regional Transportation Plan. Project sponsors should respond only to those evaluation questions that are applicable to the nature and scope of their proposed project. Project applications will be evaluated, scored, and then prioritized based on how well the project nomination addresses and demonstrates the following criteria:

- Access for All
- Collisions and Safety
- System Preservation
- System Performance
- Climate Change and Resiliency
- Public Health
- Benefits to Equity Priority Communities
- Funding Plan
- Project Readiness and Delivery Risks
- Complete Streets Integration
- Public Participation
- Consistency with RTP (and other Plans)
- Scale of Benefits

Instructions for Project Sponsors

The questions under each evaluation category provide *examples* of ways a project sponsor can demonstrate the benefits of their project in the application. Project sponsors are not required to answer every question.

Access for All

Expand affordable and convenient multi-modal travel options and choices, especially to and within key destinations, to allow people to access their regular needs.

- Will the project expand affordable and convenient multi-modal travel options and choices, particularly to and within key destinations, to improve accessibility for all people to their regular needs?
- Will the project address the transportation needs of people with limited mobility?
- If the project aims to increase walking, describe the new sidewalks, crosswalks, or obstacle minimization efforts it will include. What is the anticipated increase in walking as a result of the project?

- If the project aims to increase bicycling, describe the new bicycle lanes/paths, network gap closures, or bicycle box installations at intersections. What is the anticipated increase in bicycling as a result of the project?
- Will the project increase public transit access or improve the quality of the transit rider experience? What is the anticipated impact on transit ridership?
- Does the project fill a gap in the complete streets network and increase network connectivity by closing gaps in the bike, sidewalk, and transit networks? If so, please describe the gap(s) being addressed. Are there currently no alternative routes for these modes of transportation in the project area?
- How will the project expand the bicycle and pedestrian network across physical barriers such as creeks, freeways, and private property? Describe the specific crossings or connections proposed.
- Does the project include any education and encouragement programs to promote walking, bicycling, or transit use?

Collisions and Safety

Reduce transportation related fatalities and serious injuries (crashes) and enhance healthy, safe transportation options.

- Is there a documented history of collisions in the project area? If so, how will the proposed safety measures in the project specifically reduce collisions or address identified hazards? Please provide relevant collision data.
- What specific countermeasures are incorporated into the project design to reduce collisions, with a particular focus on preventing fatalities and serious injuries? Please provide details on these measures and their anticipated impact.
- How will the project reduce the potential for conflict between bicyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles? Please describe the design elements that will improve safety for all modes.
- In what specific ways will the project improve safety for more vulnerable users, such as low-income individuals, seniors, people living with disabilities, people of color, and youth? Please provide data or analysis to support the claims.
- If the project involves transit, will it reduce or prevent major mechanical failures for transit vehicles? If so, how? What is the current rate of mechanical failures?
- Does the project address any perceived safety or security issues that currently discourage increased transit ridership, biking, or walking (e.g., lack of lighting at bus stops, unsafe crossings)? If so, please describe the issues and the proposed solutions. What is the anticipated impact on ridership or active transportation?
- If the project fills a gap in the bicycle or pedestrian network within the project area, how will this contribute to improved safety for these users?
- Does the project eliminate any existing hazards, such as trees in roadways, dips in roads, or drainage issues? If so, please describe the hazards and the proposed solutions.
- How will the project improve access to and for emergency services and emergency evacuation routes? Please provide details.

System Preservation & Infrastructure Condition

Maintain and improve the condition of transportation assets cost-effectively and responsive to the needs of all transportation system users.

- How will the project contribute to an increase in the percentage of transportation facilities in good condition? Please provide current condition data and anticipated improvement.
- If the project involves transit vehicles, how will it reduce the percentage of vehicles that have met or exceeded their useful life benchmark? What is the current percentage and the anticipated reduction?
- Will the project extend the useful life of a transportation facility or program? If so, by how much and what is the current estimated lifespan?
- How will the project ensure that transportation facilities are maintained in a state of good repair? Please describe the maintenance aspects of the project.
- Does the project incorporate sustainable pavement practices? If so, please describe the specific practices being used and their benefits.
- How will the project enhance the cost-effectiveness of the transportation system or its assets? Will it lead to lower long-term maintenance costs, operational efficiencies, or other sustained financial benefits? Please provide details and any relevant estimates.

System Performance

Improve efficiency and enhance performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Includes improving goods movement, supporting economic development, improving travel times, and reducing congestion.

- Reduction of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): How will the project minimize vehicle miles traveled while maximizing person throughput? Please provide data or modeling to support the claims. What is the anticipated reduction in VMT?
- Reduction of Greenhouse Gases: How will the project reduce greenhouse gas emissions and criteria pollutants? Please describe the specific mechanisms and provide any relevant emissions reduction estimates or air quality benefits. How does the project advance air quality and climate goals?
- Potential for Mode Shift: How will the project encourage a shift from automobile travel to alternative modes such as bicycling, walking, transit, or carpooling? What is the anticipated percentage increase in trips made via these modes? Does the project involve increasing telecommuting options or coordinating land-use, housing, and transportation policies to reduce the need for travel? Please explain.
- System Reliability: How will the project improve the reliability and efficiency of the multimodal transportation system? Will it reduce variability in travel times, especially during peak travel periods and for transit? Please provide data or analysis to support the claims.
- Freight & Goods Movement: If applicable, how will the project improve freight and goods movement efficiency? Will it increase freight throughput on existing facilities or services? Please provide details and any relevant metrics.
- System Integration and Gap Closure: How will the project address existing gaps in the transportation network and contribute to downstream benefits or broader system improvements? (e.g., how a new parking lot relates to a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan, or how a new segment of a trail connects to an existing network). Please explain the broader impact and connections

Public Health

- Improves Public Health: Does the project directly target specific public health issues such as obesity, physical inactivity, asthma, or other health concerns? If so, please describe how and provide any relevant data or anticipated health outcomes.

Benefits to Equity Priority Communities

Ensure that plans, investments, policies, and transportation decisions will reduce disparities for historically and systemically marginalized, underserved, and excluded populations.

- Reduce Disparities: How will the project specifically reduce disparities in safety and access for people who are transportation disadvantaged due to age, income, disability, language, or race/ethnicity? Please provide data or analysis to support the claims.
- Serves Disadvantaged Populations: Does the project directly serve transportation disadvantaged populations? Will it avoid placing substantial burdens on a disadvantaged community? Please explain.
- Demographics: What is the estimated percentage of the population in the project area that identifies as minority or low-income? Please provide the data source.
- Concentration of Underserved Groups: Does the project area contain higher than average concentrations of traditionally underserved groups when compared to the surrounding area, city, or county as a whole? Please provide data to support the answer.
- Disproportionate Impacts: Are the areas where these populations are located currently subject to disproportionate negative transportation impacts (e.g., higher pollution, lower safety, limited access)? Please describe these impacts.
- Increased Traffic in Disadvantaged Neighborhoods: Will the proposed project potentially increase traffic in low-income and minority neighborhoods? If so, what measures will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts?
- Impact on Minority-Owned Businesses: Will minority-owned businesses that serve a minority or low-income population be impacted by the project? If so, please describe the potential impacts and any proposed mitigation measures.

Climate Change and Resiliency

Build a climate-resilient transportation system by preparing for, adjusting to, and reducing the effects of climate change. This includes making roads, bridges, and other surface transportation infrastructure more resistant to natural hazards like climate change, rising sea levels, floods, severe weather, and other disasters.

- Wildfire and Emergency Evacuation: How will the project increase safety and reduce emergency evacuation times in the event of a wildfire or other emergency?
- Extreme Heat: Does the project include measures to alleviate the impacts of extreme temperatures across the region (e.g., bus shelters with shade, improved ventilation)? Please describe these strategies and their anticipated benefits.
- Flooding: How will the project address increased rainfall, erosion, and flooding? Please describe the specific improvements.
- Erosion: How will the project mitigate slope erosion and flooding vulnerability? If applicable, describe any hillside stabilization efforts to prevent repeated slides.

- At-risk Coastal Infrastructure: If the project is located along the coast, how will it protect communities and natural resources from sea-level rise, with a focus on the adaptation of public infrastructure?

Funding Plan

- Overall Funding Plan: If the RTC approves the requested funds, will the project be fully funded? If not, how much additional funding is needed, and what is the likelihood of securing those funds? Please provide a realistic assessment of the project's overall funding security.
- Committed Funding: What other funding sources have already been secured for this project? Please provide details on the amount and source of each committed fund.
- Leveraging: Will the funds you are requesting from RTC be used to leverage other grants? If so, please identify those grants and the potential funding amounts. If RTC funding is not approved, will any of this other funding be at risk of being lost?
- Eligibility for Other Grants: Is this project eligible for any other competitive grants? If so, what other grants are reasonably available for this project, and what is the status of those applications?
- Funding for Cost Increases: What potential funding sources are available to cover unanticipated cost increases for the project? Identify potential sources and their likelihood of being accessible.

Project Readiness & Potential Delivery Risks

- Schedule: How quickly can the project be implemented to provide benefits to the community? Please provide a realistic project schedule with key milestones. Are there any potential risks that could impact the project schedule? Please identify these risks and proposed mitigation strategies.
- Deliverability: What is the agency's ability to complete this project on schedule and within budget? Please provide examples of the agency's performance on past grant-funded projects and discuss the timing of any other relevant projects that may impact deliverability. Are there opportunities to consolidate this project with other planned projects (e.g., timed utility upgrades, new development)?
- Mitigating Risks: Please describe the efforts undertaken to minimize risks to project implementation
- Other: Are there any other potential risks (financial, operational/asset, strategic/organizational compliance, political, etc.) that could delay the project? Please describe these risks and proposed mitigation strategies.

Complete Streets Integration

Complete streets are roadways designed to safely and comfortably accommodate all users of all ages and abilities. Complete streets expand transportation choices by making walking, bicycling, and public transportation more convenient and safer.

- Complete Streets Checklist: Has the project sponsor completed the project checklist in the [Monterey Bay Area Completes Streets Guidebook](#) (page 122)? Provide confirmation.
- Consistency with Guidelines and Policies: Is the project consistent with current complete streets guidelines and policies? Please cite the specific guidelines and policies.
- Integration of Components: How does the project integrate complete streets components appropriate for the project type and location to safely and comfortably accommodate all users of all ages and abilities? If the project does not incorporate complete streets design treatments,

please document why not and what alternative accommodations will be provided for pedestrians, bicyclists, and/or transit users (unless the project is exempt).

Public Participation and Community Engagement

Describe how the project was identified as a community priority. List any public outreach that has already occurred.

- Community Priority: Please describe how this project was identified as a community priority. What community needs or desires does it address? How have residents in the project area been involved in the decision-making or project information process to date? How will they be involved moving forward?
- Prior Outreach: Please list any public outreach that has already occurred for this project, including dates, methods, and key outcomes.
- Planned Outreach: Describe any planned outreach activities that will occur during project planning and/or implementation (e.g., outreach to stakeholder groups, advisory committees, other jurisdictions/agencies, transit, environmental groups, seniors, surveys, open houses). Please be specific about the methods and target audiences.
- Ongoing Participation: How will the project provide early and ongoing opportunities for meaningful public participation for all users throughout the project lifecycle?
- Diverse Participation: How will you ensure participation from diverse and historically underrepresented members of the public in project planning? Please describe specific outreach strategies. What specific outreach to low-income, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), etc., residents about this project has already been conducted or is planned?

Consistency with Plans

- RTP Consistency: Is the project included in the current Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Project List, which implements the SB375-mandated Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS)? Please provide the RTP Project List reference if applicable.
- Consistency With Other Plans: Is the project consistent with other regional and/or local plans? If so, please identify the specific plans and describe the alignment:
 - Vision Zero/zero traffic fatalities, local roadway safety plans
 - 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
 - Unified Corridor Investment Study (UCS)
 - Local Roadway Safety Plans
 - Safe Streets for All Plan

Scale of Benefits:

How many people could potentially benefit from this project? What is the estimated number of anticipated users for the facility, service, or program (e.g., number of cars, transit riders, bicyclists, and/or pedestrians)? Please provide data to support these estimates, such as:

- Current traffic volumes, transit ridership, bicycle and pedestrian counts (if available).
- A work plan for a program and the targeted number of people to use program.
- The key destinations served by the project (e.g., employment center, transit center, retail/commercial area, visitor destination, school).
- Modeling information for future use, if available.

Project Rating and Selection Process

Project nominations will be evaluated and ranked based on the established criteria. Each criterion will receive a rating of "High," "Medium-High," "Medium," "Medium-Low," or "Low." Projects that demonstrate strong performance across multiple evaluation criteria and offer a wider range of benefits to the community will generally be ranked higher. Projects that receive the highest overall scores will have provided data-supported responses to strengthen their narrative. These highest-rated project nominations will be recommended for inclusion in the program. While the evaluation score is a key factor in project selection, additional criteria may be considered if multiple projects receive the same score.

An applicant submitting multiple project nominations must clearly prioritize its project nominations. The Regional Transportation Commission may elect to only award the highest priority project nomination submitted by each applicant. To ensure a balanced distribution of transportation projects throughout the region, the Regional Transportation Commission may also take geographic balance into account when approving funding.