

FY 2019/20
Federal RSTP and HIP
Call for Projects Guidelines



Calaveras Council of Governments

P.O. Box 280

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Calaveras Council of Governments

Call for Projects

1. Introduction

The Calaveras Council of Governments (CCOG) approves State and federal funding for City and County transportation projects through periodic “call for projects”. The funds available come from State and federal sources that are apportioned to the agency using statutorily prescribed formulas. The last funding cycle conducted by CCOG was completed in 2018 and covered FY 2019/20 to 2022/23. Since that call for projects was completed, delays in delivering projects allocated Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding in prior calls placed CMAQ funding at risk of lapsing. Consequently, CCOG loaned \$1.158 million in FY 18/19 and prior year apportionments at risk to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. The loan will be repaid with federal Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funding in FY 2019/20. A new call for projects is being initiated in 2019 to allocate to projects the federal RSTP and \$133,000 in federal Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP) funding apportioned to CCOG. The latter funding emanates from the 2018 federal budget process and may be one-time only funding.

Included in these guidelines are the fund estimate, schedule, project evaluation ground rules, timely use of funds requirements, and project nomination application for this call for projects. Applications are due to the CCOG office no later than 5:00 pm on May 3, 2019. In May and June 2019, the CCOG Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will review the project applications and recommend to the Council a prioritized list of projects for funding from the revenues estimated to be available for this cycle. The final recommendation will be presented to the Council for adoption during the regularly scheduled CCOG meeting in August 2019.

2. Eligible Applicants/Projects

Eligible applicants for this call for projects include the parties to CCOG's Joint Powers Agreement (JPA), which are the CCOG, the City of Angels and the County of Calaveras. All project applications are subject to review by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and approval by the Council.

To be eligible, a project must be included in an existing planning document of regional significance. If not in a planning document, an exception can be made for critical safety projects. If requesting an exception, the applicant must demonstrate the critical safety need for the project and that no other funding source is available.

3. Timely Use of Funds

Attached as Appendix A is a Timely Use of Funds policy that would become part of the guidelines for this call for projects. The intent of the Timely Use of Funds policy is to ensure sponsoring agencies do not lose any funds due to missing a federal or state funding deadline. The policy also is intended to ensure that Calaveras County residents benefit from an improved transportation system through the expeditious application of the scarce transportation resources available to our region. Funding that goes unused for years defers safety, air quality, goods movement, and congestion reduction benefits. Worse yet, funding that lapses to other regions never results in benefits for our citizens.

The regional deadlines described in the policy have been established in advance of state and federal funding deadlines to provide the opportunity for project sponsors to solve potential project delivery issues and bring projects back in-line in advance of losing funds due to a missed funding deadline. The policy is also intended to incentivize project delivery by ensuring that projects awarded funding remain a priority for their sponsor or, if funds lapse, they are allocated to other priority projects.

It is the intent of CCOG to assist project sponsors in delivering their projects in a timely manner. The completion of projects is the goal that CCOG, its member agencies, and project sponsors should all be striving for. When extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances are encountered on a project, project sponsors may request a deadline extension from CCOG. To expedite project delivery, on a case-by-case basis, CCOG has assisted and will continue to assist project sponsors by administering the consultant procurement process for regionally funded projects. CCOG will also continue to propose new ideas and procedures intended to result in the ultimate success of project sponsors.

Occasionally, projects will fail to meet the deadlines. Unexpected obstacles encountered after the project evaluation process may make the proposed project infeasible. The priorities of a sponsor may change after funding award and community needs may shift. Staffing or matching fund resources may no longer be available. In these cases, projects will be challenged to meet the timely use of funds deadlines. Projects in these cases will lapse funding, and the funding will be reallocated to other projects in the same or prior cycles needing additional funding. Funding may also be allocated to projects on the backup list approved by the Council at the time the original funding list is approved.

4. Call for Projects Schedule

This call for projects will be conducted according to the schedule shown below.

Call for Projects Schedule		
Mtg. Date	Group	Milestone
December 19, 2018	TAC	Summarize funding opportunities for 2019 and preview draft guidelines and call-for-projects schedule.
January 16, 2019	TAC	Review draft call-for-project guidelines. Recommend board adopt guidelines and issue a call for projects
February 6, 2019	Board	Board adopts guidelines and issues call for projects. Apps due May 3.
May 15, 2019	TAC	First review of project applications and funding requests.
June 19, 2019	TAC	Draft programming recommendation.
July 17, 2019	TAC	Approve a programming recommendation for board consideration.
August 7, 2019	Board	Board adopts programming recommendation.
October 1, 2019		HIP and federal RSTP available for obligation.

5. Estimated Funding Available

The estimated funding for this cycle is as follows:

Fund Source	FY 19/20
Federal RSTP	\$1,158,000
HIP	\$133,233
Total	\$1,291,233

Funds are available from two sources.

Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP). This federal funding source is apportioned to state governments as a block grant to promote flexibility in State and local transportation decisions and provide flexible funding to best address State and local transportation needs. The State of California sub-apportions part of the funding to regional agencies such as CCOG, allowing CCOG broad flexibility to select projects that meet the region’s needs and priorities. The state also allows smaller regional agencies such as CCOG the option of exchanging its sub-apportionment for state cash provided that projects funded with the exchanged monies meet the federal program’s eligibility requirements. This reduces the project administration costs of project sponsors in these smaller regions and provides funding that can be used as a match to leverage federal grants. Eligible projects for this funding source include but are not limited to roads and highways, bridges, tunnels and transit capital facilities.

For the 2019 call for projects, funds are available from the repayment of a \$1,158,000 loan of CMAQ funding made in August 2018 to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission which will be repaid with a like amount of federalized RSTP funding after October 1, 2019 (FFY 19-20). Unlike CCOG’s annual RSTP apportionment from the state which is exchanged for state cash, the RSTP funding from the loan repayment will remain federalized.

Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP). Caltrans has notified CCOG that it has been apportioned \$133,233 in Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP) funding. This funding emanates from the 2018 Federal Department of Transportation Appropriation Act and is federal general fund monies rather than National Highway Trust Fund monies. Consequently, it may be one-time-only funding. Projects funded from this source must be consistent with CCOG’s Regional Transportation Plan. Eligible projects are the construction of highways, bridges and tunnels on the federal-aid system. Projects on facilities classified as local roads or minor collectors are generally not eligible for funding though some exceptions apply. To access HIP funds, eligible projects must be programmed in the current Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) by FFY 20-21. The HIP funds are available for obligation until September 30, 2021 or they will lapse. They must be expended by September 30, 2026.

6. Ground Rules for Project Evaluation

Project applications received by CCOG will be evaluated by the Technical Advisory Committee for recommendation to the CCOG Board. The TAC Committee will recommend to the Council the projects that it believes should be funded with the available resources. The Council has final approval authority on projects that will be funded. When evaluating project applications, the TAC will operate according to the following ground rules.

- The Technical Advisory Committee (“the Committee”) will recommend funding for the highest priority projects and strive towards an equitable distribution of funds among member agencies.
- The Committee may recommend a lower funding amount than that requested. If the local agency expresses that it cannot deliver the project with the lower amount at the time of the draft recommendation, the funds will be re-distributed and the recommendation revised before CCOG Council consideration.
- The Committee will recommend a funding source (federal RSTP, HIP) for a recommended project. Aside from ensuring that basic eligibility requirements are met by projects for the recommended funding source, the Committee will strive to maximize leveraging of outside funding for the project and region, minimize the costs to sponsors of administering federally funded projects, and align projects with funding sources that will increase the probability they will meet timely use of funds deadlines.
- The Committee, in some cases, may recommend a different programming year than requested due to financial capacity. If the local agency expresses it cannot utilize the funding in that year at the time of the draft recommendation, the funding will be re-allocated to another project and the recommendation revised before CCOG Council consideration.
- The Committee will establish a "back up list" of projects to be funded, should there be project cost savings/project delivery failures.
- To the degree possible, the Committee will group projects in similar categories so they can be evaluated within the same category (i.e. bike projects in one group, local road projects in one group, traffic signal projects in one group)
- To facilitate project delivery and make the most efficient use of federal funds, the Committee will try to concentrate federal funds on fewer, larger projects and maximize the federal share on federalized projects so as to reduce the overall number of federal-aid projects. The Committee will also seek to target the federal funds on the Construction (CON) phase, thus further reducing the number of authorizations processed by Caltrans and FHWA.
- The Committee will utilize “High”, “Medium”, and “Low” to indicate how well projects match up against the evaluation criteria.

7. Evaluation Criteria

The objective of the regional evaluation criteria is to review and rate similar types of projects. Projects will be compared to one another within their category in order to determine the magnitude of the improvement and to arrive at a final recommendation. The evaluation criteria for this call will be:

- Improvements in Congestion Relief. Will the project result in VMT reductions, LOS improvements, travel time savings, etc.?

- Improvements in Accessibility/Mobility. Will the project close a gap, provide a link, or close a barrier?
- Improvements in Safety. Will the project address a critical accident area or resolve non-standard design issues, such as eliminating non-standard geometrics?
- Improved Goods Movement. Will the project improve truck movement, remove barriers to truck movement, promote efficient intermodal connections?
- Matching Funds. To what degree (percent) do other funding sources provide matching funds? What are the amounts of secured funding on the project (dollar amount and percent of total project cost)?
- Leveraging Funds. Will the funding requested be used to leverage outside funding?
- Construction Phase Funding. Is funding being requested for the construction phase; as a result, the funds will directly result in a built project. This is a "yes or no".
- Improvements to Mode Share. Will the project provide alternatives to driving alone, such as transit or bike/pedestrian travel modes.
- Project Readiness. Is the environmental document complete? What stage is the project in design or right-of-way? What year is funding being requested?
- Project Delivery Record. Has the sponsor expeditiously delivered projects funded in prior cycles?
- Air Quality. Contributes to maintaining or improving air quality.

8. Instructions for Submitting Project Applications

Application packets must include the following items for each project submittal:

- Application Form (Appendix B)
- Resolution or Minute Order

Applicants must submit one electronic copy of the completed application, in MSWord or PDF format. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicants for completion. All projects must be approved by the County Board of Supervisors or City Council prior to submission of the applications. A copy of the resolution or minute order detailing approval must be included with the application.

The deadline for all submittals is May 3, 2019 at 5 p.m. Applications must be submitted to:

Calaveras Council of Governments
P.O. Box 280
444 E. Saint Charles St., Suite A
San Andreas, CA 95249

Submission via email are acceptable and must be sent to: ekelly@calacog.org

Attachments:

- A. 2019 Timely Use of Funds Policy
- B. 2019 Application