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C/CAG Lifeline Transportation Program Cycle 7 Call for Projects

The City/County Association Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) is pleased to announce the call for projects for the Lifeline Transportation Program (LTP) Cycle 7 for FY 24-25 through FY 25-26. This program is designed to help low-income residents by funding transportation projects that will improve their mobility options. Public agencies including transit agencies, city/ county social service agencies, cities, counties, and non-profit organizations are encouraged to apply. Please see the general program information below.

Introduction

The Lifeline Transportation Program is aimed to fund projects, identified through the community-based transportation planning (CBTP) process, which improves the mobility of low-income residents.

Projects must target and serve low-income communities in San Mateo County. Additionally, projects must have measurable deliverables and the project sponsor must possess the ability to effectively reach the low-income communities in need. Projects identified in San Mateo Community Based Transportation Plans (CBTPs) will be prioritized in the scoring process. However, projects identified through other relevant planning efforts in other low-income areas are also eligible.

Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects, include (but are not limited to):

- Transit and Active Transportation Capital Projects: Examples of eligible capital projects include, but are not limited to, purchase of vehicles, provision of bus shelters, benches, lighting, active transportation improvements or other enhancements, micromobility programs, or hiring a mobility manager to improve transportation access for residents of low-income communities.
- Transit Operations Projects: Examples of operating projects may include, but are not limited to, new or enhanced fixed route transit services, transit voucher programs, mobility programs, educational and outreach projects, restoration or continuation of lifeline-related transit services, and shuttles.

Available Funding and Local Match

There is \$4,500,000 million available in State Transit Assistance (STA) funding for the C/CAG Lifeline Transportation Program Cycle 7.

Grant amount minimums and maximums are as follows:

- \$50,000 to \$120,000 for transit based educational and outreach projects
- \$100,000 to \$625,000 for shuttle and operation projects, transit or active transportation capital projects, transit pass programs, and fixed transit route services.

C/CAG Lifeline Transportation Program Cycle 7 requires a minimum local match of 20% of the total project cost.

Evaluation Criteria/Selection Process

After projects are screened for eligibility, a selection panel will then assess the quality of each submittal based on evaluation criteria below:

- a. *Project Need/Goals and Objectives (25 pts)*: Applicants should describe the unmet transportation need or gap that the proposed project seeks to address and the relevant planning effort that documents the need. Describe how project activities will mitigate the transportation need. Capital or operations projects (sponsored by public transit operators or in partnership with non-profits or cities) that support and augment but are not traditional fixed route projects may be given extra points under this criteria. Project application should clearly state the overall program goals and objectives and demonstrate how the project is consistent with the goals of the Lifeline Transportation Program.
- b. *Community-Identified Priority (25 pts)*: Priority should be given to projects that directly address transportation gaps and/or barriers identified through a Community-Based Transportation Plan (CBTP) or other substantive local planning effort involving focused inclusive engagement to low-income populations. Applicants should identify the CBTP or other substantive local planning effort, as well as the priority given to the project in the plan.

Other projects may also be considered, such as those that address transportation needs identified in countywide or regional welfare-to-work transportation plans, the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, or other documented assessment of needs within designated communities of concern. Findings emerging from one or more CBTPs or other relevant planning efforts may also be applied to other low-income areas, or otherwise be directed to serve low-income constituencies within the county, as applicable.

A map of Equity Priority Communities (EPCs) is included as part of the Report for Plan Bay Area 2050, is available at:

https://mtc.ca.gov/sites/default/files/Equity_Priority_Communities.pdf

- c. *Implementation Plan and Project Management Capacity (20 pts):* For projects seeking funds to support program operations, applicants must provide a well-defined service operations plan, and describe implementation steps and timelines for carrying out the plan. For projects seeking funds for capital purposes, applicants must provide an implementation plan, milestones and timelines for completing the project. Priority should be given to projects that are ready to be implemented in the timeframe that the funding is available. Project sponsors should describe and provide evidence of their organization's ability to provide and manage the proposed project, including experience providing services for low-income persons, and experience as a recipient of state or federal transportation funds. For continuation projects that have previously received Lifeline funding, project sponsor should describe project progress and outcomes.
- d. *Coordination and Program Outreach (20 pts):* Proposed projects will be evaluated based on their ability to coordinate with other community transportation and/or social service resources. Applicants should clearly identify project stakeholders, and how they will keep stakeholders involved and informed throughout the project. Applicants should also describe how the project will be marketed and promoted to the public.
- e. *Cost-Effectiveness and Performance Indicators (10 pts):* The project will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to demonstrate that the project is the most appropriate way in which to address the identified transportation need and is a cost-effective approach. Applicants must also identify clear, measurable outcome-based performance measures to track the effectiveness of the service in meeting the identified goals. A plan should be provided for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the service, as well as steps to be taken if original goals are not achieved.
- f. *Project Budget/Sustainability (10 pts):* Applicants must submit a clearly defined project budget, indicating anticipated project expenditures and revenues, including documentation of matching funds. Proposals should address long-term efforts and identify potential funding sources for sustaining the project beyond the grant period.

Eligible Applicants & STA Fund Administration

If your agency is not an STA recognized transit operator, you must obtain sponsorship to apply for funds through an eligible transit agency, such as SamTrans. Proof of sponsorship, in the form of a letter from a transit agency must be attached with your application. Please note that transit agencies will require an administrative fee to be budgeted in your project cost for passing through STA funds.

Private for-profit entities are not eligible to receive Lifeline Transportation Program funds.

Timely Use of Funds

All Lifeline Transportation Program STA funds must be fully expended within two years of the date that the funds are programmed by MTC or the date that the agreement with pass-through agency is executed, whichever is applicable.

As the program administrator, C/CAG is responsible for monitoring the timely use of funds and the consistency with the original purpose, scope, and budget approved by the C/CAG Board.

Application Process

Applications are due **on Friday, February 16, 2024 at 12:00 noon**. Late applications will not be considered. One (1) electronic version of the application shall be submitted via e-mail to C/CAG Staff, Eva Gaye, at egaye@smcgov.org

Applicant Workshop

One (1) applicant workshop will be open to all entities interested in applying for funding and will cover the application procedures for the C/CAG Lifeline Transportation Program Cycle 7 Call for Projects. The workshop information is as follows:

Date and Time: January 10, 2024 (meeting information to follow)

Location: Zoom Videoconference

In addition, virtual office hours will be held by C/CAG Staff to provide additional guidance for project sponsors. Office hours will be held on:

Date and Time: January 24, 2024 (meeting information to follow)

Location: Zoom Videoconference

Public Workshop

Two (2) public workshops will be open to all members of the public. The workshop information is as follows:

Date and Time: January 11 2024 and January 15, 2024 (meeting information to follow)

Location: Zoom Videoconference

Call for Projects Schedule

Event	Date
Call for Projects Issued	December 18, 2023
Applicant Workshop	January 10, 2024 from 2PM-3PM
Applicant Office Hours	January 24, 2024 from 1PM-2PM

Public Workshop	January 11, 2024 from 2PM-3PM January 15, 2024 from 6PM-7PM
Applications Due	February 16, 2024
Selection Panel Reviews Applications	February 27, 2024
C/CAG Committees Consider Recommendation	April 2024
C/CAG Board Considers Recommendations	May 2024

Please contact Jeff Lacap at jlacap@smcgov.org for questions regarding the program or application process.