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From: Gabriel Gutierrez
Senior Regional Planner

Subject: **Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) Call for Projects**

Purpose of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP)

The STBGP provides flexible funding that localities may use for projects to preserve and improve conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals. The STBGP promotes flexibility in local transportation decisions and provides flexible funding to best address regional and local transportation needs.

Eligible costs for funds under this program include preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition, capital costs, and construction costs associated with an eligible activity.

Eligible Recipients

STBGP funding is available to local agencies in the TCAG region whose projects are fully or partially¹ located within the Visalia Urbanized Area Boundary (Visalia UZA). This includes the following jurisdictions: Visalia, Tulare, Farmersville, Exeter, and portions of the County of Tulare located within the Visalia UZA. Caltrans is also an eligible agency for projects located within the Visalia UZA.

Program Funding Availability and Project Selection

TCAG has approximately \$12 million available for this call for projects. The time period for implementation is from Fall 2022 to April 1, 2026. Please note however that the amount of STBGP funds available is subject to change based on future federal authorization actions, TCAG Board action, and urban boundary changes by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

¹ "Partially" located refers to projects located adjacent to the Visalia Urbanized Area (UZA) and that demonstrate direct benefits to UZA.

TCAG will evaluate STBGP applications received via a call for projects and award projects in accordance with the following scoring criteria. The maximum points available for each criterion is shown in parentheses.

1. Project addresses operations and maintenance (45 points)
2. Project improves safety (10 points)
3. Project relieves congestion (15 points)
4. Project is construction-ready (5 points)
5. Leveraging Funds (25 points)

Projects are awarded in the order of the scores received (highest to lowest) until all funding is exhausted. Those projects not selected will be placed on a contingency list and will remain eligible for funding should awarded projects fail to obligate funds in a timely manner. Projects on the contingency list will remain eligible for funding until the next STBGP call for projects.

The minimum match requirement for the STBGP program is 11.47 percent. If available, toll credits may be used to cover the match requirement. Projects requesting toll credits will not be eligible to receive leveraging points.

Cost Increases

Cost increases on projects from original applications will be borne by the implementing agency. In circumstances where an agency feels the cost increase is warranted from STBGP funds, the agency and TCAG staff can present that request to the TCAG Board for case-by-case approval.

Eligible Projects

Please see attachment for a listing of eligible projects.

Screening Criteria

Proposed STBGP projects must meet all the following screening requirements, where applicable.

- Project must be included in a local agency-adopted resolution supporting the project.
- Project is eligible for RSTP funding as set forth in 23 USC 133, as amended (see Attachment 2).
- Project applicant is an eligible recipient as described above.
- The project must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- The project must be consistent with the currently approved Regional Transportation Plan.
- The applicant must have financial capacity to complete, operate, and maintain the project.

- Funds required from other sources must be reasonably expected to be available within the time frame needed to carry out the project.

Application and Programming Process

1. Completed applications with supporting documentation are **due January 14, 2022**. They may be submitted electronically to Gabriel Gutierrez at ggutierrez@tularecag.ca.gov. Application packets will consist of a letter authorizing the application(s) from the agency and a completed STBGP Competitive Project Selection Application form.
2. TCAG staff will review applications and confer with agencies on any questions and/or clarifications needed.
3. TCAG staff will present the results of application evaluation to the TCAG Board.
4. The programming of projects will occur. TCAG will confer with agencies regarding the year of delivery.

Attachment
List of Eligible STBGP Projects

ELIGIBLE STBGP PROJECTS (Title 23 USC Section 133)

1. Eligible Projects and Activities:

- Location of Projects (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 23 U.S.C. 133(b)(4)-(11) and described below under "Eligible Activities" (b)(4) through (11);
 - (3) For transportation alternatives projects described in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) before enactment of the FAST Act (these are described in 23 U.S.C. 133(h) and in separate TA Set-Aside guidance.); and (4) As approved by the Secretary.
- Eligible Activities (23 U.S.C. 133(b)): Subject to the location of projects requirements in paragraph (a), the following eligible activities are listed in 23 U.S.C. 133(b):
 - (1) Construction, as defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(4), of the following:
 - i. Highways, bridges, and tunnels, including designated routes of the Appalachian development highway system and local access roads under 40 U.S.C. 14501;
 - ii. Ferry boats and terminal facilities eligible under 23 U.S.C. 129(c);
 - iii. transit capital projects eligible under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code;
 - iv. Infrastructure-based intelligent transportation systems capital improvements, including the installation of vehicle-to-infrastructure communication equipment;
 - v. Truck parking facilities eligible under Section 1401 of MAP-21 (23 U.S.C. 137 note); and
 - vi. Border infrastructure projects eligible under Section 1303 of SAFETEA- LU (23 U.S.C. 101 note).
 - (2) Operational improvements and capital and operating costs for traffic monitoring, management, and control facilities and programs. Operational improvement is defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(18).
 - (3) Environmental measures eligible under 23 U.S.C. 119(g), 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)).
 - (4) Highway and transit safety infrastructure improvements and programs, including railwayhighway grade crossings.

- (5) Fringe and corridor parking facilities and programs in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 137 and carpool projects in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 146. Carpool project is defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(3).
- (6) Recreational trails projects eligible under 23 U.S.C. 206, pedestrian and bicycle projects in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 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 1404 of SAFETEA-LU (23 U.S.C. 402 note).
- (7) Planning, design, or construction of boulevards and other roadways largely in the right-of-way of former Interstate System routes or other divided highways.
- (8) Development and implementation of a State asset management plan for the National Highway System (NHS) and a performance-based management program for other public roads.
- (9) 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.
- (10) Surface transportation planning programs, highway and transit research and development and technology transfer programs, and workforce development, training, and education under chapter 5 of title 23, United States Code.
- (11) Surface transportation infrastructure modifications to facilitate direct intermodal interchange, transfer, and access into and out of a port terminal.
- (12) Projects and strategies designed to support congestion pricing, including electronic toll collection and travel demand management strategies and programs.
- (13) Upon request of a State and subject to the approval of the Secretary, if Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) credit assistance is approved for an STBG eligible project, then the State may use STBG funds to pay the subsidy and administrative costs associated with providing Federal credit assistance for the projects.
- (14) The creation and operation by a State of an office to assist in the design, implementation, and oversight of public-private partnerships eligible to receive funding under title 23 and chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, 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.
- (15) Any type of project eligible under 23 U.S.C. 133 as in effect on the day before the FAST Act was enacted. Among these are:
 - i. Replacement of bridges with fill material;
 - ii. Training of bridge and tunnel inspectors;
 - iii. Application of calcium magnesium acetate, sodium acetate/formate, or other environmentally acceptable, minimally corrosive anti-icing and

deicing compositions for bridges (and approaches to bridges and other elevated structures) and tunnels;

iv. Projects to accommodate other transportation modes continue to be eligible pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 142(c) if such accommodation does not adversely affect traffic safety;

v. Transit capital projects eligible for assistance under chapter 53 of title 49, United States Code, including vehicles and facilities (publicly or privately owned) that are used to provide intercity passenger bus service;

vi. Approach roadways to ferry terminals to accommodate other transportation modes and to provide access into and out of the ports;

vii. Transportation alternatives previously described in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) and described in 23 U.S.C. 213;

viii. Projects relating to intersections having disproportionately high accident rates, high levels of congestion (as evidenced by interrupted traffic flow at the intersection and a level of service rating of "F" during peak travel hours, calculated in accordance with the Highway Capacity Manual), and are located on a Federal-aid highway;

ix. Construction and operational improvements for any minor collector if the minor collector and the project to be carried out are in the same corridor and in proximity to an NHS route; the construction or improvements will enhance the level of service on the NHS route and improve regional traffic flow; and the construction or improvements are more cost-effective, as determined by a benefit-cost analysis, than an improvement to the NHS route;

x. Workforce development, training, and education activities discussed in 23 U.S.C. 504(e);

xi. Advanced truck stop electrification systems. Truck stop electrification system is defined in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(32);

xii. Installation of safety barriers and nets on bridges, hazard eliminations, projects to mitigate hazards caused by wildlife;

xiii. Electric vehicle and natural gas vehicle infrastructure in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 137;

xiv. Data collection, maintenance, and integration and the costs associated with obtaining, updating, and licensing software and equipment required for risk-based asset management and performance based management, and for similar activities related to the development and implementation of a performance based management program for other public roads;

xv. Construction of any bridge in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 144(f) that replaces any low water crossing (regardless of the length of the low water crossing); any bridge that was destroyed prior to January 1, 1965; any ferry that was in existence on January 1, 1984; or any road bridge that is rendered obsolete as a result of a Corps of Engineers flood control or channelization project and is not rebuilt with funds from the Corps of

Engineers. Not subject to the Location of Project requirement in 23 U.S.C. 133(c); and

xvi. Actions in accordance with the definition and conditions in 23 U.S.C. 144(g) to preserve or reduce the impact of a project on the historic integrity of a historic bridge if the load capacity and safety features of the historic bridge are adequate to serve the intended use for the life of the historic bridge. Not subject to the Location of Project requirement in 23 U.S.C. 133(c)

Application

**Tulare County Association of Governments
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program
Competitive Project Selection
Application**

An electronic copy of the application may be emailed to gguierrez@tularecag.ca.gov.

General Application Questions

Implementing Agency's Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

General Project Information

Project Name: _____

Summary of Project Scope Summary of existing conditions, project scope, location, what the project is intended to do and the expected benefits:

Project Delivery Schedule

Phase	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	Total
STBGP Funds					
PE					
ROW					
CON					
Subtotal					
Local Funds					
PE					
ROW					
CON					
Subtotal					
Other Funds					
PE					
ROW					
CON					
Subtotal					
Total Project Cost					
PE					
ROW					
CON					
Grand Total					

Leveraging Funds: Points for leveraging funds will be awarded based on the amount of non-STBGP funding pledged to the project. A maximum of 25 points are available as follows:

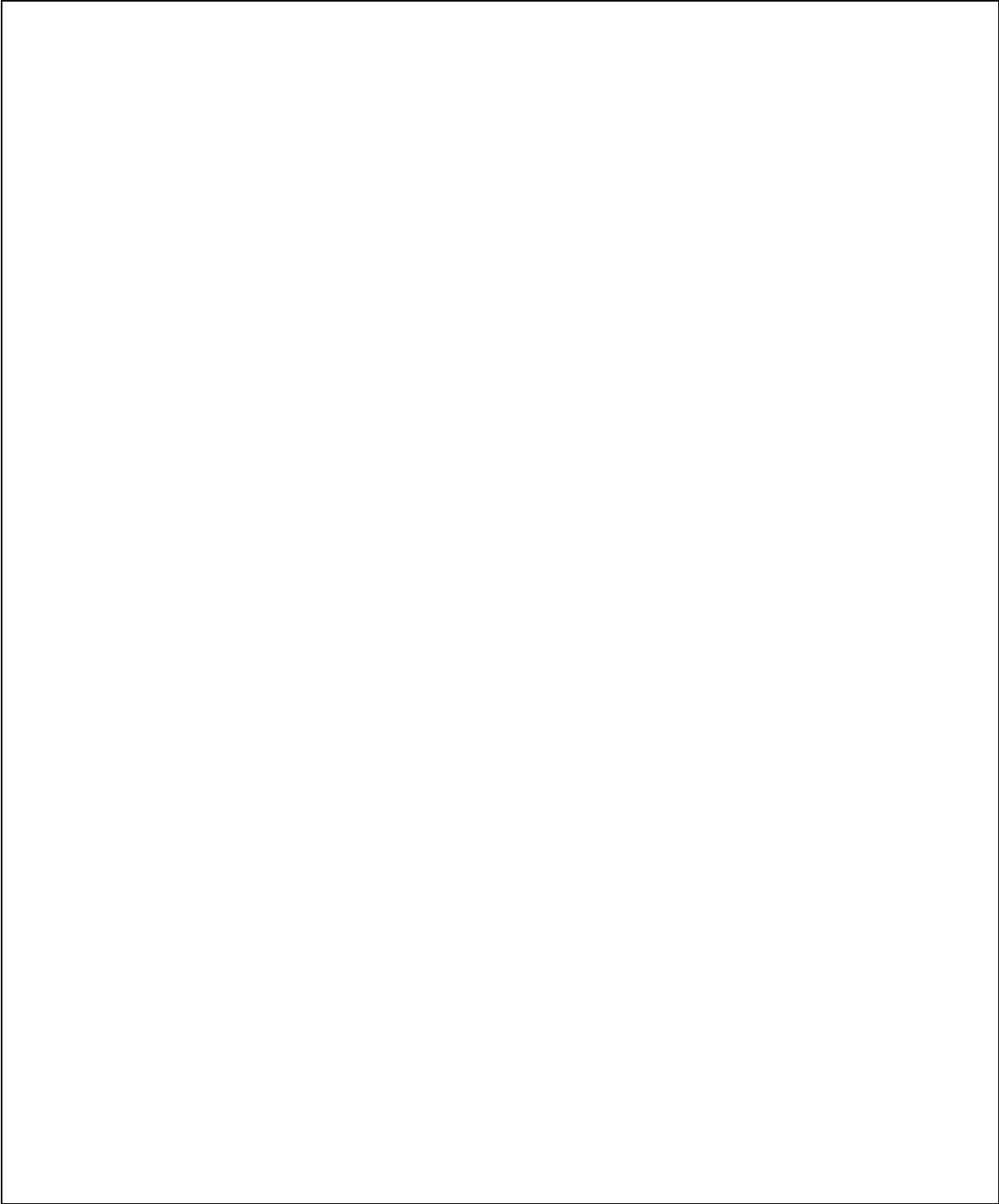
Points	Amount Leveraged
5 Points	11.47% to less than 15% of total project cost
10 Points	More than 15% to less than 20% of total project cost
15 Points	More than 20% to less than 30% of total project cost
20 Points	More than 30% to less than 40% of total project cost
25 Points	More than 40% of total project cost

*Agencies may continue to request toll credits (if available) to meet the required federal match requirement of 11.47%. However, if toll credits are used to meet the required match, no leveraging points will be awarded to the project.

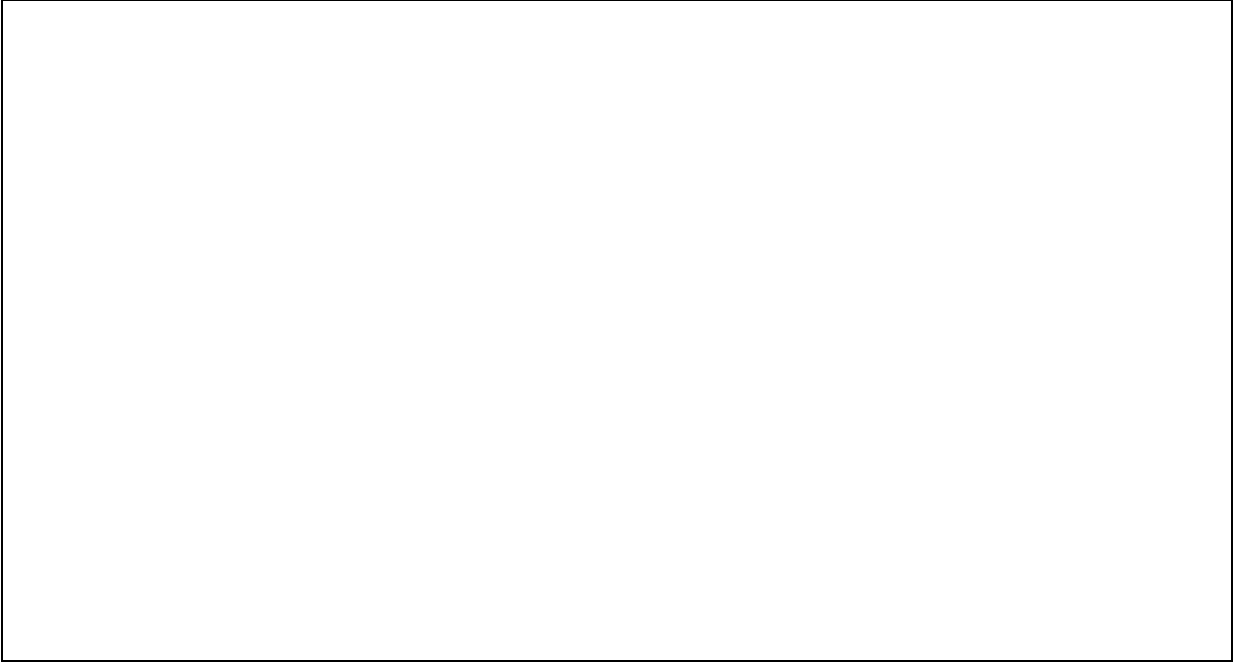
Narrative Questions

Project addresses operations and maintenance: Explain how the project addresses the operation and/or maintenance of existing infrastructure. Describe current condition of roads and/or assets and how the project will improve current condition, including estimated lifespan and pavement condition index information, if applicable. (45 points)

Project improves safety: Explain how the project addresses safety and/or security issues and demonstrate how the project improvements will remedy potential safety hazards. Include data to clearly demonstrate these issues. (10 points)

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Project relieves congestion: Explain how the project relieves congestion and/or expands the current infrastructure system without negatively affecting conformity requirements. (15 points)



Project is construction-ready: Points will be awarded to project applications which: 1) show an adequate level of planning and coordination conducted for the project and that the project is clear of apparent controversy; and 2) describe the project's current level of readiness to proceed; and 3) describes the agency's ability and commitment to deliver the project on time and within budget. (5 points)

