



SACOG Board of Directors

June 9, 2011

Release of Guidelines for 2011-12 Funding Round

Issue: SACOG is preparing for the biennial funding round process scheduled to begin this summer. A review and update of existing program guidelines and applications is underway to help ensure a successful and transparent programming process. This process applies to Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties; El Dorado and Placer counties have their own programs.

Recommendation: The Transportation Committee recommends that the Board (1) approve the updated guidelines for the Community Design, Bicycle & Pedestrian and Regional/Local Programs and (2) release the 2011-12 Funding Round call for projects for the Community Design, Bicycle & Pedestrian, and Regional/Local Programs.

Discussion: The Transportation Committee requested that staff add performance outcomes and selection considerations to the Bicycle & Pedestrian Program Guidelines. These changes are reflected in Attachment D.

In developing the 2009-10 Programming Round, SACOG staff went to extensive efforts to improve the transparency in the programming process. Efforts included seeking input from local agencies in the SACOG region and holding peer review sessions with other Metropolitan Planning Organizations to share information on programming processes and criteria. An outcome of this effort was that processes and guidelines were updated for the Air Quality, Bicycle & Pedestrian, Community Design, and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) funding programs. Additionally, new guidelines and processes were developed and implemented for SACOG's largest funding program, Regional/Local. Because of this extensive update effort in 2009-10 and the feedback gathered from local government applicants following the round, staff is proposing to carry forward the same screening criteria, performance measures, and policies for the 2011-12 Regional/Local Funding Round process. The Bicycle & Pedestrian Funding Program has expanded project eligibility to include all projects in the Master Plan; this provides local agencies with maximum flexibility and opportunity. Staff is currently revisiting the application submittal and review process to update and refine supporting materials that reflect important changes for use in the funding cycle. An application/training workshop will be held in the summer for each program.

While there is still much uncertainty concerning the amount of funds available for programming, as state and updated federal funding revenues have not been released, staff believes that releasing the 2012 Funding Round guidelines now will allow more time for the preparation of applications and the selection process. In the last round, staff received the most feedback from our partners concerning the need for more application preparation time for the Regional/Local and Bicycle & Pedestrian programs. Applicants of the prior cycle (Round 4) of the Community Design program were each contacted recently for feedback, and they did not request any substantive changes for Round 5.

Program Guidelines and summary information about the Regional/Local, Bicycle & Pedestrian and Community Design programs are attached.

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Attachments

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2011 Draft Schedule

Description	Bike/Ped	Community Design	Regional Local
Board Approval of Program Guidelines	June 16	June 16	June 16
Release Call for Projects	June 17-20	June 17-20	June 17-20
Application Information and Training	June 29	June 30; July 12	June 29
Pre Submittal Letters Due	N/A	August 3	N/A
Applications Due	August 22	August 17	September 7
Board Release of Draft Project List	November 17	November 17	November 17
Board Approval of Projects	December 15	December 15	December 15
RTIP Submittal to CTC	December 15	December 15	December 15

INFORMATION	BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FUNDING PROGRAM	COMMUNITY DESIGN FUNDING PROGRAM	LOCAL & REGIONAL FUNDING PROGRAM
Objective of program	Fund capital and non-capital bicycle and pedestrian projects throughout Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, & Yuba counties	Promote the implementation and construction of the Blueprint principles with public right-of-way improvements	Fund regional and local projects throughout Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, & Yuba counties which align with SACOG overall policy considerations identified by the Board in 2010
Funding available in 2010 round	\$8.6 million	\$12.3 million through program, and \$5 million using “recycled” prior programmed funds	\$59 million
Estimated funding available for 2012 round	To be determined	To be determined Amount will be a minimum of \$8 million	To be determined
Feedback during 2010 round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application period too short ▪ Application process didn’t take into account “color of money” ▪ Only “high priority” projects in the Master Plan were eligible to apply ▪ Intercommunity vs. intracommunity projects ▪ Definition of “good” bicycle and pedestrian circulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Retain the application and selection process ▪ Provide earlier guidance on funding source for awarded projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application period too short ▪ Application process didn’t take into account “color of money”
Proposed refinement to program/ guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application period is longer ▪ SACOG staff have more time to review project selection & select proper fund type ▪ All projects in the Master Plan may be eligible to apply ▪ Work with Bike/Ped Committee on definition clarification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No substantive changes to the application or selection process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Application period is longer ▪ SACOG staff have more time to review project selection & select proper fund type ▪ Clarify and update text to align with 2012 detail
Link to prior guidelines	http://www.sacog.org/regionalfunding/fundingprograms_bikeped-overview.cfm	http://www.sacog.org/regionalfunding/communitydesign.cfm	http://www.sacog.org/regionalfunding/fundingprograms.cfm
Proposed Application Release/ Due date	June 17–20; August 22, 2011	June 17–20; August 17, 2011	June 17–20; September 7, 2011

DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR SACOG REGIONAL/LOCAL FUNDING PROGRAM

A. Overall Policy Considerations

In September 2009, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Board of Directors approved five policy considerations for the Regional/Local Funding Program as part of the 2010 Funding Round. As part of the 2012 Funding Round, SACOG is proposing to continue to use these polices to guide the funding process; text has been updated and refined to reflect necessary changes for 2012 implementation:

▪ **Honor Prior Funding Commitments**

SACOG will continue to honor prior funding commitments made to other agencies and adopted transportation control measures identified in the air quality State Implementation Plan.

▪ **Emphasize Cost-Effective Programming Decisions**

The current constrained funding environment calls for placing an even greater emphasis on making the most cost-effective programming decisions. Projects will be expected to perform better with fewer funding resources, so the focus can be on more immediate needs (e.g., projects within the next 10 years of the MTP). The appropriate types of funding will be matched to the best projects for those fund types.

▪ **Fix it First, or Maintain Facilities in a State of Good Repair**

The current poor economic situation, as reflected in local and state transportation budgets, is significantly straining the ability of member agencies to operate and maintain existing facilities and services. The funding from this programming round will help support local agencies while also advancing longer-term policy objectives from the MTP. Road rehabilitation projects will be allowed to compete in the Regional/Local funding program for this round as long as they also include elements that support complete streets and corridor features appropriate to an urban, small community, or rural context.

▪ **Focus on Small or Medium-Sized Capital Projects**

The Regional/Local Funding Program is an important source of capital funding. In past funding cycles, capital projects providing regional benefits have been awarded funds through the Regional/Local program. A challenge for this policy priority is the limited number of projects that could be funded if the fall programming revenue is severely constrained. For the federal and state funds that are available, the emphasis will be on small- and medium-sized projects.

▪ **Support Project Development Phases for Future Funding Opportunities**

The recent one-time funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the Proposition 1B funding programs demonstrate the need to have “shelf ready” capital projects that are delivered and thereby ready to utilize funding from competitive programs likely to appear in the near future (e.g., reauthorization of the federal transportation bill, future proposition 1B rounds, etc.). A relatively small but strategically allocated portion of

the total revenue (no more than five percent without further Transportation Committee discussion) may go to early project development efforts.

B. Project Screening Considerations

All of the following conditions must be met for a project to proceed in the programming process. Failure to meet each screening consideration will eliminate the project from further consideration.

1. The project must be listed in the MTP or a lump sum project category.
2. The project must be scheduled to begin construction no later than FFY 2017 with preliminary engineering and environmental analysis scheduled within three years.
3. The project costs and schedule estimate for environmental, engineering, ROW and start-up construction must be believable, based on standards for similar projects.
4. The project sponsor must have a track record that demonstrates technical capacity and reliability for similar projects.
5. A request for construction funding must demonstrate that environmental, engineering and ROW will be ready by the time funds are requested and the financial ability for ongoing operations and maintenance.
6. The project must be consistent with complete streets requirements (as applicable; <http://www.sacog.org/complete-streets/toolkit/START.html>).

C. Project Performance Outcomes and Selection Considerations

1. A regional reduction in VMT per household/per capita
2. A regional reduction in congested VMT per household/per capita
3. An increase in multi-modal travel/alternative travel/choice of transportation options
4. Provide long-term economic benefit within the region, recognizing the importance of sustaining both the urban and rural economies
5. Improve goods movement, including farm-to-market travel, in and through the region
6. Significantly improve safety and security

Other Selection Considerations:

1. Special consideration will be given to agencies submitting a joint-proposal project; in other words, a project that can demonstrate multi-jurisdictional participation and benefits will receive some level of priority.
2. Special consideration will be given to agencies submitting a project for which the agency has already funded the initial phases with its own resources (i.e., environmental, design and/or right-of-way).

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PROGRAM

The purpose of this funding program is to provide facilities for walking and biking in the cities and towns of the region and to provide connections between them. Also, the efficiency of the transportation system is a key component of achieving the goals set forth by the Blueprint Planning Process. In the preferred Blueprint Scenario, bicycling and walking are integral to the types of development patterns depicted in the Blueprint Preferred Scenario and are necessary for its successful implementation. Projects and programs funded through this program must support the implementation of the Blueprint Preferred Scenario and planning principles.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities in new developments are expected to be paid for by developers in cooperation with cities and counties.¹ Further, facilities that serve strictly recreational trips or equestrians are also expected to obtain other funding.

In November 2004, SACOG adopted the *Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian and Trails Master Plan*, which was subsequently amended in 2005, 2007, 2009, and 2011. This plan provides the eligible pool of projects for this funding program. The *Master Plan* is a product of the efforts of SACOG's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The *Master Plan* contains a list of planned projects from around the region, and jurisdictions were encouraged to rank their projects in priority order.

In selecting the projects to fund from the projects listed in the *Master Plan*, costs, benefits and the goals listed below will be considered.

Capital Project Goals

For a community pursuing bicycle and pedestrian improvements, its top priority should be to provide local intra-community bicycle and pedestrian connections. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities achieve the greatest good when they provide safe, comfortable, and convenient options for travel in areas where popular destinations are within short distances. Intercommunity projects are bicycle and/or pedestrian connections that link communities within and between the large, medium, and small cities and towns of the four-county region. In addition to local intra-community connections, bicyclists and pedestrians also need to have options for medium and long distance travel on facilities that are safe, comfortable, and convenient. An intercommunity project should have good bicycle and/or pedestrian circulation at both ends of the segment. Specifically, projects should:

1. Provide connections within or through the central business districts.
2. Provide connections to regional and local public transit systems, at stops, stations, and terminals.

¹ Local agencies and developers should refer to the Federal Highway Administration's *Design Guidance for Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel* for a list of good practices in new developments. The SACOG funding program is not intended to be used to fund these basic good practices.

3. Provide connections within, through, or to regional and local activity centers such as schools, libraries, community centers, colleges, universities, hospitals, medical offices, senior residences, parks, athletic facilities, government services, employment centers, and high-density residential or mixed-use areas.
4. Fill in gaps on existing, planned, or proposed bicycle or pedestrian routes, including intercommunity routes.
5. Provide bicycle and pedestrian access across barriers such as arterial roads, highways, freeways, rivers, canals, creeks, and railroads.
6. Improve the time convenience of walking and bicycling, for example with shortcuts or special facilities such as bike/pedestrian boulevards.
7. Improve the safety and security of walking and bicycling.
8. Provide an aesthetic, pleasant, or more comfortable biking or walking experience.
9. Provide capital facilities that support bicycling, such as storage, parking, or bike stations.
10. Complement projects funded with other regional or state sources such as the Community Design or Safe Routes to School programs, thereby improving bicycle and/or pedestrian access provided by those programs.
11. Complement bicycle and pedestrian plans and projects in an adjacent region.

Non-capital Projects and Programs Goals

1. Encourage biking and walking through public information, education, and awareness.
2. Where needed, perform studies and develop plans that support the goals for capital facilities stated above.
3. Increase the level of public agency staff expertise on bicycling and walking.

Eligible Project Types

The following projects and programs may be funded wholly or in part and are not in priority order:

General Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

1. New sidewalks and pedestrian paths
2. Improvements to existing pedestrian facilities
3. Improved street crossings, including mid-block crossings
4. Curb extensions and median refuge islands
5. Bicycle signals and sensors at intersections
6. Pedestrian signal detection
7. Lighting for bicyclists and pedestrians

8. Signage and pavement markings
9. Traffic calming beneficial to bicyclists and pedestrians
10. Streetscaping that shades bicyclists and pedestrians
11. Upgrades to existing bikeways, including loop detectors or signal detection, pavement rehabilitation on shared-use paths, etc.
12. Class I shared-use paths and paved trails
13. Class II bike lanes
14. Bike boulevards
15. Short-cuts²
16. Bicycle/pedestrian bridges, tunnels, undercrossings and additions to rail/vehicle bridges and tunnels
17. Improvements to substandard railroad track crossings, when appropriate
18. Portion of one-way street reversion to two-way street that benefits bicyclists or pedestrians
19. Bicycle parking and storage
20. Attended bicycle parking facilities or bike stations
21. Changing and shower facilities (in limited circumstances)
22. Project feasibility studies
23. Land acquisition for capital projects

School-related Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

1. Local school bikeway and pedestrian projects
2. Bicycle and pedestrian access improvements to and through colleges and universities

Transit-related Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

1. On-board bicycle storage
2. Station or terminal bicycle storage
3. Transit stop/station bicycle and pedestrian access projects
4. Express bus services for bicyclists

² An example of a short-cut project is the land acquisition and a bicycle/pedestrian path that connects a neighborhood to local retail center, library, or school, shortening the travel time and providing convenient and safer access.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, Education, Information and Marketing

1. Bicycle and pedestrian master plans
2. Design manuals
3. Motorist education about sharing the road with bicyclists and pedestrians
4. Public agency staff training
5. Bicycle/pedestrian coordinator positions (up to two years)
6. Public relations campaigns
7. Public service announcements
8. Mapping projects
9. Brochures and pamphlets
10. Skills training
11. Education on health benefits

Ineligible Project Types

Projects and programs that are not eligible include facilities that serve only a recreational, rather than a transportation function, projects in new developments that are considered “good practices” according to FHWA guidelines, bicycle and pedestrian facility maintenance, school education programs, long-term staff positions, transit operations (except for bus services for bicyclists), law enforcement, and bicycle racks for carpools, vanpools, or private vehicles.

Project Screening for Capital Projects

To be selected for funding, a project or program must meet both of the following screening criteria:

1. It is included in the Master Plan as a planned project. Only under very special circumstances will an application be considered that is not listed in the Master Plan.
2. It must be ready for inclusion into the *Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program*, with project scope and cost. The project application may include the cost of preparing environmental documents. However, for large projects that will necessitate a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the EIS can be funded separately from the design and construction of the project (which should seek funding in a later round of funding).

Project Performance Outcomes For Capital Projects (Background in Goals Section)

1. Barrier elimination
2. Gap closure
3. Connections to/within activity centers

4. Increases the number of bicycle and walking trips (reduces Vehicles Miles Travelled)
5. Improves safety/security for bicyclists and pedestrians

Selection Considerations

1. Project fulfills program goals and performance outcomes
2. Cost-effectiveness is achieved by minimizing projected capital and operating expenditures while offering strong performance benefits
3. Sponsor agency commitment to implement the project, as evident by non-SACOG source funding commitments and inclusion in local policy documents

Other Considerations

1. Capital projects that support Blueprint implementation will be given priority over non-capital projects and programs, although up to 10 percent of the funding in a round may be used for non-capital projects.
2. The project is closely related to local activity center/compact development area, and identified in the local general plan that will be implemented soon but is beyond what is required of the developer to pay for.
3. A bicycle or pedestrian project located in an undeveloped area that connects two developed areas with good circulation, particularly in areas with land use planning consistent with Blueprint principles.
4. Projects that benefit both public transit or roadways and bicycling/walking may be funded partially from this funding source with the expectation that transit or roadway funding sources will pay for the remainder.
5. The same type of program or project has been implemented successfully elsewhere.
6. For inter-community projects, priority given to those proposals offering evidence of strong support by all local jurisdictions where the project is located.

Additional Information

The minimum project size for this funding program is \$167,205 (\$150,000 funding award + \$17,205 local match). Public agencies applying for funding for smaller projects may want to consider combining projects to meet the \$167,205 threshold, or consider a larger, multi-year program or project. The exceptions to this rule are funding for plans, short-term bicycle and pedestrian coordinator positions, or projects that would qualify for Federal Transit Agency Enhancement funds.

The application process will be specific to the Bicycle and Pedestrian program, although SACOG staff will present a recommendation for funding to the SACOG Board of Directors for all of the funding programs together.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)

**ROUND 5 COMMUNITY DESIGN
FUNDING PROGRAM (2011-2013)**

PROPOSED PROGRAM GUIDELINES

(Anticipated Review and Action by the SACOG Board of Directors June 16, 2011)

PROPOSED RELEASE DATE: Friday, June 17, 2011

APPLICATIONS DUE: 4 p.m., Wednesday, August 17, 2011

This document contains information regarding the Sacramento Area Council of Government's Community Design Program for 2011-13 (Round 5). The program provides grants to local government agencies and their partners to implement the SACOG Blueprint Principles or smart growth. Approximately every two years the program releases the program and application guidelines. This document provides background and instructions for submitting an application:

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)** provides a summary background of the program, the application requirements and other basic information.
- **Section 1** serves as the program guidelines for Community Design. It includes the purpose of the program, how the program is managed and practical information that applicants should consider when preparing an application based on the selection process from prior funding rounds.
- **Section 2** is the Application Guidelines and contains the specific instructions regarding the submittal requirements, including timelines and optional workshops. (NOTE: This section is NOT included in this review draft, but will be publicly released with the Section 1 and the FAQ.)

Please note that this program only applies to jurisdictions in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties. Jurisdictions in El Dorado and Placer Counties have separate programs for their funds.

The Frequently Asked Questions portion of this document will be updated as questions come up and posted on the SACOG website at www.sacog.org

Round 5 Community Design Funding Program (2011-13)
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**Section 2: Application Guidelines for Community Design Funding Program –
NOT INCLUDED IN THIS REVIEW DRAFT**

Round 5 Community Design Funding Program (2011-13)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(Updated May 23, 2011)

This section, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), provides the basic information about the program for potential applicants. However, if applying, the applicant is expected to fully review the guideline information described in Section 1 and 2 of this document. If there are any clarifications or information on the guidelines after June 17, 2011, then this FAQ will be updated on the SACOG website at www.sacog.org

What is the Community Design Funding Program?

The Community Design Program was established in 2003 by the SACOG Board of Directors to provide financial assistance to implement the principles of the Blueprint Project: mixed land uses, transportation options, housing choice, compact development, use existing assets, quality design, and natural resource protection. The program offers funding for projects by local jurisdictions that implement these principles, but only in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties. El Dorado and Placer counties have their own programs.

How much funding will be awarded in this round?

Staff will recommend that the SACOG Board approve a minimum of \$8 million for Round 5 of the program. In the prior cycle, Round 4, the Board approved a minimum of \$12 million, and used \$5.5 million in “recycled” funds (unused and/or defaulted project funding from prior rounds.) The reason for the decrease in Round 5 is that SACOG staff anticipates a decrease in federal and state transportation funding revenues to SACOG. Staff will also propose that the Board may be requested to fund more depending on the selection process and the recommendations made by the two review committees.

What kinds of projects are eligible?

Generally speaking, this program provides support funding for improvements to public right-of-ways that promote smart growth and sponsored by an eligible public agency. Because federal transportation funds are used for this program, awarded projects must be “federal aid eligible”. This means that projects must have a significant element involving transportation – the construction of infrastructure, environmental review, design or right-of-way purchase are general tasks that are eligible for these funds. The most common prototype project is one where the grant funds street improvements along a corridor that has infill development with private capital committed. However, the program cannot fund elements of projects that already conditionally required of projects. In other words, the eligible activities that this project will fund must be “over and above” the requirements that the governing local jurisdiction would place on the project.

Planning activities by themselves are generally not eligible, with the possible exception of the Category 3 projects described later. The main reason is the sources of funds in this round do not allow for pure planning projects in most cases.

Because the issue of eligibility is so critical to the program, each project is reviewed on a case-by-case basis for eligibility. Applicants must submit a pre-submittal letter to SACOG; and, in return, SACOG and Caltrans staff will reply with a letter stating whether the project is eligible and any foreseeable concerns the project is raising. Potential applicants are required to work with their public works staff or equivalent who are trained in managing federal aid requirements, and with SACOG staff throughout the application, selection and funding stages of the program.

It is strongly recommended that the applicant contact the SACOG Program Manager before sending in the pre-submittal letter regarding the project eligibility.

Who can apply? What jurisdictions are eligible?

Local jurisdictions in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties that have a master agreement with Caltrans to receive federal transportation funding are eligible to apply for Community Design Program funds. This may include cities, counties, air districts, and transit districts. Potential applicants unaware of their eligibility are advised to check with SACOG or Caltrans staff. Jurisdictions in El Dorado and Placer counties have a separate Memorandum of Understanding with SACOG and receive their share of federal aid through a different process.

Are applicants required to provide a local match?

Yes. The recipient must provide a minimum of 11.47 percent match in non-federal funds, as is required in all federal aid funding projects. This means for every \$100,000 of federal funds requested from the program, the applicant is required to match a minimum of \$12,957. (Or for every \$100,000 of total project costs (grant and match combined), the program will pay up to \$88,530 for every \$11,470 of match provided by the project sponsor.) Applications in all three program funding categories must meet this minimum match regardless of which funding source the awardee receives. In past funding rounds, the Selection Committee has also generally construed higher local match amounts as stronger, more committed applications.

What are the critical dates?

The most important date is the applications are **due on 4 p.m., Wednesday, August 17, 2011**. The applications guidelines were released by SACOG on Friday, June 17th. A pre-submittal letter is required before an applicant is permitted to submit an application; the last day that SACOG will accept pre-submittal letters is Wednesday, August 3. There will be two identical, optional Program Overview/Grantwriting 101 Workshops on Thursday, June 30 and on Tuesday, July 12 (participants who attend the workshop are offered the incentive of SACOG staff reviewing drafts of applications for general-level comments). The SACOG Board of Directors will be asked to approve the recommended projects on December 15, 2011.

Projects receiving grant funding in Round 5 will be evaluated by how quickly they can be delivered, generally considered within three years of funding. However, because of the availability of funding sources has been limited in prior funding rounds, it is reasonably possible that a project cannot receive its awarded funding until programming years farther into the future. This is inconvenient for all parties involved, but has become a reality with the program. These guidelines place an emphasis on deliverable, “real” projects, but some awarded projects simply require delayed delivery of funding for project readiness. As such, SACOG will work with each funding recipient and accommodate funding needs as expediently as possible.

If programming capacity is available for an awarded project, then the program requires the project be completed within three years of receipt, unless SACOG or Caltrans processes create a delay. The SACOG/Caltrans Review Team determines the appropriateness of whether a deadline can be extended, with the SACOG Board serving as the final appealable body for a project’s timeline to expend program funding.

What are the major key elements of the Program that a potential applicant needs to know about?

Some of the key features of the proposed guidelines for Round 5 are:

- The program is intended to fund projects that promote the implementation of the SACOG Blueprint Principles (compact development, mixed of land uses, transportation options, etc.)
- Cities, counties, air districts and transit districts in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties are eligible to apply, while jurisdictions in El Dorado and Placer counties have their own programs;
- Projects must be federal transportation aid eligible (construction, environmental review, design or right-of-way purchase for transportation infrastructure);
- SACOG staff has recommended lowering the minimum total to \$8 million in Round 5, (compared to \$12 million in Round 4), due to an anticipated decline in revenues for SACOG’s Regional Funding Programs;
- There are three categories of funding projects; Categories 1 and 2 are competitive and have a maximum award of \$4 million per project, while Category 3 is non-competitive with a \$100,000 maximum award.
- Applicants must provide a pre-submittal letter to SACOG to determine eligibility;
- The applicant’s point-of-contact must be trained in managing federal transportation aid and is responsible for all contents submitted in the application and communications with SACOG;
- Interviews will be conducted with applicants who received a funding recommendation from the first of two review committees; and

- Applications will be evaluated based on how well they implement the Blueprint principles, the project’s realistic ability to be delivered within three years of receiving its programmed funding, and the past performance by the applicant jurisdiction in delivering awarded projects.

What are the major proposed changes since the last round of Community Design Funding?

Generally, the program and application requirements, processes and guidelines remain the mostly the same as the prior cycle, Round 4. The recommendation for no major changes is based on SACOG staff having contacted each applicant in Round 4 for feedback on the program; only relatively minor adjustments were recommended. The only major change proposed is the recommended reduction in the minimum amount of program funding the SACOG Board is recommended to approve has gone down. SACOG staff anticipates that the agency’s federal and state transportation funding revenues will decrease in the upcoming biennial cycle. As such, SACOG staff is recommending that the Board approve a minimum funding amount of \$8 million for the Round 5, compared with the Round 4 minimum amount of \$12 million. Correspondingly, the maximum request amount will be reduced from \$7 million for Category 1 or 2 applications to \$4 million. Also, for Category 1 and 2 projects, SACOG staff is strongly suggesting – but not requiring – that projects have a minimum request of \$500,000 for a project to be federalized.

There are three funding categories– what are they, and what do I need to know?

There are three categories of project applications, as defined by the amount of funding requested. First, the most common category, referred to as Category #1 (also called “Conventional”), is for federal-aid projects that seek funding between \$100,000 to \$4 million. The types of projects in this category can be varied so long as they are federal-aid eligible. Most projects (except the planning ones, which are not eligible) awarded in past rounds fall into this category.

Category #2 projects are federal-aid eligible “Complete Streets” projects seeking \$1 million to \$4 million. These projects seek improvements within transportation corridors into more pedestrian and transit-friendly environments with associated land use changes.

Category #3 projects seek \$100,000 or less and are non-competitive. This is the only category in which projects may be awarded non-federal funding sources. Only cities and counties may apply for funding in this category, and they are not allowed to submit applications in any other category. The submittal requirements are less than applications in the other two categories, although the program would prefer projects that are federal aid eligible. Some planning projects could be eligible on a case-by-case basis. Applicants may only submit one application and the SACOG/Caltrans Review Team will work with the applicant to develop a scope of work that meets the program’s objectives. Projects in this category are compared only with others in this category.

What’s involved in the application process?

All applicants are expected to review the program and application guidelines. They must submit a pre-application letter before an application may be submitted. Applicants must also submit the application in accordance to the guidelines and with SACOG's letter of reply to the pre-submittal letter.

How will the projects be selected for funding?

There will be two different bodies reviewing the applications. First, the internal SACOG/Caltrans Review Team comprised of staff, Caltrans, and others, will review the pre-submittal letter and provide written comments regarding eligibility and delivery that it would like to see addressed in the application. Then, the Community Design Review Committee, comprised of staff and professionals in related fields from around the region, will review the applications and make funding recommendations based on merit as per the program guidelines. The SACOG/Caltrans Review Team will then interview and negotiate with each recommended recipient on the scope, timeline and deliverables. The team will also factor in an applicant's past performance on delivering Community Design Projects. If the project is considered eligible and deliverable by the team, and the applicant has a solid history of delivering past Community Design Projects, the project will be forwarded to the SACOG Board for funding approval.

What responsibilities do jurisdictions have once SACOG has programmed the awarded funds?

As per prior funding rounds, all recipients must accept the full responsibility of managing federal-aid funds. This is a significant responsibility that can require a lot of reporting and coordination with Caltrans and federal agencies. SACOG will only allow a trained professional in managing federal aid funding for the project.

Also, jurisdictions that receive Community Design Funds are required to deliver their projects according to their applications and subsequent negotiated scopes of work, timelines and deliverables.

If I have questions, who do I contact?

Please contact SACOG Community Design Program Manager, Greg Chew. He can be reached at (916) 340-6227 or at gchew@sacog.org.

Section 1

Round 5 Community Design Funding Program (2011-13)

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

A. COMMUNITY DESIGN PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The overall purpose of the Community Design Program is to provide financial support for federal aid eligible capital development projects that promote implementation of the Blueprint Project Principles.

The Community Design Program provides financial incentives to local governments in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties that have specific development and public improvements that will help foster Blueprint-friendly communities. The financial incentives, which come in the form of grants through a competitive process, must be federal aid eligible and transportation-related projects that have some land use component. Projects must also conform to some of the seven Blueprint Principles (which are discussed in detail on the SACOG website: www.sacog.org/regionalfunding/betterways.pdf):

- transportation choices;
- housing diversity;
- compact development;
- mixed land uses;
- use of existing assets;
- natural resource protection; and
- quality design.

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035 authorized the Community Design Program through 2035. The MTP included \$500 million dedicated to directly fund public agencies (possibly in partnership with private developers and community organizations) for projects that support the goals of the Plan. The intent of the Community Design Program is to use regional transportation funding to promote the construction of land use developments (or land use and related projects) that lead to fewer vehicles miles traveled and more walking, biking, and transit usage. The program results from the recognition that land use influences travel behavior and can be a powerful tool to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regional transportation system. If it is convenient for people to travel to common destinations by walking, biking, or public transit, the Sacramento region can reap air quality and congestion-relief benefits at the local and regional scale.

The Community Design Program is one of SACOG's Regional Funding Programs. Community Design along with the Air Quality, Transportation Demand Management, and Bicycle/Pedestrian

programs provide financial assistance to promote specific activities that lead to more livable communities.

Please note that the Community Design Program only applies to jurisdictions within the Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties; funding for El Dorado and Placer County projects will be according to their respective agreements with SACOG..

B. BLUEPRINT PROJECT

The Blueprint Project has given the six-county Sacramento region a long-range vision for land use to better manage the growth pressures of this region. The SACOG Board of Directors adopted a Blueprint Project Preferred Scenario in December, 2004. The Preferred Scenario serves only as a concept-level illustration of the growth principles. It was developed with parcel-level data and analysis to help ensure that the growth concepts were being applied in a realistic manner; however, the Preferred Scenario is not for literal, parcel-level interpretation. Besides the Preferred Scenario, the Blueprint Project also created the seven Blueprint Principles listed above that help guide the region when planning for individual communities. SACOG is working with local jurisdictions to implement the concepts of the Preferred Scenario. The Community Design Funding Program is intended to promote the actual construction of projects that promote the Blueprint Principles. More information about the Blueprint Project may be found at <http://www.sacregionblueprint.org/sacregionblueprint/home.cfm>

C. PROGRAM FUNDING AND GRANT CATEGORIES

In the combined fiscal years 2012-13 and 2013-14, SACOG has reserved a minimum of \$8 million total for this round of the Community Design Funding Program. If, through the end of the selection process, the two selection committees assigned to review and make recommendations on the application believe that more than \$8 million should be funded, their recommendations for the higher amount will also be submitted to the SACOG Board. Staff will then have to offer the Board alternatives to providing enough funding from the various federal and state funding sources, most likely from other regional funding programs. Ultimately, the SACOG Board of Directors will make the determination on the final program amount for Round 5 after it reviews the award recommendations.

There are three grant categories within the Community Design Funding Program for 2011-13.

- **Category #1: Conventional Projects.** This category covers the range of projects that are anticipated to be the most numerous during this round of funding. Typically, these include transportation infrastructure projects. These infrastructure projects must either (1) connect directly to a site, corridor, or neighborhood development or redevelopment project that incorporates Blueprint Principles, or (2) supports a land use plan for development or redevelopment that incorporates the Principles, or (3) support an existing community that conforms to the Principles but lacks transportation infrastructure for alternative modes.

Project applicants may seek from \$100,000 to \$4 million per project in this category.

- **Category #2:** Complete Streets Projects: This category provides funding for the transformation of transportation corridors to more pedestrian and transit friendly streetscapes with an associated transition in land uses. At least one project in this category will be selected in this round of funding. Projects funding requests must be between \$1 million to \$4 million.
- **Category #3:** \$100,000 Projects: This category is to provide more opportunities for cities and counties that choose not to compete for larger amounts of funding. Category #3 limits applicants to request one \$100,000 maximum grant. It was developed to encourage cities and counties that have not applied for program funds in the past, and those that cannot compete in the other two categories. Application submittal requirements for Category #3 are less than the other Categories #1 and #2 (see Sub-section Q). Projects in this category do not necessarily have to be federal aid eligible, but must meet the objectives of the program; SACOG will review each project on a case-by-case basis. Applications in this category are rated against other projects in this category, not against projects in the other two categories. A very limited amount of non-federal sources of funding may be awarded to projects in this category.

D. FEDERAL AID ELIGIBILITY

All projects must be federal aid eligible and will primarily lead to or include construction. Generally speaking, federal aid eligible projects are those that significantly contain transportation infrastructure. Activities or tasks within the project must be either categorized as “construction”, “environmental”, “design” or “right-of way”. Pure planning activities are generally not considered an eligible use for the Community Design Program in Categories 1 and 2.

The following are examples of projects that are generally considered federal aid eligible:

- Transportation infrastructure directly connected to a land development project, land use plan, or in an existing “Blueprint friendly” community
- Bicycle and pedestrian paths, tunnels, and bridges
- On-street bike lanes
- Pedestrian plazas in public right-of-ways
- Pedestrian street crossings
- Streetscaping such as median landscaping, street trees, lighting, and furniture
- Traffic calming (but not interfering with public transit, bicycling or walking)
- Transit buses and services that serve the site (operations limited to 3 years)
- Transit stop amenities such as shelters, restrooms, and benches
- Transit transfer centers

One critical distinction is that federal aid projects must be for project elements that are considered “over and above” those that are standard requirements if there is an associated

development with the project. For instance, if a private development is going in, and the project seeks Community Design funds for street improvements, the improvements must go beyond the jurisdiction's "standard" requirements for that associated development. The private developer may be required to put in sidewalks and crosswalks, but federal aid could pay for textured crosswalks, landscaped medians and other elements that enhance the pedestrian experience that are not standard conditions of approval.

Not all projects can be easily determined for eligibility. In all cases, SACOG and Caltrans District #3 Local Assistance staff will work directly with each applicant on eligibility. For each potential application, an applicant must submit a pre-application letter describing the project and SACOG/Caltrans will provide a written response addressing issues relating to eligibility. In addition, all applicants must have a staff person who is trained in federal aid funding management. In most cases, the staff is found in the Public Works Departments.

For those sponsoring jurisdictions that do not have internal staff who can manage federal transportation funds, they will be required to team up with a local agency or hire a qualified consultant in this area. This is not something that can be learned just for one project. The Caltrans District 3 Local Assistance staff makes the final determination on whether an individual is adequately qualified in federal aid management. If that person is deemed not qualified and a suitable replacement cannot be found, Caltrans may advise SACOG to disqualify the application.

E. FUNDING SOURCES, TIMELINES AND EXTENSIONS

The following are considered the most likely sources of funding for the awarded Community Design Funding Program for Category 1 and 2 projects:

- Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP)
- Transportation Enhancements (TE)
- CMAQ (Congestion Management and Air Quality Program)

Category 3 projects that are awarded funding may receive funds from the above sources, or "SACOG-managed" funds, which have only the restrictions that SACOG imposes on the use of these funds. Category 3 recipients in most cases will receive SACOG-managed funds and will need to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with SACOG. For Category 1 and 2 funding sources, the idea situation is that awarded projects be programmed for one of two federal fiscal years 2012-13 and/or 2013-14. However, the reality of the current federal and state funding situation is that awarded projects may receive funding in programming years 2015-16 or later. This creates a number of obstacles for projects to be delivered. Some past awarded projects have been able to request from state and federal agencies to "advance" funding, with mixed success. While other projects may simply have to put their projects on hold until the program year funds become available. SACOG cannot assure funding recipients that the year that they receive programming will match their timeline. In all cases, SACOG and Caltrans will work with the recipient to identify the best potential options available, but any applicant to this program is required to understand the reality of programming funding situation.

If, in the event programming funds are available in the 2012-13 or 2013-14 fiscal years for an awarded project, then the project has three years from the date of receiving the project E-76 notice to complete the project, or SACOG reserves the right to de-program the project's funding without the recipient's consent. There are two exceptions by which an applicant can appeal to extend this deadline:

- (1) if SACOG, Caltrans or a federal agency do not process a programming request in a timely manner, as evaluated and administered by the SACOG/Caltrans Review Team; or
- (2) with direct approval by the SACOG Board of Directors.

F. GENERAL AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Recipients receiving funding in the Community Design Funding Program will be asked to follow or be aware of these requirements.

- Follow all federal funding requirements listed in Appendix A.
- Follow all federal environmental justice directives.
- Assure SACOG that the projects meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Follow SACOG's "Use It or Lose It" policy for obligating and spending the grant funds. The policy requires project sponsors to schedule fund obligation and project implementation in the *Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program* and to honor that schedule. The "Use It or Lose It" policy may be downloaded at <http://www.sacog.org/projectdelivery/useit.pdf>
- A local non-federal match of at least 11.47% of the total cost of a project is required for projects receiving federal funding in the Sacramento region, with a few exceptions that are detailed under the individual program guidelines. This does not include "in kind" match, but must be funding that is dedicated to eligible features within the project and included in its overall cost.
- For capital projects, federal funds may be used for Preliminary Engineering (which includes environmental work and design) as well as for right-of-way and construction. When a project is ready for implementation, the project sponsor requests an authorization from Caltrans. When the project is authorized, the sponsor can incur expenses that will then be reimbursed from the grant. A project sponsor submits invoices for the entire cost incurred, and will be reimbursed at 88.53% (the total cost minus local match).

- SACOG encourages project sponsors to seek other non-federal sources of matching funding that may be available.

G. PROJECT SPONSORSHIP

Eligible public agencies that may apply for Community Design funding are those organizations qualified to enter into a Cooperative Agreement with the California Department of Transportation to receive and use Federal transportation funds. This applies only to jurisdictions in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties. These jurisdictions may choose to create a partnership with private or non-profit parties. However, the eligible sponsoring agency thereby agrees to assume all the responsibility in management of federal transportation funds, ensuring that eligible match funds are dedicated to this project, and all of the other responsibilities that accompany submittal of the application and receipt of funding.

Public/private collaborations are encouraged, but the sponsoring eligible jurisdiction applying for the funds bears the responsibility of managing federal aid requirements. Community groups and developers who wish to apply for these funds with a public agency are required to receive the consent of the applicable eligible public agency. It is recommended that the coordination of such a request occur as early as possible.

Non-city/county qualified public agencies that choose to serve as the lead sponsor will be evaluated on whether they received support from the local government in which the project site is located, preferably with coordination early in the application process. Lack of documented support or coordination will leave the impression that the project is not endorsed by the SACOG member agency and would considerably weaken the project's chances for program funding.

Also please note that if the awarded government agency intends to hire private consulting or construction services with the grant funds, public bidding laws may affect the selection of contractors.

H. PLACER AND EL DORADO COUNTIES

For Placer and El Dorado Counties, a different situation applies, due to Memoranda of Understanding between the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency and SACOG and the El Dorado Transportation Commission and SACOG that govern the use of federal funds in those counties.

In summary, the Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPA) for Placer and El Dorado Counties each hold a written agreement with SACOG that allows them to select projects with a fair share of federal funds. Local governments in these two counties will submit their grant applications to their RTPA. The RTPA will forward its selected projects to SACOG for funding. SACOG staff will review these projects and make a determination if they are qualified for the Community Design Funding Program, and, if so, they will be designated as receiving funding

through this program and will be recognized as such.

I. LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS REQUIREMENT

A local non-federal match of at least 11.47% of the total cost of a project is required for projects receiving federal funding in the Sacramento region. This means for every \$100,000 of federal funds requested from the program, the applicant is required to match a minimum of \$12,957. Or, put another way, for every \$100,000 of total project costs (grant and match combined), the program will pay up to \$88,530 for every \$11,470 of match provided by the project sponsor. This does not include “in kind” match, but must be funding that is dedicated to eligible features within the project and included in its overall cost.

If in-kind matching resources are proposed, please contact the SACOG Community Design Program Manager before submitting your application.

Federal funds may be used for Preliminary Engineering (which includes environmental work and design) as well as for right-of-way and construction. If awarded, when a project is ready for implementation, the project sponsor requests an authorization from Caltrans. When the project is authorized, the sponsor can incur expenses that will then be reimbursed from the grant. A project sponsor submits invoices for the entire cost incurred, and will be reimbursed at 88.53% (the total cost minus local match).

Jurisdictions are encouraged to provide a local match higher than 11.47% if they are able to. The two review committees have generally viewed a higher match percentage as a better indication by the jurisdiction that it is committed to the project.

The match works through the reimbursement process. For instance, if a grant recipient has a 20% match and sends an invoice with incurred costs of \$100,000, then the Community Design Program will send, via Caltrans, a reimbursement check for \$80,000. The remaining \$20,000 will be paid for by the recipient. (This does not necessarily apply to Category 3 projects, which will likely be directly reimbursed by SACOG; but the local match requirement remains in effect).

J. COMMUNICATION TO COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITIES

Depending on the county in which the primary applicant jurisdiction resides, specific requirements are in effect:

Sacramento/Yolo Counties: Applicants for Community Design Funding Program in Sacramento and Yolo Counties must communicate (email acceptable) to the board of the transportation agency in those counties that they intend to apply for these funds before the August 17, 2011 application due date. The CTA does not need to take action on the application.

Sutter and Yuba Counties: These two counties do not have countywide transportation agencies in place, so the above action is not necessary.

K. PAST PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Recipients of the Community Design Program funding will be evaluated by the SACOG/Caltrans Review Team (described below) on their delivery performance in prior rounds. SACOG reserves the right to reject an application at any point during the selection process if the proposed grant application is determined to be unrealistic with the proposer's ability to deliver the project as stated in the application.

L. REVIEW COMMITTEES AND SELECTION PROCESS

Two committees will be involved in the review and selection process. The first committee is the Community Design Working Group. Its main function is to review the applications and recommend funding based on the stated criteria (see sub-section M). The committee is comprised of staff and appointed officials from geographically diverse areas of the region. Different technical disciplines will also be represented on the committee (see below for composition).

The second committee is the SACOG/Caltrans Review Team, comprised of SACOG and Caltrans staff, and possibly staff from other agencies who are familiar with federal transportation funding requirements. This team will review each applicant's pre-application letter to provide guidance on federal aid eligibility.

Here is the application selection process involving the two review committees:

Step 1a: Pre-submittal Letter Applicants submit a pre-submittal letter regarding their project to SACOG. The SACOG/Caltrans Review Team reviews the letter for federal aid eligibility and any other issues that raise concerns. A response letter is sent back to the applicant indicating the Team's findings. The applicant may proceed if the Team's review indicates the project is federal aid eligible and/or could be modified to be eligible.

Step 2: Round 5 Application Review: The applicant submits the application. Round 5 applications will be reviewed by the first committee, the Community Design Working Group. The Group will select projects based on implementation of the Blueprint Principles, ability to be delivered in a timely manner, and the relative merits of the project when compared to other applications. The Group's recommendations will be forwarded to Step 3.

Step 3: Interviews for Recommended Projects: The SACOG/Caltrans Review Team will review the projects recommended for funding for their ability to be delivered, and to ensure that they remain federal aid eligible. For each recommended project in Categories #1 or #2, an interview will take place between the Team and the applicant. Projects in Category #3 will have a phone

interview. Prior to the interview, the applicant will submit a document providing more detail on the scope of work, timeline and deliverables. The Team and the applicant will discuss the scope work/timeline/deliverables. If the Team concludes the project is deliverable and federal aid eligible and the written scope of work, timeline and deliverables is accepted by the Team, the project will be submitted for recommended funding to the Board.

Step 4: Final Program Funding Decision: The SACOG Board of Directors will be presented with the list of recommended projects for funding. The recommendation will have a minimum of \$8 million of projects. However, if the two review committees recommend more than \$8 million of projects, then the Board will be presented with two lists: one showing how \$8 million will be awarded, and another showing a higher amount coupled with SACOG staff's recommendations on the sources of funding for the higher amount. The Board will be asked to take action of one of the two lists.

Members of the first committee, the Community Design Working Group, will be appointed from the following groups as shown below:

Community Design Working Group Composition

Expertise	Appointment By:	Working Group Positions
Planners	Planners Committee	3-5
Project Engineers	Regional Planning Partnership	1-2
Urban Designer	Regional Planning Partnership	1
Bike/Ped	Bike/Ped Advisory Committee	1
Air Quality	Air Districts	1
TDM	TDM Task Force	1
Transit	Transit Coordinating Committee	1
Community Groups	Regional Planning Partnership	1
TOTAL		10-13

M. EVALUATION CRITERIA

There are three evaluation criteria used by the two review committees to determine whether a project will be recommended for funding. Below each criterion is a description of what the two committees look for, including some questions they frequently have about a project, or specific information they seek.

Criterion #1: How well does the proposed project promote the Blueprint Project Principles?

Practical considerations: This is the most fundamental question each project will be judged against by the Working Group. Based on the prior funding rounds, the Working Group selected federal aid qualified projects that best exemplified the Blueprint Principles. Reviewers look for projects that will promote pedestrian/transit friendly, compact mixed-use communities.

Oftentimes, projects that have private investment associated with property adjacent or near the application project area are favorably viewed.

Reviewers also look for the “relative context” and “relative value”, meaning relative to the jurisdiction and community that the project is in, will the project implement Blueprint principles better than other projects. For instance, a small project in a more rural area that promotes walking and more compact development may provide more relative value per dollar in the review group’s view than a bigger, more costly project in a more urban area. In other words, the small jurisdiction offers more “Blueprint value” given its locational conditions per dollar than bigger jurisdiction.

Applicants seeking to understand how competitive their projects might be, may wish to compare their idea against the projects funded in prior rounds. Some of the past funded projects show the concept of relative context and relative value. These applications may also give prospective applicants an idea of what application contents were successfully used. However, please be sure to note that many of the pure planning projects that were funded in Rounds 1 and 2 are no longer eligible for funding in Categories 1 and 2. The .PDF files of grant applications of all past awarded projects may be found at <http://www.sacog.org/regionalfunding/communitydesign.cfm>

The single most common concern the Working Group had in reviewing applications was the lack of clarity, information or documentation. Some applications lacked why their project was Blueprint-supportive, while others tried unsuccessfully to rationalize why a project followed the Blueprint principles. Some applicants also lacked a clear explanation of why the project was needed to support Blueprint. Other applicants failed to clearly describe how they would use the grant funding in a way that would lead to Blueprint-friendly development. The following are questions that have been raised in the past by the Working Group (although the applicant does not have to necessarily answer these in the application):

- Does this project serve as a good example of the Blueprint Principles for the region when compared to other applications?
- There are several projects in the region that need funding; what makes this project particularly outstanding that regional funds should be used to get it built?
- Has the governing body with the most legal standing endorsed or approved this project? How else has this governing body shown support for this project?
- Are there letters or other documentation from property owners and other stakeholders who have something to lose stating support for the project? Do the property owners state what they are intending to do with their property that is Blueprint-friendly and how committed they are completing their project(s)?
- Has the surrounding neighborhood been involved in the project’s development and has the affected neighborhood or the appropriate neighborhood association endorsed the grant project?
- What are the number of units of housing, commercial space, jobs and other important indicators within a quarter mile of this site? Within one mile? How do residential densities compare with other comparable subject areas?

- If the project is implemented, what additional Blueprint-style development will occur as a result from both the public and private sectors?
- Is the design of the project of a quality standard that the region would use as an example of Blueprint for others to follow?

Criterion #2: Will this project be delivered? What is the likelihood that the project will be implemented as the application implies?

Of the applications that showed a strong tie with the Blueprint Principles, the Working Group will consider how realistic, or “deliverable”, are these proposals. As stated above, both the Review Team and the Working Group will review a project’s deliverability. The Working Group will base its review on the information in the application, and the Review Team may ask for additional information beyond the application if the project is recommended for funding by the Working Group.

Successful applicants will be able to provide evidence that the project has been well-thought through and that the project was likely be implemented immediately. The following are some of the questions that past Working Groups have used to help evaluate this criterion. Please note that applicants are not expected to answer each of the following questions, but use some of them as a framework for creating a clear understanding of the deliverability of the project. The following are common questions that the SACOG/Caltrans Review Team has used in evaluating project applications:

- What evidence is there to suggest the applicant can deliver this project in a timely manner?
- Where is the applicant in terms of securing right-of-way, CEQA/NEPA, and other pertinent matters?
- Where is this project in the development review and approval process?
- What documentation is there on how much funding has been invested in the project area?
- What source of money is being used for the matching funds? Have those funds been dedicated for this project? Does the match and/or past activities show the high level of commitment by the applicant?
- Are there major outstanding issues that are not resolved? Does this project need to be awarded in this funding cycle, or can it wait until future cycles after the applicant has addressed all critical issues?

Practical Considerations: Past awarded projects have generally addressed the issues raised in these criteria. Some of the tools that successful applicants included in their applications included:

- A context map of the site: where is the subject area in relation to the commonly known landmarks within the region.
- An aerial map showing the project or subject area. The maps showed what exist currently, what projects are in place, and how and where grant funds were going to be used.

- A list of major capital improvements within, adjacent to, or near the subject site. This list could show infrastructure improvements, private development investment made or committed, and long-term public works projects likely to be built according to an adopted plan.
- Photographs of the site or subject area as they currently exist.
- Renderings or drawings of what the subject site or area will look like as a result of grant funding.
- Renderings, graphics or photographs of projects that have recently been built or are going through development review for construction in or near the project subject area.
- Letters of support from key organizations (neighborhood association, adjacent property owners, private developers directly affected by the subject project). These stakeholders should have “something to lose” but support the project anyway. Please note that the more letters does not necessarily have a positive impact; letters from parties who have little at risk generally have not influenced past Working Groups or may even demonstrate that the applicant is not addressing the challenges they face.
- Written information that addresses as some (but not all) of the questions mentioned above. The level of detail that is provided should be enough to provide the Working Group a clear, overall picture of what activities, investments, etc. are taking place without providing extraneous information.

Criterion #3: Past Performance of Community Design Funded Projects

The SACOG/Caltrans Review Team will consider the applicant’s past success or failure with Community Design projects. Applicants that have delivered Community Design projects will be given more credibility towards delivering future projects. Applicants that have failed or are significantly behind schedule on past awarded Community Design projects will lose credibility on their ability to deliver a project according to their application, thus jeopardizing the applicant’s ability to be recommended for funding in Round 5.

N. OPTIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW/GRANTWRITING 101 WORKSHOPS WITH INCENTIVE

There will be two identical optional workshops that potential applicants may attend. These workshops will review the program, the application requirements and lessons from prior funding rounds as they apply to this funding cycle, including how to prepare a grant application. The focus on the workshops is to provide insight into the thought process of the two review committees.

The workshops, which are identical and will contain the same contents, will be held on:

**Thursday, June 30
10:30 a.m. to Noon**

and

Tuesday, July 12

3:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments

1415 L Street, Suite 300, Sacramento

(No RSVP necessary; open to all parties)

Incentive for Attending Either Workshop: Anyone may attend either or both workshops. Individuals who attend the workshop will be allowed to submit drafts of their application to SACOG staff for a general review. Staff will provide verbal comments on the draft and specific suggestions for improvement. This service is not available to jurisdictions that do not have individuals attending one of these workshops.