



# 2021 COMMUNITY DESIGN FUNDING PROGRAM (ROUND 9) PROGRAM & APPLICATION GUIDELINES

APPLICATION AND GUIDELINES RELEASE DATE:

**November 11, 2020**

APPLICATIONS DUE:

**4:00 p.m., Friday, January 15, 2021**

This document contains information regarding the Sacramento Area Council of Government's Community Design Program for 2021 (Round 9). The program provides grants to local government agencies and their partners to implement the SACOG Blueprint Principles or smart growth. Approximately every two or three years SACOG releases the program and application guidelines. This document provides background and instructions for applying:

**Section 1** provides an overview of the Community Design Program. 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. It discusses program changes from the prior funding round.

**Section 2** provides information about the Competitive Category – what is it, what are eligible projects and applicants, and how to apply.

**Section 3** provides information regarding the Non-Competitive Category, including eligibility and the process for applying.

The **Appendix** provides a detailed description of SACOG's Project Performance Assessment tool.

*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.*

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## SECTION 1: Overview of the Community Design Program

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### A. General Description of Program

The overall purpose of the Community Design Program is to provide financial support to local agencies for projects that promote placemaking and the Blueprint Project Principles. Placemaking projects improve or enhance the livability of a community and create places that people desire to spend time or live in. Projects must also conform to some of the seven Blueprint Principles, which are discussed in detail on the SACOG website: <https://www.sacog.org/publication/better-ways-grow>: (1) transportation choices; (2) housing diversity; (3) compact development; (4) mixed land uses; (5) use of existing assets; (6) natural resource protection; and (7) quality design.

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 vehicle miles traveled and more walking, biking, and transit use. 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.

Community Design's financial support comes in the form of grants awarded primarily through a competitive process. Save for the exception discussed below, projects must be federal aid eligible transportation-related projects that support some land use component. Further, applicants must have a Master Agreement in place with Caltrans to receive federal and state transportation funds or with the Federal Transit Administration to manage FTA funds as an FTA Grantee.

Please note that the Community Design Program only applies to jurisdictions within Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba Counties; El Dorado and Placer Counties have separate funding programs.

### B. Application Categories

Round 9 of Community Design continues the program's two core categories: (1) Competitive Category and (2) Non-Competitive Category. The Competitive Category is for cities, counties, and agencies with agreements with Caltrans (or FTA) to manage federal transportation funds within Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties. These eligible applicants can apply for grant funds up to \$4.0 million per project on a competitive basis. The Non-Competitive Category allows cities and counties to submit one project for funding for a lesser amount between \$100,000 and \$500,000, depending on the jurisdiction's growth factors and how well the application meets specified criteria. Cities and counties may only apply for either Competitive or Non-Competitive projects; other qualified agencies may only apply in the Competitive Category. More detailed information about both categories is provided in Sections 2 and 3.

Round 9 of Community Design also includes a new third funding category: housing planning and activities that help accelerate housing production. It is described in the next sub-section C below.

## C. REAP Housing Funding Category

The Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) category is a competitive category that focuses exclusively on housing-related activities. The California Housing and Community Development Department is permitting SACOG to offer its members in all six SACOG counties (El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba counties) a competitive grant program for activities that will promote housing and accelerate housing production. SACOG's REAP competitive program will offer approximately \$1.7 million region wide. The program is managed within the Community Design program because housing strongly connects with land use and transportation, particularly as they all relate to placemaking.

The guidelines for the REAP Program will be a separate document and will be released later in Nov/Dec 2020, after the Community Design Competitive and Non-Competitive category guidelines are released. No further information about the REAP is contained in this document, as it will be covered in the later guidelines.

## D. Funding Sources and Local Matches

The Community Design funding target for Round 9 is estimated at \$16.5 million, not including the \$1.7 million for the REAP housing activities competitive category. Historically, the Community Design Program (before REAP) has funded between \$12 million and \$20 million in projects per cycle.

Federal and state funding requirements are applicable. The funding sources available are Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP, aka STBG), the Congestion Management and Air Quality Program (CMAQ), and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). For capital projects, federal funds may be used for the preliminary engineering phase, which includes environmental work and design, as well as for right-of-way and construction phases. SACOG Managed Funds (SMF) are also available in a limited capacity to awarded projects in the non-competitive category as described in Section 3.

Program recipients receiving federal or state transportation funds must provide a minimum of 11.47 percent match in non-federal funds, as is required in all federal aid funding projects. This means that 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. Projects receiving SMF funds are not required to provide a match.

## E. Changes from Prior 2018 Funding Round

In responding to feedback, the application selection process has three substantive changes since the prior round in 2018 (Round 8).

1. **Competitive Category application process shorter:** Applicants submit a letter with up to 3-pages of narrative, 5 pages of graphics and required forms. Based on the application letter, the Community Design Project Advisory Committee will review projects and select a short list of projects for a 30-minute interview, with an option to submit up to 4 more pages of information. Following the interview, the committee will submit their recommendation to SACOG staff. Section 2 provides more details.
2. **More funds for Non-Competitive Category recipients:** More funding is being made available to non-competitive recipients. Each jurisdiction is given a range of funding amounts that it is eligible for, depending on how well it meets criteria. Section 3 provides more details.

3. **REAP-related housing funding:** as described above, the REAP program will be under the umbrella of Community Design but program and application guidelines will be released separately later.

## F. Implementation

After SACOG has awarded a grant, project sponsors will be asked to:

- Follow SACOG’s “Use It or Lose It” policy for obligating and spending the grant funds. Recipients must expend the project funds within two years of when programmed. Extensions are given to awarded projects if programmed funds are not available within three years of award. SACOG makes SMF, RSTP and CMAQ available on a first-come, first-serve basis. STIP funds may not be as available. Some STIP may not be available until SFY 2026/27.
- Amend their project into the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) via SACTrak.
- Provide a local (non-federal) match for most projects, as described earlier.
- Comply with the California Transportation Commission’s State Transportation Improvement Program Guidelines; the Caltrans’ Local Assistance Procedures Manual; and Caltrans’ Local Assistance Program Guidelines.

When a project is programmed in the MTIP and is ready for implementation, the project sponsor requests a federal authorization (E-76) or allocation request from Caltrans District 3 Local Assistance. Only after the project is authorized and/or allocated, can the sponsor incur expenses that will then be reimbursed from the grant. The project recipient will work directly with Caltrans Local Assistance on the reimbursement process. A project sponsor submits invoices for the entire cost incurred and is reimbursed at the reimbursement rate authorized.

## G. Program Schedule

The following are the key dates of the application process. Please check the <https://www.sacog.org/regional-funding-programs> website for any updated announcements.

<b>November 11, 2020</b>	Program and Application Guidelines released and posted on SACOG Website. SACOG staff available to discuss projects with prospective applicants.
<b>Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 11:00 a.m. – Noon</b>	Optional Conference Call: Community Design Orientation
<b>4:00 pm Friday, January 15, 2021 (strictly enforced)</b>	ROUND 9 APPLICATIONS DUE for Competitive and Non-Competitive Categories. Submit applications to Greg Chew at <a href="mailto:gchew@sacog.org">gchew@sacog.org</a> . All submitters will receive a confirmation of receipt.

<b>February 2021</b>	SACOG notifies each sponsor whether project is short listed for interview. Applicant given Project Advisory Committee feedback and option to submit up to 4 more pages of information prior to interview.
<b>February 2021</b>	Hold Interviews for all short-listed projects in Competitive Category. Details to be announced.
<b>March 25, 2021</b>	Staff recommendations released for project awards.
<b>April 1, 2021</b>	Staff presents recommended projects to SACOG Transportation Committee. Funding recommendations posted in staff report to committee.
<b>Thursday, April 15, 2021, 9:30 a.m.</b>	SACOG Board takes final action on recommended projects and determines final program funding amount.
<b>Summer 2021</b>	Earliest likely time a federal authorization request will be approved. Timeline highly subject to the recipient's ability to prepare request, nature of the project, and program funding availability.

## **H. SACOG Program Coordinator and Further Information**

Please direct any questions regarding the Community Design Funding Program or the application process to the SACOG Community Design Program Coordinator:

**Greg Chew, Senior Planner**

Sacramento Area Council of Governments  
 1415 L Street, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95814  
 Phone: (916) 340-6227  
 E-mail: [gchew@sacog.org](mailto:gchew@sacog.org)

SACOG staff will provide consultation to all potential applicants regarding eligibility, deliverability and the application and selection process. Staff may also provide preliminary draft application review.

Updated information will be posted on the Community Design page at:

<https://www.sacog.org/community-design>

The weblink provides answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ). The FAQs will not be sent directly to potential applicants, so please periodically check the website for updates, particularly as the application deadline draws near.

## I. Optional Orientation Conference Call

There will be an optional conference call for potential applicants held on:

Community Design Program Introduction Virtual Conference Call (Optional)

Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 11:00 am – Noon

RSVP is required to [gchew@sacog.org](mailto:gchew@sacog.org) at least one hour before the event to receive appointment and Zoom information

The conference call will introduce the Community Design Funding Program. This will provide an overview of the program goals, the types of projects it funds, common characteristics of awarded applications, and other information about the program. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions during or after the conference call. The meeting will be recorded and posted on the Community Design website: <https://www.sacog.org/community-design>

*The remainder of this document provides information about the two funding categories of the Community Design Funding Program:*

*Section 2: Competitive Category*

*Section 3: Non-Competitive Category*

## SECTION 2: Community Design Program – Competitive Category

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### J. Competitive Category: Eligibility

The Competitive Category provides funding for projects that are larger in funding award but must be selected through a competitive process.

**Eligible applicants:** Member agencies, Caltrans District 3, and transit districts can independently submit their application if they have master agreements with Caltrans to manage federal aid transportation funds or with the Federal Transit Administration to manage FTA funds as an FTA Grantee. Other special districts and public agencies (e.g., air districts, JPAs, transportation management agencies) are eligible to be a co-applicant with a SACOG member agency.

**Eligible projects:** All projects must be located within Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo or Yuba counties and must consist of federal aid eligible activities that will primarily lead to or include construction. Federal aid eligible projects are those that significantly contain transportation infrastructure in public right-of-way. Activities or tasks within the project must be categorized as “construction,” “environmental,” “design” or “right-of way.” Pure planning activities are not considered an eligible use in the Competitive Category.

**Request and Award amounts:** Applicants will identify a “full request amount,” which is the amount they are requesting up to \$4.00 million per project. They will also state their “minimum request amount” which is the minimum amount that they need to perform some portion of the project. The minimum request amount may be the same or less than the full request amount. The recommendation that will be provided to the SACOG Board generally is either for the full amount, the minimum amount or zero. As these are mostly federal aid funds, historically most applicants have not sought less than \$500,000 for construction projects. Design projects historically have not been funded above \$500,000. Requests must be rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.

**Match:** All grant recipients in the Competitive Category will receive federal or state transportation funds and therefore must provide a minimum of 11.47 percent match in non-federal funds.

**Project Types:** The following are examples of projects that are 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, separated bikeways, or other bicycle infrastructure on publicly owned land
- Pedestrian plazas in public rights-of-way and public property
- 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 stop amenities such as shelters, and benches
- Transit transfer centers
- Electric vehicle charging stations and other support infrastructure within community gathering environments

## K. Project Consultation:

Upon request, SACOG staff will meet individually with interested sponsors in the competitive category to review their transportation investment needs for a two to five-year period.

- Consultation will focus on the sponsor's planning documents (e.g., capital improvement program, pavement management system), as well as outreach efforts (including activities to engage underserved communities), in the context of the funding round policy framework. The meetings can also offer technical assistance/capacity building efforts towards future application development in communities underrepresented in previous funding rounds.
- SACOG input on the performance benefits and competitiveness of potential applications will be discussed and technical assistance offered during the consultation phase.

## L. Project Performance Assessment

Projects in the Competitive category will be quantitatively evaluated using SACOG's Project Performance Assessment (PPA) tool. The tool provides a series of quantitative performance indicators that fit broadly within the goals and outcomes of the Community Design program, not tied to a specific Blueprint principle. The performance indicators from the PPA tool will be an important reference for the Project Advisory Committee in their evaluation of projects. The project sponsor is recommended to bring these PPA outputs into their application and/or interviews where relevant to substantiate the claims made in the narrative. The Community Design guidelines do not prescribe which indicators to use by Blueprint principle or other selection criteria, instead encouraging sponsors to think critically about which outcomes best pair with their application material to make the most compelling case. In other words, the sponsor can view the PPA results as a menu of possible indicators to choose from in responding to the Community Design prompts.

SACOG staff will run the PPA tool for all projects, either through a pre-application consultation or as part of Step 1 below. Project sponsors also have an opportunity to reference other data in support of their application.

More information about the Project Performance Assessment tool can be found in Appendix A of this document.

## M. Application and Selection Process

The Competitive Category application and selection process has been shortened to reduce the time needed for agencies to apply for the program. The process for this cycle has three steps:

- **Step 1:** Application: Project sponsors submit a complete application that is more abbreviated than the ones used in prior funding rounds. Applicants will be limited to no more than three pages of narrative content, five pages for graphics, and required forms. The submittal provides essential basic information about the project location, proposed activities, and reasons why the project meets the program objectives and performance outcomes.

The Project Advisory Committee reviews the application for: eligibility of activities, PPA results, and application material in terms of meeting program selection criteria (described below). The committee then invites short-listed project applicants for the required interview phase, which is the basis for the committee's recommendations. Projects not receiving an invitation for an

interview are no longer considered for funding. Note that SACOG staff performs the PPA but applicants may also reference other data sources.

- **Step 2:** Additional Written Information (optional): SACOG staff provides feedback to the applicant based on the Project Advisory Committee’s application review. The feedback highlights areas on which to focus and provide more detail for the next steps. Short-listed projects notified of an interview (Step 3) are given an optional opportunity to provide an additional 4 pages to address specific questions/comments provided in feedback.
- **Step 3:** Interview: SACOG and the Project Advisory Committee members conduct 30-minute interviews with short-listed applicants. After all interviews are complete, the Project Advisory Committee makes recommendations to SACOG staff for funding.

A policy working group then provides a unified review across the various funding programs, drawing on the successive input from steps 1-3 to complete the final evaluations. This iterative process considers the application as an integrated whole. All application components (engineering cost/feasibility analysis, PPA outcomes, narrative responses) are reviewed by experts individually and at the policy working group level. This policy working group categorizes submitted projects into three priority tiers (low, medium, and high) by the selection criteria adopted by the SACOG board. See Appendix B for information on the priority tiers.

As a final step, SACOG staff and management review all working group recommendations across the selection criteria to recommend a full project list to the SACOG board for funding awards.

## **N. Community Design Project Advisory Committee**

The Project Advisory Committee is comprised of staff and appointed representatives from geographically diverse areas of the region recruited through SACOG’s staff-level regional advisory committees. Participants represent broad fields such as land use, bicycle/pedestrian planning, transit, engineering, and related subjects. All participants, including SACOG staff, will sign an agreement that ensures conflict of interest requirements are met.

## **O. Selection Criteria**

There are two general evaluation criteria used by the advisory committee and SACOG staff to determine funding recommendations:

### **Criterion #1:**

#### **Project Benefit: How well does the proposed project promote the Blueprint Principles?**

(75 points possible)

This is the most fundamental question each project will be evaluated against by the Project Advisory Committee. The Community Design Program’s primary intent is to assist local agencies with placemaking – making environments that improve the livability of communities that they serve.

Projects must clearly identify one or more of the seven Blueprint Principles: mixed land uses, transportation options, housing choice, compact development, use existing assets, quality design, and natural resource protection. The PPA tool provides quantitative indicators related to the Blueprint Principles, as discussed above.

Project Benefit evaluation draws on two factors: (1) the PPA score, and (2) the project benefit narrative in the application.

Through the narrative applicants need to show how an award would lead to substantive land use changes by creating stimulus for more private and public investment, and/or creating placemaking. Reviewers look for context-sensitive projects that will promote pedestrian/bicycle/transit friendly, compact mixed-use communities. For example, is there evidence that private investment is occurring in the corridor? If not, what about the proposed transportation investment makes private investment more likely?

- **Performance Outcomes are measured through the Project Performance Assessment (PPA) and application narrative response.** SACOG will run the PPA based on the inputs provided by the project sponsor. Any sponsor can bring forward its own data in the application material as part of the project evaluation.
- **Project Benefit is assessed relative to project size and within similar place types.** The sponsor provides evidence that the project is appropriate for the surrounding community’s current and expected land uses. Needs for current and future users are also well considered. The project benefit criteria support project evaluation across a breadth of size, scope, location, and context.
- **Project Benefit is also assessed relative to submitted applications for similar projects.** This is a secondary consideration but still important in the overall evaluation of the benefit.

<b>Project Benefit Scoring</b>	
The project receives high scores for the quantitative (i.e., PPA) and qualitative (i.e., narrative benefit description) relative to (1) its project size and similar place types; and (2) relative to submitted applications for similar projects.	High (51 to 75)
The project receives medium scores for the quantitative (i.e., PPA) and qualitative (i.e., narrative benefit description) relative to (1) its project size and similar place types; and (2) relative to submitted applications for similar projects.	Medium (25 to 50)
The project receives low scores for the quantitative (i.e., PPA) and qualitative (i.e., narrative benefit description) relative to (1) its project size and similar place types; and (2) relative to submitted applications for similar projects.	Low (0 to 24)

**Criterion #2:**

**Project Readiness & Deliverability: How realistic is it for this project to be implemented within the program timeline?** (25 points possible)

Successful applicants will be able to provide evidence that the project has been well thought through and that the project is likely be implemented within the next three years. Applications for construction or project development funding should include a well-defined funding plan, budget and schedule that demonstrate the implementation of the project is feasible. Construction funding requests will demonstrate coordination with many stakeholders throughout the planning and project implementation

phases and identification of commitments to maintain the improvements after completion. Project development requests will focus on the ability of the applicant to deliver the phase(s) of the project for which funding is sought.

For construction funding requests, projects that demonstrate a higher state of construction readiness will receive a higher score. Readiness includes technical and financial readiness such as completion of engineering, environmental and design studies, secured funding towards project completion, feasible schedule, etc. Readiness considerations for project development funding requests focus on evidence that the sponsor is ready to complete the project phases for which SACOG funding is requested (e.g., environmental, design, right-of-way).

Applicant project delivery history is also a consideration. SACOG’s Programming & Project Delivery team will supply the delivery information to the Project Advisory Committee about project sponsors and prior funding awards. For example, information will include whether the project sponsor has failed to deliver a SACOG funded project commitment or lost any federal/state funding within the last three years.

The Project Advisory Committee will consider both the applicant’s narrative response and engineer/budget estimate. The reviewer will assess if the project scope, schedule, and budget are reasonable in comparison to similar project types. Working groups will use a risk assessment checklist.

The Project Delivery evaluation draws on two factors: (1) Project Readiness, and (2) Implementation Considerations:

**(1) Project Readiness** *(not initiated, underway, complete)*

- Status of planning and scoping documents *(this is especially important for project development applications that are seeking funds for environmental, design or ROW work)*
- Status of environmental phase and clearances
- Status of preliminary engineering & design phase
- Status of right-of-way acquisitions

<b>(1) Project Readiness Scoring</b>	
<p>For construction funding requests, the sponsor has completed all project development phases and/or clearly demonstrates in the application they have the resources and commitment to complete the remaining phases in the near-term.</p> <p>For project development funding requests, the application provides clear evidence that the sponsor is ready to complete the project phases for which SACOG funding is requested (e.g., environmental, design, right-of-way) in a timely manner.</p>	<p>High (9 to 12.5)</p>
<p>For construction funding requests, the sponsor has completed nearly all project development phases and/or offers adequate evidence in the application they are likely to have the resources and commitment to complete the remaining phases in a timely manner. Some timing or resource concerns may lead to a medium range score vs. a high range score.</p>	<p>Medium (5 to 8)</p>

For project development funding requests, the application provides adequate evidence that the sponsor is ready to complete the project phases for which SACOG funding is requested (e.g., environmental, design, right-of-way). Some timing or resource concerns may lead to a medium range vs. high range score.	
For construction funding requests, the sponsor has not completed many project development phases and/or does not offer adequate evidence in the application that they are likely to have the resources and commitment to complete the remaining phases in a timely manner. Many timing or resource concerns may lead to a low range vs. medium range score.	Low (0 to 4)
For project development funding requests, the application does not provide adequate evidence that the sponsor is ready to complete the project phases for which SACOG funding is requested (e.g., environmental, design, right-of-way). Many timing or resource concerns may lead to a low range vs. medium range score.	

**(1) Project Implementation**

- Evidence from plans that the project is identified as a priority investment for the sponsor
- Identified implementation issue(s) can be resolved or mitigated
- High levels of community and governing body support
- Clear evidence of advance coordination with project partners
- Clear evidence of funding sources and sponsor commitment to maintaining the project after it is completed

<b>(2) Project Implementation Scoring</b>	
Implementation of the project phase is feasible, a high level of support for the project is demonstrated and there is a good financial plan to maintain the project once built or launched; the project sponsor has a strong record delivering earlier federal/state funding awards.	High (9 to 12.5)
Implementation of the project phase is feasible, but some risks have been identified; an adequate level of support for the project is demonstrated and there is a reasonable financial plan to maintain the project once built or launched, but some risks may be present; the project sponsor has an average track record delivering earlier federal/state funding awards and/or some delivery risks in the application are identified.	Medium (5 to 8)
The sponsor does not adequately demonstrate through the application that it is an implementable project, or the application does not provide sufficient evidence of project support or the project support does not include an adequate financial plan to maintain the project once built or launched. The project has numerous project delivery risks, and/or the project sponsor has failed to deliver on prior federal/state funding awards.	Low (0 to 4)

## HOW TO APPLY FOR COMPETITIVE CATEGORY FUNDING

The remainder of Section 2 below serves as the Request for Applications and directly addresses the requirements for applying for a Community Design Program Grant. Please read the instructions in this section with the background information from the Guidelines in Section 1 when considering and preparing a grant application.

**Application and Deadline:** The application must be submitted by email to the SACOG Community Design Program Coordinator Greg Chew at [gchew@sacog.org](mailto:gchew@sacog.org) by 4:00 p.m. on January 15, 2021.

### P. Application Contents

All applications in the Competitive Category must contain the following elements with page limits as listed:

Max Pages	Content Element; Category	Content Description
email	Email transmission to Community Design Program Coordinator	Message stating that (name of jurisdiction) is submitting a Community Design application that is attached as one .pdf file, and who the point of contact is for the application. SACOG will reply all to the email to confirm receipt.
1	Required Form #1: Project Summary	Summary description of grant application using similar format to Table #1 shown at the end of this Section P.
3	Narrative Project Description	<p>This narrative section is the key focus for the application. The applicant has flexibility to describe the project, its importance, what impact it will have, and its readiness in just these three narrative pages. Specifically, the narrative should respond to these questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What activities will the applicant undertake if the grant is awarded?</li> <li>2. Identify and explain how the project implements at least one of the seven Blueprint principles: housing options, transportation choices, compact development, mix of uses, existing assets, preserve natural resources and quality design.</li> <li>3. What land use changes will result from the project in the near term?</li> <li>4. What actions have been taken to date to ensure that delivery and implementation of the project is executed within the program timelines?</li> </ol>
5	Project Maps/Graphics/ Photos	Up to five pages of maps or graphics illustrating the proposal. Page sizes are restricted to either 8.5"x11" or 11"x17". May be interspersed with narrative text.

<b>Max Pages</b>	<b>Content Element; Category</b>	<b>Content Description</b>
Unlimited, as needed	Engineer's estimate/budget	Project budget summary and/or engineer's estimate showing projected costs. Whether it is included in this application or in subsequent steps in the application process, applicants will be expected to provide details about what project costs are used, and how they were determined. SACOG may share an engineer's estimate template with any interested sponsor.

**Required Form #1: Project Summary (Competitive Category)**

Please fill out the contents of this table as the first element of the Community Design application. The applicant's contact person is the project manager and must be knowledgeable of Federal Aid management. The applicant does not need to replicate this exact format, but the table must fit on one page.

	<b>Content</b>
Project title	Official name of the project
Sponsoring Agency	Lead organization for grant application; entity that assumes all responsibility regarding management of federal aid funding, the match and project delivery
Lead Person and contact information (phone, email, mailing address)	This person is the project manager and the point of contact for this application and all grant-related matters. Please be sure this contains: the person's name, title, organization, mailing address, phone number, and email address. This individual must have knowledge of federal transportation aid funding.
Partner Organization(s) and match amount	Names of other organizations officially affiliated with the grant project, if any, and match amount, if any. A partner agency bears some responsibility in the activities of the grant.
Community Design Funds Requested	Amount of money requested from Community Design Grant Program – this is the full request amount
Local Match and other funds	Local match must be at least 11.47% of requested amount above; also list other funding amounts from other sources if full grant amount is awarded.
Minimum Amount to Conduct Project	If not awarded the full requested amount above, what is the minimum amount needed to do the project. This may mean a reduced scope of work, which would be negotiated between applicant and Community Design Project Advisory Committee before the award is granted. The committee generally is only able to recommend the full amount, the minimum amount, or no award.

Project Description	<p>For the project description, provide a one to two sentence description of your project, using the following structure:</p> <p>Location, facility, limits: Improvement. Blueprint principle(s) (Repeat for multiple locations or limits).</p> <p><b>Example Project Descriptions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Rancho Cordova, on Folsom Blvd., from Bradshaw Rd. to Horn Rd.: Streetscape improvements, including sidewalk gap closure, new bifurcated sidewalks (on south side of Folsom Blvd.), new Class II bike lanes, and landscaped medians. Blueprint principle: transportation options.</li> <li>• In Elk Grove, along the south side of Elk Grove Creek from Laguna Springs Drive to Oneto Park: Construct a separate Class I (off-street) bicycle/pedestrian trail. Along Laguna Springs Drive, from Elk Grove Boulevard to Laguna Palms Way: Construct Class II (on-street) bike lanes. Blueprint principle: transportation options.</li> </ul>
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## SECTION 3: Community Design Program – Non-Competitive Category

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### Q. Application, Selection Process and Funding

The Non-Competitive category is intended for jurisdictions that do not have a Community Design capital project ready to compete this cycle. Non-Competitive awards respond to key jurisdictional needs and can help projects progress through technical milestones to then compete for larger amounts in future funding opportunities.

**Sponsor Eligibility:** Only cities and counties in the four-county region may apply for one Non-Competitive Category application but then waive the eligibility to apply in the Competitive Category.

**Funding:** Non-Competitive Category awards fall within a sliding scale of \$100,000 to \$500,000 depending on each jurisdiction's growth and planning factors, (see description and tables below). Any city/county jurisdiction will receive at least a minimum of \$100,000 in funding for eligible scope work if they waive the right to apply in the Competitive category of the program.

Projects receiving \$100,000 or less are eligible for flexible (non-federal) SACOG Managed Funds (SMF) but forego any federal/state transportation funds above that amount. Projects receiving SMF still must show how the award promotes placemaking or the Blueprint principles.

For grant awards above \$100,000, the sponsor must either have project scope activities that are eligible for CMAQ, STIP or RSTP funds or present a viable strategy to account for funding eligibility requirements. The project sponsor is responsible to execute on such strategy within a year of the grant award.

**Match:** Projects receiving \$100,000 awards or SACOG Managed Funds have no matching requirement; awards above \$100,000 receiving federal funds must provide a standard 11.47 percent match requirement.

### R. Application Process

Sponsors that pursue the Non-Competitive program category need to contact the SACOG Community Design Program Manager during the open application period between November 11 to January 15, 2021, to discuss their jurisdiction's idea. After the two parties agree in concept on a project, the jurisdiction will be asked to submit a scope of work describing what the jurisdiction would accomplish with the award. If the jurisdiction seeks more than the minimum award amount, it will have to justify the request by addressing the four additional factors (described below). Final amounts in the Non-Competitive category will be listed as part of the funding round staff recommendation.

**Potential for Additional Non-Competitive Funding – 4 Additional Factors:** Additional funds, above the minimum \$100,000 amount described above, are available to non-competitive project sponsors. A sponsor is most likely to receive above the minimum amount if their project budget and scope is also supportive of multiple planning factors, as follows:

- **Project Deliverability:** The project sponsor has demonstrated technical capacity to successfully complete scope activities by the end of FY 2023.
- **Leverage:** A higher than required local match is being offered by the project sponsor.

- **Green Zone implementation:** Scope activities include planning or project development work in the jurisdiction’s identified Green Zones.
- **Affordable Housing Support:** The sponsor’s scope includes scope activities that are supportive of affordable housing production in their jurisdiction.

**R. Sliding Scale of Non-Competitive Category Minimum and Maximum Awards**

Two factors are used to determine the minimum amount each city and county in the four-county region is eligible for in the Non-Competitive category:

- (1) Each jurisdiction’s share of the 4-county 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy growth projection, broken out into four categories (Table 1); and
- (2) Each jurisdiction’s share of the 4-county affordable housing allocation in the 2021-29 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), broken into four categories (Table 2).

**Table 1:** Point breakdown by jurisdiction’s percentage share of 4-county 2040 growth projection:

% Share of MTP 2040 growth (4 county)	Points
0 to 1%	1
2-5%	2
6-10%	3
10+%	4

**Table 2:** Point breakdown by jurisdiction’s percentage share of 4-county low/very low-income housing units in 2021-29 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA):

% Share of Low/Very Low Income 2021-29 RHNA (4 county)	Points
0 to 1.0%	1
1.1% to 5.0%	2
5.1% to 10.0%	3
10.1+%	4

**Table 3:** Non-Competitive Community Design Program award range based on points from Tables 1 and 2:

Total points	Non-competitive	
	MINIMUM Amount	MAXIMUM Amount based on 4 additional factors
2	\$100,000	\$250,000
3	\$125,000	\$275,000
4	\$150,000	\$300,000
5	\$175,000	\$350,000
6	\$200,000	\$450,000
7	\$225,000	\$450,000
8	\$250,000	\$500,000

**Table 4: Minimum and Maximum Non-Competitive Award Amounts by Jurisdiction**

	Pts - % Share MTP 2040 Growth (4 county)	Pts - % Share 2021-29 RHNA Affordable (4 counties)	Total Points	MINIMUM Award Amount	MAXIMUM based on 4 Additional Factors
Isleton	1	1	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000
Wheatland	1	1	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000
Winters	1	1	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000
Live Oak	1	1	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000
Marysville	1	1	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000
Sutter County	1	1	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000
Citrus Heights	1	1	2	\$ 100,000	\$ 250,000
Galt	1	2	3	\$ 125,000	\$ 275,000
Yolo County	2	2	4	\$ 150,000	\$ 300,000
Yuba County	2	2	4	\$ 150,000	\$ 300,000
Woodland	2	2	4	\$ 150,000	\$ 300,000
Yuba City	2	2	4	\$ 150,000	\$ 300,000
Davis	2	2	4	\$ 150,000	\$ 300,000
West Sacramento	3	3	6	\$ 200,000	\$ 400,000
Rancho Cordova	3	3	6	\$ 200,000	\$ 400,000
Folsom	3	3	6	\$ 200,000	\$ 400,000
Elk Grove	3	3	6	\$ 200,000	\$ 400,000
Sacramento	4	4	8	\$ 250,000	\$ 500,000
Sacramento County	4	4	8	\$ 250,000	\$ 500,000

## HOW TO APPLY IN NON-COMPETITIVE CATEGORY

### S. Non-Competitive Category Applications

Only cities and counties in Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties may apply for one Non-Competitive Category application but waive the eligibility to apply in the Competitive Category. Non-Competitive Category applicants just submit the simple Level 1 information in their request if they are only seeking the minimum amount identified in Table 4. If applicants seek more than the minimum amount, up to the maximum, they must provide Level 1 and Level 2 application information. All Level 2 applications will receive an award amount between the minimum and maximum amounts. The SACOG staff and Community Design Project Advisory Committee will evaluate projects based on application information and prioritize projects for Level 2 funding amounts based on overall program funds available.

**Application and Deadline:** The application is a letter with 2-5 pages of narrative, plus any associated graphics. It may be submitted by email to the SACOG Community Design Program Coordinator Greg Chew at [gchew@sacog.org](mailto:gchew@sacog.org) by 4:00 p.m. on January 15, 2021.

### **Application contents:**

The information that must be addressed in the application letter depends on whether the applicants seeks only the minimum amount or more than the minimum, up to the maximum, shown in Table 4.

#### **Level 1 Non-Competitive Category application seeking less than or equal to Minimum amount:**

Please provide a letter stating what the jurisdiction is seeking by providing the following information:

- a. Name of jurisdiction, project manager and contact information, and title of project on jurisdiction letterhead.
- b. Budget request
- c. Narrative description of what the application would do. Describe the goal(s) of the project, what activities the grant fund would cover, and how the project helps the jurisdiction with some aspect of community development.

#### **Level 2: Non-Competitive Category application seeking more than Minimum amount:**

- a.–c. Provide all of the information in Level 1 application information above. Also provide responses to the following four criteria:
  - d. Project Deliverability: Steps the sponsor would take to successfully complete scope activities by the end of FY 2023.
  - e. Leverage: What level of local match is offered by the project sponsor?
  - f. Green Zone implementation: Describe if any scope activities include planning or project development work in the jurisdiction's identified Green Zone(s).
  - g. Affordable Housing Support: Describe if the sponsor's scope includes activities that are supportive of affordable housing production in their jurisdiction.

## APPENDIX A:

# Project Performance Assessment

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The Community Design program included several new changes in the prior funding cycle (Round 8, 2018). One of the chief changes to the program was incorporating the Project Performance Assessment (PPA) tool as part of the overall project evaluation. The PPA tool provides quantitative indicators for each project that relate to the goals and objectives of the Community Design program. These quantitative indicators complement the narrative-based responses and other material provided by the applicant to evidence the project's performance benefits.

Round 9 of Community Design (2021) continues to use the PPA as part of a project's overall evaluation. Round 9 uses a new version of the PPA with several refinements and enhancements. The updated tool stems from an assessment of the first iteration of the tool that drew both on technical staff and users and follows an open beta period for users to comment and test the tool's new changes.

SACOG is offering to run the PPA tool for all Community Design project sponsors in Round 9 while still providing the option for sponsors to run the tool themselves. Learn more about the indicators and changes to the PPA tool for the 2021 funding round at: <https://www.sacog.org/post/2020-ppa-tool-materials> for summary materials and detailed documentation.

For Round 9 the PPA tool will provide a series of quantitative indicators that fit broadly within the goals and outcomes of the Community Design program, not tied to a specific Blueprint principle. The project sponsor should bring these PPA outputs into their application where relevant to evidence the claims made in the narrative. The Community Design guidelines do not prescribe which indicators to use by Blueprint principle or other selection criteria, instead encouraging sponsors to think critically of what outcomes best pair with their application material to make the most compelling case. In other words, the sponsor can view the PPA results as a menu of possible indicators to choose from in responding to the Community Design prompts.

Table 5 below summarizes the list of indicators produced by the PPA for the 2021 Community Design program within broad themes of complete streets/multi modalism; land use and VMT; economic prosperity and accessibility, and safety. Each indicator is then described in more detail in the following section with sample visualizations. Indicators can help provide comparisons across projects and in relation to regional and place type averages but are meant to be used in combination with the qualitative material the sponsor provides in the application.

**Table 5. Indicators by cross-cutting themes**

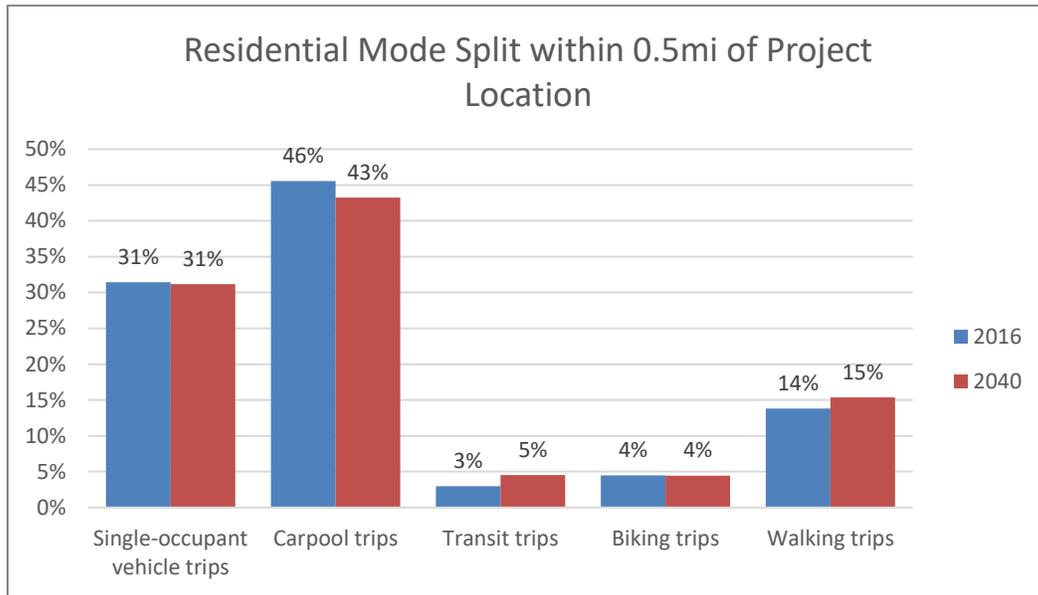
<b>Complete Streets and Multi-Modalism</b>
Transportation mode share
Bike lane/path coverage
Street connectivity
Transit activity
<b>VMT and Land Use</b>
Job and dwelling unit density
Land use diversity index
Housing product diversity
Infill/greenfield community
<b>Economic Prosperity and Accessibility</b>
Accessibility to services
Accessibility to jobs
Accessibility to educational facilities
Agriculture and open space preservation
<b>Safety</b>
Total collisions
Collision rate
% of fatal collisions
% of collisions involving a bicyclist or pedestrian

## Indicator Description

### Complete Streets and multi-modalism

- Transportation mode split for residents within half mile of project:** this indicator estimates the travel characteristics of residents within the project buffer area, split into: walk, bike, drive alone, carpool, transit, and other trips. It reports both for current conditions (2016) as well as what the MTP/SCS envisions for the corridor by 2040. This metric is applied to show where biking, walking and transit trips are expected to increase. Note that the future year data for this metric, like all other PPA outputs used in Community Design, is not an estimate of the impact of the project, but instead the summation of the MTP/SCS planned investments in 2040. Project sponsors will need to discuss how the proposed project either leverages existing conditions or aligns/helps implement the plan.

*Example Visualization: travel mode split*

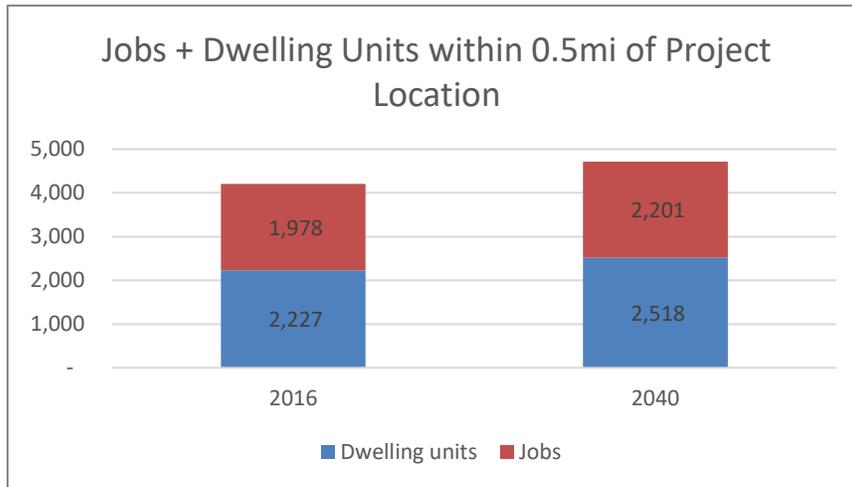


- **Bike lane + path / total road mileage:** number of class 1 (trail), 2 (bike lane), and 4 (cycle track) centerline miles in the project area divided by the total number of centerline miles (road miles) in the same area. For year 2017. This metric is applied to quantify how much supporting/connecting bike infrastructure is around the proposed project.
- **3- or 4-way intersections per acre:** the number of 3-way and 4-way intersections per acre of project area. For year 2016. This metric is applied related to research showing that areas with a higher intersection density are more supportive of walking.
- **Transit activity:** the number of times a transit vehicle stops within the project area on a typical weekday. For year 2016.

### VMT and Land Use

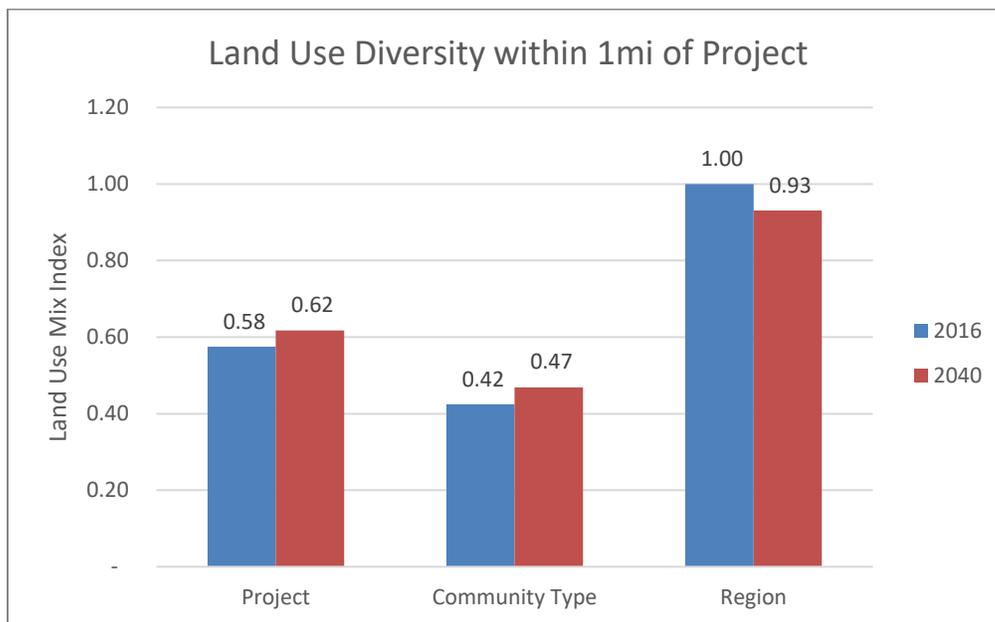
- **Combined jobs and dwelling units within a 0.5mi of project location:** the 2016 data estimates current conditions in the project corridor, and the 2040 provides the MTP's projected totals of jobs and dwelling units. Projects serving a denser built environment have been shown to reduce VMT/capita. Note that the future year data is not an estimate of the impact of the project. Project sponsors will need to discuss how the proposed project either leverages existing conditions or aligns/helps implement the plan.

*Example Visualization: density*



- Land use diversity index within 1 mile of project location:** the higher the value on the land use diversity index (ranging from 0 to 1), the more evidence of mix of uses, which have been shown to reduce VMT. The indicator measures an area’s ratio of households to K-12 student enrollment, park acreage, and employment in the retail, service, and food sectors. A score of 1 indicates an “ideal” ratio of households to amenities that people use on a daily basis like shopping, restaurants, schools, etc. that in turn increases the likelihood that people living in those households will either walk or bike to these destinations or drive a shorter distance.

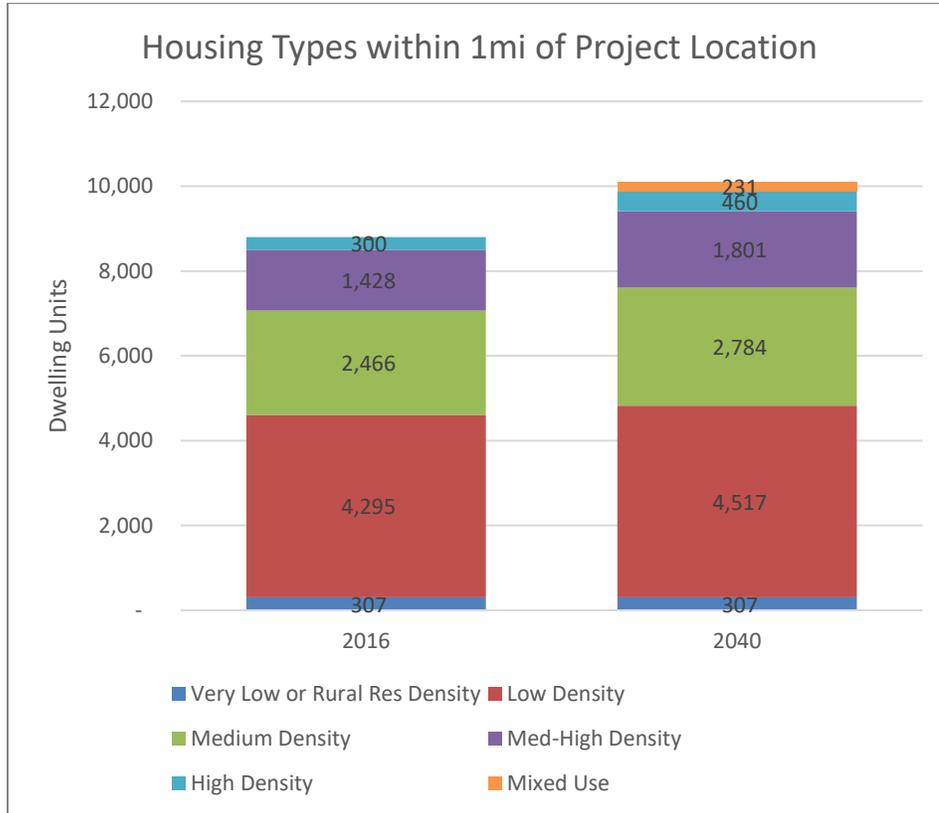
*Example Visualization: Land Use Diversity Index*



- Housing product diversity within 1 mile of project location:** the number of housing units within the project corridor in the following categories: high density, medium-high density, medium density, low density, very low or rural residential density, and mixed-use. The density classifications come from SACOG’s MTP/SCS. In other words, these are definitions standardized

to the full region, not for an individual jurisdiction or community. Having a variety of housing densities (single family homes, duplexes, larger apartment complexes, etc.) is essential to furthering the Community Design goal of increasing housing choice.

*Example Visualization: product diversity*

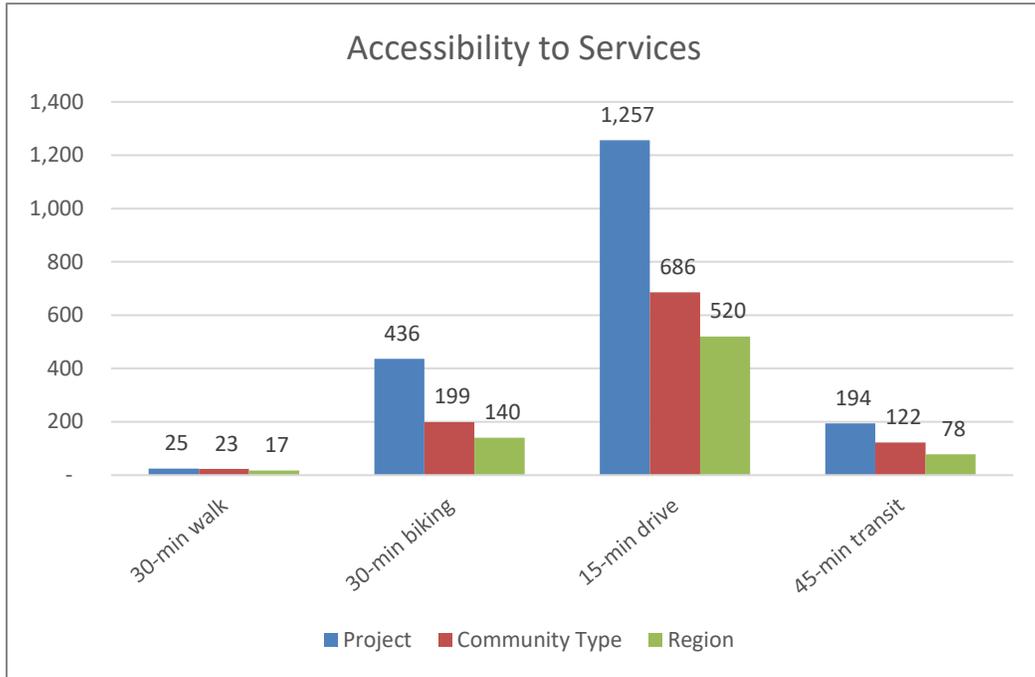


- Infill/greenfield community:** This indicator draws on the land uses surrounding the project to give a categorical output. If over 90 percent of the buffer area is in a developing, agricultural, rural residential or other non-urbanized land use, the project is considered greenfield. If 90 percent or more of the buffer area is in an established community or center and corridor, the project is considered infill. If the project is in a mix of uses, the outcome reports the project spans both infill and greenfield areas. The land use designations come from the 2020 MTP/SCS.

### Economic Prosperity and Accessibility

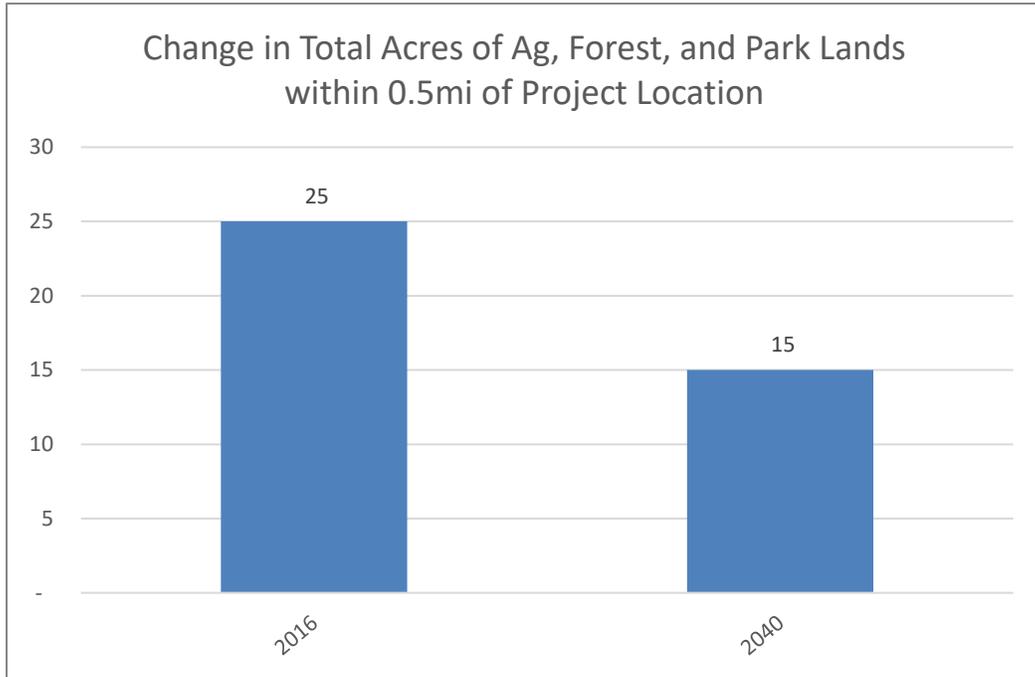
- Base Year Service Accessibility by Mode** the number of services (parks, K-12 schools, higher education facilities, libraries, hospitals, other medical service facilities, grocery stores, pharmacies, clothing stores, and banks) accessible by mode, e.g. within a 30-minute trip (or 45 minutes for transit), in the project area. This metric is applied to show the total number of services near households and the potential for increased transit, walking, or cycle trips.

Example Visualization: Service Accessibility



- **Access to jobs in all sectors by mode:** The number of jobs accessible by mode, e.g. within a 30-minute drive or within a 30-minute bike ride, in the project area. This metric is applied to show if the project is serving an area of high employment.
- **Education Facility (K12 schools and higher education) Access:** The number of educational facilities accessible by mode, e.g. within a 30-minute walk or within a 30-minute bike ride, in the project area. This metric is applied to show if the project is serving an area with many educational institutions that may support educational training opportunities for the future workforce.
- **Agriculture preservation:** measures the acres of forest, agricultural land, or park/open space in project shed currently and in 2040. Projects that maintain their portion of open space through time are more supportive of MTP/SCS goals to preserve the agricultural economy and use existing resources.

*Example Visualization:*



**Safety**

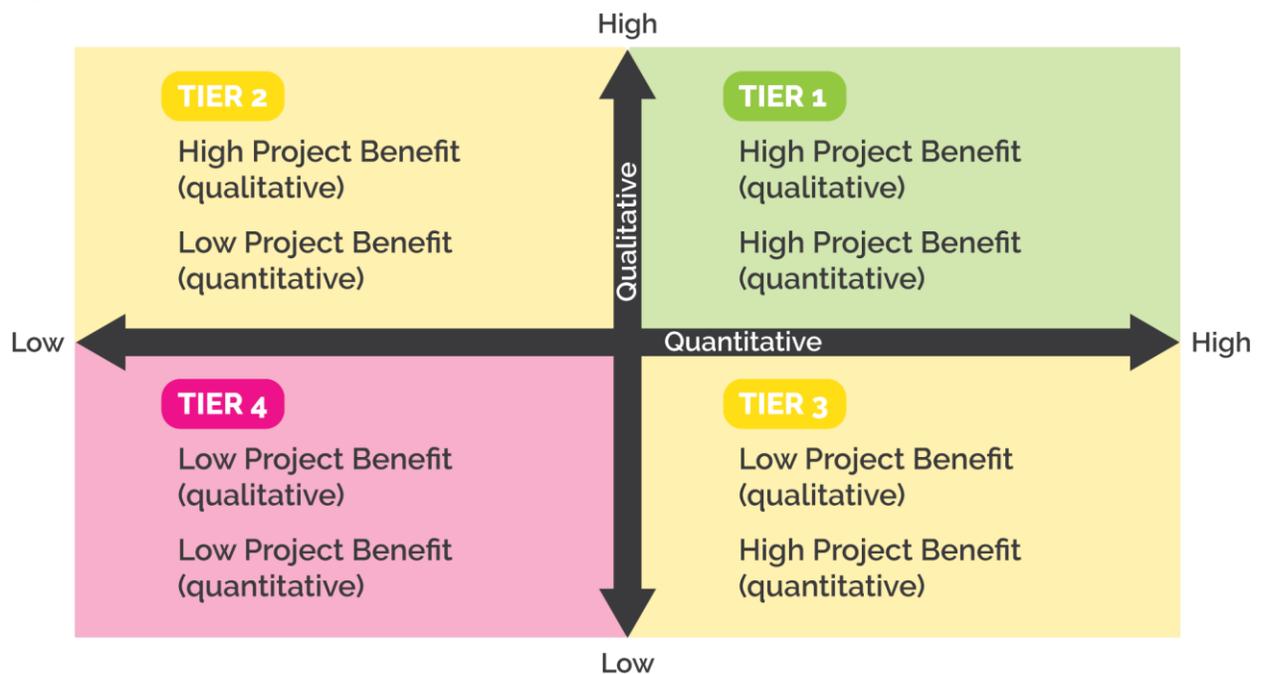
- **Total Collisions** – number of injury and fatality collisions along the corridor between 2014 and 2018. This metric is applied to show if the facility has a high number of overall collisions.
- **Collisions Rate** – the five-year TIMS collision average along the facility per 100 million vehicle miles travelled. This metric is applied to show if the facility has a high rate of collisions.
- **Percent of Fatal Collisions**- the percent of all collisions that result in a fatality. Is used to show collision severity.
- **Percent Bike/Ped Collisions** – the percent of all collisions that involved a person biking or walking. This metric is applied to show if people biking and walking are involved in collisions.
- **Collision Heat Map** – This additional map shows collisions in the project area. This map can serve as a visual to where there is a concentrated history of crashes.

## APPENDIX B: Policy Advisory Committee and Project Tiering

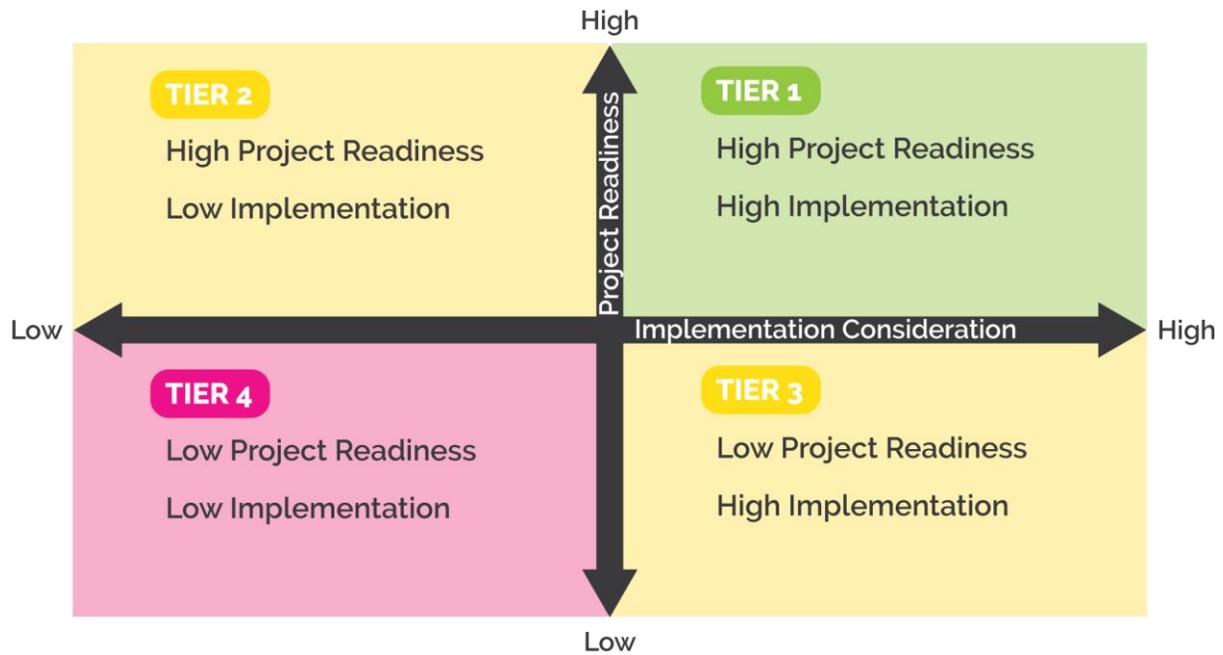
The policy advisory committee completes the final evaluations through taking input from the dual selection criteria reviewed by the Project Advisory Committee. The project scores provide a means to assess the projects and project tiering provides another reference to inform the award recommendation. Both selection criteria will be classified into three project tiers (low, medium, and high). The qualitative assessment of other project application details (e.g., application narrative, project deliverability) are then considered to establish final project selection tiers for award consideration.

The project tiers consider evaluation inputs (1) and (2) together for each criterion. This method simplifies a series of numbers into a relative score of four tiers by selection criteria. Figures 1-2 illustrate the tiers planned to evaluate Community Design project applications.

**Figure 1 – Project Benefit Tiers**



**Figure 2 – Project Implementation**



The benefit of using a tiering system is that it gives the policy working group the ability to quickly reference how all scored projects relatively compare to each other. Each project is grouped into a high/medium/low category by the three selection criteria using the groupings shown in Table 6 below.

**Table 6 – Project Selection Tiers**

Tier	Factor 1	Factor 2	Grouping
1	High	High	High
2	High	Low	Medium
3	Low	High	Medium
4	Low	Low	Low