

## Frequently Asked Questions about the Project Performance Assessment (PPA) Tool

### 1. What is the PPA tool?

The Project Performance Assessment tool compiles information about roads, trails, and transit systems, the form and function of neighborhoods and communities, people living in those communities, and current and future conditions in a project area. The tool brings together the numerous data sets SACOG maintains to create performance indicators for individual transportation projects, and serves as the baseline data used in the Regional Program's quantitative performance assessment. The tool stems from a 2017 working group exploring methods to analyze transportation investments at the project level.

### 2. Is the PPA tool required for the 2018 Funding Round?

Yes, the PPA tool is a required component of both the 2018 Community Design and 2018 Regional Program. SACOG will run the PPA tool on all projects applying in the Community Design program (i.e. the sponsor does not run the tool for Community Design applications, this is done by SACOG). All project sponsors applying to the Regional Program are required to input their projects into the PPA tool as a mandatory element of the application. The sponsor will attach the completed data output to the Regional Program application.

The one exception is for transit vehicle maintenance or equipment projects. These projects instead use the Transit Asset Management (TAM) data tool instead of the online PPA tool. Note that transit projects that are not for vehicle maintenance/equipment (such as new service, new station, station improvements) are required to use the PPA table. Transit agencies should consult with SACOG staff if unsure whether to provide the TAM or PPA data table as part of the application.

### 3. What if my project is a new facility or a system-wide investment? How will the PPA tool provide data indicators for these types of projects?

Projects with unique geographies (new facility, system-wide investments, or projects not tied to a specific geography or facility), or projects whose primary benefits are to provide an alternative to an existing facility can work with SACOG to identify and create a custom geography in the PPA tool. For example, a new facility could draw on data for an existing parallel facility as part of the PPA summary table if the goal of the new project is to relieve conditions on the parallel facility. Sponsors need to work with SACOG in advance of the application deadline for a custom summary table. SACOG's contact for this is Kyle Smith, [ksmith@sacog.org](mailto:ksmith@sacog.org), who can help sponsors develop a custom data table.

### 4. Why did I get an error message when running the PPA tool?

You cannot use any special characters (commas, backslash, underscore, etc.) in the user input fields of the tool. The most common issue for users to date has been putting a comma or backslash in the Project Name input tab, which will produce an error code. **Do not use any special characters in any of the text input fields.**

## **5. Can I bring in my own data/analysis outside of the PPA?**

Yes. The PPA is the baseline data used in the 2018 funding round. Applicants are not required to provide any additional data outside the PPA tool. However, the project sponsor may bring in any additional data or analysis as part of the narrative questions.

## **6. What if I don't know/don't have PCI, vehicle speeds, or AADT for my project?**

The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is required for all road projects claiming a State of Good Repair/Maintenance benefit (Outcome #7). If the project is not claiming a maintenance benefit, the applicant can simply input a "0" (zero) into the field.

The applicant can use posted speed limit or design speed if vehicle speed on the segment is unknown.

Finally, SACOG has created the traffic volume reference table as a resource for the AADT input. The volume reference table can be found next to the summary Project Performance Assessment table in the Regional Program guidelines and online tool.

## **7. Where can I go to learn more about the PPA tool?**

- The [2018 regional program guidelines](#) give a walkthrough of the PPA tool and how to use in the Regional Program. The third section of these guidelines gives the evaluation framework of both the PPA and narrative questions.
- The [Regional Program PPA documentation](#) gives the technical background of the tool, including the data sources, rollup, and buffering concept.
- The [Community Design PPA documentation](#) provides the same technical information, except from the perspective of how PPA is used in Community Design.
- The [PPA webpage](#) has the summary information of the tool, and the archived material from the 2017 working group.
- The PPA place type summary below reports average regional scores and guidance on how to interpret the data results. This same information is also found in the program guidelines and documentation referenced above.

## **PPA Interpretation and Guidance Table**

### **What do the numbers mean?**

SACOG has created the below summary table to help project sponsors/potential applicants interpret the results of the Project Performance Assessment data. The first column lists the seven performance outcomes used in the Regional Program. The second column lists the numeric indicators within each performance outcome. The guidelines provide more information on how the data indicators relate to performance outcomes (notably, how applicants are only evaluated on three of the seven outcomes and the indicator sets within each outcome).

Your project demonstrates performance potential, need, and/or benefit when it has indicator values that are stronger--either higher or lower--than other projects in similar areas. For most indicators, a supportive score will be numerically higher, as defined in the table's third column. For example, a project with higher congestion levels today (relative to projects in similar areas) demonstrates the need for a congestion mitigation project (thus supporting Performance Outcome #2 on congestion). Likewise, a project that improves access to a high number of jobs relative to similar place types is supportive of Performance Outcome #4, improving the economy. Note that the indicators on Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and Pavement Condition Index (PCI) are the exception to this interpretation guidance: For VMT or PCI, a lower score is more supportive of the performance outcome or need. Finally, three indicators are used for project context, and do not have a high or low interpretation. These metrics are: (1) the complete street potential index for Outcome #7, and the (2) volumes and (3) speed indicator in Outcome #3. For more information on each metric, including evaluation guidance, please read the third section of the Regional Program guidelines referenced above.

### **Comparison to projects in similar areas**

Projects will be evaluated against those in the same MTP/SCS community type, which is a classification SACOG uses in its long range transportation plan. The guidance table provides the average score by indicator of all projects in each community type in SACOG's current MTP/SCS, as noted in the table's final columns.

**Guidance Table: Project Performance Assessment (PPA) Tool Averages by Community Type and Score Interpretation**

| Outcome                                 | Indicator  | A supportive score is... | Established      | Corridor         | Developing       | Rural Residential | Ag/Other         | Regional Average |
|---|--|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Outcome #1 - Reduce VMT</b>          | <b>VMT/Capita</b>                                    | Lower                    | 17.5             | 13.5             | 21.7             | 28.8              | 31.1             | 18.3             |
|   | <b>Net Jobs (EMP) + Dwelling Units (DU) per acre</b> | Higher                   | 6.1              | 16.8             | 2.2              | 0.3               | 0.4              | 3.1              |
|   | <b>Change VMT/ capita</b>                            | Lower/Negative values    | -6.4%            | -11.1%           | -7.6%            | -2.0%             | -1.9%            | -6.4%            |
|   | <b>Net Density Increase</b>                          | Higher                   | 16%              | 31%              | 152%             | 10%               | 0%               | 31%              |
| <b>Outcome #2 - Reduce Congestion</b>   | <b>Buffer area CVMT/VMT</b>                          | Higher                   | 4.6%             | 5.44%            | 5.0%             | 0.85%             | 3.0%             | 4.1%             |
|   | <b>% growth DU + EMP</b>                             | Higher                   | 24%              | 57%              | 313%             | 12%               | 0%               | 40%              |
| <b>Outcome #3 - Increase Multimodal</b> | <b>3- or 4-way intersections per acre</b>            | Higher                   | 0.11             | 0.16             | 0.02             | 0.01              | 0.00             | 0.03             |
|   | <b>Bike lanes + paths/ total road mileage</b>        | Higher                   | 17.4%            | 22.5%            | 10.2%            | 1.7%              | 1.6%             | 9.7%             |
|   | <b>AADT</b>  | Context                  | Volume Ref Table | Volume Ref Table | Volume Ref Table | Volume Ref Table  | Volume Ref Table | Volume Ref Table |
|   | <b>Posted Speed Limit</b>                            | Context                  | n/a              | n/a              | n/a              | n/a               | n/a              | n/a              |
|   | <b>Transit vehicle stops per acre</b>                | Higher                   | 0.19             | 1.21             | 0.00             | 0.00              | 0.00             | 0.06             |
|   | <b>T/B/W future mode share</b>                       | Higher                   | 12%              | 29%              | 7%               | 3%                | 4%               | 13%              |
| <b>Outcome #4 - Support Economy</b>     | <b>Transit + Drive Job Access</b>                    | Higher                   | 410,933          | 527,887          | 266,223          | 181,067           | 164,173          | 403,102          |
|   | <b>2012 K-university enrollment per net acre</b>     | Higher                   | 1.1              | 3.1              | 0.2              | 0.0               | 0.0              | 0.21             |
|   | <b>% Emp growth</b>                                  | Higher                   | 41%              | 49%              | 290%             | 18%               | 0%               | 49%              |
|   | <b>% Ag Acres current</b>                            | Higher                   | 5%               | 4%               | 55%              | 15%               | 48%              | 41%              |
|   | <b>% Change in Ag Acres</b>                          | Higher/No change         | -20%             | -60%             | -13%             | -1%               | 0%               | -1%              |

|                                 |  |         |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |                     |
|---------------------------------|--|---------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Outcome #5 - Freight</b>     | <b>% Commercial VMT</b>                    | Higher  | 17%                 | 42%                 | 14%                 | 11%                 | 17%                 | 19%                 |
|                                 | <b>Commercial CVMT/<br/>Commercial VMT</b> | Higher  | 4%                  | 3%                  | 4%                  | 3%                  | 1%                  | 4%                  |
|                                 | <b>% Industrial Jobs</b>                   | Higher  | 18%                 | 8%                  | 30%                 | 20%                 | 37%                 | 16%                 |
| <b>Outcome #6 - Safety</b>      | <b>Total Collisions/<br/>1 million VMT</b> | Higher  | 0.72                | 0.90                | 0.42                | 0.53                | 0.40                | 0.70                |
|                                 | <b>% Fatal Collisions<br/>(All Roads)</b>  | Higher  | 1.7%                | 1.3%                | 3.4%                | 3.6%                | 4.6%                | 2.0%                |
|                                 | <b>% Bike/Ped<br/>Collisions</b>           | Higher  | 14%                 | 18%                 | 7%                  | 4%                  | 3%                  | 14%                 |
| <b>Outcome #7 - Maintenance</b> | <b>PCI</b>                                 | Lower   | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 |
|                                 | <b>AADT</b>                                | Higher  | Volume Ref<br>Table | Volume Ref<br>Table | Volume Ref<br>Table | Volume Ref<br>Table | Volume Ref<br>Table | Volume<br>Ref Table |
|                                 | <b>Complete Street<br/>Potential Index</b> | Context | relative            | relative            | relative            | relative            | relative            | relative            |
| <b>Equity</b>                   | <b>LIHM Population</b>                     | Higher  | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 | n/a                 |
|                                 | <b>% LIHM Population</b>                   | Higher  | 31%                 | 56%                 | 14%                 | 6%                  | 11%                 | 30%                 |