



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Community Action Resource and Empowerment (CARE) Program Cycle 1 Guidelines

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November 2023

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**COMMUNITY ACTION RESOURCE AND EMPOWERMENT (CARE) PROGRAM
CYCLE 1 GUIDELINES**

FY 2022-23 AND FY 2025-26

November 2023

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COMMUNITY ACTION RESOURCE AND EMPOWERMENT (CARE) PROGRAM CYCLE 1
GUIDELINES**

FY 2022-23 AND FY 2025-26

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1. **BACKGROUND.** The Community Action Resource and Empowerment (CARE) Program establishes the policy framework and commitments for supporting community-led transportation enhancements in Equity Priority Communities as referenced in Plan Bay Area 2050 (PBA2050): Implementation Strategy. PBA2050 outlines the region’s Long-Range Plan, incorporating equity through investments and policies that affect historically and systemically marginalized, underserved and excluded groups, including people with low incomes, people with disabilities and communities of color. Funds are for a four-year period covering federal fiscal years (FY) 2022-23 through FY 2025-26. Attachment A outlines the CARE program mission, goals, objectives, funding availability, program architecture, and programming policies.

Since 2005, the Lifeline Transportation Program (LTP) supported and advanced projects identified in Community Based Transportation Plans and the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan. The LTP was redesigned to form the Community Action Resource and Empowerment Program (CARE) to address administrative fund source barriers, to better align and advance high priority community-based transportation plans with project implementation, and to strengthen community assets by better resourcing community relationship and power-building.

2. **PROGRAM MISSION AND GOALS.** The Community Action Resource and Empowerment (CARE) Program is a capacity building, technical assistance, and participatory budgeting grant

program for under-resourced communities (i.e., Equity Priority Communities, Priority Populations) in the 9-county Bay Area region.

a. Mission:

- i. To provide under-resourced communities (i.e., Equity Priority Communities, Priority Populations) with the opportunity to advance high priority community-based, multi-sector transportation-housing-climate initiatives that improve mobility.
- ii. To support community leaders in transformative change, working effectively in diverse, ambiguous, and challenging contexts in achieving multi-beneficial transportation mobility, housing, and climate outcomes.

b. Goals: The goals of the program are to:

- i. Strengthen multi-sector partnerships to advance more impactful, intersectional, and innovative projects. These initiatives must:
 - Address transportation gaps and/or barriers identified in Community-Based Transportation Plans (CBTP), MTC Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, or other substantive local planning efforts involving focused outreach to low-income populations. While preference will be given to community-based plan priorities, strategies emerging from countywide or regional welfare-to-work transportation plans, or other documented assessment of need within the designated Equity Priority Community will also be considered. Findings emerging from one or more CBTPs or other relevant planning efforts may also be applied to other low-income areas, or otherwise be directed to serving low-income constituencies within the county, as applicable.
 - Support the development of projects to close the race and equity gap.
 - Invest in historically underserved communities, which may include projects prioritized in a Community-Based Transportation Planning (CBTP) or Participatory Budgeting process, or projects located within Equity Priority Communities with demonstrated community support. Equity Priority Communities are defined in Chapter 1 Plan Bay Area 2050 and described at <https://mtc.ca.gov/planning/transportation/access-equity-mobility/equitypriority-communities>;
 - Advance project readiness and further develop priority community ideas or concepts so that projects/initiatives can become competitive for local, state, and/or federal fund sources.
- ii. Build community power and engagement.
 - Acknowledge and grow community leadership and knowledge.
 - Build mutually beneficial relationships for meaningful, inclusive collaboration that includes outreach, education and broad partnerships among a variety of stakeholders such as public agencies, transit operators, community-based organizations, residents, and underrepresented, overburdened groups.

- iii. Support intersectional leadership and expertise with particular focus on increasing access to funding and resources for project planning and implementation within under-resourced communities to advance Community Based Transportation Plans or Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan strategies.
 - Improve diverse range of transportation solutions, and in particular transportation needs specific to older adults and people with disabilities of low-income communities.

3. **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.** The CARE Program will be administered by MTC, supported by county transportation agencies (CTAs) or other designated county-wide agencies as follows:

County	CARE Program Liaison
Alameda	Alameda County Transportation Commission
Contra Costa	Contra Costa Transportation Authority
Marin	Transportation Authority of Marin
Napa	Napa Valley Transportation Authority
San Francisco	San Francisco County Transportation Authority
San Mateo	City/County Association of Governments
Santa Clara	Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and Santa Clara County
Solano	Solano Transportation Authority
Sonoma	Sonoma County Transportation Authority

This involves CTA coordination and a full commitment to a broad, inclusive public involvement process and using multiple methods of public outreach. Methods of public outreach include but are not limited to highlighting the program and application solicitation on the CTA website; sending e-mails to local community-based organizations, city departments, and non-profit organizations (particularly those that have previously participated in local planning processes); and contacting local elected officials and their staffs. Further guidance for public involvement is contained in MTC’s Public Participation Plan.

For projects involving federal funds, MTC and CARE Program Liaisons must also consider fair and equitable outreach and selection of project candidates in accordance with federal Title VI requirements, i.e., funds must be distributed without regard to race, color, and national origin.

4. **FUNDING AVAILABILITY.** Fund sources for the Cycle 1 CARE Program (FY2022-23 through FY2025-26) include State Regional Early Action Program (REAP) 2.0 funds¹, and One Bay Area Grant (OBAG), which encompasses federal Surface Transportation Program (STP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ), and other local funds available to MTC, as

¹ REAP 2.0 Guidelines: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/docs/grants-and-funding/mpo-reap-2-0-final-guidelines.pdf>

shown in Table A. CMAQ funds will be used for eligible projects that demonstrate air quality benefits and implement Plan Bay Area’s climate initiative goals and priorities.

Funding for CARE from REAP 2.0 and OBAG will be assigned a minimum of \$1M to counties, for eligible projects based on a competitive process to be conducted by MTC and in coordination with CARE Program Liaisons in each county. All funded projects must meet the eligibility requirements of the respective funding source. See Appendix 1 for detailed eligibility requirements by fund source.

Table A: Funding Available FY2022-23 through FY2025-26

	Project Development for a “Community Based Transportation Plan” Project*	Implementation of a Neighborhood-level Project/Participatory Budgeting (capital)	Community Power-Building and Engagement	Overall CARE Program Total
Total	\$20M		\$1.5M**	\$13M OBAG \$8.0 REAP \$21.5M Total
Local Match	11.47%	11.47%	No local match required	
Minimum Project Amount Threshold	\$250K		\$25K	
Award Amounts	Minimum: \$1M for each of the 9-Counties Maximum: No County will receive more than 50% of the funding available			

*Also includes strategies in MTC’s Coordinated Plan or other substantive local planning effort

**Community power-building and engagement to be funded with \$1.5 million in local funds available to MTC within the OBAG framework.

- a. Local Fund Exchanges. Project Sponsors have the discretion to use local fund exchanges to fund projects that are not otherwise eligible for the state and federal funds in Cycle 1. Project Sponsors must notify MTC about their intent to exchange funds, and MTC staff will review and approve the exchanges on a case-by-case basis. MTC staff is supportive of these fund exchanges to the extent that the exchange projects meet the spirit of the CARE Program.

5. ELIGIBLE LOCATION, RECIPIENTS/SUBRECIPIENTS

- a. Eligible Locations. All projects must be located in one or more of the following locations:
 - [Equity Priority Communities](#) (EPCs)
 - [Priority Development Areas](#) (PDAs)

- Bay Area Air Quality Management District's (BAAQMD) [Community Air Risk Evaluation Program Area or similar local designation](#)

- b. REAP 2.0. Project sponsors selected for REAP 2.0 funding through the CARE program may include: Bay Area counties, cities, a city and county, transit agencies or districts, county transportation agencies, Tribal Entities, community-based organizations, Public Housing Authorities, academic institutions, school districts, special districts, developers of Affordable Housing, or regional Housing Trust Fund (<https://www.hcd.ca.gov/docs/grants-and-funding/mpo-reap-2-0-final-guidelines.pdf>).
 - c. OBAG. Project sponsors selected for OBAG funding through the CARE program may include: Bay Area cities, counties, transit agencies, federally recognized Tribal governments, and County Transportation Agencies (CTAs). Non-profit organizations are only eligible for OBAG funds if they partner with an eligible OBAG recipient (e.g., CTA, transit operator) that is willing to serve as the recipient of the funds and pass through the funds to the non-profit, and if they have an eligible project.
6. REAP 2.0 AND FEDERAL OBAG PROGRAMMING PROCESS. For REAP 2.0 and OBAG funds, MTC will solicit applications, in collaboration with CARE Program Liaisons.
- a. Outreach - Consistent with MTC's Public Participation Plan and FTA's Title VI Circular (FTA C 4702.1B), MTC will conduct a broad, inclusive public involvement process, and use multiple methods of public outreach in collaboration with CARE Program Liaisons.

Methods of public outreach may include, but are not limited to, highlighting the program and application solicitation on websites, and sending e-mails to all prospective applicants, including those that serve predominantly minority and low-income populations.
 - b. Competitive Process. The CARE Program is a competitive grant program within the OBAG 3 and/or REAP 2.0 framework. Projects will be selected through an open, competitive process.
 - c. Multi-Year Programming: The First Cycle CARE Program will cover a four-year programming cycle, FY2022-2023 to FY2025-2026.

7. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- a. Eligible Categories: Projects must advance "Community Based Transportation Plan" projects or strategies within "MTC's Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan" (or other substantive local planning efforts involving focused outreach to low-income populations) through:
 - i. Category 1: Project development technical assistance
 - ii. Category 2: Participatory Budgeting Process and Implementation or Advancing High-priority neighborhood level projects through similar extensive outreach/engagement process
 - iii. Category 3: Community power-building and engagement initiatives

b. Eligible capital projects. Eligible capital projects, consistent with requirements of funding sources, may include (but are not limited to); bus stop improvements, including accessibility enhancements, the provision of bus shelters, benches, lighting, or sidewalk improvements at or near transit stops; rehabilitation, safety or modernization improvements; non-transit projects such as bike lanes, complete streets, streetscape improvements, safety improvements, crosswalk improvements; or other enhancements to improve transportation access for residents of low-income communities or people with disabilities. See Appendix 1 for additional details about eligibility by funding source.

c. Projects must be eligible for STP or CMAQ or REAP.

i. For STP or CMAQ funds, refer to details in 23 USC Sec. 133 and at <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/stbgfs.cfm> (STP), and in 23 USC Sec. 149 and at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/policy_and_guidance/ (CMAQ); Consistent with Plan Bay Area 2050, available at <https://planbayarea.org/>; and meet all OBAG 3 programming policy requirements described in these guidelines and in MTC Resolution 4505. Note: Projects selected for Community Power-Building and Engagement will be funded with local funds and do not need to meet STP/CMAQ eligibility requirements.

ii. For REAP funds, see Section 204 of REAP 2.0 Guidelines: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/grants-and-funding/MPO-REAP-2-0-Final-Guidelines.pdf>. Activities generally may include: Technical assistance, planning, staffing, consultant needs (CARE/CBTP or Coordinated Plan related). Projects must support one or more of the following REAP 2.0 objectives:

- a) Accelerating infill development that facilitates housing supply, choice, and affordability through various planning programs, or services;
- b) Realizing multimodal communities through programs, plans, and implementation actions shifting travel behavior by reducing driving through programs, ordinances, funds, and other mechanisms;
- c) Shifting travel behavior through reducing driving; and,
- d) Increasing transit ridership through implementation actions, and planning

8. LOCAL MATCHING REQUIREMENTS. The CARE Program requires a minimum local match of 11.47% of the total project cost.

a. Exception to the local match requirement: Projects selected for Community Power-Building and Engagement will be funded with local funds and do not require a local match.

b. Sources of local match. Project sponsors may use certain state, or local funding sources (Transportation Development Act, operator-controlled State Transit Assistance, local sales tax

revenue, etc.) to meet the match requirement. In-kind contributions such as the market value of in-kind contributions integral to the project may be counted as a contribution toward local share.

Toll Credits are not an eligible source of local match for the CARE Program. However, for capital projects, sponsors that fully fund the project development or Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase with non-federal funds may use toll credits in lieu of a match for the Construction (CON) phase. For these projects, sponsors must still meet all federal requirements for the PE phase.

9. COORDINATED PLANNING. In the Bay Area's Coordinated Plan, through community outreach and engagement, MTC continues to identify the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, and to provide strategies for meeting those local needs. Therefore, projects funded with CARE Transportation Program funds should be consistent with the transportation needs, proposed solutions, and enhanced coordination strategies presented in the Coordinated Plan.

Mobility management is among key coordination strategies recommended in the plan. The designation of and funding for countywide mobility managers is identified as an essential component of that strategy. For more information on the strategies within the Coordinated Plan, please see: mtc.ca.gov/coordinatedplan.

10. GRANT APPLICATION. To ensure a streamlined application process for project sponsors, a universal application form will be used. The application and guidelines are informed by input from the "call for project ideas" process. If a project proposal is a universally, regionally applied project, the project proposal could be elevated to a regional project.
 - a. Applications for projects eligible for CMAQ funds must also provide inputs for air quality improvement calculations, using the Supplemental Air Quality Inputs v.1.1 template.
11. APPLICATION EVALUATION. Per OBAG 3 federal funding and REAP 2.0 guidelines, MTC evaluates and selects projects. MTC staff may solicit input from a panel of stakeholders, reflecting diverse perspectives to inform and advise MTC decision-making.
 - a. Evaluation criteria. Standard evaluation criteria will be used to assess projects. The six criteria include (1) project need/goals and objectives, (2) community-identified priority, (3) implementation plan and project management capacity, (4) coordination and program outreach, (5) cost-effectiveness and performance indicators, and (6) project budget/sustainability. MTC will establish the weight to be assigned for each criterion in the assessment process.
 - b. Selection criteria considerations. In addition to the evaluation criteria, projects will be selected with considerations to the following: (1) geographic diversity; (2) need, with a priority on lower-capacity communities; and (3) range of project types: diverse range of project types, interdisciplinary approach, and focus on equity.

See Appendix 2 for the detailed standard evaluation criteria.

12. POLICY BOARD ADOPTION

- a. Project sponsor resolution of local support. As part of the grant award, project sponsors will be required to adopt a Resolution of local support. The resolution shall state that the local project sponsors understand and agree to meeting all project delivery, funding match and eligibility requirements, and obligation and reporting deadlines and requirements. MTC will provide a resolution of local support template.

13. PROJECT DELIVERY. All projects funded under the county programs are subject to the following MTC project delivery requirements:

- a. REAP 2.0. If selected for REAP 2.0 funding, project sponsors must expend the CARE REAP 2.0 funds **by June 30, 2026**. This deadline is established by state statute (Chapter 3.15 of California Health and Safety Code sections 50515.06 to 50515.10).
- b. OBAG 3. If selected for OBAG funding, project sponsors must obligate CARE Program OBAG funds by **January 31, 2027**, per OBAG 3 program deadline. Note: Project awards will be cancelled, and funds will be reverted for use in future CARE Program grants if projects are not obligated by January 31, 2027.

14. PROJECT OVERSIGHT. All project budget and scope of work changes must be approved by MTC CARE staff. All scope changes must be fully explained and must demonstrate consistency with CARE Program goals. Project sponsors must have a record of consistently meeting state and federal timely use of funds deadlines and requirements or demonstrate/identify revised/new internal processes to ensure they will meet funding deadlines and requirements moving forward at the time of project nomination.

See Appendix 1 for detailed accountability and reporting requirements by funding source.

15. PERFORMANCE MEASURES. As part of the Call for Projects, applicants will be asked to establish project goals, and to identify basic performance indicators to be collected in order to measure the effectiveness of the CARE projects. At a minimum, performance measures projects could include documentation of outcome-based metrics provided with the funding, and a qualitative summary of procedures employed for the project. For capital projects, project sponsors are responsible for establishing milestones and reporting on the status of project delivery. Project sponsors are responsible for satisfying all reporting requirements, as referenced in Appendix 1. Project sponsors will forward reports containing performance measures to MTC for review and overall monitoring of the CARE Program.

16. FUND ADMINISTRATION

- a. OBAG. Project sponsors are responsible for entering OBAG funded projects into MTC’s Fund Management System (FMS) for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Grantees will access their funds through the Caltrans federal-aid process.
- b. REAP 2.0. Project sponsors selected for REAP 2.0 funds are responsible for complying with fund administration and reporting requirements as stipulated in funding agreements with MTC or another pass-through agency. Eligible entities for REAP include community-based organizations (CBO), which can be their own project sponsor. MTC would enter into a funding agreement with the CBO directly.

17. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS.

- a. Project Sponsor Responsibilities. OBAG applicants are required to comply with MTC’s Regional Project Delivery Policy, MTC Resolution No. 3606 and all applicable federal requirements.

18. TIMELINE. The anticipated timeline for Cycle 1 is as follows:

Fund Source	Action	Anticipated Date*
All	Commission approves Cycle 1 Program Guidelines	November 15, 2023
All	MTC launches Call for Projects process, in coordination with County Transportation Agencies (CTAs)	November 16, 2023
All	Application deadline for Project Sponsors to submit eligible project(s) to MTC	February 15, 2024
All	MTC Commission approval of Program of Projects	April 24, 2024
All	Project sponsor submits local resolution of support	April/May 2024
OBAG	Project sponsors awarded OBAG funds submit project(s) in MTC’s Fund Management System (FMS)	April/May 2024 **

*All dates subject to change.

**Due date for projects to be submitted in FMS will be dictated by the 2025 TIP Update development schedule.

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Appendix 1
Community Action Resource and Empowerment (CARE) Program Cycle 1
Funding Source Information

	One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG)	Regional Early Action Planning (REAP 2.0)
Purpose of Fund Source	The One Bay Area Grant, now in its third iteration, guides how MTC distributes federal transportation funding from the Federal Highway Administration to projects and programs that improve safety, spur economic development, and help the Bay Area meet climate change and air quality improvement goals.	To accelerate infill housing development, reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), increase housing supply at all affordability levels, affirmatively further fair housing (AFFH).
Detailed Guidelines	https://mtc.ca.gov/digital-library/5022851-obag-3-appendix-1-county-local-program-call-projects-guidelines	https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/grants-and-funding/MPO-REAP-2-0-Final-Guidelines.pdf
Eligible Recipients	Bay Area cities, counties, transit agencies, federally recognized Tribal governments, and County Transportation Agencies (CTAs) are eligible to apply for OBAG funds. Non-profit organizations are only eligible for OBAG funds if they partner with an eligible OBAG recipient (e.g., CTA, transit operator) that is willing to serve as the recipient of the funds and pass through the funds to the non-profit, and if they have an eligible project.	Bay Area cities, counties, transit agencies, federally recognized Tribal governments, County Transportation Agencies (CTAs), community-based organizations, Public Housing Authorities, academic institutions, school districts, special districts, developers of Affordable Housing, or regional Housing Trust Fund.

	One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG)	Regional Early Action Planning (REAP 2.0)
Eligible Sub recipients (must partner with an eligible recipient that will serve as a pass-through agency)	Other entities, such as non-profit organizations and community-based organizations may apply as co-applicants, under an agreement with an eligible recipient.	Other entities may apply as co-applicants, under an agreement with an eligible recipient.

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<p>Eligible Projects</p>	<p>Projects must be: Eligible for STP or CMAQ funds, as detailed in 23 USC Sec. 133 and at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/factsheets/stbgfs.cfm (STP), and in 23 USC Sec. 149 and at https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/policy_and_guidance/ Consistent with Plan Bay Area 2050, available at https://www.planbayarea.org/; and Meet all OBAG 3 programming policy requirements described in these guidelines and in MTC Resolution 4505.</p> <p>Focus areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Community Based Transportation Plan” Project Development or “Coordinated Plan” strategy. 2. High-Priority Neighborhood Level Project Implementation/Participatory Budgeting (PB); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical assistance for implementation of a PB process - Project Implementation: Funding projects resulting from a PB process, eligible for REAP funding (capital) 3. Community Power-Building and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customized outreach and engagement activities by community-based organizations (CBOs) focused on low-income, underserved groups. - Capacity Building for CBOs and local government to advance CBTPs. 	<p>See Section 204 of REAP 2.0 Guidelines: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/grants-and-funding/MPO-REAP-2-0-Final-Guidelines.pdf</p> <p>Activities generally may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance, planning, staffing, consultant needs (CARE/CBTP/Coordinated Plan related) • Outreach and engagement activities • Project must support one or more of the following categories: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Accelerating Infill Development that facilitates Housing supply, choice, and affordability through various planning programs, or services. b. Realizing multimodal communities through programs, plans, and implementation actions c. Shifting travel behavior by reducing driving through programs, ordinances, funds, and other mechanisms; and d. Increasing transit ridership through implementation actions, and planning <p>Focus areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “Community Based Transportation Plan” Project Development or “Coordinated Plan” strategy. 2. High-Priority Neighborhood Level Project Implementation/Participatory Budgeting (PB): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical assistance for implementation of a PB process - Project Implementation: Funding projects resulting from a PB process, eligible for REAP funding (capital) 3. Community Power-Building and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach and engagement activities are eligible as priority setting and components of other proposed uses.
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	One Bay Area Grant Program (OBAG)	Regional Early Action Planning (REAP 2.0)
CARE Program Local Match	11.47% No local match required for Community Power-Building and Engagement	11.47%
Estimated timing for availability of funds to project sponsor	<p>Eligible project sponsors may initiate the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) programming request process to program their project in the TIP immediately following MTC approval of program of projects. After the project is in the approved TIP, sponsors may seek to obligate the funds through the Caltrans federal-aid process. Funds will be available on a reimbursement basis after the funds have been obligated.</p> <p>For sub recipients, the eligible recipient acting as fiscal agent will likely initiate a funding agreement following MTC approval of programs of projects. Funds will be available on a reimbursement basis after execution of the agreement.</p>	<p>Eligible recipients acting as fiscal agents will initiate TIP programming requests following MTC approval of program of projects. Once awards are programmed in the TIP, sponsors may request obligation through Caltrans Local Assistance. Funds will be available on a reimbursement basis after execution.</p>
Accountability & Reporting Requirements	<p>Eligible sponsors (i.e., cities and counties) must submit performance (i.e., outcome-based performance metrics) statistics for the project, to CARE Program Administrators and MTC.</p> <p>Depending on the arrangement with a pass-through agency, sub recipients will likely submit quarterly performance reports with invoices, first to the pass-through agency for reimbursement, and then to CARE Program Administrators and MTC for review.</p>	<p>Eligible sponsors (i.e., cities and counties) must submit performance (i.e., outcome-based performance metrics) statistics for the project, to CARE Program Administrators and MTC. Grantees are responsible for following all applicable REAP 2.0 requirements for preparing and maintaining their grants.</p> <p>Depending on the arrangement with a pass-through agency, sub recipients will likely submit quarterly performance reports with invoices, first to CARE Program Administrators for review, and then to the pass-through agency for reimbursement.</p>

Note: Information on this chart is accurate as of August 2023. MTC will strive to make CARE Program Administrators aware of any changes to fund source guidelines that may be enacted by the appropriating agencies (i.e., HCD, FHWA)

Appendix 2
CARE Program Cycle 1
Standard Evaluation Criteria

The following standard evaluation criteria are intended to provide consistent guidance in prioritizing and selecting projects to receive CARE Program funds. MTC, in consultation with other stakeholder representatives, will consider these criteria when selecting projects, and establish the weight to be assigned to each of the criterion. MTC staff will review the proposed county program criteria to ensure consistency and to facilitate coordination among county programs.

- a. Project Need/Goals and Objectives:** Applicants should describe the unmet transportation need or gap that the proposed project seeks to address and the relevant planning effort that documents the need. Describe how project activities will mitigate the transportation need. Project application should clearly state the overall program goals and objectives and demonstrate how the project is consistent with the goals of the CARE Program.
- b. Community-Identified Priority:** Priority should be given to projects that directly address transportation gaps and/or barriers identified through a Community-Based Transportation Plan (CBTP), MTC's Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, or other substantive local planning effort involving focused inclusive engagement to low-income populations. Applicants should identify the CBTP, Coordinated Plan or other substantive local planning effort, as well as the priority given to the project in the plan.

Other projects may also be considered, such as those that address transportation needs identified in countywide or regional welfare-to-work transportation plans, or other documented assessment of needs within designated Equity Priority Communities. Findings emerging from one or more CBTPs or other relevant planning efforts may also be applied to other low-income areas, or otherwise be directed to serving low-income constituencies within the county, as applicable. Equity Priority Communities are defined in Chapter 1 Plan Bay Area 2050 and described at <https://mtc.ca.gov/planning/transportation/access-equity-mobility/equity-priority-communities>.

- c. Implementation Plan and Project Management Capacity:** For projects seeking funds for capital purposes, applicants must provide an implementation plan, milestones, and timelines for completing the project.

Priority should be given to projects that are ready to be implemented in the timeframe that the funding is available.

Project sponsors should describe and provide evidence of their organization's ability to provide and manage the proposed project, including experience serving low-income persons, and experience as a recipient of state or federal transportation funds.

- d. **Coordination and Program Outreach:** Proposed projects will be evaluated based on their ability to coordinate with community stakeholders. Applicants should clearly identify project stakeholders, and how they will keep stakeholders involved and informed throughout the project. Applicants should also describe how the project will be marketed and promoted to the public.
- e. **Cost-Effectiveness and Performance Indicators:** The project will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to demonstrate that the project is the most appropriate way in which to address the identified transportation need and is a cost-effective approach. Applicants must also identify clear, measurable outcome-based performance measures to track the effectiveness of the project in meeting the identified goals. A plan should be provided for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the project, as well as steps to be taken if original goals are not achieved.
- f. **Project Budget/Sustainability:** Applicants must submit a clearly defined project budget, indicating anticipated project expenditures and/or revenues, including documentation of matching funds (OBAG/REAP). Proposals should address long-term efforts and identify potential funding sources for sustaining the project beyond the grant period.

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