



## 2025 CYCLE 1 REGIONAL TRANSIT CONNECTIONS PROGRAM CALL FOR PROJECTS GUIDELINES

### INTRODUCTION

The San Mateo County Transportation Authority (TA) is pleased to announce the first Measure W [Regional Transit Connections \(RTC\) Program](#) Cycle 1 Call for Projects. The purpose of this program is to fund transit improvements that connect San Mateo County with Alameda County, San Francisco County, and Santa Clara County. This includes services provided by transit agencies such as AC Transit, BART, Caltrain, SamTrans, SFMTA, VTA, and WETA. In 2018, San Mateo County voters approved Measure W, a 30-year, half-cent sales tax to fund a variety of transportation investments. Ten percent of Measure W funds are dedicated to the RTC Program.

Up to \$70 million may be made available for projects that best meet the program evaluation criteria.

### APPLICATION MATERIALS

The Call for Projects packet consists of the program guidelines, an application form, list of required attachments, and a sample resolution. These documents and other related reference materials, including template funding agreements, can be found at:

<https://www.smcta.com/whats-happening/call-projects>

### SCHEDULE

Call for Projects Issued	April 3, 2025
Notify TA of Intent to Submit	May 16, 2025
Project Applications due	May 30, 2025
Evaluation Period	June/July 2025
Informational item to TA Board on Draft Program of Projects	August 7, 2025
TA Board approves proposed Program of Projects	September 4, 2025

#### Notice of Intent to Submit:

Sponsors must fill out the notice of intent to submit survey using the link below with the project name and sponsor agency information by May 16, 2025 ([Click here for the Notice of Intent Survey Link](#) - see CFP guidelines for additional details).

#### Submitting Applications:

Sponsors must submit one electronic copy of the completed application with all required attachments by uploading all materials to a specific Dropbox link that will be provided. Completed applications must be received no later than **May 30, 2025 by 4:00 PM. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.** It is the sponsor's responsibility to check with TA staff to confirm the receipt of applications prior to the submission deadline.

### CONTACT

For general application questions or other information, please contact:

Patrick Gilster, Director of Planning & Fund Management  
[gilsterp@samtrans.com](mailto:gilsterp@samtrans.com) or (650) 622-7853

## ORGANIZATION

1. Reference Information
  2. Available Funding
  3. Roles
  4. Applications
  5. Other Policies/Guidelines
- Exhibit A – Strategic Plan 2025-2029 General TA Policies & Guidelines Chapter
- Exhibit B – Strategic Plan 2025-2029 RTC Program Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria
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### 1. REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Regional Transit Connections (RTC) Program consists of the Measure W RTC program category. The RTC program is guided by the RTC Plan, adopted in October 2024, and associated Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) which includes the following four goals:

- Increase regional transit services and enhance infrastructure to improve transit speed and reliability.
- Establish more direct regional transit routes and supportive infrastructure to facilitate transit trips with fewer or cheaper transfers to increase transit use and reduce congestion in major highway corridors.
- Promote equitable regional transit programs, operations, and supportive infrastructure that improve connectivity between transit operators, enhance customer experience, help provide off-peak travel options, and increase safety for all riders.
- Develop a first/last-mile system that creates access for all ages and abilities to regional transit stations and supports connected micromobility.

In 2018, the voters of San Mateo County approved Measure W, a new 30-year half-cent sales tax for transportation programs and projects that took effect July 1, 2019 and expires June 30, 2049. The Measure W Congestion Relief Plan (CRP) identifies that 10 percent of Measure W be dedicated to infrastructure and services that are designed to improvement transit connectivity between the County and the region.

**To be eligible for the Call for Projects a project must be included in the RTC Plan and CIP or show alignment with MTC's Plan Bay Transit 2050+ Goals. New projects are required to receive additional approval from the TA (please contact Patrick Gilster, Director of Planning & Fund Management).**

The RTC Plan and CIP are posted on the TA's website below:

<https://www.smcta.com/funding/transit/RTC>

## Definitions

The following terms are used throughout the application materials:

- i. Overall project: The entire project ultimately to be constructed.
- ii. Project scope: The specific project phases or elements for which Measure W funds are being requested in this application/cycle. The project scope may be a subset of the overall project.
- iii. Sponsor Agency: The applicant for Measure W funds for the project scope, the public and political champion, solidify funding plan, coordinate with the TA to identify appropriate implementing agency, submit monitoring reports, sign funding agreements.
- iv. Implementing Agency: The agency implementing the project scope (see Table 3 for sample roles).

## 2. AVAILABLE FUNDING

The Measure W 2025 Cycle 1 Regional Transit Program Call for Projects is based on the guidance adopted in the 2024 RTC Plan and CIP as well as further codified in the TA Strategic Plan 2025-2029.

This Call for Projects includes funding for all three RTC sub-categories identified in the RTC Plan as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Available Funding by RTC Sub-Category**

Subcategories	Available funds	Eligible Projects
Capital (60%)	\$42 million	Projects that will construct new infrastructure or alter the built environment
Operations (25%)	\$17.5 million	Projects and programs that enhance transit service
First/last-Mile (15%)	\$10.5 million	Projects that will provide safe active transportation connections to regional transit nodes
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$70 million</b>	

## 3. ROLES

### • **Sponsor and Implementing Agency Roles**

While funding applications must be submitted by eligible sponsors for Measure W RTC funding for the Capital and Operations subcategory, there is flexibility in terms of the agency that will be implementing the project scope. A sponsor may implement the project scope itself, or partner with an implementing agency. For the First/last-mile Category, an eligible transit agency that has identified a local project as a priority in their station access or equivalent plan, may provide a letter of concurrence for a different Measure W eligible Sponsor to apply for funding (i.e. a local roadway project on adjacent right-of-way).

Sponsors that intend to partner with another agency for implementation must coordinate with that agency in submitting applications for this cycle.

The roles and responsibilities of a sponsor-implementing agency partnership will need to be defined and documented in the application. The sponsor and the implementing agency may

be different for different phases of a given project. Table 3 provides a model of how the responsibilities could be divided between a sponsor and implementing agency.

- **TA Role**

The TA will work closely with transit agency Sponsors on the implementation of Measure W RTC projects. The TA may be requested to provide technical assistance to act as the implementing agency if requested by a sponsor for certain types of work.

Mandatory consultation with the TA:

*Sponsors must consult with the TA before submitting applications if they are requesting that the TA be the implementing agency for the project (either as the lead implementer or to support implementation.)* The TA's willingness to be an implementing agency for a project does not imply that the project will receive Measure W funding.

***The TA contact for mandatory consultation for project implementation requests is Patrick Gilster, Director of Planning & Fund Management at [gilsterp@samtrans.com](mailto:gilsterp@samtrans.com). Final approval for receiving technical assistance will come from Peter Skinner, Executive Officer, Transportation Authority.***

#### 4. APPLICATIONS

- **Governing Board Resolutions (Attachment A)**

An adopted governing board resolution from the project sponsor in support of the project application is required. The resolution will affirm the sponsor's support for the project scope, the sponsor's role for the project scope, confirm the commitment of matching funds and the ability to commence project scope within 12 months of receiving TA Board funding award. Governing board resolutions are required to be submitted no later than July 31, 2025 if they cannot be submitted by the application deadline. Applications will be accepted on an interim basis with a copy of the draft resolution and an indication of which governing board meeting the resolution is planned for adoption.

- **Cover Letter & Non-Supplantation of Funds Statement (Attachment B)**

In addition to the required signatures in the application, a cover letter should be provided by the sponsor agency's General Manager or Executive Director (or similar position) attesting to accuracy of the project cost estimate, schedule, and funding provided in the application along with a brief description of project benefits to the applicable community. The cover letter must also state attest to non-supplantation of funds if awarded RTC program funding.

- **Letters of Support (Attachment F)**

Sponsors are encouraged to provide letters of support from stakeholders, but this is not a requirement. However, project sponsors with letters of support from community-based or private sector organizations will receive more points during the evaluation process. Descriptions of stakeholder support and community involvement will still be required as part of the application.

- **Applications for multiple phases**

Since the RTC Program occurs on a four-year Call for Projects schedule, application requests for multiple phases will be considered for phases that would start within prior to 2029.

- **Major Projects Advancement Policy**

For projects with a total expected cost over \$25 million, Sponsors must follow the TA's Major Projects Advancement Policy in the TA Strategic Plan 2025-2029. Sponsors must present a presentation to the TA Board upon completion of the Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Clearance (PE/EV or PA/ED) phase of work prior to requesting funding for Final Design, Right-of-way, and Construction phases of work. The Sponsors must present information on project needs, benefits, impacts, and costs/funding plan to the TA Board of Directors and Community Advisory Committee. This can be done as part of the Draft Recommendations for a Calls for Projects cycle or as a standalone presentation. If an agency is requesting PS&E but has not yet completed PE/ENV, funding may be programmed but not allocated until the applicant returns to the TA Board to fulfill the Major Projects Advancement Policy requirements.

- ***Applications for ROW and Construction***

Sponsors requesting Measure W RTC Program funds for the ROW and Construction phases of work will need to provide a credible funding plan for the delivery of the project through construction as part of the application. The costs associated with ROW can be significant. The TA will assess the reasonableness of the funding plan to better manage the risk it undertakes making significant capital outlays with respect to the sponsor's ability to fully deliver the project through construction.

- ***Exhibit A Scope of Works (Attachment E)***

The TA will also require each applicant to fill out the TA's standard Exhibit A Scope of Work template that accompanies every Funding Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding. This will help expedite the funding agreement execution process. All projects should assume an earliest start date of December 8, 2023 after the final program adoption.

## **5. OTHER POLICIES/GUIDELINES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROJECTS**

- ***Eligible Costs***

Measure W RTC Program funds shall be used for direct eligible costs to complete the scope of work. Expenses incurred for the development of project applications and the review of funding agreements are not eligible for reimbursement. The TA, or its authorized agents, reserves the right to audit the sponsor's performance to ensure compliance with the terms of the sponsor's funding agreement or memorandum of agreement. Staff time to implement a project scope of work is eligible.

- ***Under-subscription and Right to Change Funding Amounts***

If the Call for Projects is undersubscribed this funding cycle, the TA may elect not to fund all eligible project applications. Only the projects that best meet the project evaluation criteria may be funded. The TA also reserves the right to increase or decrease the amount of available funding depending on the project applications submitted.

- ***Cost increases***

The Project Sponsor shall immediately notify that TA at the time it is discovered that the allocated funding is not sufficient to complete the funded scope of work. It is the responsibility of the sponsor to take the lead in identifying and securing any additional funds to complete the scope of work. Given the large need of funding identified in the RTC Plan, the TA may not consider future requests for awarded phases. The TA has no obligation to allocate additional Measure W RTC Program funds to address a cost increase. Sponsors can work with the TA and other funding entities to secure additional funds or explore and implement scope modification to align the project with the available funding.

- ***Reimbursement***

Project costs must be incurred and paid for by the sponsor or implementing agency prior to requests for Measure W funding reimbursement. Project costs incurred prior to the execution of the funding agreement may not be eligible for reimbursement. Documentation must accompany all requests for reimbursement such as, but not limited to, copies of vendor invoices, timesheets, backup documentation, checks, and payment advice. It is up to the discretion of the TA Executive Officer whether alternative funding and reimbursement strategies may be considered, please request consideration from the Director of Planning of Management to discuss options if necessary.

- ***Scope changes***

Project sponsors seeking a change in project scope after the TA Board approval of the Measure W allocation must obtain approval from the TA staff, or risk losing the associated measure funds. Costs incurred that are not part of the Measure W-funded project scope will be ineligible for reimbursement.

- ***Construction and Landscape/Close-out Requests***

Project sponsors should note that all landscaping and close-out costs should be included with the request for construction funds. Future requests for only landscaping and other close-out costs will not be considered separately, except under limited special circumstances.

# Exhibit A

## 8

## **Programming, Allocation, and Monitoring Guidelines**

## 8.1 PROJECT SELECTION CATEGORIES

The TA Strategic Plans have historically categorized Measures A and W funding programs and subcategories into three categories: Agreement-Based Programs, Plan-Based Programs, and Competitive Programs. This plan removes the Plan-Based Programs category since multiple plans were adopted in the prior Strategic Plan period, but the TA may elect to update those individual plans as conditions change in the future. Additional plans may be developed for individual funding programs periodically to guide updates and reflect best practices over time in the future and updates to the Strategic Plan also qualify as plan-based changes. The results of which are now either agreement-based, competitive-based, or a combination of the two for the Strategic Plan 2025-2029.

The programs included in the Agreement-Based category are governed by agreements that are either specified in the Measure A Expenditure Plan or the Measure W Congestion Relief Plan. The programs included in the Competitive Program category are governed by a CFP cycle or on a first-served, ready-to-go basis. These program designations are shown in Table 11.

Agreement-Based		
Measure A	Measure W	
Local Streets & Transportation	Local Safety, Pothole & Congestion Relief (Local Investment Share)	
BART	N/A	
Caltrain		
Dumbarton Rail Corridor		
Ferry		
Competitive		
Measure A	Measure W	Project Selection Approach
Highways	Countywide Highway Congestion Improvements	Call for Projects process guided by the Short-Range Highway Plan (SRHP) and Highway Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
Alternative Congestion Relief (ACR)	Transportation Demand Management (TDM)1	Call for Projects process guided by the ACR/TDM Plan
Pedestrian & Bicycle	Bicycle & Pedestrian	Call for Projects process
Local Shuttle2	N/A	Call for Projects process guided by the Peninsula Shuttle Study
N/A	Regional Transit Connections	Call for Projects process guided by the Short-Range Transit Plan (SRTP) and Transit CIP
Grade Separations	Local Safety Pothole & Congestion Relief Improvements (Grade Separations)	Fund pipeline projects on a rolling basis

Table 11: Project Selection Approach

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> The Measure W TDM program is a subcategory of the Measure W Countywide Highway Congestion Improvements program.

<sup>2</sup> The Measure A Local Shuttle program is a subcategory of the Measure A Transit program

## 8.2 STANDARD GUIDELINE ELEMENTS

The following sections describe standard guidelines and policies that are generally applicable to all TA funding programs. However, individual programs in the Competitive Program category may specify additional guidelines and requirements as part of each subsequent CFP that also must be adhered to.

### 8.2.1 Eligible Sponsors

The designated participants in the Measures A and W programs are the project initiator, the Sponsors, the project manager/operator, and the TA. Table 12 defines the eligibility requirements, roles, and responsibilities of each of these participants.

Participant	Eligibility	Roles and Responsibilities
Project Initiator	Any person or entity	Develops scope for the initial project
Sponsor	Measure A: identified in Expenditure Plan for each program category Measure W: as determined through the Strategic Plan development process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit funding request or CFP applications to the TA</li> <li>• Develop funding plan</li> <li>• Coordinate with the TA to identify appropriate implementing agency</li> <li>• Submit monitoring reports</li> <li>• Sign primary grant agreement and project supplement(s)</li> </ul>
Implementing Agency	The agency who is responsible for leading funding award on behalf of an eligible Sponsor. The TA may act as an implementing agency, if requested.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan/engineer/construct projects</li> <li>• Operate services</li> <li>• Sign primary grant agreement and project supplement(s) when applicable</li> </ul>
Transportation Authority	Identified in the Measure A Expenditure Plan and the Measure W Congestion Relief Plan as the manager/ administrator of the Measures A and W programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate and prioritize projects</li> <li>• Coordinate with Sponsor to determine implementation lead</li> <li>• Program and allocate funds</li> <li>• Oversight of projects / programs</li> <li>• Sign primary grant agreement and project supplement(s)</li> </ul>

Table 12: Measures A and W Participants and Responsibilities

### 8.2.2 TA Board of Directors Approval

The TA Board of Directors makes fund programming decisions based on recommendations developed during CFP processes. These decisions reserve funds for specific projects or a program of projects. Either concurrent with the programming or in a separate action, the Board of Directors will allocate funding and track allocated funds as part of the TA's annual budget approval process. This series of actions ensures timely availability of funds.

### 8.2.3 Primary Grant Agreement and Project Supplement(s)

Historically, the TA has executed separate funding agreements and memoranda of understanding, or amendments thereto, for each phase of each project. To streamline and expedite future contracting processes, the TA has developed a new primary grant agreement through which the TA and Sponsors will document the structure of their relationships and related obligations. Concise individual project supplements will detail each funded project and any specifically-associated requirements during the 10-year term of the primary grant agreement.

To be eligible for TA Measures A and W funding over the next 10 years, the TA will require Sponsors' governing boards to adopt resolutions authorizing the Sponsors' chief executive/mayor/chair, or designee, to sign a primary grant agreement with the TA.

### 8.2.4 Matching Funds

The TA requires that Sponsors provide matching funds for all individual funding requests. The matching funds can either be supplied from the options below:

- Local general funds
- Local investment funds from Measure A Local Streets/Transportation and Measure W Local Safety, Pothole, and Congestion Relief Improvements that are discretionary transportation funds provided for each local jurisdiction
- External local, county, regional, state, and federal grants or other funding sources

Navigating through the network of external funding and securing matching funds may be complicated for Sponsors. To aid local jurisdictions in obtaining funds as needed to meet the minimum matching funds requirement, the TA has provided a representative summary of existing federal, state, and local funding programs that can be leveraged with Measures A and W funding contained in **Appendix G**, although these programs are subject to change. As resources permit, the TA will work with Sponsors to maximize the amount of matching funds secured for each project, which is discussed further in **Section 11**.

### 8.2.5 Timely Use of Funds

As part of TA funding agreements, Sponsors have been required to comply with timely-use-of-funds requirements pertaining to project initiation timelines and invoicing for the Highways, ACR/TDM, Bicycle & Pedestrian, and RTC competitive funding programs. The Strategic Plan 2025-2029 extends these requirements to all TA funding programs with additional guidelines for defining what constitutes project initiation. Projects that fail to meet the outlined requirements will be at risk of being deprogrammed and the awarded funds may be reprogrammed to other projects. Project deprogramming will be implemented using the following tiered monitoring system.

## PROJECT INITIATION REQUIREMENTS

- For project awards identified as “fully funded” as the result of a TA allocation, the project must be initiated within 12 months of the funding award. At a minimum, this includes the execution of a funding agreement or project supplement, along with the submittal of the first request for reimbursement of a Sponsor’s own staff’s work, release of a Request for Proposal for pre-construction work (PLAN or PID, PA/ED or PE/EV, and PS&E phases), or release of a construction bid opportunity.
- If a Sponsor does not initiate work within 12 months of the funding award as indicated in required Quarterly Status Reports, the TA will require a meeting with the Sponsor’s chief executive and project staff to review reasons for the delay. The TA Executive Director or Executive Officer may approve one six-month extension, at their discretion, if a reasonable strategy and commitment by the Sponsor are agreed to. Projects granted this extension must be able to initiate the project within 18 months of the funding award. The TA may de-program a project if these requirements are not met and may provide additional exceptions on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances.
- For projects awards that have requested to use Measure A and/or Measure W funding as leverage for other external grant opportunities, the TA will monitor a timeline for the applicable project phase to be fully funded: Projects costing under \$5 million must be fully funded within two years, and projects costing over \$5 million must be fully funded within five years. Once a project becomes fully funded, the project initiation requirements detailed above will apply.

## INVOICING REQUIREMENTS

- Sponsors will be required to invoice at minimum once a quarter from project initiation.
- The TA will update the Quarterly Status Reports format to include a stoplight to monitor and report on invoicing compliance
- If a project does not bill two quarters in a row, a project will be deemed inactive, and the TA will require a meeting with the Sponsor’s chief executive and project staff to review project progress. If a project does not bill for one year, then the TA Executive Director or Executive Officer may consider recommending the Board of Directors de-program the project.

## ATTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

- Sponsors must include attribution that indicates work was funded with “Measure A Funds” or “Measure W Funds” or “Measures A/W Funds from the TA.” This provision applies to any project, or publication, that is funded in part or in whole by “Measure A Funds” or “Measure W Funds” or “Measures A/W Funds.” Acceptable forms of attribution include TA branding on Project-related documents, construction signs, public information materials, and any other applicable documents. Sponsor must comply with the TA’s External Attribution Guide, which may be updated from time to time and will be available on the TA’s website.

## 8.2.6 Monitoring and Reporting Requirements

### GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

All TA-funded projects are subject to monitoring and reporting requirements. Historically, monitoring and reporting requirements varied for each individual funding program. The Strategic Plan 2025-2029 merges the disparate requirements into a single requirement of formal reporting to the Quarterly Status Reports (QSRs). The TA may require additional monitoring requirements for Sponsors on a case-by-case basis. These requirements will also be included in the forthcoming

Principal Agreements that each eligible Sponsor must adopt to receive funding from the TA.

- Capital projects
  - Sponsors will be required to submit formal reports to be included in the TA Quarterly Status Reports (QSRs) during the planning, design development, and construction of capital projects. The content of the QSRs will be focused on project scope, schedule, budget, cash flow, and identification of potential project risks. A final report documenting the final project scope, schedule, and budget along with photo evidence will be required.
- Operational projects
  - Sponsors will be required to submit QSRs with content focused on project performance for operating projects. Sample performance measures include ridership, service effectiveness (cost per passenger), service quality, and customer satisfaction. If performance measures indicate less than acceptable performance, the TA will work with the Sponsor to set up a mitigation program and achieve improvements as a condition of continued funding from the TA.

### MAJOR PROJECTS ADVANCEMENT POLICY

For projects with projected total costs over \$25 million, Sponsors must present a presentation to the TA Board upon completion of the Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Clearance (PE/EV or PA/ED) phase of work prior to requesting funding for Final Design, Right-of-way, and Construction phases of work. The Sponsors must present information on project needs, benefits, impacts, and costs/funding plan to the TA Board of Directors and Community Advisory Committee. This can be done as part of the Draft Recommendations for a Calls for Projects cycle or as a standalone presentation.

The intent of the Major Projects Advancement Policy is to better inform the TA Board of Directors and Community Advisory Committee about potential trade-offs and impacts of projects earlier on in the development process once these considerations are known upon the completion of environmental review. This policy also applies to projects exempt from environmental review but with projected costs over \$25 million. Required analysis and impact assessment should be discussed with TA Executive and Director-level staff during preliminary engineering scoping.

As a Key Action for the Strategic Plan 2025-2029, the TA will also be developing Program Management Guidelines with updates to the oversight process for projects over \$25 million.

### CREDIBLE FUNDING PLAN

A Credible Funding Plan requirement applies to all projects subject to the Major Advancement Policy. The Credible Funding Plans should clearly lay out the TA's maximum contribution and how a Sponsor will use other local funds or external grant sources to fully fund the project. The Sponsors should acknowledge their responsibility for securing the remaining funding or request assistance from the TA. TA staff will create a standard template and review Credible Funding Plans to assess the assumptions for potential external grant awards.

The following level of effort is required based on the phase of work being request for funding in a CFP cycle:

- **Planning (PLAN):** For planning requests only that phase of work needs to be identified for funding.
- **Project Initiation Document (PID), Pre-Environmental/Environmental (PE/EV), or Project Approval and Environmental Document (PA/ED):** Following the development of a

planning study, a planning level cost estimate will be required for the total project cost and a full funding plan with estimated costs for all future phases of work is required to be signed by the Public Works Director (or similar position). Additionally, a description of how the project aligns with the California State Transportation Agency's (CalSTA) Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure goals by describing how a project is working to meet the metrics identified in the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Systemwide Investment Strategy (CSIS). This will be critical to understanding how the project may be able to leverage external state funding.

- **Final Design (PS&E), Right-of-Way (ROW), or Construction (CON):** Following the completion of preliminary engineering and environmental review phase, a revised preliminary engineering cost estimate will need to be prepared. The full funding plan with updated costs for all future phases of work is required to be signed by the Public Works Director (or similar position) for projects under \$25 million and by the City Manager (or other similar executive position) for projects over \$25 million in total cost.

## 8.3 TA ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 8.3.1 Funding Agency

The primary role of the TA is to act as the funding agency to administer the Measures A and W transportation sales tax revenues. As part of this role, the TA actively assists Sponsors with leveraging funds and securing external grant awards, especially for major projects over \$25 million.

### 8.3.2 Sponsor

In 2016 and 2019, the TA Board of Directors authorized the agency to become an eligible Sponsor for the Measure A Key Congested Areas and Supplemental Roadways categories through minor Transportation Expenditure Plan amendments because the TA was not listed as an eligible Sponsor in the Measure A TEP (Reso 2016-12 and 2019-25). Subsequently in the 2021 Short-Range Highway Plan, the TA limited itself to sponsoring highway projects of countywide significance.

The Measure W Congestion Relief Plan does not specify eligible Sponsors for individual funding programs and permits eligible Sponsors to be further clarified in guidelines for each required Strategic Plan. However, consistent with the TA Board's direction in the Short-Range Highway Plan (adopted June 2021), the TA should continue to be eligible for projects of countywide significance in the Measure W Countywide Highway Congestion Improvements category.

### 8.3.3 Technical Assistance

The TA will take on an expanded technical assistance role to aid current and potential Sponsors in project delivery in various TA funding programs through several technical offerings, as described in the Technical Assistance Program in [Section 11](#).

## 8.4 ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

### 8.4.1 Special Circumstance Requests

There will be special circumstances when Sponsors need to request Measures A and W funding outside the established funding processes discussed in [Section 5](#). The TA Board of Directors may make funding available outside established CFP cycles upon request based on the following criteria:

- Urgency
  - A project that calls for immediate construction to address a public safety need
  - A project that can realize significant cost savings if it can be constructed in an earlier timeframe
  - Loss of funding sources if the project is not constructed within a certain timeframe
  - Expected escalation of project development and construction costs outpaces the rate of growth of Measures A and W revenues
- Impact to the Measures A and W programs
  - Potential of the funding advance delaying other projects
  - Financial fees associated with advancing funds (the potential saving in implementation costs should be considered)

The TA will determine the method of delivering the advance at the time the request is granted by the TA Board of Directors. The TA should also develop CIPs to determine if advancing funds by either borrowing from other programs or using financing would be an economically and fiscally prudent means of delivering high-priority projects at a lower cost (adjusted for inflation) compared to waiting and implementing projects strictly using a pay-as-you-go approach.

#### **8.4.2 Financing and Bonding Backed by Sales Tax Revenue**

Both Measures A and W allow the TA to bond against their future tax revenues for the purpose of advancing the commencement of or expediting the delivery of transportation programs and projects. The bonding capacity is limited by future anticipated Measure A or Measure W revenues. The TA will weigh the benefits of bonding to facilitate timely implementation of programs and projects and avoidance of escalating construction costs against the costs of issuing debt. In recent years, interest rates have been relatively low, and the bonding agencies have been particularly receptive to issuing bonds supported by sales tax revenues. However, it will remain important for the TA to weigh the costs of a bond issue and the interest payments that will be required against the costs of deferring or delaying projects until the natural flow of funds is sufficient to move forward.

## 10.6 REGIONAL TRANSIT CONNECTIONS

The Regional Transit Connections (RTC) Program consists of the Measure W RTC program category. The RTC program is guided by the RTC Plan, adopted in October 2024, and associated CIP which includes the following four goals:

- Increase regional transit services and enhance infrastructure to improve transit speed and reliability.
- Establish more direct regional transit routes and supportive infrastructure to facilitate transit trips with fewer or cheaper transfers to increase transit use and reduce congestion in major highway corridors.
- Promote equitable regional transit programs, operations, and supportive infrastructure that improve connectivity between transit operators, enhance customer experience, help provide off-peak travel options, and increase safety for all riders.
- Develop a first/last-mile system that creates access for all ages and abilities to regional transit stations and supports connected micromobility.



### 10.6.1 Measure W Regional Transit Connections

The Measure W Congestion Relief Plan states:

*A total of ten percent (10%) of Tax Proceeds will be invested in infrastructure and services that are designed to improve transit connectivity between the County and the region. Currently, the County is connected to neighboring counties and the broader region with a network of transit options including rail, water transit, heavy rail, and regional bus services. More and more county residents are traveling longer distances to get to their jobs. Today, over sixty percent (60%) of residents commute to jobs in neighboring counties, and the vast majority of them drive alone, increasing congestion on already crowded highways.*

*Investments from this Category will be prioritized based on a project's ability to reduce congestion, a project's ability to enhance mobility options by connecting the county to the rest of the region, and a project's support through public private partnerships.*

*Investment will be made on a discretionary basis according to criteria and award schedules established by the Authority.*

### **10.6.2 Program Specific Guidelines**

The program specific guidelines and requirements for this funding program are detailed in Table 28.

Program Guideline Category	Guideline Requirement
Funding Cycles	4 Years
Eligible Sponsors/ Eligible Sponsors	Public transit agencies that operate within or to/from San Mateo County including Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (Caltrain), the District, AC Transit, WETA, BART, SFMTA, and VTA
Matching Funds (Standard and Equity Based)	<p>Standard Match: A minimum 10% match is required for all applications regardless of sub-category. Matching funds can be any non-RTC funding source. The TA will not consider previously incurred costs or previously expended or encumbered funds towards the matching requirement. Staff time in-lieu match is also not accepted.</p> <p>Equity Priority Locations: A reduced 5% match may be requested in advance of submitting for project/program applications located in MTC Equity Priority Communities, ReImagine SamTrans Equity Priority Areas, or C/CAG CBPP Equity Focus Areas.</p>
Minimum Funding Request	Require a minimum request of \$500,000 per allocation except for planning or feasibility study phases in support of a capital project.
Maximum Funding Request	Limit individual requests/allocations per CFP cycle to \$25 million for capital projects, \$5 million for operational projects, and \$5 million for first/last-mile projects (whether capital or operations).
Maximum Project Contribution (All Phases)	50% of total project cost
Number of Applications	Eligible Sponsors may submit up to three applications per RTC CFP cycle. If a Sponsor acts solely as the lead agency to support a regional transit-related program with a separate implementing agency, the eligible Sponsor may submit one additional application.
Timely Use of Funds: Expenditure Timeline	<p>Primary grant agreement and project supplement(s) Execution (all subcategories): Fund recipients must complete a primary grant agreement and project supplement(s) and begin work within one year of allocation unless the TA approves the use of requested funding as leverage for other external grant programs.</p> <p>Operations Subcategory Awards: Operations funding must be spent within four years of executing a primary grant agreement and project supplement(s).</p> <p>Capital Subcategory Awards: For Planning, PE/EV, and PS&amp;E phases: All work on capital projects must be completed within three years of effective date of the executed primary grant agreement and project supplement(s) date if funds are awarded for only one phase of work. If the TA awards funds for more than one phase, it may allow work to be completed within up to five years from primary grant agreement and project supplement(s) execution.</p> <p>For awards that fully fund ("last dollar in") ROW and CON phases: For ROW only, work on the funded phase must be completed within three years from primary grant agreement and project supplement(s) execution. For funds awarded to ROW and CON phases together, or funds awarded for only CON, the funded work must be completed within five years of execution of the primary grant agreement and project supplement(s).</p> <p>For ROW and CON awards that do not fully fund a phase ("TA funds used as leverage"): a Sponsor has up to five years to secure full funding for the applicable phase(s) and to execute a primary grant agreement and project supplement(s). The same ROW and CON timely use of funds requirements from the previous section applies once the primary grant agreement and project supplement(s) is executed.</p>
Additional Monitoring and Reporting Submittals	N/A

Table 28: Regional Transit Connections Program Guidelines Table

### 10.6.3 Additional Requirements or Policies

#### PROGRAM SUBCATEGORIES

Sponsors apply to the RTC Program directly through program subcategories based on project eligibility. These subcategories are:

Program Subcategory	Percentage of Funds
Capital	60%
Operations	30%
First/Last-Mile	10%

#### GENERAL POLICIES

- All projects should align with MTC's Plan Bay Area 2050+ including Transit 2050+ and the Bay Area Transit Transformation Action Plan.
- To be compliant with the Measure W Congestion Relief Plan, RTC funds may only be used to supplement existing available funding and may not be used to replace (supplant) funds previously allocated to or budgeted for a project.
- Projects that may be eligible in multiple TA programs generally should apply for funding outside of the RTC Program first. For example, projects located primarily on the highway system should apply for funding from the TA's Highway program.
- If the 2004 Measure A is not renewed, Peninsula Shuttle Program routes that access regional transit would be eligible for funds from the first/last-mile subcategory.
- The TA may consider requests above the maximum requested amount each cycle, and/or recommend reduced funding awards, depending on whether the individual CFP cycle is over- or undersubscribed. As part of the Draft RTC Program of Projects, staff would provide an option for the TA Board of Directors to consider and provide direction for the Final RTC Program of Projects in each CFP cycle.
- The CIP should be updated after every two CFP cycles.

#### CAPITAL PROJECTS POLICIES

- Capital projects must be located within San Mateo County.
- All phases of work such as planning (planning, project study report, feasibility studies, etc.), PE/EV, design, ROW, and CON are eligible if they are in the support of the development and delivery of a capital project.
- RTC funds cannot be used for general state of good repair or maintenance projects.
- Maximum TA contributions include:
  - For projects over \$25 million total for all phases of work, the TA will contribute up to 50% of the total cost toward the project
  - For projects under \$25 million total for all phases of work, the TA will contribute up to 75% of the total cost toward the project

- Eligible applicants may request an exception to this policy if they can document that they have exhausted all other reasonable eligible local, county, regional, state, and federal funding opportunities. Eligible applicants must work with TA staff to have an approved credible funding plan and grant strategy prior to submitting a CFP application.

### **OPERATIONS PROJECT POLICIES**

- Operations funds may be used to support services that extend beyond the San Mateo County borders into adjacent counties as long as costs paid with RTC funds are proportionate to anticipated service levels in San Mateo County relative to adjacent counties (i.e., based on proportions shares of boardings and/or alighting).
- Operations funds may not be used to support existing operations and are intended to support new or expanded services. Expanded services may include increased frequencies, customer experience programs, or service level augmentation for existing routes.
- A new service, program, or expanded service may apply with a ten percent (10%) match for its first award of RTC funds and is eligible to apply for only one directly subsequent call for projects with a 25% match requirement. A “new” service or program is one that has not received Measure W RTC funding previously. A service will no longer be considered “new” or “expanded” if it has received two awards for funding from this program.

### **FIRST/LAST MILE PROJECT POLICIES**

- Capital first/last-mile projects must be identified as a priority project in a transit agency’s station access improvement or equivalent plan. If an agency does not have such a plan, these funds may be used to develop one with no required match to ensure all agencies are equally able to support and identify priority first/last-mile projects in San Mateo County. If an agency wishes to include areas outside of San Mateo County, the agency must proportionally fund the effort based on the number of stations/terminals to be included within and outside the county.
- Projects must improve connections within three miles of regional transit connections.
- Capital projects for micromobility (includes bikeshare or scooter share) are eligible only if they directly support the regional transit network, such as with siting and construction of bikeshare stations that would provide access within three miles of, or on-site at, a transit station/terminal.
- Capital project investments from the RTC program for micromobility resulting in new operations would also be eligible for up to \$2.0 million in operating funds each CFP cycle.
- Operations funds without a corresponding capital project for micromobility or bikeshare are also eligible if they support on-going implementation of a system in San Mateo County that directly supports first/last-mile access to transit stations/terminals.
- If a micromobility or bikeshare system is managed by a regional agency or extends outside of San Mateo County, the maximum San Mateo County contribution should be proportional to the services provided within the county.

## 10.6.4 Evaluation Criteria

Projects submitted to the RTC Program are evaluated and prioritized by a TA-assembled review committee. Evaluation criteria for the RTC Program were developed in the RTC Plan and are separated into five thematic areas. Table 29 shows the evaluation criteria that all potential candidate projects submitted for funding consideration will be evaluated against.

Regional Transit Connections Program Evaluation Criteria (Measure W)	Applicable Measure W Core Principles	Maximum Points Available
<b>Connectivity</b>		<b>30</b>
Increase access and connections to jobs, housing, transit hubs, and other high activity centers to support existing economic activity and spur economic development in the vicinity	W1, W2, W4, W6, W8, W10, W11	5
Improve service frequency (e.g., headways), reliability (e.g., on-time performance), and coordinated seamless connections with other transit systems (e.g., schedule alignment)	W1, W2, W6, W7, W8, W10, W11	10
Improves connectivity, integration, and coordination between local and regional transit services	W1, W2, W6, W8, W10, W11	10
Improve travel time savings	W1, W2, W8, W10	5
<b>Sustainability &amp; Cost Effectiveness</b>		<b>20</b>
Reduce congestion on existing transit route/corridor	W1, W2, W4, W8, W10	4
Relieve congestion for regional trips and reduction in VMT per capita	W1, W2, W3, W5, W7, W8, W10, W11	4
Increase transit ridership and induce mode shift from SOV trips	W1, W2, W8, W10, W11	4
Value: Benefit relative to the amount of funding requested (high impact, low cost - "bang for the buck")	W1, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W8	3
Reduce GHG emissions and improve air quality	W2, W6, W10	2
Investment in clean air/zero emission vehicle technology	W3, W6, W8	2
Private sector contribution, including public/private partnerships (e.g., value capture of terminal land with revenues reinvested in support of service)	W2, W4, W5	1
<b>Safety &amp; Customer Experience</b>		<b>20</b>
Provide first/last-mile access options/accommodations as part of the project	W1, W2, W5, W6, W8, W9, W11	8
Improve safety for the transit service and for access to services for all users	W2, W6, W10	6
Promotes a high-quality transit rider experience through enhancements such as wayfinding, rider displays, amenities, programmatic security/enforcement strategies, etc.	W2, W6, W9, W10	6
<b>Equity &amp; Community Support</b>		<b>25</b>
Location Based Equity: Project improves transportation options for disadvantaged communities/areas	W2	8
User Based Equity: Project Improves transportation affordability, access, or mobility for disadvantaged users	W2	5
Environmental Justice: Degree to which project mitigates pollution and/or improves public health conditions for vulnerable populations	W3, W6, W8	7
Impact project has on low income, transit dependent, and/or other historically disadvantaged communities	W3, W6, W8	0*
Demonstrates stakeholder support, community engagement, and CBO/advocacy involvement		5

Regional Transit Connections Program Evaluation Criteria (Measure W)	Applicable Measure W Core Principles	Maximum Points Available
<b>Readiness</b>		<b>5</b>
Clear and complete proposal		1
Project status and schedule		1
Has a credible cost estimate and funding plan		1
Ease and speed of implementation		1
Applicant experience and ability to deliver project on time and on budget with examples		1
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>

Table 29: Regional Transit Connections Program Evaluation Criteria

\* No associated positive point value, up to 2 possible negative points (-2 – 0 range)