

May 14, 2020**Agenda Item 5c****MTC Resolution No. 4202, Revised: One Bay Area Grant Program Second Round (OBAG 2) Project
Selection Criteria and Programming Policy - Priority Development Areas (PDA)
Planning Grants & Technical Assistance**

Subject: Approval of approximately \$7.86 million in PDA Planning and Technical Assistance Grants and supportive studies.

Background: In November 2020, staff presented a proposed approach to a Call for Letters of Interest from local jurisdictions for PDA Planning and Technical Assistance grants, to be released together with a Call for Letters of Interest for Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) grants. Since its inception, the PDA Program has funded more than 60 plans for cities throughout the Bay Area and enabled nearly 50 technical assistance projects to facilitate implementation of adopted PDA plans. The program is one of the primary tools for linking regional and local planning and for integrating land use and transportation planning.

Call for Letters of Interest Process

In late December 2020, staff released a joint Call for Letters of Interest for PDA Planning and Technical Assistance Grants and REAP grants. The deadline to submit applications closed on February 12, 2021. Following broad outreach that included multiple notifications to all planning directors, city managers and, where applicable, housing directors, four webinars, presentations to staff in all nine Bay Area counties, and numerous one-on-one virtual meetings, local jurisdictions submitted requests for \$30 million in PDA planning grants and technical assistance—nearly four times the approximately \$7.86 million in available funding.

Proposals were evaluated by MTC/ABAG staff using objective criteria that included: location within a Community of Concern; implementation of Plan Bay Area 2050, particularly transportation and housing strategies; support for housing production at all income levels; and protection of existing PDA residents at risk of displacement. For planning grants, additional preference was given to proposed plans for PDAs established prior to 2019 without adopted plans; unplanned PDAs established in 2019; and updates to outdated plans. For Technical Assistance grants, preference was given to proposals that demonstrated innovation and regional replicability, increased pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and updated transportation impact review standards to assess Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) rather than Level of Service (LOS), as required by Senate Bill 743.

PDA Planning and Technical Assistance Grant Recommendations

Staff recommends awarding funding to the plans and technical assistance projects identified in Attachment B, which includes:

- Comprehensive plans, such as specific plans, for 12 unplanned PDAs established before 2019 collectively anticipated to add capacity for 75,000 new homes at all income levels in a diverse set of transit-rich places ranging from Communities of Concern to High Resource Areas. This recommendation results in funding all eligible requests for planning grants for unplanned pre-2019 PDAs, with total amounts adjusted to establish parity between similar proposals.

- Specific Plans for three new PDAs (established in 2019) that will pursue local implementation of key Plan Bay Area 2050 strategies— *Transform Aging Malls and Office Parks into Neighborhoods*, *Allow a Greater Mix of Housing Densities and Types in Growth Geographies*, and *Build a Complete Streets Network*—in locations within walking distance of major transit investments included in the Plan’s *Next Generation Transit Network*.
- Technical Assistance to pilot policies that advance complex Plan Bay Area 2050 strategies such as *Advance Regional Vision Zero Policy*, *Expand Commute Trip Reduction Programs at Major Employers*, and *Accelerate Reuse of Public and Community-Owned Land for Mixed-Income Housing and Essential Services*.
- A new regional VMT Technical Assistance program to deliver the resources necessary for every Bay Area jurisdiction to adopt a VMT policy, beginning with working groups comprised of North Bay jurisdictions and CTAs, as well as applicants for VMT-related Technical Assistance. Building on staff’s experience implementing SB743 and a successful, recently completed, multi-jurisdiction PDA TA grant, this approach will achieve significant cost savings and deliver a much-needed resource to the 70% of Bay Area cities that have yet to adopt a VMT policy a year after the state deadline. The working groups will also be an opportunity to deliver resources that will help to address inconsistencies between the state’s direction to focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions/VMT and Level of Service (LOS) monitoring conducted through county Congestion Management Programs. A second phase that expands working groups region-wide to ensure VMT policies are adopted in advance of Housing Elements will be funded through REAP.

To complement this set of projects, staff recommends programming the remaining \$87,000 in OBAG2 PDA Planning and Regional Studies funding to support studies evaluating shared challenges and opportunities related to key Plan Bay Area 2050 strategies.

Overall, the set of awards outlined in Attachment B would support communities throughout the Bay Area. When viewed together with the REAP program, a grant award is recommended to at least one jurisdiction in every Bay Area county. However, due to the limited available funding and the high quality of submissions, many locally and regionally significant proposals cannot be funded. To amplify the program’s impact, MTC/ABAG will engage local jurisdictions to evaluate potential shared solutions that leverage the PDA and REAP programs to address challenges identified in multiple unfunded requests, such as sea level rise, public engagement, and housing feasibility.

Next Steps:

Staff will work with awardees to establish scopes of work and funding agreements. Awardees of Technical Assistance grants will select consultants from firms on a new Regional Planning Consultant Bench that will serve the PDA and REAP programs. Awardees of Planning grants may select consultant firms from the bench, or could pursue their own procurements. Staff is requesting authorization for the Regional Planning Consultant Bench this month from the Commission and the ABAG Executive Board.

Issues: None

Recommendation: Refer MTC Resolution No. 4202, Revised, to approve approximately \$7.86 million in Planning and Technical Assistance grants listed in Attachment B, to the Commission for approval

Attachments: Attachment A: Presentation
Attachment B: List of PDA Program Planning and Technical Assistance Grants
Attachment C: MTC Resolution No. 4202, Revised


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