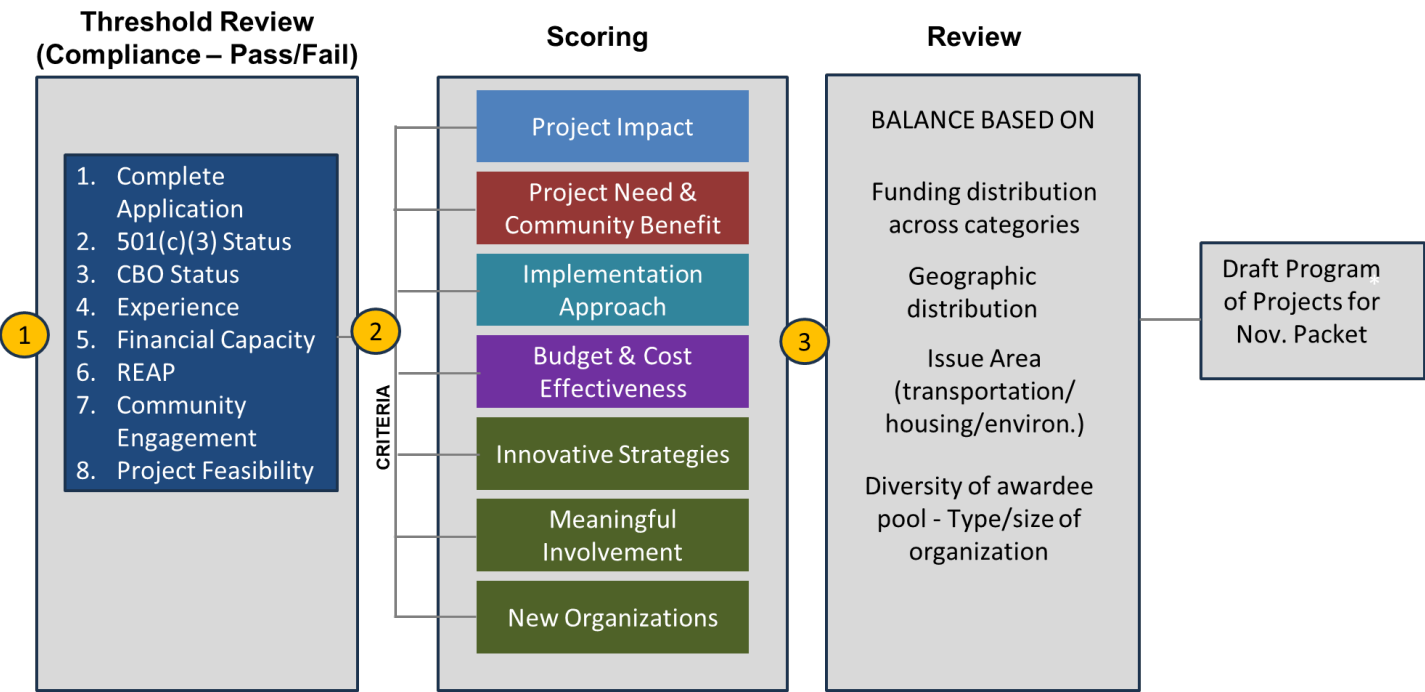


CARE Power- Building and Engagement (Pb+E) Grant Program
Evaluation and Selection Process

Background:

Round 2 projects were selected from the original Call for Projects process in September 2025 (143 applications received), based on the same screening and evaluation process. The evaluation and selection process includes three assessments: 1) **Threshold Requirement** Assessment; 2) **Quality** of Application Assessment via Scoring Criteria; and 3) **Balanced Factors** Assessment (i.e., geographic representation, transportation/housing project mix, size of CBOs). The evaluation was conducted with a mix of internal MTC staff and external agencies who lead and/or deliver similar equity-rooted investments in regional/local programs.

Below is a graphic and detailed description of the “CARE Pb+E Evaluation and Selection Process.”



(Extracted from the September 2025 Call for Projects Guidelines – pages 13 – 19)

1. How Will Proposals Be Evaluated?

Eligible applications will be screened for meeting the program threshold requirements below, and then evaluated and ranked according to the scoring criteria below. Applications that do not meet all threshold requirements will be disqualified from the application review process.

Pb+E Program Threshold Requirements

All grant program applicants must meet the following threshold requirements before moving on to project scoring:

1. Application Complete by Deadline

Submit **all** required application materials, including attachments, by the application deadline.

2. Community-Based Organization that Works with Equity Priority Communities

Applicant is a community-based organization, as defined in the [Glossary of Terms](#), that is EITHER a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization OR fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Applicant must also work with and/or serve residents in [MTC's Equity Priority Communities](#).

Applicants must:

- Attach a 501(c)(3) determination letter (either for applicant or fiscal sponsor)
- Attach a fiscal sponsor letter (if applicable)
- Confirm CBO status
- Describe the communities that the applicant works with, serves and benefits

3. Demonstrated Transportation/Housing/Climate Experience

Applicants must have demonstrated experience working on transportation, housing and/or climate issues. Applicants provide evidence of relevant experience through one or more of the following:

- **Organizational Experience:** Documentation of projects/services in transportation, housing, or climate
- **Staff Experience:** Staff bios showing relevant background/credentials
- **Partnership History:** Previous collaborations with transit, housing or climate organizations (public or nonprofit)

4. Financial Capacity

Applicants must have the financial capacity to manage grant funds OR partner with a fiscal sponsor that has such capacity. The organization and/or its fiscal sponsor, as applicable, demonstrate financial capacity by meeting the following requirements:

- Current with IRS Form 990 filings
- In good standing with the Secretary of State
- No outstanding IRS or state compliance issues
- Established systems to track and report grant expenditures
- Previous organization and/or staff experience meeting general grant requirements
- Ability to submit invoices and expense documentation on schedule
- Annual organizational budget equal to or higher than \$25,000
- The Board of Directors reviews financial statements on at least a quarterly basis
- Neither the applicant nor its fiscal sponsor, if applicable, is currently involved in any legal proceedings, investigations, or disputes that could materially affect the applicant's operations, financial stability, or ability to carry out the proposed grant activities

Applicants must attach their financial statements or, if unable, provide required financial documentation, attach a statement explaining the circumstances and describe their staff and/or organizational experience managing previous grants or contracts.

5. Ability to Advance REAP 2.0 Goals

Proposals must demonstrate that the project aligns with at least one of the REAP 2.0 goals, recognizing that MTC will work with awardees to ensure final projects demonstrate the ability to advance all three:

- **Accelerating Infill Development:** Activities that support housing supply, choice, and affordability in existing communities
- **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing:** Actions that support the expansion of housing access for protected classes, historically marginalized or underserved populations, and reduce segregation
- **Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled:** Strategies that support the reduction in car dependency and increase alternative transportation, such as public transit, biking, or walkability

Eligible projects must demonstrate a new component that expands or deepens the impact/reach of existing activities and, through the new component, advances REAP 2.0 goals outlined in the Call for Projects. Applications for grant funding to support existing activities with no new or innovative component to advance REAP 2.0 goals will be deemed ineligible.

6. Community Engagement Approach

Proposals must include actions that meaningfully engage with disadvantaged and historically underserved communities in [Equity Priority Communities](#). The proposal demonstrates meaningful engagement through:

- **Underrepresented Members of Equity Priority Communities:** Plans for engaging underrepresented demographic groups within EPCs in project implementation
- **Engagement Methods:** Culturally appropriate and effective engagement strategies
- **Accessibility:** Plans for language (including ASL) interpretation, accessible meeting formats, and/or compensation where appropriate
- **Implementation:** Proposals should describe how community input will shape project implementation

7. Project Feasibility

Proposals must demonstrate organizational capacity to complete the proposed project in a timely manner by submitting:

- **Description of staffing** to complete the proposed work
- **Workplan:**
 - Overall project goal, measurable outcomes, and activities to achieve the intended outcomes
 - Timeline to meet program deadlines, including activity sequencing

- **Budget:**
 - Comprehensive project budget
 - Reasonable costs

Threshold Requirements Evaluation Checklist

✓	Threshold Requirement	Evaluation
	1. Application Complete and Submitted by Deadline	Pass / No Pass
	2. Applicant is CBO, with 501(c)(3) status or fiscal sponsor, and works with/in Equity Priority Communities	Pass / No Pass
	3. Demonstrated Transportation/Housing/Climate Experience	Pass / No Pass
	4. Financial Capacity	Pass / No Pass
	5. Ability to Advance REAP 2.0 Goals	Pass / No Pass
	6. Community Engagement Approach	Pass / No Pass
	7. Project Feasibility	Pass / No Pass

Scoring Criteria

Applications that meet all threshold requirements will be scored per the following criteria:

Scoring Category	Description	Category 1 Points	Category 2 Points	Category 3 Points
Capacity Building Impact	• Clear, effective, and feasible plan for enhancing community leadership, knowledge, and/or organizational capacity • Plan for partnerships and collaborations necessary to implement the project	20	N/A	N/A
Partnership Development	• Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of each partner • Strategies for effective multi-sector collaboration • Plan for sustaining partnerships beyond the grant period	N/A	20	N/A
Community Project	• Innovative approach that tests new models or scales proven community solutions • Evidence of community leadership in project design • Identification of potential challenges and how to address them • Potential for long-term impact beyond the grant period	N/A	N/A	20
Project Need and Community Benefit	• Clear description of transportation/housing needs or gaps being addressed • Specific benefits to disadvantaged and historically underserved communities in Equity Priority Communities • Connection to previously identified community priorities (e.g., Community-Based Transportation Plans), if applicable	10	10	10
Implementation Approach	• Clear, feasible workplan with a detailed and realistic timeline, measurable outcomes, and a plan for implementation • Appropriate staffing, partnerships, and collaborations necessary to complete the project activities and achieve the measurable outcomes	20	20	20

Scoring Category	Description	Category 1 Points	Category 2 Points	Category 3 Points
Budget and Cost Effectiveness	• Reasonable costs relative to the proposed activities and measurable outcomes • Appropriate allocation of resources across project components	10	10	10

Bonus Points (up to 30 additional points)

- Innovative Strategies: Innovative strategies or partnerships that can be replicated in other communities (+10 points)
- Meaningful Involvement: Meaningful involvement of youth, seniors, or people with disabilities in the design and implementation of the project (+10 points)
- New Organizations: New or emerging organizations (< 5 years old) or organizations that have not previously engaged with or received funding from MTC (+10 points)

Selection Process

The Evaluation Panel will be composed of multidisciplinary MTC staff and subject matter experts. Based on the comparative strength of applications in each program area, the panel maintains discretion in making final award recommendations.

2. Glossary of Terms

Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH): Legal requirement and practice of actively working to overcome patterns of segregation and expand housing choices for historically excluded communities.

Community-Based Organization (CBO): A nonprofit or grassroots entity that operates within, serves, and is accountable to a specific geographic or demographic community, focusing on addressing local social, economic, health, or civic needs through direct services, advocacy, community organizing, and resident/worker engagement.

Equity Priority Communities (EPCs): Geographic areas identified by MTC that have historically faced disinvestment and continue to experience barriers to opportunity. View EPC map

Fiscal Sponsor: An established organization that accepts grants on behalf of projects or smaller organizations that don't have their own 501(c)(3) status.

Infill Development: Building new housing in already developed areas rather than expanding into undeveloped land, often making use of vacant or underused properties.

REAP 2.0: Regional Early Action Planning 2.0 - California's planning program that requires regions to coordinate housing, transportation, and climate goals.

Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT): The total number of miles driven by all vehicles in an area, used as a measure of transportation demand and environmental impact.

Transit-Oriented Development: Housing and other development located within walking distance of public transit to reduce car dependency.

This program is funded through California's Regional Early Action Planning (REAP) 2.0 program and administered by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission