

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Programming and Allocations Committee****January 14, 2026****Agenda Item 3a-26-0055****MTC Resolution Nos. 4604, Revised, and 3989, Revised. MTC Community Action Resource and Empowerment (CARE): Power-building and Engagement (Pb+E): Program of Projects – Round 2****Subject:**

Revisions to MTC Community Action Resource and Empowerment (CARE) guidelines and MTC's Exchange Program to award an additional \$1 million in Power-building and Engagement (Pb+E) grants, augmenting the \$1.5 million awarded in November 2025 in Round 1.

Background:

MTC's Community Action Resource and Empowerment (CARE) Program, the successor to MTC's equity-rooted legacy Lifeline Transportation Program, was established in November 2023 via MTC Resolution No. 4604 advancing MTC's Equity Platform. CARE supports three program categories: transportation-based community capacity power-building and engagement (Pb+E), community-based transportation technical assistance, and participatory budgeting supporting Equity Priority Communities and similar designations in the nine-county Bay Area region. The target programming amount for CARE Cycle 1 is \$22 million, which includes a mix of federal One Bay Area Grant (\$15 million in OBAG 3 and MTC exchange) and \$2 million in one-time Regional Early Action Program (REAP 2.0) funds.

In November 2025, the Commission adopted the CARE: Power-building and Engagement's (Pb+E) Program of Projects (PoP), funded by REAP 2, awarding \$1.5 million to 16 community-based organizations (CBOs) in the 9-county region. Projects implement transportation/housing/climate efforts that build community leadership and capacity, strengthen multi-sector partnerships, and pilot community initiatives that advance impact outcomes. In December 2025, the Commission set aside \$1.5 million in additional MTC exchange funds through the OBAG 3 CARE program for Pb+E.

Additional \$1 million for Power-building and Engagement Grants: This month, staff recommend programming \$1 million of these MTC exchange funds to fund additional Pb+E projects (Round 2), due to the remarkably high demand for this competitive program. MTC received 143 applications requesting \$18.9 million from the CARE Pb+E Call for Projects process in September 2025, for the \$1.5 million of grant funding available.

Evaluation and Selection Process: Round 2 projects were selected from the original pool and Call for Projects process in September 2025 (143 applications), based on the same screening and evaluation process. Attachment A describes this process in detail. The evaluation and selection process includes three assessments: 1) Threshold Requirement Assessment; 2) Quality of Application Assessment via Scoring Criteria; and 3) Balance of 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.

Round 2 Program of Projects: Ten (10) projects totaling \$1 million are recommended for awards as described in Attachment B. Five (5) of the awards are single-county projects totaling \$350,000 and five (5) are multi-county application awards totaling \$650,000. Four (4) of the ten (10) projects focus on “Transportation,” three (3) of the ten (10) address “Transportation and Housing”, and three (3) of the ten (10) focus on “Housing”.

Snapshot of Pb+E Program of Projects (Rounds 1 and 2): Round 1 and proposed Round 2 grant awards combined will total \$2.5 million for 26 projects to CBOs (Attachment C). Grant awards comprehensively represent all nine counties. Each of the nine-counties receives at least one (1) single county award and benefits from at least one (1) multi-county award. Eighteen (18) of the projects are single-county applications while eight (8) are multi-county projects. Eight (8) of the projects address “Transportation”, nine (9) address “Housing”, and nine (9) address “Transportation and Housing.” In addition to grant funds, support will be provided to all 26 of the grant awardees including a professional coach, technical assistance, and two network convenings to expand reach, diversify learnings, and adapt from lessons learned for greater impact.

Issues:

Round 1 grant awardees will begin implementation first, followed by Round 2 recipients. Implementation includes matching coaches with grant awardees, contracting with CBOs, project charter development and work planning, in support and preparation for grant project delivery. Round 2 awards are pending on final due diligence of project sponsors and named partners.

Recommendations:

Refer MTC Resolution Nos. 4604, Revised, and 3989, Revised to the Commission for approval.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: CARE Pb+E Grant Program: Evaluation and Selection Process
- Attachment B: Round 2 - Recommended CARE Pb+E Program of Projects
- Attachment C: CARE Pb+E Round 1 and Round 2 (Proposed) Program of Projects
- MTC Resolution No. 3989, Revised
 - Attachment B
- MTC Resolution No. 4604, Revised
 - Attachment A
- Presentation



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