Frequently Asked Questions : Four-County State Funding Program

If you require any further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.

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Helpful Resources:

Please refer to the links below for additional SACOG and CTC resources.

- SACOG Four-County State Funding Program 2025 Call for Projects
- SACOG STIP Guidelines
- CTC STIP Webpage
    - 2024 STIP Guidelines (PDF)
- Other SACOG FAQs:
    - MTIP
    - MTP/SCS

What types of projects does the STIP program fund?

The SACOG STIP Program seeks to fund a variety of projects that align with state policy goals, focusing on climate, modal choice, and equity. The program includes two main funding elements: the intra-county competitive program and regional pooled funding.

1. Intra-County Competitive Program:

- Per page 5 of the SACOG STIP Guidelines, "the intra-county competitive program focuses on fix-it-first projects that also provide additional performance outcomes and/or modernize roadways, mirroring the goals of CAPTI to align with state policy goals for state of good repair, modal choice, climate, and equity."
- This program is designed to address the needs of local agencies with consistent county-wide funding, where local agencies only compete against other agencies within their county.
- The STIP program, as stated in the SACOG

STIP Guidelines, seeks to fund projects in the following categories:

- o Rehabilitation and operational improvements for regional roadways that:
  - · Include additional improvements necessary to accommodate other modes of transportation, such as bicycles, NEVs, micromobility, pedestrians, and/or high capacity transit infrastructure that
    - · Fill in existing network gaps; and/or
    - · Connect to key destination centers and/or mobility hubs
- o Resolve significant safety issues (such as projects related to intersections with disproportionately high crash rates and/or high levels of congestion)
- o Support regional goods movement
- o Provide traffic calming strategies or other complete streets elements
- o Projects that improve traffic flow, including signal systemization, streamlining intersections, improving transportation systems management and operations, traffic signal optimization plans, and traffic signal interconnection
- o Projects that include project elements that address resiliency and adaptation including (but not limited to):
- o Cooling elements such as trees, shade, cool pavement treatments, etc.
- o Support of evacuation routes and/or emergency response routes
- o Implementation and maintenance of trails projects or other active transportation projects
- o Transit projects that increase the frequency or service improvements for public transit, including capital improvements

2. Regional Set-Aside

- · The pooled portion of the funding program supports larger regionally significant projects that help the region meet established goals and targets associated with the MTP/SCS.
- · Projects to be considered for this portion must be included in the board-adopted Grants Prioritization list from October 2024, or a significant project submitted from Yuba or Sutter counties.
- · Projects in this category are competitive across all eligible agencies within the four counties.

What are the key deadlines for the Four-County State Funding Round?

Schedule

- · March 17, 2025 – Call for Projects Officially Released
- · March 19, 2025 – Pre-submittal Workshop (Virtual)
- · **March 28, 2025 – Pre-application Due to SACOG by 4:00 PM**
- · April 7 – May 1, 2025 – Pre-application Consultations with SACOG Staff
- · **May 2, 2025 – Draft Applications Packages Due to SACOG by 4:00 PM**
- · May 21 – June 3, 2025 – Draft Application Consultations with SACOG Staff
- · **June 6, 2025 – Final Applications Packages Due to SACOG by 4:00 PM**
- · July 2025 – Staff Release Project Award Recommendations
- · August 2025 – Transportation Committee Recommends Project Awards to the SACOG Board for Final Approval
- · August 2025 – SACOG Board Takes Final Action on Recommended Projects and Determines Final Program Funding Amount
- · March 2026 – Initiate Programming

Do I need to submit a Draft Application Package and what does it include?

All applicants are required to submit a draft application package by May 2, 2025, to be considered for funding. Draft applications must include all application elements as specified in the program guidelines. The evaluation committee will score the draft applications, and the scores will be shared with applicants. Applicants can make changes before submitting the final application.

How do I submit a Draft Application and Final Application Package?

Draft and Final application packages should be submitted via email directly to David Pape at dpape@sacog.org.

Why is SACOG doing pre-application consultations for the Four-County STIP round?

Staff are offering pre-application consultations to support project applicants through this process by consulting on project eligibility and competitiveness requirements before you complete a full application. This is a technical assistance service we offer project sponsors to streamline their work, help them prioritize project applications, and help them achieve success in the round.

How do I set up a pre-application consultation?

You can book at time with us here. Please meet with us ahead of the draft application due date on May 2, 2025.

Can I apply with a project that I did not submit a pre-application for?

Project sponsors are encouraged to submit a pre-application for all projects they want to apply for funding through the Four-County STIP round. If you have not submitted a pre-application during the form intake process, we can provide a separate word document for you to submit the pre-application. Please send these ahead of May 2, 2025, for SACOG's review.

What are exempt and/or lump sum projects?

Projects must be listed in the 2020 MTP/SCS or fit within a lump-sum project category and must be identified as an "exempt" project, to be eligible for the program. Exempt projects are exempt from air quality conformity requirements and can be added to "lump sum" project lists in the MTP/SCS.

A "lump sum" is a compilation of numerous exempt projects that are not considered to be of appropriate scale for individual identification Instead of listing each item separately, federal planning guidelines allow metropolitan planning organizations such as SACOG to include these projects in a 'lump sum' or group them in a listing

together. The lump sums must be consistent with the "exempt project" classifications under 23 CFR 771.117 (c) and (d) and/or 40 CFR Part 93.126.

What are non-exempt projects, and why are they ineligible from the Four-County STIP round?

Non-exempt projects refer to all highway and transit projects that are required to determine conformity and must comply with federal requirements outlined in 40 CFR 93 Part A. If a project is not identified in 40 CFR 93.126, 40 CFR 93.127, and 40 CFR93.128, it is considered a non-exempt project. Further federal transportation air quality conformity and non-exempt designations (federal requirement), differ from CEQA exemptions (state requirement).

SACOG's decision to limit STIP projects to exempt projects was based on the limited dollars that would be available, and to focus on more appropriately sized "fix-it first" projects or those that help the region meet air quality / GHG targets. It's worth noting that STIP funding accounts for roughly 20 percent of the total funding (federal and state) that SACOG will be administering over the course of the upcoming regional funding programs.

This eligibility requirement aligns with previous Maintenance and Modernization funding rounds, which also restricted eligibility to exempt projects only. In prior programs, non-exempt projects qualified under the Transformative program. For the upcoming federal program planned for early 2026, non-exempt projects may qualify under either the System Performance or the Next Generation/Clean Air Solutions Programs.

What are the project funding requirements for the Four-County STIP?

Project sponsors must provide a minimum of 11.47% match towards the project cost and clearly identify the funding in the PPR.

Project sponsors may apply for funding to complete any phase of a project. When applying pre-construction components to a project, applicants must demonstrate how it intends to fund the construction of a useable segment.

Further, CTC requires projects receiving funding from the STIP to show a full funding commitment for the phase of work funds are requested for (see Page 7 of the 2024 STIP Guidelines (PDF)). For instance, if you are requesting funding for the PA&ED phase, your application should show full funding for that phase, either covered by the request, local funds, grant funds, etc. You can show later phases as unfunded but need to provide a clear funding plan for the project.

SACOG cannot program a project or phase of a project in the STIP without a full funding commitment either from STIP funds or from other committed funds. If you are unable to show full funding for the phase, please consider another phase for funding that could be covered, or another project.

Does SACOG require a local resolution showing full funding commitment of phases? When should that resolution be signed to be eligible for the funding?

Project sponsors are required to submit an adopted agency resolution from their council or board. This resolution must indicate a firm commitment to deliver the awarded project on time, ensuring accountability and alignment with the project's goals and timelines.

SACOG understands it can be difficult to get council or board approval with limited time. If you are unable to provide an adopted agency resolution by the May 2nd Draft Application deadline, please indicate what steps you have taken to agendize the resolution. The adopted agency resolution should be provided by the Final Application deadline on June 6 to be considered eligible for funding.

Does the Four-County STIP Round require a project study report (PSR)/ PSR equivalent for eligibility? If that is not complete today, will my project be ineligible?

Yes, project sponsors are required to provide a PSR or PSR equivalent for the program. PSR's are a Caltrans requirement that shows the project scope, schedule, cost, and early design and

environmental considerations. Refer to Page 6 of the CTC STIP Guidelines - 2024 STIP Guidelines (PDF)

For previous SACOG PSR examples, you can refer to our 2024 STIP round page.

Please note that programming is contingent on SACOG receiving an acceptable PSR or PSR equivalent. Applicants must provide SACOG with a PSR or equivalent by July 31,2025 to be eligible for funding.

Which funding years will the Four-County STIP round cover?

The available funding for the STIP program will be from FY 2027-2028 and FY 2028-2029, as determined by the state published STIP five-year estimates. If this will be a concern for delivering the project you are proposing, please book a pre-application consultation with SACOG staff to discuss further.

Can I request state-only funds for my project?

We have heard from several project sponsors who would prefer state-only funds for their project. Per the STIP guidelines (page 28), it is possible to request State-only funding, however, funding availability may be limited. Given the inability to guarantee State-only funding, project sponsors must be willing and able to receive federal funds for their project. If an agency is currently ineligible to receive federal funds, but would be willing to receive them, the award will be conditioned on the premise that any outstanding issues related to eligibility will be resolved shortly after the funding award.