



## Approve Mode Shift Program Funding Guidelines

Consent

**Prepared by:** Victoria Cacciatore

**Attachments:** Yes

**Approved by:** James Corless

**Referring Committee:** Transportation

### 1. Issue:

Staff consulted with partners to identify the Mode Shift program funding guidelines to distribute up to \$1,500,000 for mode shift and mobility projects and programs. The Mode Shift program guidelines build on older SACOG transportation demand management and innovations-focused programs while strengthening the role of equity in project selection.

### 2. Recommendation:

The Transportation Committee recommends that the board approve the Mode Shift program funding guidelines and authorize the release of the request for grant applications.

### 3. Background/Analysis:

Transportation demand management (TDM) is a set of strategies aimed at maximizing traveler choices. While traditional TDM programs have focused on replacing commute trips with non-driving modes, TDM can broadly be defined as providing travelers with effective choices to improve travel reliability. TDM is one example of a cost-effective strategy to address transportation problems such as congestion, road and parking facility costs, crash costs, and air pollution stemming from vehicle emissions.

Under the umbrella of the Innovative Mobility Program, SACOG applies TDM strategies to achieve policy outcomes of advancing equity in underserved communities, reducing vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions, and managing roadway congestion. While SACOG provides regional services and programs that support shifting people away from single-occupancy vehicle trips—such as Sacramento Region 511 to provide phone- and web-accessible traveler information for all modes—competitive grant programs for member agencies and planning partners serve an important role in identifying and addressing residents' needs while supporting of these policy outcomes.

The last round of TDM grants was completed in 2019 before pandemic impacts re-shaped commute trips that many local and regional programs targeted. Prior iterations of SACOG Transportation Demand Management grants used three competitive funding programs with different emphases on innovative transportation options, micro projects, and traditional mode shift projects.

### 4. Discussion/Analysis:

The purpose of the Mode Shift program is to invest in, test, and expand new and existing programs that

reduce car trips, provide new mobility solutions, and make options like biking, walking, taking transit, and sharing rides the easy choice for all types of trips. The grant program is envisioned to support the execution of small non-infrastructure programs, events, quick-build projects, tactical urbanism, or projects to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips and miles by encouraging biking, walking, riding transit, carpooling, vanpooling, and teleworking as options for reducing car trips.

Staff interviewed key collaborators in the region to learn about possible projects and programs in the region with interest and potential to create mode shift or increase mobility. Partners from transit operators, transportation management agencies, regional transportation planning agencies, city and county staff, and non-profits shared challenges from implementing past grants, ideas for technical assistance, and how the proposed grant program could bolster their efforts to create and support mode shift. Following collaborator interviews, staff released the draft guidelines for comment in mid-August and incorporated those comments into the draft Mode Shift Program funding guidelines (Attachment).

SACOG staff developed the draft Mode Shift funding guidelines using the 2018 Transportation Demand Management Innovations Grant Guidelines as a starting point. Staff used the input from key collaborators to shape the update and worked to incorporate best practices from other SACOG-operated grant programs. Based on partner feedback and the potential to streamline the grant application process, the Mode Shift funding guidelines allow for new approaches to mobility as well as traditional types of mode shift programs with demonstrated success inside and outside of the region.

The draft Mode Shift guidelines propose purposefully creating a stronger role for transportation equity in project selection by adding a scored criterion. To simplify the process, the draft guidelines propose one set of scoring criteria and application for all projects to use. The last proposed change in the draft guidelines from prior TDM funding programs is to remove the match requirements for projects and programs. Collectively, these changes to the funding program should reduce barriers to entry for smaller non-profits with potential programs and projects.

#### *Schedule*

The guidelines outline a longer than normal application period (September 19 through November 18) to allow project sponsors more time to discuss proposed projects and associated performance outcomes with staff. The proposed schedule within the draft Mode Shift guidelines recommends a January 2023 request for board approval of staff funding recommendations. The January board approval is requested to allow potential applicants enough time to execute agreements with SACOG in advance of bike month-focused programs.

Attachment: Mode Shift Program Funding Guidelines

#### **5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:**

There is no fiscal impact to the agency. The grant program funding for the Mode Shift program is identified through the Innovative Mobility Framework. Staff hours to implement the funding program are included in the approved Overall Work Program.

#### **6. This staff report aligns with the following SACOG Work Plan Objectives:**

##### **Goal 1 : Advance Economic Prosperity**

**Objective 1:** Invest in and protect the transportation infrastructure needed to implement the region's

economic prosperity plan.

**Objective 2:** Establish the Sacramento region as a testbed and scale-up location for innovative mobility solutions.

**Objective 3:** Improve people's ability to get to jobs, schools, and other economic opportunities.

**Objective 5:** Begin sustained effort to address the racial inequities related to economic prosperity indicators associated with housing, transportation, and opportunity.

**Goal 2 : Connected Communities**

**Objective 2:** Support innovative mobility options that develop equitable, accessible transportation options for all residents.

**Objective 3:** Prioritize cost-effective transportation investments that enhance mobility while improving safety, air quality, and the condition of transportation infrastructure and assets.